

Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg State University Digital Commons

Faculty Submissions

Philosophy

2014

Jules Lequyer: Prophet of Open Theism (PowerPoint)

Donald W. Viney

Pittsburg State University, dviney@pittstate.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/phil_faculty

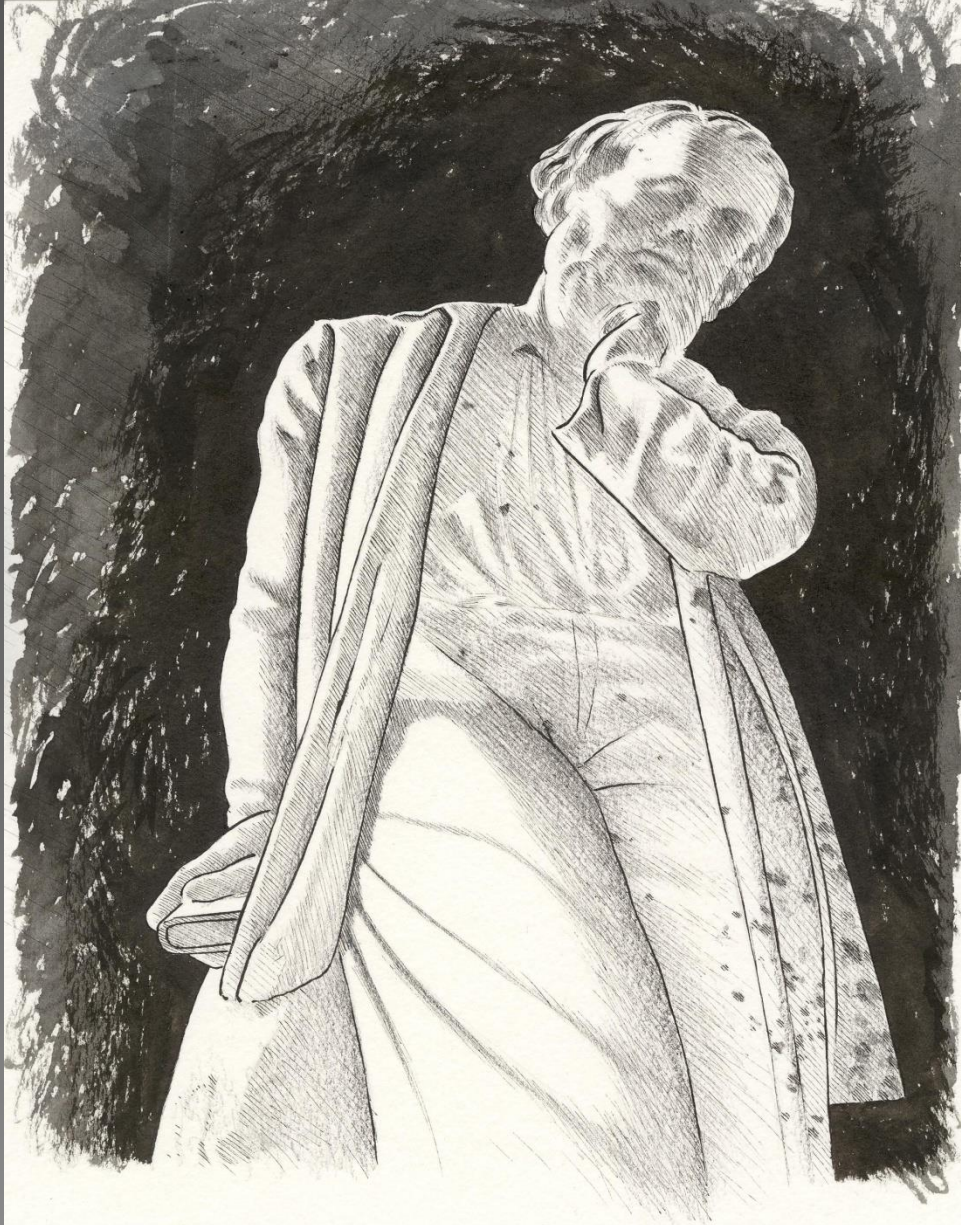


Part of the [Philosophy Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Viney, Donald W., "Jules Lequyer: Prophet of Open Theism (PowerPoint)" (2014). *Faculty Submissions*. 15.
https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/phil_faculty/15

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Philosophy at Pittsburg State University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Submissions by an authorized administrator of Pittsburg State University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@pittstate.edu.



Jules Lequyer: Prophet of Open Theism

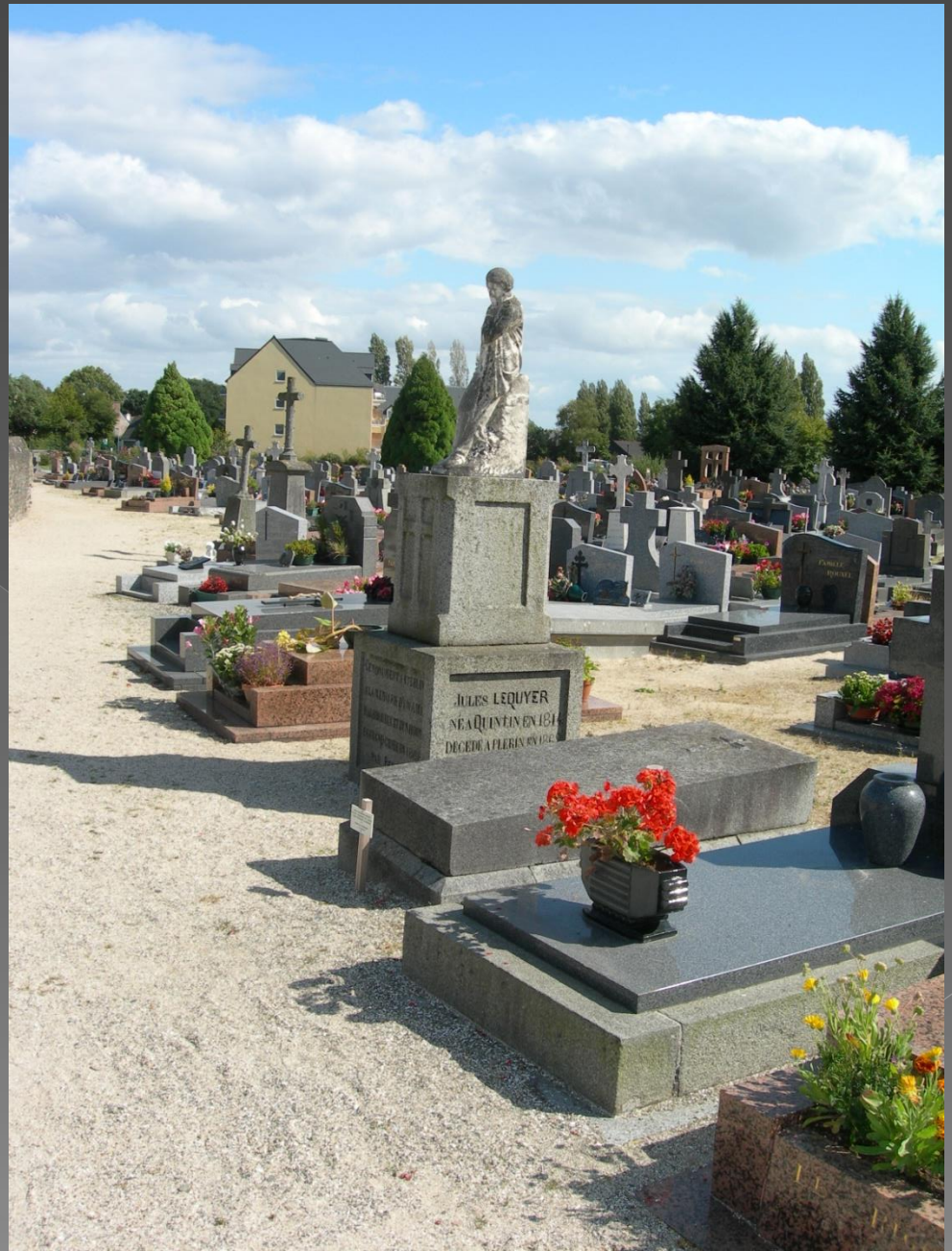
Donald Wayne Viney
Pittsburg State University

