

## **The Philosophical Exploration of Free Will and Social Responsibility: The Path of Resistance in the Play 'Bartleby the Scrivener'**

Wang Qian

Shandong Sport University, Sports and Arts College, Shandong Jinan, 250102,  
China

Tian Ke\*

Lyceum of the Philippines University, Manila, 430072, Philippines  
wqxw1203@163.com

**Abstract:** German director Bolixin Von Pezer's theatrical play "The Copyist Bartleby" acts as a metaphor for philosophy, crafting a "monologue" through two actors. Within the drama, Bartleby exists in a form of "absence", yet, akin to the central tenet of existentialism, he lurks persistently throughout the entire narrative. His chosen response of "I would prefer not to" serves not only as a rejection of the external world but also as a profound exploration of his inner self. This mode of expression resonates with the potentiality thought of Italian philosopher Agamben. In Agamben's philosophy, saying "no" is not just a form of refusal but also an acknowledgment and experience of potentialities. Through this contemplation, freedom is redefined. It is not just an escape from constraints, but also an embrace and experience of latent possibilities. As philosophers have discussed, our current crisis stems not only from a lack of potential but more so from the misunderstanding and misuse of it. Only by breaking traditional frameworks and disrupting entrenched thought patterns can we genuinely enter the realm of freedom, experience the fullness of "form-of-life", break free from dualistic constraints, and achieve true self-redemption.

**Keywords:** Bartleby; Potentiality Thought; Freedom; Redemption; Philosophy

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The play "Bartleby, the Scrivener" is adapted from the renowned American writer Herman Melville's short story "Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street." The adaptation was crafted by German director Boris von Poser, starring Wang Chuanjun and Sulidepuribu. Multiple performances took place in Shanghai and Beijing in April and October of 2018, respectively.

Presented in the form of a "one-act play," it narrates the absurd tale that unfolds between a Wall Street law firm's boss and his employee, Bartleby, during the 19th century. Actor Wang Chuanjun takes on the role of the boss, sharing his initial impressions of the newly hired Bartleby: reticent,

industrious, and mechanical in his actions, he was always found diligently copying in a corner. Initially, the boss is quite pleased, deeming Bartleby to be a reliable employee. However, he gradually observes that regardless of any request or inquiry he poses, Bartleby would always respond with "I would prefer not to," culminating in his silent demise in prison, where he "preferred not to speak, and preferred not to eat." (Maderová, 2010)

Bartleby's "I would prefer not to" can be interpreted as a form of rebellion against the realities of life. Yet, this resistance is not an overt negation; hence, he never explicitly says "I refuse" or "I am unwilling." Instead, he always softly murmurs, "I would prefer not to." Such a phrase can be understood as a subversion of the established language and modes of thought. Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben describes this subversive form as "potentiality." (Aguilar, 2019; Agyingi et al., 2016)

## 2. BATAILLE AND AGAMBEN'S NOTION OF POTENTIALITY

For a long time, human thought has been dominated by a binary opposition model, a pattern pervasive throughout our philosophy, religion, and culture: motion and stillness, sacred and profane, human and animal, action and inaction, oppression and resistance... This inherent philosophical structure often forces people to take a side on complex issues, choosing to support or oppose. The philosophical roots behind this can be traced back to philosophers like Plato and Descartes, whose dualistic theories laid the foundation for Western thought (Matteson, 2008). Within this binary mode of thinking, central concepts naturally arise, leading to standards of judgment like right and wrong, superior and inferior. Modern critical theories have started to question this, attempting to move beyond binary logic to explore a more complex, multi-faceted, and relational mode of thinking. Agamben's philosophical perspective is particularly unique. Rather than simply discarding binary opposition, he attempts to trace its origin, delving deep into its structure, aiming to dismantle it by understanding its formation mechanism. Drawing upon Bartleby's phrasing of "I would prefer not to," he seeks a way that is neither affirmative nor negative, but rather renders the binary ineffectual. Therefore, in many of Agamben's works, there is a strong emphasis on concepts of suspension, interruption, inactivity, de-functionalization, and rest (Radu, 2016). The term "potentiality" he introduces epitomizes this logic of negation and stands as a core element in his intellectual framework.

