

## **Last draft**

Rodríguez, T. (2024). Historiographical Models for the Study of Anne Conway's *Principia*. *Journal of the History of Women Philosophers and Scientists*, 3(1), 74-99.  
<https://doi.org/10.1163/2666318X-bja00023>

**Abstract:** In this article I analyze the different historiographical models that have contributed to the “interpretative heritage” of Anne Conway. I argue that, due to the current state of scholarship on the history of women philosophers, the main mission of this scholarship is to increase the interpretative heritage of their works in general and of Anne Conway in particular. For this purpose, it is necessary to apply a pluralistic perspective regarding models. A pluralist perspective would argue that there are different historiographical models that apply to the study of the text and that each model, even the failed ones, increases the interpretative heritage. In this sense, I identify six main models used in the study of Conway's *Principia* and propose that the sixth, the contextual/eclectic model, is more fundamental for the study of Anne Conway because it assists us in laying the foundations for other more restricted or specialized models.

## **Introduction**

An interpretative heritage is the set of works that have been produced by previous interpreters of a particular text. This set of works can include commentaries, scholarly essays, critical editions, critical reviews, and popular interpretations. The interpretative heritage helps us to understand the texts. Texts without interpretative heritage are very difficult to understand and are often kept out of the canon of the history of philosophy. The interpretative heritage of a text is part of its history; therefore, the study of its construction is important in writing the history of women philosophers in general and of Anne Conway in particular.

In contrast to the canonical philosophers (Plato, Aristotle, etc.), the texts of women philosophers have not received the patient work of centuries of interpretation necessary to make them more intelligible in the present. When faced with the history of women philosophers we find that the interpretative heritage of their texts has begun to grow especially in the final decades of the twentieth century.

One of the women philosophers whose interpretative heritage has been markedly increasing is Anne Conway. *The Principles*, as it is known—Conway’s only extant work—is divided into nine chapters. In the first, Conway begins by referring to God and His attributes in the Plotinian manner<sup>1</sup>. She also presents her own version of the Trinity in an attempt to achieve compatibility with other religions (she mentions Jews and Turks) by omitting the words “three distinct persons”<sup>2</sup>. In the second chapter she addresses the problem of creation in time and proposes the infinite duration of creatures. The third is devoted to the study of God’s will, the infinity of creatures and worlds. The fourth chapter examines the figure of Christ. The fifth proposes a syncretic reading of Christ as Son of God or the first creature; its nature is considered as intermediate, only able to change towards the good. Chapter six examines the nature of creatures and proposes that creaturely mutability is essential to them. Every creature is composed of body and spirit<sup>3</sup>. The next chapter states that these do not differ substantially: each body has a type of life or spirit by nature and has the principle of perception, feeling and thought, love, joy and pain. Each body has activity and movement by its very nature. Finally, chapters eight and nine add some arguments about her monism and the nature of spirits and bodies, criticizing Descartes, Hobbes, and Spinoza.

As can be inferred from this brief outline, Anne Conway’s *Principia*, originally written in English and translated into Latin, is a complicated text. The number of its themes is problematic for several reasons, as Mercer states: “After the text’s rediscovery in the twentieth century, the philosophical subtlety of the *Principles* has been difficult to discern. Because the book draws heavily from Christian, Jewish, and Platonist sources and because Conway herself has such wide-ranging and heterodox ideas, scholars have struggled to locate

---

<sup>1</sup> For the Plotinian characteristics of her God, cfr. Head (2024): “As we can see here, creation is characterised by Conway as an overflowing of goodness, in a manner reminiscent of Platonic imagery, in which the flow of being from God cascades down different metaphysical levels, distinguished by their closeness and similarity to the source (see, for example, Plotinus’ reference in the *Enneads* to the perfection of the One leading to the generation of the Intellect” (6); Hutton (2004): “Indeed the existence and nature of the deity is the primary principle from which her system unfolds. As in the *Enneads* of Plotinus, God is the one, the first cause and source of all being” (55) and Frankel (1991): “she speaks of God as a complete, self-sufficient “fountain” from which all creatures “emanate” necessarily. God’s emanative creativity is one of its essential attributes (44). Note that Head and Hutton refer to Corse and Coudert translation. Frankel refers to Lopston’s edition of the XVII century English translation. In the following sections, if an author does not to utilize the translation by Corse and Coudert, it will be noted in a footnote.

<sup>2</sup> Cfr. Hutton (2004: 65, 107-109, 170).

<sup>3</sup> “Conway’s claim is rather that matter and spirit are essentially the same, and differ from one another only modally, that is, in their manner of existence”. (Frankel, 1991: 51)

the proper perspective from which to view her philosophical proposals” (2019: 707). Her particular approach makes the work of the historian of philosophy somewhat more complicated, since it escapes the structures under which we write the history of philosophy of that period today. Sara Hutton stresses that

the very choice of title, ‘Most Ancient and Modern’, confounds the modern understanding of historical categories and our sense of the distinctness of one philosophical school from another.<sup>4</sup> Her incorporation of religious and theological material in her treatise, in particular her use of kabbalistic and Origenist doctrines, runs counter to our sense of the modernity of seventeenth-century philosophy, and even our idea of philosophy (2004: 7).

In this context, I shall analyze the models that have been proposed for the construction of Anne Conway’s interpretive heritage. If, as Mercer states, “twentieth-century scholars had to begin their textual analysis [of Conway’s *Principia*] *ex nihilo*” (2019: 50), by 2024 philosophical historiography has done a vast work of interpretation. In a systematic review, five preponderant models can be noted: the proto-Leibnizian, the “modern”, the “Platonic”, the “scientific” and the “theological”. Faced with them, a sixth model, which we can call “contextual” comprises several lines of research: for example, the conversational line (e.g. Hutton and her intellectual biography). Here I turn to another line of this model, which I call “eclectic” (which links Conway’s philosophy with previous traditions based on the idea of *prisca theologia*) and propose that this eclectic line of the model is key to the understanding of the peaceful co-existence of the other five models.

This analysis will reveal the importance of maintaining pluralistic strategies in the study of Conway’s text in order to consolidate the interpretative heritage of the *Principia*. One might

---

<sup>4</sup> For a description of this topic see Hutton 2014: “According to the ‘ancient–modern distinction’ the moderns are those thinkers who reject the authority of antiquity, while those philosophers who retain traditional approaches to philosophy and respect for classical thinkers are grouped with the ancients. The ancient–modern distinction can claim to be grounded historically, since many seventeenth-century philosophers position themselves by reference to new or ancient philosophy” (932).

foresee that this kind of pluralistic strategy could be useful for studying the works of other women philosophers.

To do so, I have divided this text into seven sections. In the first, I present a general approach to the notion of historiographical model. The second explores the proto-Leibnizian model that views Conway as Leibniz's predecessor. The third studies the modern model linking the philosopher with her contemporaries—Descartes and Spinoza—through rational reconstructions. The fourth section presents the model relating Conway to the Cambridge Platonists (sometimes including her in this movement), and to the Platonic tradition in general. In the fifth part, Conway appears as a scientist or natural philosopher. The sixth section presents the theological model, focuses on Conway's natural theology and situates her as a philosopher of religion. Finally the seventh section presents the contextual model and its two lines: the conversational and the eclectic.