Jules Lequyer by Tanguy Dohollau

Jules Lequyer

A 19th century
French philosopher
whose influence is
disproportionate to
the knowledge of his
work or of his name.

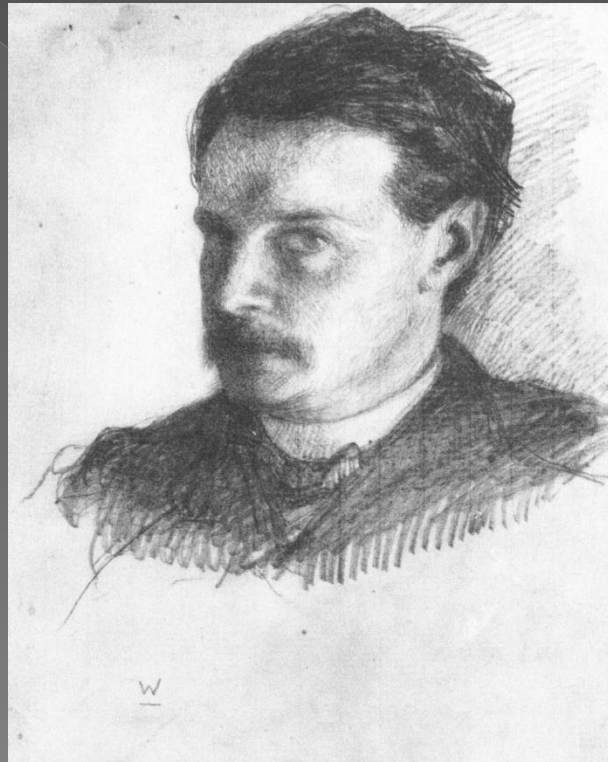
Lequyer's grave in Plérin



Despite the fragmentary condition of his writings and the fact that he published nothing, Lequyer's influence was wide-ranging.



Charles Renouvier
(1815-1903)



William James
(1842-1910)



Jean-Paul Sartre
(1905-1980)

Lequyer is often compared to his fellow countryman Pascal and to his contemporary, Kierkegaard.



Blaise Pascal
(1623-1662)



Søren Kierkegaard
(1813-1855)

The monument
over Lequyer's
grave in Plérin,
France.



Jules Lequyer, Born at Quintin in 1814,
Deceased at Plérin in 1862, Pray for him.



Lequyer remembered in Quintin



Lequyer's birthplace

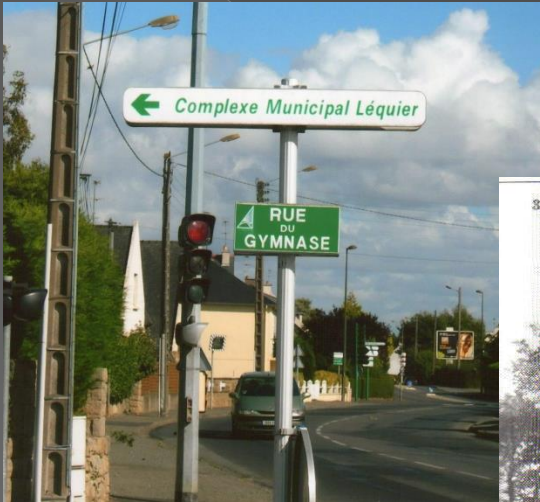


Jules Lequyer
Street

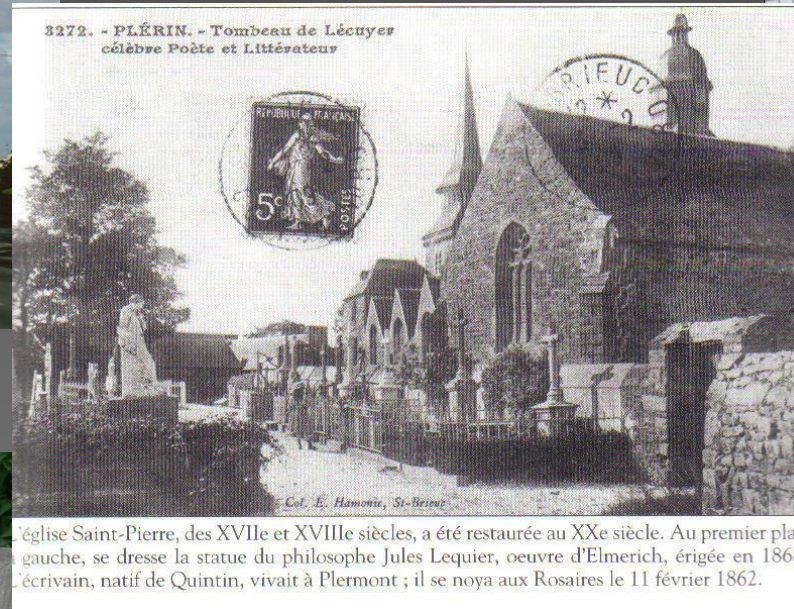


Jules Lequyer medical center

In Plérin, the name of Jules Lequyer is well-known



Municipal complex



Old postcard



Lequyer street



Plaque near Lequyer's house (Plermont)



Lequyer high school

Church yard as it appears today.