The discussion about potentiality can be traced back to Aristotle, who

saw potentiality and actuality as wholly opposing relations. Speaking of perception, he posited that "the faculty of sensation exists potentially, not in the sense that it is an actual activity," (Tian, 2015), suggesting there are two levels of seeing and hearing, one potential and the other actual. He distinguishes between sensing and sensed objects in terms of potential and actual. Moreover, discussing "the knowledgeable," he differentiates between two types of individuals, both potentially possessing an ability (knowledge) but in different ways: "One type of person transforms through learning, repeatedly shifting from opposite qualities, while the other transitions from merely having unactualized perceptual or grammatical knowledge to an actual activity" (Dmitriev et al., 2020; Tian, 2015).

Following Aristotle, Agamben divides potentiality into universal and elastic (specific) potentiality. Universal potentiality refers to the cognitive ability inherent in children or the general populace; for example, one can become an architect or a certain type of person, but this requires transformative learning (Aristotle did not consider sperm and clay as potential persons or statues because they still need to undergo change through external factors, rather than metamorphosing through their inherent nature). The elastic (specific) potentiality pertains to individuals already equipped with certain knowledge or skills. For instance, an architect possesses the potential to construct even if he hasn't built anything yet. This specific potentiality can remain unactualized. This recalls Aristotle's claim that "every potentiality is also, at the same time, a potentiality for the opposite" (Tian, 2015). Agamben terms this opposing potential as "impotentiality," which signifies potentialities that aren't realized or acted upon (Wang & Yan, 2014). To Agamben, "impotentiality" apparently solidifies the unique standing of humans amidst all creatures and forms of life. While other animals are confined to actualizing their specific potentialities, humans stand out as beings who can exercise their "impotentiality" (Wang & Yan, 2014). Essentially, humans possess the choice of abstaining from certain actions, thus actualizing their "impotentiality," whereas animals and other natural entities (like the sun and stars as Aristotle suggests) merely act out their intrinsic potential. The structure of potentiality here is thus framed within a series of dichotomies (universal/specific, action/inaction, presence/absence, potential/impotentiality), where impotentiality becomes the ability to refrain from realizing or using one's capability, marking a failure of potential.

To further elucidate potentiality, Agamben distinguishes between two modes: active potentiality and passive potentiality. Drawing from

Aristotle's "On the Soul," where he differentiates between active and passive potentialities (for instance, wood possesses the inherent potential to burn, while fire actualizes this potential in the wood), Agamben's interpretation leans towards understanding active potentiality as something spontaneous and self-initiated, while passive potentiality is reactive and receptive (Wang & Yan, 2014). What underpins Agamben's need to differentiate potentialities this way? He aims to amalgamate both, proposing a novel analytical framework. For instance, Kant, in the "Critique of Pure Reason," perceives self-awareness as a priori, inherently spontaneous, and receptive. He builds on empiricist thought, suggesting that the mind, devoid of innate ideas, is but a *tabula rasa*, receiving imprints from the external world—a view reminiscent of Aristotle's idea of the mind as a "blank slate" where thoughts inscribe. Here, passivity, spontaneity, potential, and reality converge into a form of passive potentiality. In contrast, the philosopher Nietzsche, renowned for championing the will to power and the will to life, is usually perceived as embodying active potentiality. Yet, in Agamben's view, such active power precedes all forms of passive potentiality, and both forms of power indulge in a perpetual cycle of mutual affection. (Stern, 1979)