### 1. Models in Conway's historiography

As mentioned, this article organizes the main models with respect to which studies on Conway have developed and provides a map of the construction of her interpretive heritage in recent decades. My assumption is that the history of philosophy employs various models to deal with its object or objects of study. A historiographical model can be described as a representation of the development of a philosophy of the past. It aims to make this philosophy intelligible to the contemporary reader. By 'philosophy' I understand the *oeuvre* (usually written) of a person or a school. The model is constituted by various elements such as analogies, metaphors, theories of philosophical change, etc.

Historiographical models represent a selected part or aspect of a philosophy of the past. In this way they seek to make the philosophy of the past understandable by dividing it into various regions in order to deal with texts that are very difficult to study on account of their complexity.

The variety of models that have been presented in recent decades regarding the work of Anne Conway represent aspects of her philosophy, thus facilitating the study of a fixed set of characteristics of her work, offering restricted descriptions that respond to the needs of construction of an interpretive heritage. Given this scenario, proposing a single model for

Conway's study would go against the very mechanisms of modeling in the history of philosophy. I argue that it is necessary to maintain a pluralistic approach to the study models *vis-à-vis* Conway's text.

By pluralism<sup>5</sup> I understand the historiographical position that assumes that there are different ways of representing the object of study and that these forms may be harmonious or complementary, intersect each other or have implications for each other. They can be placed side by side because each of them is anchored in Conway's text and her eclectic approach towards philosophy. This eclectic approach, as will be shown, is part of the six model, the contextual one and according to the hypothesis of this article, is more fundamental than the other five because it is anchored in a *historical* history of philosophy.

A *historical* history of philosophy assumes that non-philosophical aspects (for example, theological, social, material aspects) are important for understanding the conditions in which women philosophers philosophized in the past. In general terms it can be described, with Frede, as an enterprise that seeks to study the philosophical positions of the past "as historical views, i.e. as views that were maintained by a particular individual in a particular historical context" (26), in the attempt to understand "how philosophy as a matter of historical fact got started and how it in fact evolved in the way it did up to the present day" (10).

The contextual/eclectic model, anchored in this type of history, takes precedence because the other ways of studying the history of philosophy "ultimately have to rely on its findings. For it is the historical discipline which determines, as well as we can determine, which position a philosopher of the past, as a matter of historical fact, took and for which reasons he did, in fact, take it" (10).<sup>6</sup>

## 2. The "proto-Leibniz" model.

In her article, "Women, philosophy and the history of philosophy" Sarah Hutton offers an overview of the last thirty years in the development of studies on women philosophers in history. At the beginning of the account, she states that the fate of women philosophers thirty years ago was mostly tied to their consideration as minor figures (686). Thus, the best way

---

<sup>5</sup> In this regard, see Kinzel (2016).

<sup>6</sup> Once we have this historical study, according to Frede, we will also be in a position to judge "whether philosophical positions of the past continue to be of philosophical interest or not" (168).

to receive attention that a dead female philosopher had was what Hutton calls the “coat-tail ride” syndrome. Thus, Damaris Masham with John Locke; Elisabeth of Bohemia with Descartes, etc.

The problems with this approach have been detected by several historians of philosophy. Although, at first, it was useful in pointing out or highlighting the philosophical practice of women, it has the disadvantage of associating them with the category of ‘minor philosophers’ (cf. Waithe, ‘2015’). ‘Minor Philosopher’ is a representation that models inclusion in the history of women’s philosophy. In particular, in the case of Anne Conway, her importance and inclusion are valued by her relationship with a figure of the canon, Leibniz, by virtue of the fact that she precedes him. This model, which I will hereinafter call “proto-Leibnizian” can be closely related to the “Best Supporting Actress” strategy, described by Witt and Shapiro (2020) as tending to satisfy the following need: “The history of philosophy is a story and we need to find a plot line that includes new, female characters”, by showing

How certain women philosophers made significant contributions to the work of male philosophers on central philosophical issues. We could call this the “Best Supporting Actress” approach in that the central cast remains male and the story line of philosophy is undisturbed. It is a good strategy for several reasons: it is relatively easy to accomplish, and it provides an internal anchor for women philosophers. On the other hand, it reinforces the secondary status of women thinkers and if this were the only way of integrating women philosophers, that would be an unfortunate result. (Witt and Shapiro, 2020)

Let’s see an example from the literature written in Spanish: the work of Bernardino Orio de Miguel “La filosofía de Lady Anne Conway, *un* proto-Leibniz”<sup>7</sup> (note that in Spanish the indefinite article is masculine in this case). As can be seen from the title, Orio de Miguel assumes that Conway’s philosophy is important because it precedes or influences Leibniz’s. In addition to the introductory study, he provides a translation of the *Principles*. He states

---

<sup>7</sup> The philosophy of Lady Anne Conway, a proto-Leibniz”.

that, at that time (1990, the year in which he proceeded to work on his translation of *Principia*) the secondary bibliography was scarce. He had, for example, Carolyn Merchant's article on Leibniz and Conway that served as the axis to develop his synthesis of the *Principles* in the light of Leibnizian philosophy:

The first thing that strikes us is the fact that Leibniz, the proud philosopher who had read everything and who thought of himself having gone 'further than anyone' in the knowledge of the laws of the universe, never affirmed of an author or any book what he confessed in PR.PH. *Chivalry* aside, it was this woman's worldview, it seems, that he found closest to his own system, of all that he had read" (Orio de Miguel 2004, 38).

While this approach might have been justified before, given the limited secondary literature and the need to introduce Conway's text to the philosophical community, it would seem that it is now possible to apply other models; or at least, to give a twist to this model similar to that carried out by Emily Thomas (2017) who analyzes this term (proto-Leibniz) under three concepts—time, space and process—concluding that only in the last one could Conway be considered a proto-Leibnizian.

According to Thomas, Conway's philosophy is both closer and farther from Leibniz's than had been anticipated, depending on the subject at hand. She attests that "Many scholars have since pointed to the ways that Conway's system anticipates or prefigures Leibniz's, sometimes characterizing Conway as a proto-Leibnizian" (990). Regarding the question of time, Thomas reports that both Loptson<sup>8</sup> and Frankel<sup>9</sup> apply this model when they assume that Conway's position on it is similar to Leibniz's. In this sense, the model does not imply

---

<sup>8</sup> "Anne Conway was a forerunner of Leibniz in a number of respects. Her system is a kind of monadology. She is also, like Leibniz a disbeliever in absolute time and a vitalist in attempting to account for motion (1982:2).