This monument was raised to the memory
of an unhappy friend and a man of great
genius in 1868 by Renouvier



Charles Renouvier (1815-1903)

Befriended Lequyer
at the École
Polytechnique in
Paris and became
widely known and
read in philosophy
in the late 19th
century.



CH. RENOUVIER A DIX-HUIT ANS
au moment de son entrée à l'Ecole Polytechnique
(Facsimile d'un dessin d'après le peintre Baron)

Lequyer's registration at the École Polytechnique

CONCOURS DE 1834.	
N° D'IMMATRICULATION. 5259	Lequyer, Joseph, Louis, Jules né le 29 janvier 1814
à Paris	à Quinbin département des Côtes du Nord
N° D'ADMISSION. 81	fil. de Joseph Jean Noël et de Célestine Marie Marie Eusebe Dégaultray, souper.
DATE D'ENREGISTREMENT. 10 novembre	Signalement: Cheveux et sourcils blonds front de courcel nez droit yeux bruns bouche peu menton roux visage ovale taille d'un mètre 66 centim.
Signature de l'Élève:	Marques apparentes: une cicatrice au front au dessus de l'œil gauche et une cicatrice au menton du côté droit
	Services militaires:
	Domicile des parents: son père est Medecin à St Brienc (Côtes du Nord)
	Grades obtenus:
	Passé à la 1 ^{re} division en 1835 , le 53^e d'une liste de 136 Élèves.
	Déclaré admissible dans les services publics en 1836 , le 72^e d'une liste de 121 Élèves.
	Admis dans le service d' Étal major en 1836 , le 8^e d'une liste de 8 Élèves.
BOURSES ET DÉGRÈVEMENTS.	
Troussseau et première mise d'équipement.	

The only
known likeness
of Lequyer

On the back of this
drawing, made by
Mathurin Le Gal la
Salle, found in his
private papers, his
daughter Marie
wrote, "I believe
that this is
Monsieur Léquyer."



Renouvier's unhappy friend

Lequyer's parents were dead by the time he was 30.

In 1851, Lequyer's friends placed him in the asylum at Dinan after he attempted to cut his arm with an axe. He was home again in 3 months.



Goulven Le Brech next to Dinan asylum, 2009

Consequences of the Crisis

After his release, Lequyer proposes to his childhood sweetheart, Anne “Nanine” Deszille (1818-1909).

She refuses.



“La chêne”: the tree where Anne and Jules left messages for each other as children.

Consequences of the Crisis

Ever proclaiming his sanity, Lequyer is estranged from close friends such as Mathurin Le Gal La Salle (1814-1903).

In 1853 Lequyer left for Besançon and Lons-le-Saunier and taught mathematics.



Mathurin Le Gal La Salle
(Fonds Jules Lequyer)

Plermont

In 1855, Lequyer returned to Plérin, never to leave again. He lived in the house his father built called Plermont (contraction of *Plérin* and *mont*).



Plermont, 2009

Gate and Plaque at Plermont



Gate and plaque in 1994



Plaque in 2009

“Oh Marianne . . .”

At Plermont, Lequyer had a housekeeper, Marianne Feuillet. Lequyer's mother had said to her, “Oh Marianne, pray, look out for my poor Jules. He has in his heart a passion which, I greatly fear, will be the death of him.”



Fireplace at Plermont

The Divine Poet

The All-Powerful, the divine poet, in no way brings about the appearance on the world scene of characters who come to fill a role decided for them in advance—these imitations of life are the games of human genius. Who could make of the work of God so frivolous and so base an idea!

Jules Lequyer, Dialogue of the
Predestinate and the Reprobate

Lequyer's Philosophical World



Augustine



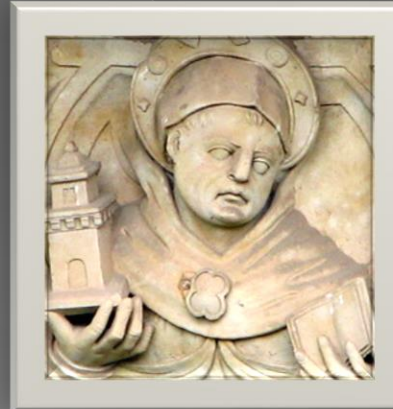
Pascal



Duns Scotus



Hegel



Aquinas



Fichte



Descartes

God All-Doing?

You have to understand that passing from the vulgar notion of God Almighty to the scientific notion of God All-Doing is hard work for me. I was so accustomed to thinking that God does not do everything since man does something.