In reality or in literature, what is the potential essence as described by Agamben? *Bartleby* serves as the best testament. Bartleby is the protagonist of the novella and play "Bartleby, the Scrivener." He works diligently as a copyist in a law firm. Initially, he's very industrious, but over time, he begins to refuse tasks — declining to review legal documents, refusing to retrieve mail from the post office, and even his primary responsibility of copying. He always responds with, "I would prefer not to." Even after being dismissed, he refuses to leave the office, ultimately getting incarcerated, where he neither eats nor moves until he dies. Agamben interprets Bartleby's refusal as a potentiality expressed in a formula: when asked to fetch mail, Bartleby doesn't say he doesn't want to or refuses to; he emphasizes, "I would prefer not to," which becomes his consistent response. It's not a refusal of the content of the task, but maintaining a formal posture of refusal — a "tendency" to stay distant. In line with the concept of potentiality, which is always the capacity to do or not do, Bartleby's repetitious phrase "destroys all possibility of establishing any connection between capability and will. This is the potential formula." (Wang & Yan, 2014).

Zizek, discussing the limitations of multiculturalism and resistance politics, sees in Bartleby's act a new logic of resistance. Bartleby's "I would prefer not to" isn't "I would rather not participate in the market economy,

not partake in the competition and profit of capitalism"(Ji & Hangzhou, 2014). Instead, it's a withdrawal from all micro-political practices, a seemingly passive action that in essence is the purest form of refusal. Contrarily, Deleuze analyzes the formula "prefer not to," believing it has a destructive and annihilative nature, leaving "a deafening silence in its wake."(Liu & Cao, 2012). Bartleby neither desires nor rejects; he creates a new territory, a space. If Bartleby simply did not want to obey, he'd still be a resister, assuming a societal role. But this formula creates a new logic: Bartleby becomes an "unreferenced man," one without position.

In the play, the director doesn't assign an actor to Bartleby; his presence is conveyed through the narration of his employer. Bartleby's absence, to some degree, signifies the director's interpretation: Bartleby doesn't play any societal role and shouldn't be portrayed but should remain an empty signifier. Agamben sees the Bartleby image upholding the structure of potentiality, even considering Bartleby a messiah — not saving what was, but what never was. Agamben posits that the most frightening thing in our era isn't the unfulfilled potential but the overflow of omnipotent potentiality.

### 3. AN ALTERNATIVE INTERPRETATION OF FREEDOM

In fact, whether it's Bartleby or Agamben's potentiality, underlying them both is a contemplation on how to attain freedom. While Agamben articulates in the chapter "Potentiality, Not Freedom" that "potentiality, to a Greek – and likely, to reason as well – had nothing whatsoever to do with the free-will of the subject"(Wang & Yan, 2014), he is referring to the freedom of the subject in its traditional sense, the ability to make free choices. He emphasizes that potentiality is not about choosing to accomplish a particular action, nor is it about choosing not to act (in one way or another). Instead, it's about sustaining oneself in a state of non-realization or in relation to what's lacking (like Bartleby) – a non-potentiality. Precisely in this state of "absence" or "inaction", freedom finds a broader domain. Thus, he believes that "freedom is not merely the power to do this or that, nor is it the power to refuse to do something. It is the power to actualize one's own non-potentiality, related to one's lack. This is also why freedom can be freedom in both good and bad"(Wang & Yan, 2014). So, when faced with various choices in life, how do we determine our true "potentiality"? Perhaps at certain moments, the purest form of freedom is to not choose, not act, but simply exist? This is a question

everyone must contemplate, and a challenge philosophy poses to us: to delve beyond the surface and seek a deeper meaning of freedom.

Arendt also once defined freedom in "The Human Condition," stating, "To be free means to be unburdened by the necessities of life or coercion from others, and not subjected to one's own compulsion. It means to neither dominate nor be dominated"(Liang, 2023). Is the freedom we seek truly rooted in the autonomy and transcendence of the soul? The necessities of life and coercion from others are like chains, constraining our thoughts and actions. When Bartleby faced the feast in prison, his choice might have been a survival instinct, but from another perspective, he indeed lost the freedom to choose. Invisible shackles of our own desires or others' expectations can prevent us from being truly free. The dynamics of dominator and dominated may appear as a power struggle on the surface, but it's a testament to how both parties lose their freedom within this power structure. Rulers, trapped by power, may lose their true selves, while the dominated are oppressed, lacking freedom. Bartleby's boss, seated on the throne of power, might seem superior, but he too is constrained by power and isn't freer than Bartleby. So, where should one seek true freedom? Arendt offers a direction: a public realm, a domain untouched by private desires and power dynamics. In this space, everyone can freely share their views, feelings, and opinions without influences of family background such as gender, age, or economic disparity. In the end, freedom is most purely manifested in this public realm. Hence, true freedom isn't innate but requires our efforts to obtain and defend it in the right environment."

