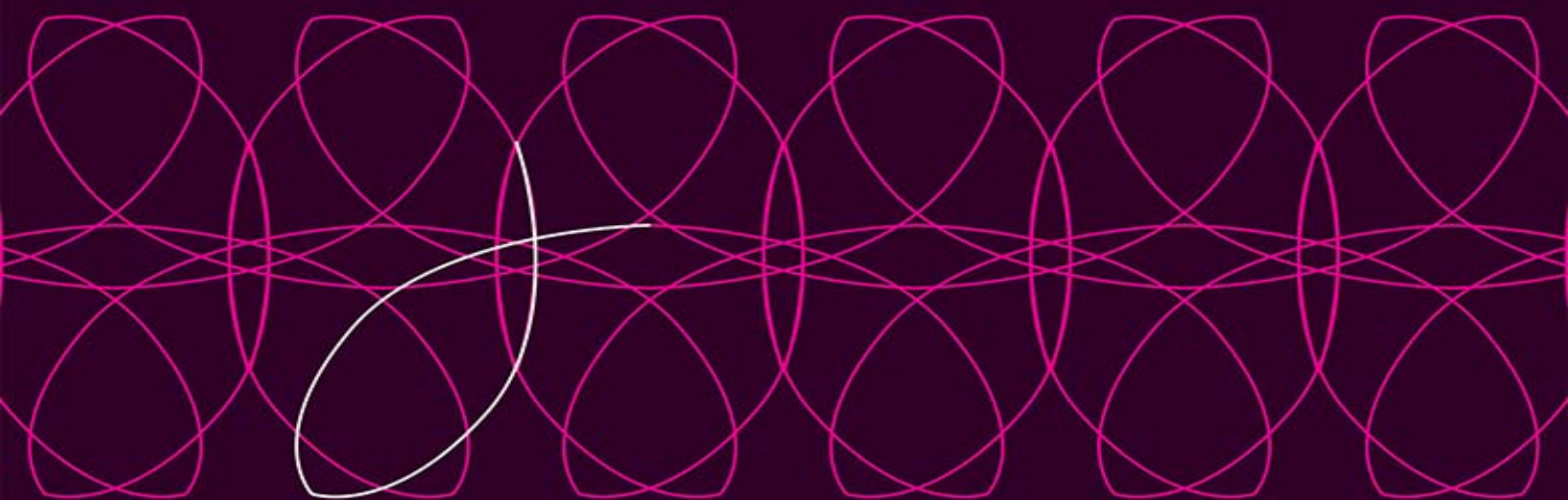


FRANÇOIS JULLIEN



RESOURCES
OF CHRISTIANITY

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Resources of Christianity

François Jullien

Translated by Pedro Rodriguez

polity

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Dedication

For Pascal David

This text expands on a lecture I gave in March 2016 for the *Cours méthodique et populaire de philosophie* at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and in May 2016 at the Université Catholique de Lyon.

My thanks to Pascal David, who edited the first written
version.

I

Refusal to avoid (the question of Christianity)

Why, you might wonder, have I decided to deal today with “Christianity”? What more have we to do with it? I believe it’s important at present to take the trouble, to stop evading the question, because it is a fertile one: not for cultural identity (is Europe “Christian”?) but for culture, and especially for philosophy, which is the matter at hand. The eras of Christianity’s dominance and subsequent denunciation are behind us, and the era of its banishment upon us. It is high time to review what Christianity has caused to advene¹ in thought. What *possibilities* of the mind has it contributed, or buried? That is my reason. Because it needs doing. Even if, having spent so much time among the Greeks and the Chinese, I am perhaps not ideally suited to the task. Perhaps the risk is worthwhile for me precisely because I take an external perspective, because I am further removed from the vassal’s position.

I believe the time has come to stop evading the question of Christianity in contemporary thought. The very idea of “Europe,” bound up as it is in that history, stands to gain. We in present-day Europe must determine what Christianity has contributed, transformed, discovered, or covered up in thought. We must determine what lies totalized (labeled) in the *-ity* of Christianity, which we see couched amid so many other *-ities* and *-isms*. I say *evading* [*évitement*] because the astonishing, even aberrant, affair known as Christianity is, in an ambient manner, a collective embarrassment to us. There is no denying this. We would