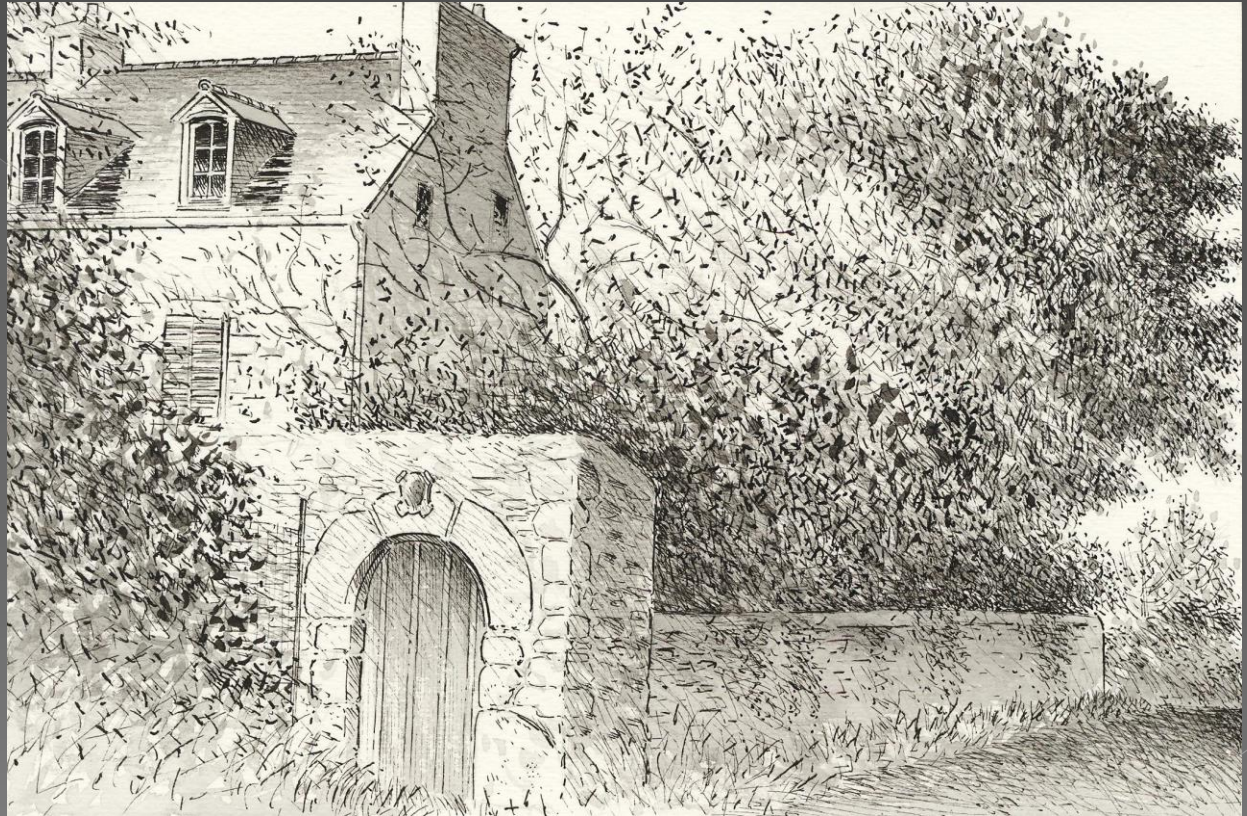
Jules Lequyer, *Dialogue of the Predestinate and the Reprobate*

Cahier A, at the Ford Lequier, Rennes

Something unheard of

*Bold traveler in
the worlds of
thought, I have
explored more than
one route, I have
sounded more than
one abyss.*

Jules Lequyer to
Anne Deszille

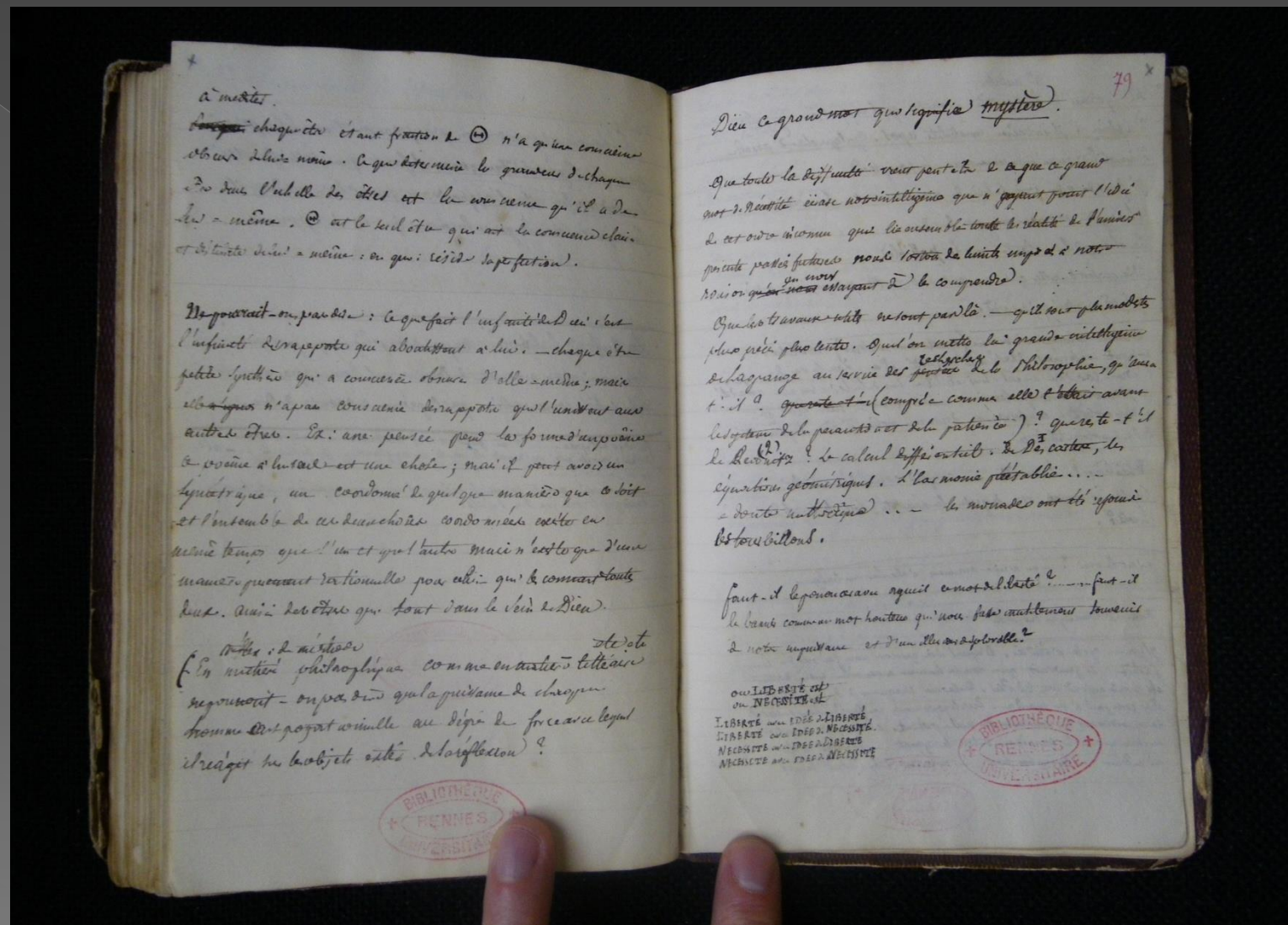


Plermont, by Tanguy Dohollau

God who created me creator of myself

*. . . I hold beneath my gaze the most certain of
truths and, in order, the first: I am free; [. . .]
I am a dependent independence; I am a person
responsible for me who is my work, to God who
created me creator of myself.*

Lequyer to Renouvier



Cahier C, at the Fonds Lequier, Rennes
“Double Dilemma”

Lequyer's "Double Dilemma"

either Freedom is

or Necessity is

Freedom with the Idea of Freedom

Freedom with the Idea of Necessity

Necessity with the Idea of Freedom

Necessity with the Idea of Necessity

Late in 1861 Lequyer again proposed to Anne Deszille.