<sup>9</sup> In her article 'Anne Conway' (1991), the first section reflects on Conway's influence on Leibniz "Leibniz was strongly influenced by Conway's work and even, according to Carolyn Merchant, owes his use of the term monad to her" (42); regarding time, she acknowledge that "In this respect, Conway's position is very much like Leibniz's: Time is relative to succession and motion, both of which belong only to creatures. They are the inferior analogues of eternity and of the will whereby God creates." (47).

claiming that “Conway’s account of time is identical to Leibniz’s, merely that they are similar” (993). However, Thomas argues that “in order to properly understand Conway’s ontology of time and space, the claim that Conway is a proto-Leibnizian in these regards must be undermined” (993). She then describes the reasons for holding this with respect to time and space. However, the model remains valid in terms of the question of process, where Conway would be a proto-Leibnizian according to Thomas.

While it is true that Thomas’ article questions some results of this model and focuses on Conway’s philosophy and not Leibniz’s<sup>10</sup>, it does not question the model itself, that would still work for at least one of the central themes of Leibniz and Conway’s philosophy.

An underlying topic of the model is the question of monads, present in Merchant’s article as one of the main subjects. Thomas supposes that Conway describes creatures as monads:

Conway’s *Principles* argues that God is creator of all things (CC 9; I:3) and there are three kinds of species. First, God, the highest being. Second, Christ, who acts as a mediator between God and creatures (CC 24–5; V:3–4); sometimes Conway refers to Christ using the kabbalistic name ‘Adam Kadmon’. Third, created creatures, the lowest beings; sometimes these are described as ‘monads’ (2017:992).

Both Merchant’s and Thomas’ position on monads have been questioned by Reid (2020). According to Merchant<sup>11</sup> (1979), the fact that the authorship of the *Principia* had been attributed to van Helmont prior to the twentieth century led to the exclusion of Conway from the recognition she deserved as an important figure in the development of Leibniz’s thought. According to her, Conway’s system is a significant input to Leibniz’s philosophy up to the writing of the *Monadology* in 1714. Merchant argues that “As established by the evidence earlier presented, Leibniz appropriated the term “monad” from both van Helmont and Conway, its origins stemming initially from the cabala. The influential role that Anne

---

<sup>10</sup> “This paper has argued that Conway is not a proto-Leibnizian about time or space, but she is with regard to process. Conway is both further away from, and closer to Leibniz than has been previously appreciated. In addition to explicating Conway’s views on these issues, this study has provided new insight into Conway’s intellectual sympathies”. Thomas 2017: 1007.

<sup>11</sup> Merchant refers directly to the 1690 edition of the *Principia*.



Conway's ideas played in Leibniz's decision to use this concept has hitherto not been recognized because of a series of scholarly errors originating from Heinrich Ritter's assumption that van Helmont was the author rather than the editor of her *Principles*" (268).

For his part, Reid questions that Conway used the concept of monad in her system. If we follow Reid, Conway's introduction into the history of philosophy through this model would be not only from a subordinate position, but also a false one: he claims that Conway did not have a theory of monads and that the only textual evidence available to argue such a thing may be an addition by van Helmont in the Latin translation of her text.<sup>12</sup> If this is the case, the model has been useful to bring attention to Conway and generate a significant number of studies that increase the interpretive heritage, although it has given false or questionable results. This means that historiographical models not only serve to clarify the thinking of female philosophers, but also have inclusion purposes that go beyond the truth or falsity of their results. The evolution of this model, at least, suggests that the advance in *scholarship* leads, despite the inaccuracy of the first approximations, towards a dialogue on equal terms between Conway and the canonical philosophers. With this, we can move towards the second model.

### 3. The 'modern' model.

One of the most successful models for the study of Conway interprets her thinking in relation to her contemporary 'modern' philosophers: Descartes and Spinoza. It differs from the previous one in that Conway did not engage in a conversation with the work of Leibniz, as she did with that of these philosophers. On the other hand, the current tendency of this model is to illuminate Conway's positions through the study of her disagreements with them and not vice versa, as would happen in the case of the proto-Leibnizian model. In this sense, Nastassja Pugliese (2019) proposes a strategy to make intelligible certain points of Conway's metaphysics as a response to Spinoza's positions. For Pugliese, the critique of Spinoza has not been sufficiently explored and such an exploration would provide elements for a more

---

<sup>12</sup> "The fact is, however, that she did not do this. Conway simply did not use the term 'monad' anywhere in her book, or, for that matter, in her extant letters. She knew perfectly well what it meant, because she had read More. But—perhaps precisely because she did not believe that anything like that really existed in the world—she did not use the term". Reid 2020: 693.

accurate understanding of her particular monism.<sup>13</sup> Her aim is to show that Conway's ontology deepens when read as emerging from her commitment to the philosophical works she criticizes in Chapter IX: "As Conway's title indicates, the Principles should be read together with Spinoza's works (and Descartes' and Hobbes' as well), as an alternative metaphysical account" (784).

Other authors who support this model try to clarify her monism (Gordon-Roth, 2018 and Thomas, 2020) through strategies close to the rational reconstructions proposed by Rorty<sup>14</sup> (1984). Gordon-Roth argues that Conway oscillates between *an existence pluralism* and an *existence monism*. Emily Thomas questions her position by stating that one should read "Conway as a priority monist: the whole of creation is ontologically prior to its parts" (275). Both discuss Conway and her interlocutors (Hobbes, Spinoza, More, Descartes<sup>15</sup>) in contemporary terms<sup>16</sup>.

As mentioned, this model emphasizes the understanding of Conway's philosophy, especially its metaphysics, through its reaction or reception to modern authors with whom she "has a conversation" in her *Principia* and with whom historians of philosophy could recreate a

---

<sup>13</sup> "Although commentators have explored her criticism of Cartesian metaphysics, there has not been a more specific account of Conway's assessment of Spinoza. In this paper, I will argue that Conway, in criticizing Spinoza's identification between God and nature, defends a paradoxical monism, and that her concept of individuation is a *reductio ad absurdum* of Spinoza's criterion of identity in the individuation of finite modes. In order to address these criticisms, I will reconsider the problem of Conway's acquaintance with Spinoza's philosophy, taking into account the dates of composition of the *Ethics* and then offer a comparative map of Spinoza's and Conway's main metaphysical thesis". Pugliese 2019: 772. Regarding Conway's vitalist monism, cfr. Platas Benítez (2006).

<sup>14</sup> Rorty argues that rational reconstructions are those carried out primarily by analytic philosophers who attempt to reconstruct arguments in order to dialogue with philosophers of the past as if they were "colleagues with whom they can exchange views" (Rorty 1984: 49). These reconstructions have been branded as anachronistic; on the other hand, historical reconstruction has been proposed—as in Skinner's position—as the appropriate method for generating historical knowledge about philosophy. Rorty proposes that these two positions are not mutually exclusive but constitute two distinct areas: the philosophical and the historical.

<sup>15</sup> Cfr. Gordon-Roth (2018: 280) and Thomas (2020: 277, 278, 281 y ss).