Regarding the question of how to achieve freedom, Agamben discusses it from a different perspective—the foundation of freedom. He places the potential of "de-potentialization", or the power of people to say "no", in a unique position, believing that all of life exists in the realm of potential, in the potential domain between ability and inability. This potential is a prerequisite for true freedom, which, besides unrestricted choice, is also the ability to possess one's own impossibility. Freedom is closely related to one's inherent lack, in which potential can never be realized, and it's precisely because of this impossibility that freedom becomes possible. Sartre once said in discussing his view of freedom, "I cannot freely escape my family, nationality, or class, nor can I choose to freely overcome my desires and habits, but it's precisely through these limitations that freedom emerges." Thus, "the existence of freedom is the existence that can realize its plans"(Chen, 1997). It is not the past that determines my choices; my existence originates from the future, and the past cannot prevent my free choices. If I am limping, it might seem I cannot freely choose my past, but

the meaning of limping is what I assign to it now. I only choose the present, which requires walking, to realize I am limping. Sartre achieves freedom through active actions and choices, while Agamben's freedom is realized through potential interruptions and inactions. For example, in avant-garde music maestro John Cage's piece "4'33"," it is in the silence of the music that freedom and non-potential are best expressed.

Therefore, Agamben proposed the concept of the "coming community", a possible form of human belonging that is always in the process of arrival yet unattainable, much like it exists in a latent manner. Cage's audience is in the process where the music is about to be played but isn't. "Coming" implies it is present now, but its potential has not yet been grasped, just as when we say "someone is about to arrive". This latency might not exist in reality but can emerge at any moment. Thus, freedom is not a direct fact, nor is it the active "action" in the public space as described by Arendt or the "intervention" and "choice" advocated by Sartre. It's realized through inaction. In Agamben's logic, potential "maintains itself by suspending reality, is the ability not to actualize itself, is its utmost non-potential ability"(Agamben & Sacer, 1995). For instance, in the famous "Schrödinger's cat" experiment proposed by Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger, when an external observer opens the box, the cat's state of being alive or dead becomes definitive. Without an observer, the cat is in a superposition of being alive and dead. Freedom is based on this state before a choice is made. Throughout his many works, it's not hard to find Agamben particularly emphasizing the importance of "non-working", "inaction", and "rest" (inoperoso).

Thus, philosophers Arendt, Sartre, and Agamben each present their unique insights into the fundamental proposition of "freedom". Arendt's interpretation can be seen as a macro concept of freedom, a state of "not being dominated by anyone". In this concept, "anyone" includes all external constraints, including others, and even extends to our innermost selves. By contrast, Sartre focuses more on an existentialist perspective, believing that "being dominated by someone" is not the opposite of freedom. To him, freedom is the ability to make independent choices even when constrained by the outside world. Agamben's perspective on freedom seems to challenge conventional understandings. He doesn't simply position himself in the binary opposition of "being dominated by someone" and "not being dominated by anyone", but believes that real freedom might be hidden within a certain "impossibility". This is a pure freedom that exists in the dialectical relationship between potential and non-potential. Most philosophers see freedom as an issue of

positive/negative choice and realization, but Agamben goes further, presenting a view where freedom is its own impossibility, closely tied to its inherent lack and interruption. Here, Barthes' idea of "I prefer not to" aptly echoes Agamben's perspective.