Again she refused, this time instructing him to destroy their correspondence.

This he did, but not before copying it.



Jules Lequier by Tanguy Dohollau

“Adieu Nanine”

February 11, 1862,
Lequyer swam into
the bay of St.-Brieuc
to the limits of his
strength and,
according to his
secretary, cried
out, “Adieu Nanine.”
His body washed
ashore that evening.



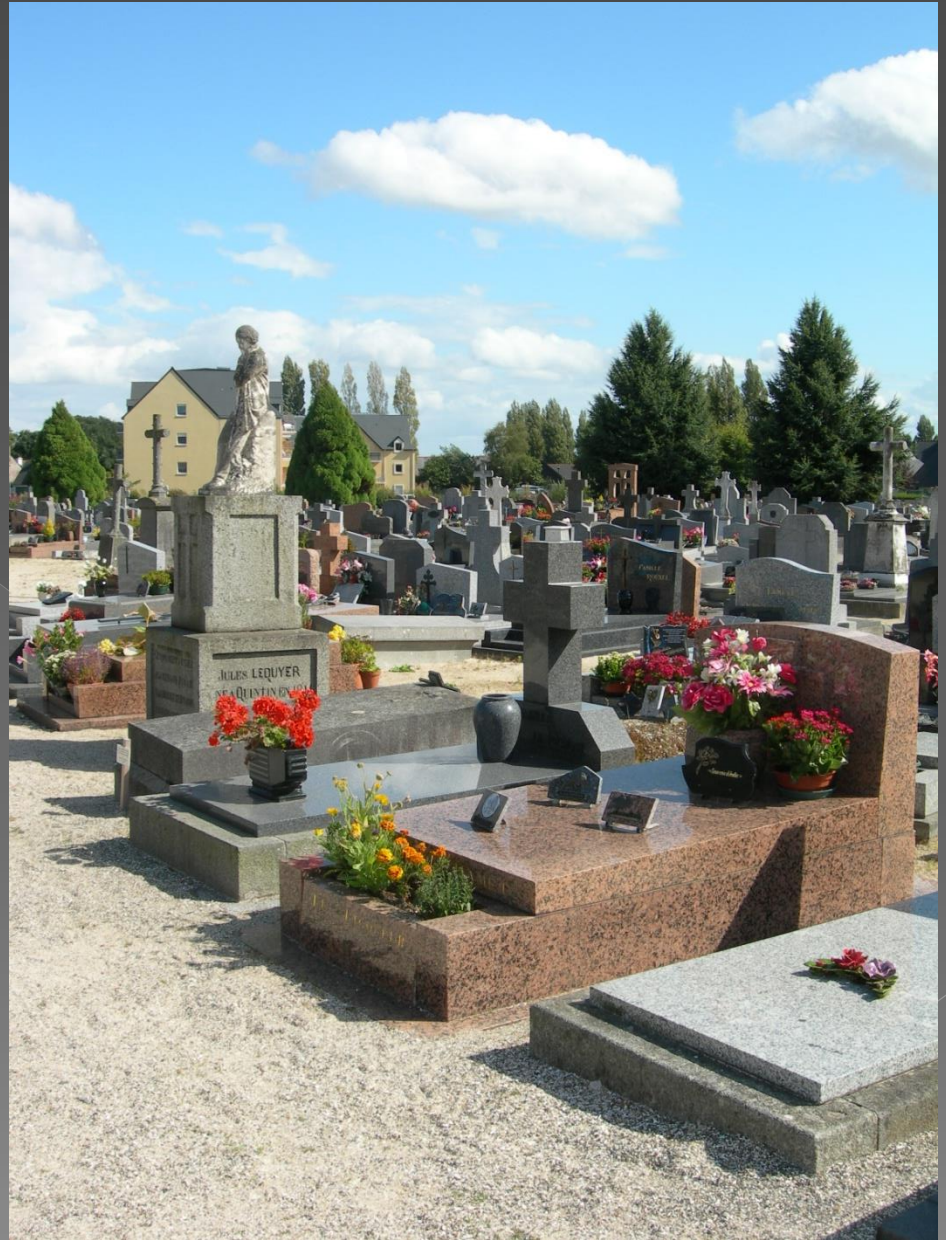
Suicide?

For a month following his death local newspapers debated whether it was a suicide. A century later, Camus mentioned Lequyer's death in *The Myth Sisyphus*.



Albert Camus (1913-1960)

The monument over Lequyer's grave was the idea of Madame Agathe Lando, an elderly poet who befriended Lequyer. Renouvier arranged to have the statue made.



Renouvier's importance for Lequyer

Published excerpts from Lequyer's writings in his own books, which is how William James came to know of him

Published, at his own expense, the first edition of Lequyer's works.

Commissioned the small statue and monument over Lequyer's grave.

Lequyer's importance to Renouvier

Literally to his dying day, referred to Lequyer as “my master”