<sup>16</sup> This model should be distinguished from Peter Loftson's interpretation in his 'Introduction' to the XVII century English translation (1982). He "more boldly, detects anticipations of Wittgenstein, Kripke and others in the *de re* modality he discerns in her work.... This has the advantage of helping to give modern philosophers some sense of kinship with a remote figure from the past. But it is only possible by distortion and omission. On this kind of reading, much of the content of her book has to be consigned to the category of dross, or perhaps 'mysticism'. And in that category one will find her use of the kabbalah and of alchemical terminology, as well as such weird and wonderful concepts as 'vital extension'" (Hutton, 2004: 8). I agree with Hutton regarding this issue.

conversation in the rational reconstructions style. Another example can be found in Mercer, “Anne Conway’s Response to Cartesianism” (2019). Here, Mercer, who underlines the difficulties of the text because of its eclecticism, argues that the criticism of Descartes’ philosophy allows us to shed light on Conway’s original positions and arguments. She explains Conway’s search for metaphysical foundations through her critique of mechanicism:

Conway thought the mechanists had gone too far in stripping nature of its own inherent activity and diminishing its creaturely diversity; and so she sought better metaphysical foundations for the mechanical explanatory model. Proposing her own metaphysics as a solution to the mistakes of mechanists like Descartes, Hobbes, and others, she insists that such philosophers “have generally erred and laid a poor foundation” (Conway 1996 [1690]: 9. S.1, 63). (Mercer 2019: 711).

In addition, for Mercer, the notion of matter is key to understanding how her vitalism is articulated through her critique of Descartes.<sup>17</sup>

John Grey follows the model by analyzing Conway’s arguments against Cartesian dualism and detecting those whose premises would not be accepted by Cartesianism. In contrast, he finds one that would be “drawn from premises that Descartes seems bound to accept. She argues that two substances differ in nature only if they differ in their ‘original and peculiar’ cause (CP 6.4, 30); yet all created substances have the same original and peculiar cause; so, all created substances have the same nature” (Grey 2017: 1). Cartesians would tend to accept this argument, as it is similar to that expounded by Descartes in his *Principles*.

In short, this model differs from the previous one in that it does not subordinate Conway to a canonical figure or emphasize her importance as a precursor. It puts Conway’s arguments on an equal footing with those of the philosophers she criticizes and attempts a rational reconstruction of their arguments in general.

---

<sup>17</sup> “As we have seen, her main objection to Descartes—and to anyone else who would add passive stuff to nature—is that any notion of matter as merely extended contradicts God’s vital goodness.” Mercer 2019: 717.

4. The Platonic model. Hutton (2004, 86) argues that the *Principles* are conceived within a 'broadly Platonist framework' and that Conway must be placed firmly among the Cambridge Platonists<sup>18</sup>. This approach is shared by several scholars (including Thomas herself<sup>19</sup>). The 'Platonist' approach to Conway's philosophy inevitably passes through the consideration of her relationship with Henry More<sup>20</sup>. It also considers the complex historiographical framework in which Platonism is inserted in Modern Philosophy studies.

Since the beginning of philosophical historiography in the eighteenth century, Platonism has been one of the least fortunate traditions. This, according to Hutton, intervenes in the valuation of Conway in an unfortunate way, at first. Within this perspective, according to Hutton, Conway's presence in the historiographic studies of women philosophers acts contrary to the first reaction that subordinated her to a canonical philosopher. Her revaluation also entails a reappraisal of the Cambridge Platonists, especially More, considered until recently marginal figures.

Other examples of this model can be found in the work of John Head (2019), who sets out to explore, as an aid to the reconstruction of Conway's brief exposition in the *Principles* "the manner and extent to which Conway adopts the account of freedom of her philosophical mentor, Henry More, who had presented his theory of freedom in *Enchiridion Ethicum*" (631).

Head argues that Conway's position on divine freedom and human freedom assumes that she was willing to differ from More's positions, but at the same time presents some elements of

---

<sup>18</sup> The same idea appears already in Hutton (1995): "Les points de divergence, aussi importants soient-ils, ne doivent pas pour autant obscurcir le fait qu'Anne Conway était restée, dans une large mesure, dans le même camp théologico-philosophique que More et Cudworth. A tous égards, ses objectifs religieux et philosophiques étaient les mêmes que ceux des penseurs de Cambridge, bien qu'elle se distinguât d'eux, par bien des aspects significatifs, sur les moyens philosophiques de parvenir à ses fins. Comme More et Cudworth, elle cherchait à élaborer une défense raisonnée du théisme. Comme eux, elle mettait l'accent sur la bonté, la sagesse et la justice de Dieu qui se reflètent dans la constitution ordonnée du monde créé. Elle partageait leur esprit latitudinarien et leur insistance anti-déterministe sur le rôle du libre arbitre". (383) And in Frankel (1991) « Conway might best be described as a Cambridge Platonist, for she is Platonistic in her imagery and, as we shall see later on, in her background assumptions ». (44)

<sup>19</sup> This demonstrates how models intersect and are not inherently isolated or contradictory.

<sup>20</sup> "For the *Principles* is conceived within a broadly Platonic framework, and exhibits features associated with Cambridge Platonism in general. Much of the detail, especially the critical detail, can be linked to Henry More" (Hutton 2004: 86)

his ethical theory. In reconstructing these two types of freedoms, Head finds sufficient evidence to argue that

it is highly likely that Conway had the account of freedom in More's *Enchiridion Ethicum* in mind when she offers her own theory of divine and human freedom. We will see that Conway posits a stark distinction between human and divine freedom by claiming that God does not have the kind of indifference of will that is granted to us. When we come to compare Conway and More, we shall see that whilst they both agree in attributing substantive freedom to both God and human beings, the *Principles* departs from More's philosophy in refraining from limiting freedom to human beings alone (as far as created beings are concerned), but extending it to all creatures (632).

Other works, for example, Gabbey (1977)<sup>21</sup>, show the interaction of Conway and More in their reading of Descartes from their epistolary exchange or their disagreements regarding the concept of matter and spirit (Hutton, 1995).

Unlike the previous model, the Platonic model assumes that Conway belongs to an established philosophical tradition—Platonism—and that she inherits its problems regarding the historiographical consideration of this philosophy, such as being considered a minor tradition in modernity or alien to Modern ideals. In contrast to the modern model, it indicates that to understand Conway we have to insert her into this tradition and put her in dialogue with contemporary Platonists, especially More. Dialogue in this tradition does not mean that there are no controversies among its members, on minute or transcendent points. The important thing is that they share certain principles<sup>22</sup>.

While it is true that the Platonic model has been developed mainly in relation to More, Hutton (2021 and 2020) considers that it can be extended to explore the relationships between

---

<sup>21</sup> Gabbey refers directly to the 1690 edition of the *Principia*.

<sup>22</sup> Platonism as a tradition has faced this problem. One solution lies in Gerson, who proposes six principles for regarding a thinker as Platonic in Gerson 2015.