#### 4. THE CRISIS AND REDEMPTION OF MODERN MAN

People in the present era actually face a series of crises, from Wall Street in the 19th century to the world today. On one hand, what we call "democracy" today is separating people from what they cannot do. When one is alienated from one's own potential and is deprived of the experience of what one shouldn't do, people today believe they have the capability to do anything. Even when they should realize that they have reached an unprecedented state where both power and processes are out of control, they respond cheerfully with "no problem" and irresponsibly proclaim "I can do it"(Agamben, 2011). This means that while those separated from their potential can still choose not to act, those separated from non-potential lose the capacity for resistance and inaction. These people also lose their freedom, identity, and position. They feel omnipotent. As a result, we don't even know if our doctor is an actor, if exam takers are impostors, or if an online girlfriend is actually male. Everyone seems to be able to play the role of another person at any time, even losing the freedom not to "act" in this process of alienation. On the other hand, under the protection of state power, we are also facing an identity crisis. People's identities are no longer the traditional sense of personal identity, but are being replaced by various digital constructs like ID numbers, employee numbers, student numbers, becoming a form of identity without personality. Thus, the reduction of people to mere "bare life" has become a given, to the extent that it is now the foundation of how states perceive their citizens. Just like the deportees in Auschwitz had no names and nationalities, only the numbers branded on their arms, today's citizens also get lost amidst the nameless masses(Agamben, 2011). In the philosophical perspective of modern society, human existence faces a "materialization" phenomenon. With society's excessive pursuit of rationality and efficiency, individuality and uniqueness seem to be consumed by a forced homogenization. This not only deprives people of their unique value but also makes them indistinguishable in the masses, like an interchangeable part in a vast machine. When viewing certain artworks, this alienation becomes particularly evident. For instance, in some dramas, characters are

stripped of names and merely defined by their roles or functions, such as "turkey," "pliers," "gingerbread," or "prison food deliverer." They are no longer unique beings, but extensions of their duties and functions, like countless employees and guards.

So, facing such circumstances, how should we achieve self-redemption? Agamben believes the relationship between potential and realization points to two forms of life: bare life and form-of-life. The concept of bare life, developed from the concept of "homo sacer," is a purely biological life, which can also be understood in modern times as digitized and homogenized life; whereas form-of-life is "a life in which it is impossible for potential to be separated, a life in which nothing like bare life can be extracted" (Agamben, 2000). It's not a direct fact, but the possibility of life, the potential of non-potential, the interruption of action. He emphasizes biopolitics is about self-liberation, not subjectification; it's about relinquishing power to renounce reconfirmed identities, refusing the state's resubjectification. The core of this new biopolitics is to escape from the control of the state machinery. It upholds bare life, not the human rights of the modern nation-state's legal system. On the other hand, Agamben believes the subject of redemption is not "creation" or potential, but the act in which creation and potential are suspended. Redemption is "born from an undetermined creation, ending in a mysterious salvation without a specific goal" (Agamben, 2011). Due to the absence of a clear goal, potential has broader possibilities, and the goal of redemption can be realized. Precisely because Bartleby neither explicitly refuses anything nor has a clear goal, to some extent, he truly achieves self-redemption.

Meanwhile, the concepts of redemption and happiness are intertwined. Happiness can be understood as the representation of its formal life, distinct from mere "bare life." A formal or happy life is a form of life that breaks away from sovereign logic, "It is neither animal nor human life. It is not the essence reached in the course of realization, but surpasses essence and knowledge, surpasses concealment and its removal" (Van Munster, 2004). In the evolution of formal life and happy life, we begin to re-examine and challenge boundaries deeply rooted in culture and thought: the distinction between species, the sacred and the secular, the noble and the humble. This re-examination fosters new forms and cognitive concepts, implying a boundless, more fluid worldview. Traditional conceptual frameworks grant us the power to order and categorize. Such categorizations, like distinguishing between humans and animals, segregating the sacred from the profane, and marking the noble from the lowly, not only define how we view the world but also determine our