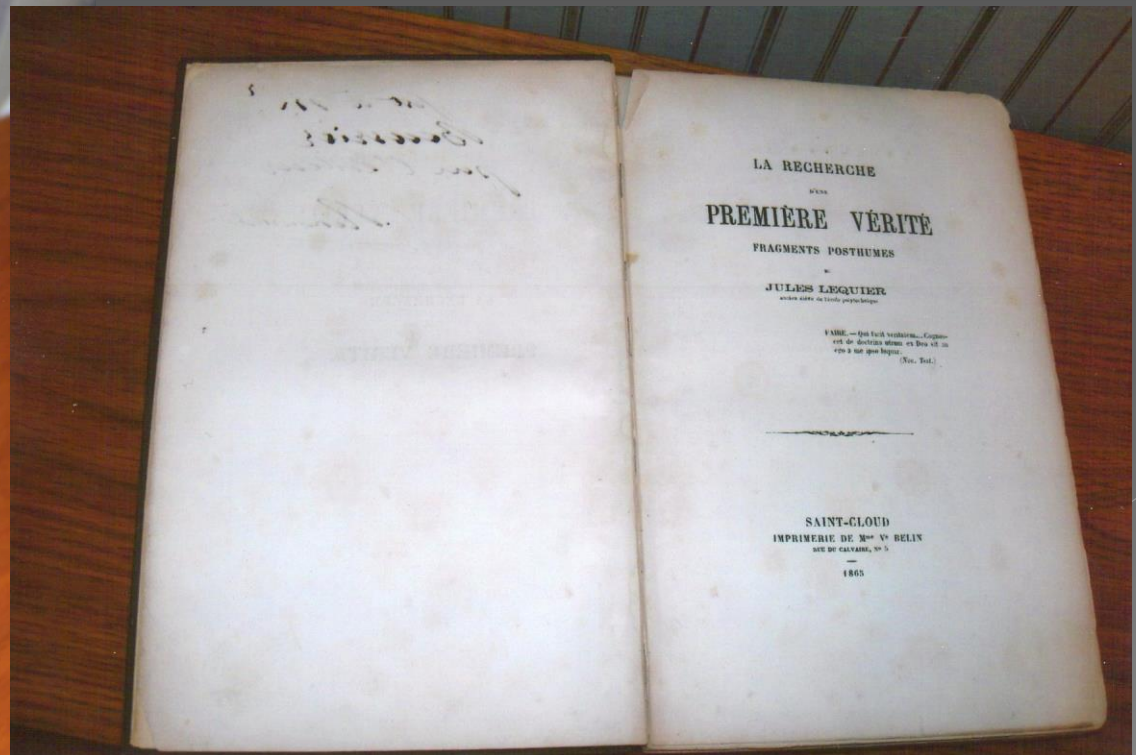
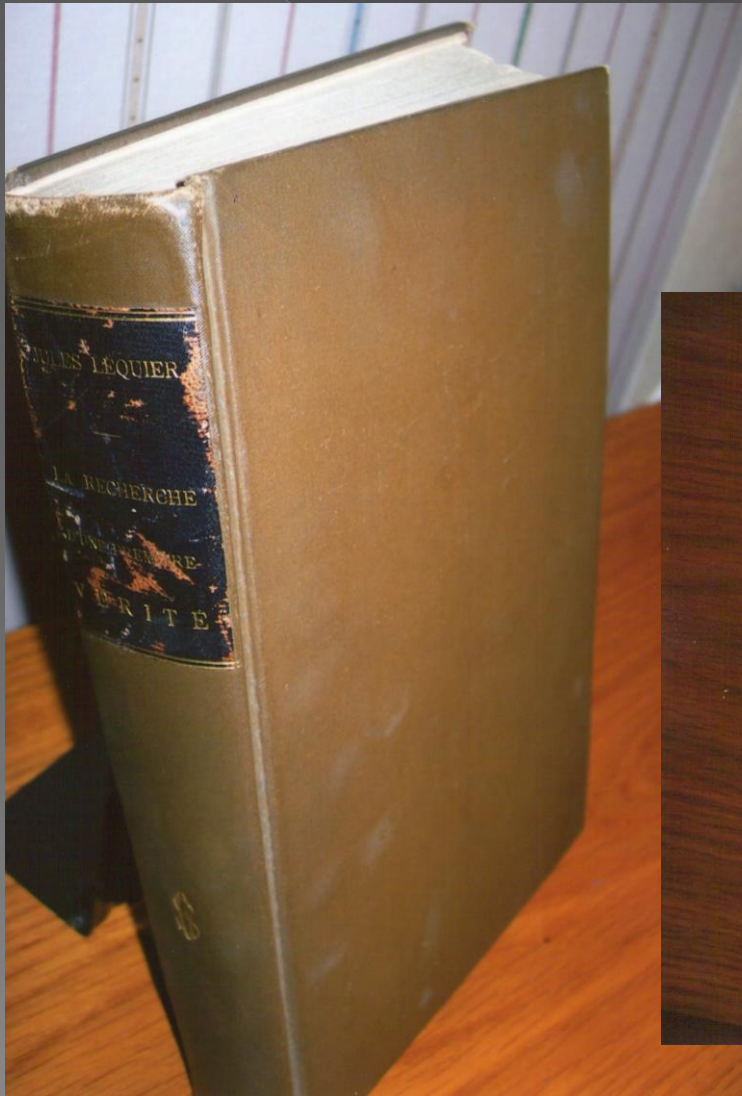
Credited Lequyer for his own views on free will and its relation to knowledge and certainty

Took as the formula of his philosophy of personalism Lequyer's phrase: “to make, and in making, to make oneself”

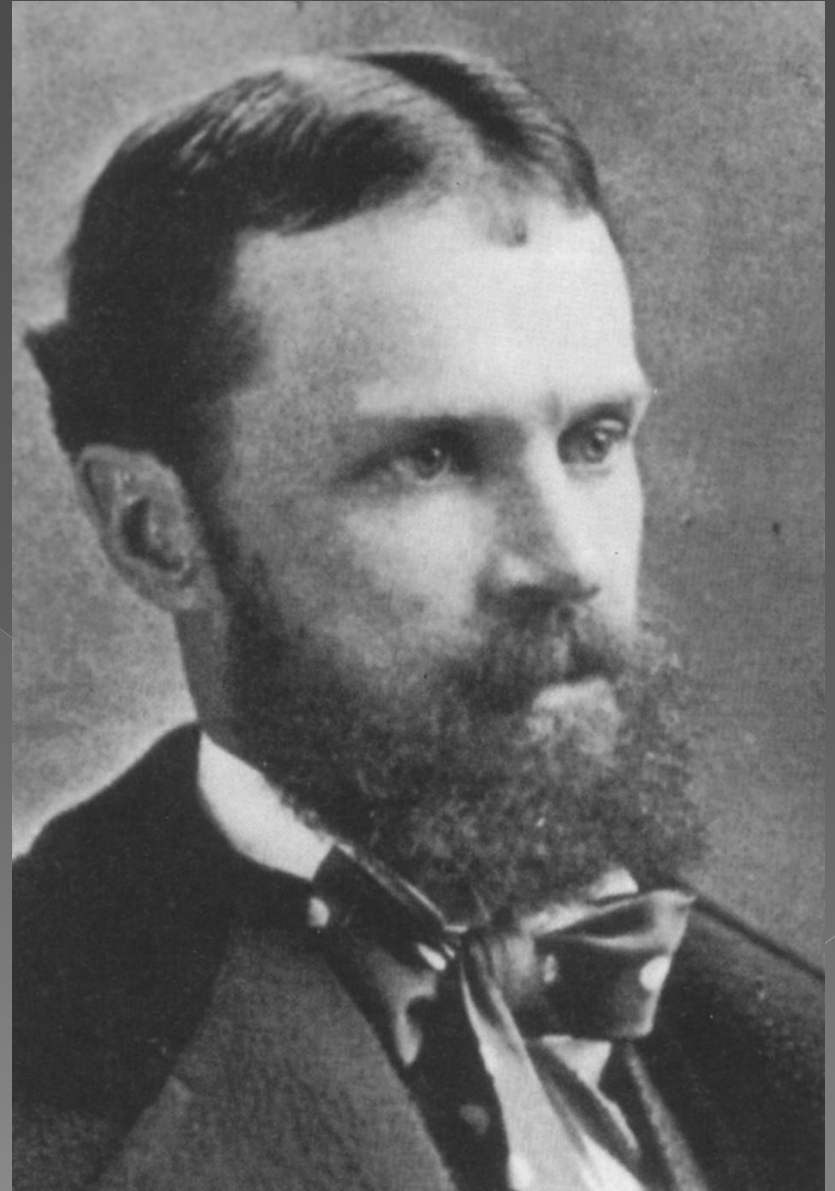
His Works: The Hornbeam Leaf,
Abel and Abel, The Search for a First Truth,
The Dialogue of the Predestinate
and the Reprobate



In 1865, Renouvier published, at his own expense, 120 copies of a selection of Lequyer's writings and distributed them to philosophers, including one to William James.