Conway and Plato himself. Although there is no strong evidence of what edition of the dialogues she may have read, Hutton believes that

Conway's philosophy is indebted not just to Platonism in general but also to Plato's dialogues. In particular, her metaphysical conception of goodness or virtue as godlikeness, resonates deeply with Plato's discussion of goodness in the later dialogues. By highlighting further parallels in the later dialogues, most notably in the *Philebus*, I seek to show that there are details of her discussion of goodness which suggest direct engagement with Plato's philosophy. It may therefore be considered deeply embedded in the Platonist tradition (2020: 41).

Another form of exploration within this model will link Conway with Renaissance Platonism. While Hutton surmises that Ficino's translation must have been at hand somehow, more precise research is still pending.

In sum, the Platonic model assumes that to understand Conway we must place her among the Cambridge Platonists, in particular, her relationship with More must be emphasized in several themes such as dualism and freedom. It also supposes that it is possible to link Conway's thought to Plato and that this route passes through the translation of Ficino and therefore through Renaissance Platonism. This affirms that Conway is part of a broad and complex philosophical tradition.

5. Anne Conway, scientist. In 1986, Margaret Alic began her history of women scientists with these words:

Science is the body of knowledge that describes, defines and, where possible, explains the universe—the matter that constitutes it, the organisms that inhabit it, the physical laws that govern it. This knowledge accumulates by a slow, arduous process of speculation, experimentation and discovery that has been an integral part of human activity since the dawn of the race. Women have always played an essential role in this process.

Yet we think of the history of science as a history of men (Alic 1986, 1).

This situation, the oblivion in which the history of science and philosophy has left women has been alleviated by various efforts in recent decades, which include Alic's book. The first scientist referred to in the prologue of her book, which on the other hand will run chronologically in what follows, is Anne Conway. In it she narrates how, in 1696, Francis Mercury van Helmont met Leibniz (in the words of Alic, "the founder of modern German science") and gave him a recently published book "The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy" that was to play an important role in the development of Leibniz's philosophy. This anonymously published book was written by Anne Conway, "a forgotten woman in the history of science". Leibniz states:

My [opinions] in philosophy are a little closer to those of the late Countess of Conway, and have an intermediate position between Plato and Democritus, for I believe that everything happens [*se fait*] mechanically, as Democritus and Descartes wanted against the opinion of Henry More and his followers; and yet still everything happens [*se fait*] vitally and according to the final causes, everything is full of life and perception, contrary to the opinion of the followers of Democritus (Leibniz to Thomas Burnet, 24 August, 1697, GP III, 217). (In Paolucci 2002: 159)

For Alic, it is necessary to consider the contribution of Anne Conway<sup>23</sup> to science and her case serves as an introduction to the situation of other scientists: "hundreds of women scientists have been excluded from our history books. In every society and every historical era women participated in the development of science and technology" (4). Conway is presented as the archetype of the modern scientific woman (privileged and with access to a type of non-formal education) "whose natural philosophy represents one of the last attempts to cement together the spiritual and material worlds into an organic whole" (5). Alic claims that Conway remains virtually unknown to the scientific community in 1986.

---

<sup>23</sup> Alic refers directly to the 1692 English translation of the *Principia*.

With these words we could consider inaugurated the scientific model that seeks to elucidate Conway's contributions to natural philosophy. This model has dealt with considerations about matter in Conway's philosophy (D.-C. Rusu 2021) or its possible theoretical relationships with alchemy (Hutton 2021).

Rusu (2021) rethinks Conway's contributions in natural philosophy from her conception of matter. Her text is the result of a project that seeks to understand the development of modern science: "Manipulating Spiritual Matter. How Did Modern Science Become Experimental?" She argues that Conway is undoubtedly a vitalist and a monist, but not an anti-materialist as some have described her:

Conway conceives of created substances as gross and fixed spirit, or rarefied and volatile matter. While interpreters agree that Conway's "spirit" shares characteristics traditionally attributed to matter (e.g., extension, divisibility, impenetrability), and that she is critical of Henry More's immaterial spirit, Conway's spirit is still conceived as an immaterial soul-like or mind-like entity. I argue that Conway's vitalism is material, and is best understood in the tradition of Renaissance vital naturalism (528).

She bases her claim on the fact that Conway does not criticize materialism *per se*, but the mechanistic materialism that qualifies matter as lifeless. According to her, Conway's vitalism must be materialistic in some sense since the only immaterial substance is God. On the other hand, placing Conway in the correct tradition is important for elucidating her vitalism or her materialism. Thus, Conway is related to Telesio, Campanella and Bacon who also use the "spirit" to account for all natural processes in what she calls the tradition of Renaissance vital naturalism<sup>24</sup>. Thus, spirit and matter create a *continuum* and the only difference between them is the degree of condensation or volatility.

---

<sup>24</sup> "Naturalism refers to the belief that all natural phenomena can be explained by natural causes, without the need to introduce supernatural or divine intervention. This implies that, for the above authors, nature has vital force or motion in itself. Hence, we can say that these authors represent a current of "vital naturalism." Guido Giglioni has argued that the main influence was Stoic naturalism (Rusu, 2021, 531).



On the other hand, this model relates the activity of female philosophers with ‘other areas of knowledge’ (Hutton 2021) that could be considered within the history of science such as alchemy, medicine or pharmacology. Hutton states that Conway has a relationship with alchemy through chemical medicine:

First, her philosophy involves radical transmutation, where “creatures are mutable, and continually change from one state to another.” These changes involve intermutation not only of such basic elements as earth, water, air, fire, and ether, but of minerals, metals, plants, and of one metal into another. Furthermore, radical transformation occurs in patterns of degeneration and restoration, where creatures intermutate along a hierarchy of being in such a way that a man can become a brute, or a horse a human being.<sup>25</sup> This process is spiritual as well as a physical: degenerating creatures become more solid or corporeal as they decline morally, while the restored creatures transform from a “hardened” more corporeal state to a more subtle composition as they are spiritually purified (99).

Although Hutton admits that transmutation is not itself an alchemical element, she highlights a detail of Conway’s account of the transformation process that suggests some knowledge of medical ideas: the adoption of the metaphor of ferment.<sup>26</sup>

However, while the scientific model can be used to study Conway by linking her to materialism and alchemy, we should also bear in mind the degree to which science and religion were inseparable in the seventeenth century, as David Byrne points out in “Anne Conway, Early Quaker Thought, and the New Science”:

The Puritan and Anglican contributions to natural theology have been well-documented, but even marginal religious groups like the Quakers contributed to the wealth of new ideas which together forged ‘the new science’. Spiritual Quaker principles provided Conway with a solution to the problem that vexed all English

---

<sup>25</sup> For a study of horse transmutations in Conway, see Strok, 2022.

