

FREEDOM:
Reassessments
and Rephrasings

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Phrygian Liberty Cap—worn by paleo-Christians, Yezidi Muslims, “The Three Wise Men,” Mithra, Marianne, enfranchised slaves in Rome, revolutionaries in France, and patriots in the American War of Independence—is on the state flag of New York. —*Ed.*

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Preface and Acknowledgments

Tiny Appleworm was content. It had been told by its parent that it could roam all it wanted, that it was at liberty to explore its universe, free to partake of apple flesh and apple blood for as much its baby body could tolerate and for as long as its baby heart should desire . . . provided, of course, that it remain always on this side of the outer sanctum and well clear of The Peel. Now how ought I put it, our youthful worm was simply ecstatic: surely such apple-wide freedom was the best of all freedoms in the best of all possible worlds. “Not so, Papaworm?” Longjohn Appleworm was silent. And pensive. He did not deem the time had come to tell junior all the truth, and nothing but the truth at that. For how could a parent confide in its only child that cheap advice aside, once it, too, had stooped to infringe Rule Number One; that, as if straying too close to the Edge of Knowledge were not scary enough, the transgression of The Limit had proven even more creepy—it had divulged disturbing questions to which there were alas no soothing answers. And all that, for what? A useless innocent peep into a wholly unreachable realm: the Forbidden Territory. What good would it do to seek to explain? Would not the explanation now prove to be even more confusing than the infraction then, considering (a) that there were still myriad pears, oranges, and peaches under the sunny blue sky, out there; and (b) that Longjohn and the missus had long given up all hope and worry about how to get from here to there: over time, alternate concepts of ‘freedom’ had become for them wholly reprehensible rebellious ruminations to be placed under lock inside righteously repressive beliefs tightly wrapped in the ancient wisdom of honorably acknowledgeable, predeterminedly linear disenchantment.

This cross-disciplinary product holds the harvest of an interfaculty seminar conducted as part of an academic series of scholarly exchanges

founded and directed by the editor in the collegial spirit implied by its name: *Cross-Campus Conversations (CCC) at Penn*. It proved to be a joy and a privilege to collaborate with my very distinguished participants, all of whom are respected for their insight-provoking erudition within their respective fields of academic research and/or professional practice. Without their loyal cooperation, and sustained faith and support, this complex product could not have materialized.

I would like to present special thanks to Dr. Greg Urban, Arthur Hobson Quinn Professor and then-Chair of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, not only for extending to me helpful Visiting privileges that have greatly facilitated my varied duties as seminar convener, director, and editor, but also for taking an active interest and a productive part in our seminars, and thereby actually contributing to the operational, cross-communal, and intellectual fruition of yet another of our unconventional initiatives. My special thanks go also to Dr. Rogers E. Smith, C. H. Browne Distinguished Professor and then-Chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania, for facilitating the continuation and completion of my editorial work on this project as Visiting Scholar at my old department. As a newcomer on Penn Campus, Dr. Smith sat in on two of my seminars, was introduced to arrays of colleagues from various disciplines and professions, could observe the design and the conduct to fruition of our pursuits, and was included as a participant in our end-of-term public panels. Shortly after my farewells to Penn, I learned that he will be chairing a new interdisciplinary program named DCC—"Democracy, Citizenship and Constitutionalism": a program that will generate a new theme each year, publish the results of its scholarly work, and stage spring conferences, too. And I find cause to rejoice. To Dr. Jay C. Treat, Director, Instructional Computing, School of Arts and Sciences at Penn, and to his merry troubleshooters go my sincere appreciation and thanks for the electronic blackboard network that facilitated my remote management of the project in a very sustained fashion.

This volume is being brought together at a point in life when I should have been spending even more quality time with my family. My deepest debt is therefore to the two women who shared my emotional universe, imparting to me the freedom to imagine I still could afford to do many things wholly my way, and enjoying my feigning to be doing just that. At this writing, alas, one of them is no more; may

she rest in peace in the eternal embrace of the spouse she loved and she missed so much. And may the other continue to do what she does well—remain a source of strength, of love and inspiration, for many more happy and healthy years to come. Freedom is at its best, when shared, no matter that our days on Earth are counted.

Jose V. Ciprut