James's famous declaration in 1870, "My first act of free will shall be to believe in free will" followed upon his reading of Renouvier's summary of Lequyer's views on freedom. In his published writings, he never mentioned Lequyer by name.



Freedom or Necessity?

Two hypotheses: freedom or necessity. To choose between one and the other with one or with the other.

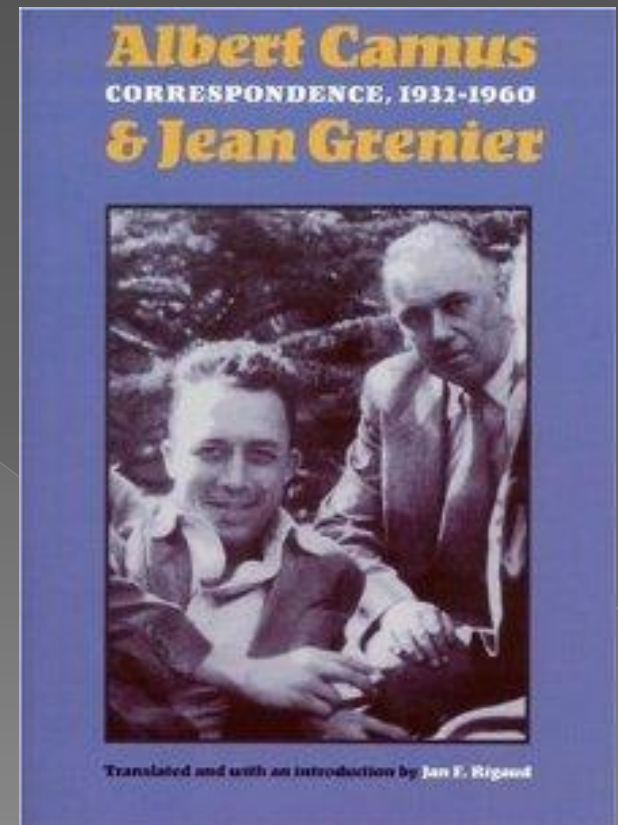
It is an act of freedom that affirms freedom.

Jules Lequyer, *The Search for a First Truth*, Part I

More widely available editions of Lequyer's works were published in the 20th century.



Jean Grenier, Camus' teacher, wrote extensively on Lequyer and edited his complete works.



In 1944, Sartre affirmed as the central tenet of existentialism Lequyer's formula, "To make, and in making, to make oneself." He did not mention Lequyer's name.



The core of Renouvier's Personalism and Sartre's Existentialism

The formula of science:

TO MAKE,

not to become, but to make, and in making, TO

MAKE ONESELF.

Jules Lequyer, *Search
for a First Truth*, Part I

Hartshorne on Lequyer

CHARLES HARTSHORNE
724 SPARKS AVENUE
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78705

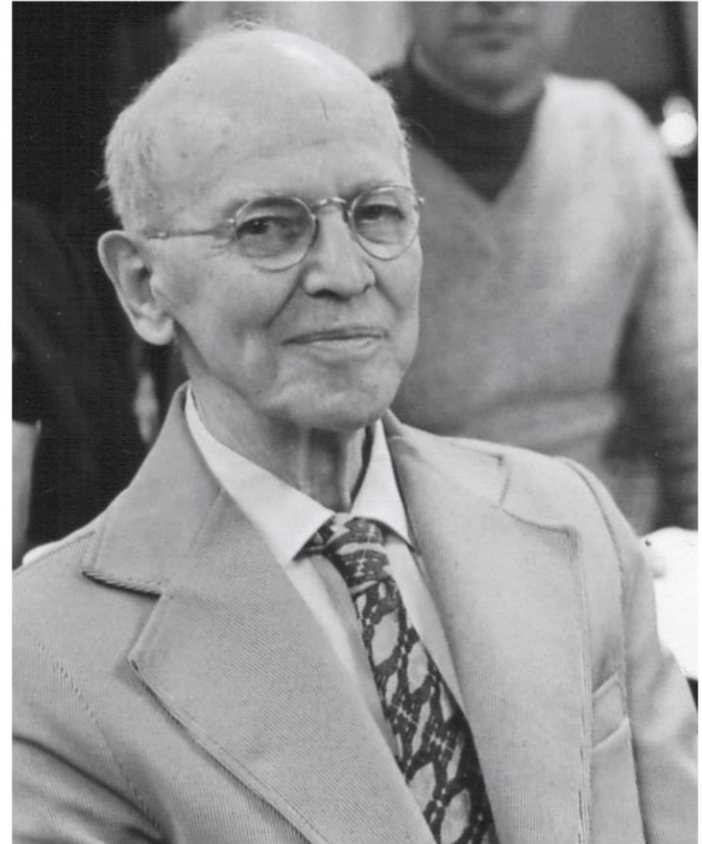
July 19/88

Dear Don,

Thanks for your fine photos. I hope your father is flourishing.
The news about your students is most pleasing.

About Lequyer, I agree with your analysis of the close similarity of my views on past and future and Lequyer's. I am not aware of being definitely influenced by L. on that point. I have known for a long time that he was one of the few number who see time as modal, the past being necessary condition for the ^{possibility of the} present but the future as not in concrete detail necessary consequence of the present, or the present of the past. But my own adoption of this standpoint was still earlier, ^{and} settled, I think, by James, Peirce, Bergson, Whitehead and others, including Dewey, Boutroux, Renouvier, still others, including Lequyer, confirmed or encouraged me, but my mind was already, I think, made up. I read Lequyer only after Jean Wahl told me, in 1948, that I ought to read him, seeing that my views were similar. Then Brimmer, who translated L., ^(about 1960) after being my student at Emory, made me very aware of ^{his} work. If he influenced me appreciably it was in what he said about God ^{as} as the one who has "created me creator of myself," thus closely anticipating Whitehead's "self-created creature."