<sup>26</sup> “Conway describes the process of regeneration as a healing process comparable to Christ’s redemptive power which she refers to as a “ferment.” She writes, “In assuming flesh and blood, he sanctified nature so that he could sanctify everything, just as it is the property of a ferment to ferment the whole mass.” (Hutton 2021: 99)

natural philosophers in the Restoration era: creating a natural philosophy which conformed to the mechanical philosophy while simultaneously asserting a providential God. (2007: 33)

Thus, the scientific model sheds light on Conway's contributions to the history of science and reintegrates her into the revaluation of women's contributions to scientific knowledge. In addition, it shows a link with the next model, the theological one, which shows that the intricate body of knowledge presented by the *Principles* must be approached in a pluralistic way.

6. The theological model. A recent model integrates the theological elements as important factors in the philosophical reflection of women philosophers, in particular Anne Conway. The relations between philosophy and theology have been close since antiquity and have often been a source of concern (or conflict) for historiography. In Conway's case, her theological concerns<sup>27</sup> have been studied by White who describes her as "an early modern religious philosopher whose life and ideas remain relatively unknown to the majority of contemporary Westerners" (2008: ix).

Conway's ideas about nature serve White's model for historiographical purposes such as to "increase our awareness of the diversity of intellectual positions regarding the construction of nature during the seventeenth century" (4). Moreover, it shows that the notion that women did not play a significant role in debates about natural processes during Modernity is false. The model allows cosmological-religious positions to be articulated with ethical positions concerning the appropriate relationships between all forms of nature. Finally, it has a presentist aspect by linking it with the concerns of the twentieth century: "Conway's reflections on the 'sentience' of nature prefigure some key assumptions and implications of

---

<sup>27</sup> The works of Jonathan Head also belonging to this model (*Rational and natural theology in Anne Conway's Principia*, among others). In them, for example, it is stated: "A growing number of scholars have trained their attention on the philosophical theology of Anne Conway, as presented in her posthumous work, *Principia Philosophiae antiquissimae et recentissimae* (Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy), first published in 1690. However, whilst the bulk of this scholarship has successfully served to illuminate many of her metaphysical and theological claims, little consideration has thus far been given to Conway's theological method, including her understanding of the sources of genuine religious and metaphysical knowledge, and the manner in which we are able to rationally reflect upon God and creation" (2021). Cf. *The Philosophy of Anne Conway. God, Creation and the Nature of Time* (2022).

twentieth-century process cosmologies regarding the radical relationality found among all forms of nature” (4).

Elizabeth Burnes (2021), for her part, identifies two main problems regarding the philosophy of religion present in the *Principles*: the problem of evil and the problem of religious diversity. She also claims that although the sources of her ideas can be found in Kabbalah, the Cambridge Platonists and Quakerism, among others, she offers her own unorthodox solutions to these problems. For Conway,

Those who acknowledge that there is a mediator between God and creatures ‘can be said truly to believe in Jesus Christ, even though they do not yet know it and are not convinced that he has already come in the flesh’ (32). This, then, is Conway’s solution to the problem of religious diversity which, from a Christian point of view, is the problem of whether those who have never encountered Christ can achieve salvation. It bears some resemblance to Karl Rahner’s twentieth-century argument that there can be ‘anonymous Christians’ (147).

To summarize, the theological model presents a presentist aspect by linking Conway with some “process cosmologies” of the twentieth century that maintain a radical relationality between all forms of nature or with Rahner’s position on the “anonymous Christians” regarding the problem of religious diversity.

## 7. The contextual model.

All these models have contributed with varying degrees of success to the interpretative heritage of the *Principles*. However, it seems necessary to note that a more fundamental model is presented in the construction of our interpretative heritage because it allowed (and continues to allow) more particular models to emerge. By fundamental I understand, with Frede (2022) and his historical history of philosophy, that it has priority over other models

since “other forms of study of the history of philosophy **ultimately have to rely on its findings**. For it is the historical discipline which determines, as well as we *can* determine, which position a philosopher of the past, as a matter of historical fact, took and for which reasons he did, in fact, take it.” (10)

In the enterprise of familiarization and vindication of the philosophical works of women philosophers (and other non-canonical philosophies of the past) it is necessary, as Hutton (2004) affirms, to return to the origins “and study their works within the philosophical conditions of their production” (13). Thus, “Before we can situate such figures within philosophy as we know it, we have to come to an understanding of the philosophical language they used and the circumstances which shaped their thought. We have, in other words, to reconstruct its context.”<sup>28</sup> (13)

This model has the following principles (I follow Hutton, 2015: 8 ff):

1. It broadly proposes a history of ‘historicized’ philosophy. The recovery work needed to rehabilitate women in the history of philosophy must be historically grounded.

---

<sup>28</sup> The origin of the contextual model can be traced, according to Beaney, to Wittgenstein and Austin who emphasized the multiple forms used in language and the need to understand the broader contexts of this use (language-games, social practices, and forms of life, more generally) if we want to properly understand what is meant on each occasion. Richard Popkin and Quentin Skinner would be properly the initiators in the historiographical field of this approach, especially Skinner with his “Meaning and understanding in the history of ideas”, where he states: “we must be able to give an account not merely of the meaning of what was said, but also of what the writer in question may have meant by saying what was said” (2002: 79). To understand what they were doing in writing as they wrote, we need to understand the context in which they wrote. Later Rorty would include this approach in his classic article “The historiography of philosophy: four genres”, where he distinguishes it from rational reconstructions, proposing that both types of reconstruction (rational or contextual) are valuable if carried out independently. Subsequently, Ayers and Garber defend a type of contextualism, close to an antiquarianism that can be “of value to the analytic philosopher by providing fresh views as to what philosophy is, helping us “to **free ourselves from the tyranny of the present**” (Garber 2005: 145). As a descendant of this line we find the contextualism of historians working on women philosophers such as Hutton and O’Neill.

2. It rejects a presentism<sup>29</sup> at all costs: it should not be dictated by contemporary interests and the philosophical assumptions of the present. In that sense, this history is also called *disinterested*<sup>30</sup> (O'Neill 2015).
3. This program of recovery of women philosophers, however incomplete, has implications for the historiography of philosophy in general.

Given these three elements, the model welcomes several directions. Two examples:

- Hutton's conversational sub-model in her intellectual biography of Conway.
- The eclectic sub-model proposes that the philosophical practice of Anne Conway is linked to a harmonization of different philosophical traditions and that understanding this eclectic practice is important (Mercer, Rodríguez).

7.1 The conversation model represents philosophical practices as conversations or dialogues. Philosophical practices often take the form of an engagement through debates, dialogues, objections and responses, commentaries, glosses and correspondence. This sub-model also allows us to examine the personal, cultural, and philosophical conditions in which any philosopher philosophized, respects historical distance, emphasizes past conceptions of philosophy as a discipline, and assumes that modern readers are unfamiliar with the philosophy of the past. It opens the possibility of tracing the fate of particular philosophies and individual philosophers and admits no prejudices about themes, genres or periodization.