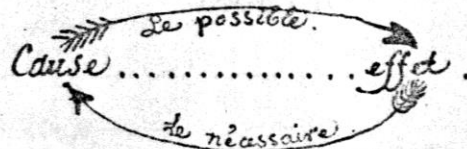
Lequyer's greatest influence was through Renouvier ^{to} James, and through James ^{to} Dewey, in making ^{clear} the connection ^{of} freedom (as creativity) with chance, setting limits to what even ideal ^{or} divine decisions can determine, and making causal indeterminacy almost axiomatic for later French metaphysics. But do not forget that Descartes started France in that direction by insisting on real freedom for human persons. No other tradition, least of all the British, has been so resistant to the deterministic tendency of early modern thought. What helped us to do better than the British was



Charles Hartshorne
(1897-2000)

Holographic diagram of modal relations of cause and effect

- 1^o. Du possible — Idée de la cause.
- 2^o. Du nécessaire — Idée de l'effet — Relation de l'effet à la cause; enchaînement des effets et des causes.
- 3^o. Principe de la causalité — alliance du possible et du nécessaire; — Loi du devoir — Postulatum.



Le possible réside dans la puissance qu'a la cause de se déterminer elle-même. ^{le possible humain}
 Le nécessaire est la relation de l'effet à la cause. ^{le possible divin répond à une cause éternelle qui ne dérive que d'elle-même.}
 On pourrait dire que l'effet est le mouvement par lequel la cause se détermine; c'est-à-dire, qui accompagne la détermination de la cause.

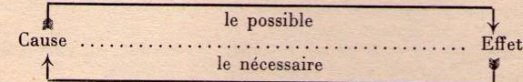
A un certain point de vue le possible est nécessaire (seulement dans ce sens qu'il est nécessaire qu'il existe)
 et le nécessaire est le possible déterminé.

L'ordre est la manifestation du nécessaire au sein du possible.

Le BEAU est le type de l'ordre.

Le possible : Ces champs mystérieux que nous ouvrent les causes. [249, p. 18.]

- 1^o Du possible — idée de cause.
- 2^o Du nécessaire — idée de l'effet — Relation de l'effet à la cause; enchaînement des effets et des causes.
- 3^o Principe de la causalité — alliance du possible et du nécessaire; — loi du devoir — Postulatum.



L'origine du possible réside dans la puissance qu'a la cause de se déterminer elle-même. } Le possible humain
 Le possible divin répond à une cause éternelle qui ne dérive que d'elle-même.

Le nécessaire est la relation de l'effet à la cause en tant que l'effet dérive de la cause.

On pourrait dire que l'effet est le mouvement par lequel la cause se détermine; c'est-à-dire qui accompagne la détermination de la cause.

... à un certain point de vue le possible est nécessaire (seulement dans ce sens qu'il est nécessaire que le possible existe) et le nécessaire est le possible déterminé.

L'ordre est la manifestation du nécessaire au sein du possible. Le BEAU est le type de l'ordre. [249, p. 19.]

Hartshorne and Lequyer

1948: In Paris, Jean Wahl suggested to Hartshorne that he read Lequyer's work.

1953: Hartshorne published the first English translation of excerpts of Lequyer's writings.

1975: Harvey Brimmer, Hartshorne's student, wrote a dissertation on Lequyer.



Hartshorne, 1981

The Openness of God



Charles Hartshorne



David Basinger, William Hasker, Clark Pinnock
Richard Rice, John Sanders

Lequyer anticipated the ideas of process and open theism in which God is affected by creaturely decisions and faces an open future.

Divine Relativity: Anticipations of Open Theism

Terrible prodigy: man deliberates and God waits.

*Relation of God to the creature, as real as the relation
of the creature to God.*

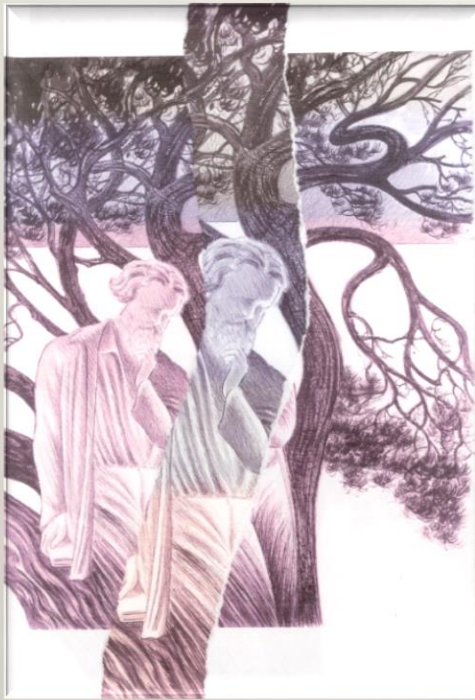
*The world, little as it is, suffices to deprive God of the
integrity of all-encompassing being. It makes a spot
on the absolute that destroys the absolute.*

Jules Lequyer, *The Search
for a First Truth*, Part I

Who knows what the first movement I am going to make will decide in my future existence? It may be that from circumstance to circumstance my entire life will be different, and that, later by virtue of a secret connection which, by a multitude of intermediaries, connects the least things to the most considerable events, I will become the rival of men whose names my father only pronounces with respect, in the evening, near the hearth, while one listens to him in silence.

Jules Lequyer, "The Hornbeam Leaf"

Jules Lequyer



T. Dohollau



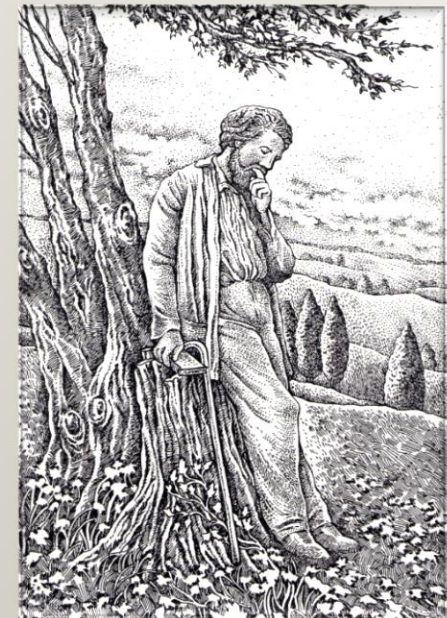
Bluteau



Elmérich



Le Gal la Salle



Bakay