---

<sup>29</sup> "The following study is premised on my view that the key to understanding Anne Conway's philosophy today lies not in any putative protomodernity but in its historicity, not in the ground shared with the present, but in its difference from the present" (Hutton 2004: 13)

<sup>30</sup> In this regard, O'Neill states: "This form of 'disinterested' history is intended to make intelligible the presuppositions and patterns of inference used by philosophers of the past—even if we now find those presuppositions or inferences unacceptable. Those engaged in historical reconstruction consider significant themes, strategies, and texts to be those considered so by philosophers of the past. Consequently, if our current historical reconstruction of that period fails to include works or writings published by women that circulated in academic circles and were recognized in their own time as philosophically useful, our histories are incomplete and distorted".

It assumes that in practice, philosophy is integrally related to both its past and its present and that the philosophers did not work in isolation: there are cross-references between the themes and arguments used by them. In that sense, Hutton states, philosophy might be regarded as the exchange between philosophers, i.e. a conversation. Inspired by Descartes' *Discours de la méthode*<sup>31</sup>, she claims:

We can think of philosophical 'conversation' in different ways—literally as actual dialogue, metaphorically as implied discussion through the themes that are treated and arguments which are employed. In philosophical debates in the past, as now, the interchange might be with one's contemporaries or with one's predecessors, direct or indirect, personal, or impersonal. An important aspect of the conversation of philosophers is and was the reading and interpretation of philosophical texts, and the cumulative inheritance of responses, glossae, objections, replies, refutations and critiques which perpetuates philosophical traditions and keeps debates alive (2014: 936)

One of the advantages of this model is that it avoids prejudices of periodization, categorization, and the division between major philosophers / minor philosophers. It emphasizes continuities over ruptures. In doing so, it can provide a more complete and integrated representation of the philosophy of the past.

This model is practiced by Hutton in her intellectual biography of Conway, an obligatory reference in studies on Conway from its publication to the present day. O'Neil (2005: 187ff.) also adheres to it.

---

<sup>31</sup> "... la lecture de tous les bons livres est comme une conversation avec les plus honnêtes gens des siècles passés, qui en ont été les auteurs, et même une conversation étudiée en laquelle ils ne nous découvrent que les meilleures de leurs pensées", Descartes, *Discours de la méthode* (in Hutton 2014: 925)

7.2 The eclectic sub-model is based on the notion of a conciliatory eclecticism.

According to Mercer (2012), many modern philosophers practiced this “conciliatory eclecticism”, assuming that the different philosophical traditions were not incompatible and that it was possible to reconcile them by mixing ancient and modern ideas. This is key issue to understand the pacific co-existence of all models described above. Although many thinkers were inclined to find a new method to ensure “philosophical certainty” (107), many others, including Conway, sought to construct a new philosophy (at least partially) from traditional elements. The conciliatory strategies they used were diverse.

All of the above, can be found in Conway’s work. For example, in the title of her work: *The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy concerning God, Christ, and Creation, that is, concerning the Nature of Spirit and Matter*.

The eclectic/syncretic philosopher (I will take the two terms as synonyms) is generally regarded as a thinker who amalgamates various elements of various philosophical schools with greater or lesser coherence. The term seems to facilitate the ‘classification’ of these philosophers and generally ignores the many problems presented by their works, sources, and influences. The concept of ‘eclecticism’ is generally not examined in terms of present specificities and instead functions as a non-problematic historiographical category. The case of Anne Conway seems to fall into this category. Her philosophical work has been considered eclectic or syncretic, for example, by Hutton (2004) and Orio de Miguel (2005) and involves the combination of philosophical elements from different traditions. This combination is quite alien for contemporary philosophical historiography.

However, I propose that eclecticism can be used as a methodological category related to the contextual model, once the principles of the same model have been applied to it by contextualizing the emergence of the category and its development and giving back the term a non-pejorative meaning<sup>32</sup> that accounts for the philosophical mechanisms and attitudes of Conway’s Principia. In this way, eclecticism can be understood as a philosophy whose main characteristic is to deliberately select doctrines from various philosophical schools in order

---

<sup>32</sup> For a description of this contextualization see Rodríguez 2022.

to combine them. In the case of Conway, the theoretical support for such a conjunction is given through the notion of *prisca theologia* or *pia philosophia*: at the beginning of time God revealed to humanity the original truth through certain sages who were responsible for transmitting it in various ways. These ways developed in paganism through a line that starts with Hermes Trismegistus (or Zoroaster) and ends with Plato. For Christianity, it starts with Moses and ends with Jesus Christ. Under this premise, traces of this original truth would be found in all traditions and can be harmonized by the philosopher.

A similar approach can be found in the description made of her work, according to the preface of the *Principles*:

[Conway] understood perfectly, not only the true System of the World, call it Copernican or Pythagorick as you will, with all the Demonstrative Arguments thereof; but all Descartes his Philosophy, as also all the Writings of him, who (though a Friend of Descartes, yet) out of Love to the Truth, hath so openly for this good while opposed his Errors: To say nothing of her perusing (by the Benefit of the Latin Tongue, which she acquired the Skill of notwithstanding these great Impediments) of both Plato and Plotinus, and of her searching into, and judiciously sifting the abstrusest Writers of Theosophy. (In Conway 1996: 4)

The sub-model does not neglect the various traditions present in Conway's text neither does it prioritize one over the others. This is a crucial difference regarding the other models studied before. To unfold the study of this eclecticism, a knowledge of the different traditions and their languages, the ways in which their incorporation into Conway's work was justified and the understanding of the reasons that led her to practice it are necessary. All this implies the reconstruction of a broad philosophical context that incorporates not only the main actors of modern philosophy, but hypotheses of other philosophies such as the Platonic or the Kabbalist traditions, Quakerism, Alchemy, etc.

In short, the contextual/eclectic model has greater explanatory power than the other models and shows how Conway harmonized the elements that can later be treated in a specific way



by other models. Therefore, it can be considered fundamental for the development of past and future Conway historiography.

## 8. Conclusion

We have reviewed the main models of approach to Conway's thought. It is proposed that all have contributed to the interpretative heritage. The first five models have certain advantages and disadvantages, mentioned above. The sixth model (which can also be criticized) is presented as more fundamental insofar as it presents an anchor in a historical history of philosophy. This model should be a prerequisite before undertaking the exercise or interaction with other models.

That said, it should be noted that the plurality of models is a successful strategy for the growth of interpretive heritage that has taken place in Conway's studies in recent decades. This mapping of models can therefore be considered an important exercise in the recapitulation and reflection of the recovery program of women philosophers, in particular, in the case of Anne Conway. It can also shed light on other recovery projects in the history of women philosophers, for example, in Latin America<sup>33</sup>.

## Bibliography

Alic, M. (1986). *Hypatia's Heritage*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Burns, E. (2021). Anne Conway's Philosophy of Religion. *Think* 59, Vol. 20 .

Conway, A. (2022). "Los principios de la más antigua y moderna filosofía" (Capítulo 9).

See under Paolucci, M., and E. Ludueña.

Conway, Anne (1996). *The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

---

<sup>33</sup> Cfr. Manzo (forthcoming) and Rodríguez (forthcoming).

- Frankel, L. (1991). "Anne Conway", in M. E. Waithe (ed.) *A History of Women Philosophers*, Vol. 3. Springer.
- Frede, M. (2022). *The Historiography of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gabbey, A. (1977). Anne Conway et Henry More: Lettres sur Descartes (1650-1651), *Archives de Philosophie*, 40(3), 379–404.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/43033992>
- Gerson, Lloyd P. (2005). "What is Platonism?", *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 43(3):253-276.
- Gordon-Roth, J. (2018). "What Kind of Monist is Anne Finch Conway?", *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, 4(3), 280-297
- Grey, John R.T. (2017). "Conway's Ontological Objection to Cartesian Dualism", *Philosophers' Imprint* 17:1-19.
- Head, J. (2024). "Anne Conway on Omnipresence". *PHILOSOPHICA*. DOI: 10.5840/philosophica20244159
- Head, J. (2019). "Anne Conway and Henry More on Freedom", *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 27(5) (New Perspectives on Agency in Early Modern Philosophy). 631-648.
- Head, J. (2021). "Rational and natural theology in Anne Conway's Principia". *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 74(1), 41-51. doi:10.1017/S0036930621000041
- Head, J. (2022). *The Philosophy of Anne Conway. God, Creation and the Nature of Time*. London/New York: Bloomsbury.
- Hutton, S. (2014). Intellectual History and the History of Philosophy, *History of European Ideas*, 40:7, 925-937, DOI: 10.1080/01916599.2014.882054.
- Hutton, S (1995). Anne Conway critique d'Henry More: l'esprit et la matière. *Archives de Philosophie*, 58(3), 371–384. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43037362>
- Hutton, S. (2004). *Anne Conway. A Woman Philosopher*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Hutton, S. (2019). "Women, philosophy and the history of philosophy", *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 27(4)
- Hutton, S. (2020). "Plato and the Platonism of Anne Conway". In: Ebbersmeyer, S., Paganini, G. (eds) *Women, Philosophy and Science*. (Series: Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences, vol 4). Cham: Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-44548-5\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-44548-5_3)
- Hutton, S. (2021). "Alchemy and Cultures of Knowledge among Early Modern Women". *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal* Vol. 15, No. 2
- Hutton, Sarah (2004). "Introduction". In *Anne Conway. A Woman Philosopher*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-13.
- Hutton, Sarah (2004). *Anne Conway. A Woman Philosopher*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hutton, Sarah (2015) "'Blue-Eyed Philosophers Born on Wednesdays': An Essay on Women and History of Philosophy", *The Monist* 98(1), January 2015, Pages 7–20, <https://doi.org/10.1093/monist/onu003>
- Kinzel, Katherina (2016). "Pluralism in Historiography: A Case Study of Case Studies". In Sauer, Tilman and Raphael Scholl (eds). *The Philosophy of Historical Case Studies*. Cham: Springer, pp. 123-150. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-30229-4\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-30229-4_7)
- Loftson, P. (1982), "Introduction" in Conway, A. *The principles of the most ancient and most recent philosophy*. The Hague ; Boston : Martinus Nijhoff .
- Manzo, S. (forthcoming). "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz y Concepción Gimeno de Flaquer: acerca de la modestia intelectual y la subjetividad femenina". En Rodríguez, T., ed *Filósofas del pasado, historiografía e historia*. UNAM, México.
- Mercer, C. (2019). "Anne Conway's Metaphysics of Sympathy". In: O'Neill, E., Lascano, M.P. (eds) *Feminist History of Philosophy: The Recovery and Evaluation of Women's Philosophical Thought*. Springer, Cham: Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-18118-5\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-18118-5_3)

- Mercer, Christia (2012). "Platonism in Early Modern Natural Philosophy: The Case of Leibniz and Conway". In Christoph Horn and James Wilberding (eds.), *Neoplatonic Natural Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mercer, Christia (2019). "Anne Conway's Response to Cartesianism". In Steven Nadler, Tad M. Schmaltz, and Delphine Antoine-Mahut (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Descartes and Cartesianism* (online edn. accessed 26 May 2023) <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198796909.013.44>.
- Merchant, C. (1979). "The Vitalism of Anne Conway: Its Impact on Leibniz's Concept of the Monad". *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 17(3), 255-269. doi:10.1353/hph.2008.0331.
- Pugliese, Nastassja (2019) "Monism and individuation in Anne Conway as a critique of Spinoza", *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 27(4):771-785.
- O'Neill, E. (2005). "Early Modern Women Philosophers and the History of Philosophy". *Hypatia*, 20(3), 185–197. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3811122>
- Orio de Miguel, Bernardino. (2004). *La Filosofía de Lady Anne Conway, un Proto-Leibniz*. (Translation with introduction and notes of Anne Conway, *Principia Philosophiae Antiquissimae et Recentissimae*. Valencia: Editorial de la UPV.
- Paolucci, M., and E. Ludueña, (2022). "Los principios de la más antigua y moderna filosofía (Capítulo 9) de Anne Conway". *Siglo Dieciocho*, (3), 153-187. <http://siglodieciocho.com.ar/index.php/sd/article/view/67>
- Platas Benítez, V (2007). *El monismo vitalista y la filosofía de la modernidad temprana; integración del monismo vitalista de Anne Conway*. Morelia: Jitanjáfora.
- Reid, J. (2020). "Anne Conway and Her Circle on Monads". *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 58(4), 679-704
- Rodríguez, T. (2022). "The Eclecticism of Anne Conway". In: Lopes, C., Ribeiro Peixoto, K., Prikladnitsky, P. (eds), *Latin American Perspectives on Women Philosophers in*

- Modern History* (Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences, vol 13". Cham: Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00288-5\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00288-5_8)
- Rodríguez, T., (forthcoming). "Nombrar a las filósofas latinoamericanas: Laureana Wright y el romanticismo social en México". En *Filósofas del pasado, historiografía e historia*. UNAM, México.
- Rorty, R., 1984, "The historiography of philosophy: four genres.". In R. Rorty, J. B. Schneewind and Q. Skinner, *Philosophy in History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 49-76.
- Rusu D-C. (2021) Anne Conway's Exceptional Vitalism: Material Spirits and Active Matter. *HOPOS: The Journal of the International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science* 11:2, 528-546.
- Strok, N. 2022. "El caballo será por fin alguna vez convertible en hombre": consideraciones en torno al caballo y su transmutación en Anne Conway. *Siglo Dieciocho* 3:59–80
- Thomas, E. (2020). "Anne Conway as a Priority Monist: a reply to Gordon-Roth". *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, 6(3), 275-284.
- Thomas, E. (2017). "Time, space, and process in Anne Conway". *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 25(5).
- Waithe, M.E. 2015, "From Canon Fodder to Canon-Formation". *The Monist* 98(1) pp. 21-