relationships with other beings. But from a philosophical perspective, are these categories and boundaries truly fixed? Should we rethink and redefine them to better understand the true relationship between humans and the environment, the self and the other? Within such a framework, humans can be isolated from their societies or groups. When an individual is deprived of political rights or other fundamental human rights, they might be viewed as akin to animals, thereby losing their inherent dignity. For example, Jews during the Nazi era or the "stateless" discussed by Hannah Arendt lost their so-called "human rights," leaving them without legal protection, their properties and even lives could be legally seized. Those in power often harmed one group under the guise of protecting another. The concept of "formal life" opposes such distinctions; it doesn't merely emphasize equality but strives to preserve the integrity of life, seeking a new kind of "community." This community signifies a collection of shared attributes that belong only to themselves, not to any other attributes. In this new community, Bartleby should not be categorized or relegated to other groups. He should not just be seen as an employee or prisoner but simply as Bartleby himself. It's within such potential communities that individuals can confront modernity's dilemmas.

As for the ways of redemption, Sartre, when discussing freedom, states that existence is not determined by the past but originates from the future. Similarly, redemption requires separating the past from its historical context, annihilating it, allowing it to metamorphose into the power of origin. Redemption is not about returning or changing the past to restore someone to a former state, but about creating a new form through a negative attitude. For instance, in 2004, Agamben intended to lecture in the U.S., but due to the requirement of fingerprinting and retinal scans upon entry, he refused. He argued that if such invasions under the pretext of counter-terrorism are normalized today, graver and legal encroachments might occur in the near future. Agamben resisted authority through his "non-action," actualizing his "non-potentiality" and rendering the U.S. authority ineffective to some extent. In Eastern philosophy, the Daoist notion of "Wu Wei" (doing by not doing) suggests that by not intervening, things can naturally achieve their best state. This aligns with Agamben and Bartleby's thoughts: in certain circumstances, refusing to act, choosing to pause, is a profound form of action.

Every theory or strategy has its historical and cultural context. Thus, we can't simply view the strategy of "I would prefer not to" as passive or ineffective. In certain social and cultural backgrounds, this strategy might be the most effective form of resistance. Philosophy's aim isn't always to

provide concrete solutions but often to offer a way to understand the world and ourselves. Evaluating a philosophical idea or theory shouldn't solely hinge on its practical effects. Philosophy's value often lies in its provision of fresh perspectives and ways of thinking, not just its real-world efficacy. The phrase "I would prefer not to" makes us ponder: What is "action"? When is action most appropriate? When does non-action carry more meaning? These questions delve into human freedom, choice, and the essence of life, going beyond mere utilitarian assessments.

## 5. CONCLUSION

One can argue that Bartleby's "I would prefer not to" is the most poignant line in the drama, offering us a fresh perspective to contemplate another possibility of life, resonating uncannily with Agamben's potentiality. However, it should be understood that Agamben's potentiality is a special kind, because, in the conventional understanding of potentiality, it denotes an active possibility, one striving for immediate realization. For long, we have emphasized on harnessing an individual's potential, increasing their capabilities, viewing the realization of potential as a positive event, and even striving to facilitate conditions to turn potential into reality. Freedom is often interpreted as the realization of one's potential. So, by common logic, the focus should be on how to actualize potential, on saying "yes".

But for Rousseau, potentiality should be deferred; for one to become truly free, children shouldn't receive moral and rational education prematurely, but rather their potentialities should be delayed to protect their innate nature. Education should be subtractive, not additive. Moving to Deleuze, he introduces a concept akin to potentiality—virtuality. Virtuality isn't the opposite of reality but rather a past or future state of it, harmonizing with reality.

Deleuze emphasizes perpetual change and creation within differences; potentiality is an ongoing process, not an outcome. Both Bartleby and Agamben echo this sentiment, maintaining that potentiality isn't about realizing capability in the usual sense, nor deferral in Rousseau's sense, but about negation, interruption, the ability to say "no"—a "non-potentiality". Yet, differing from Deleuze's emphasis on positive creation and transformation, Agamben and Bartleby focus on the negation of creation and the cessation of change.

In "What is the Contemporary?", Agamben presents a profound

philosophical proposition: What kind of existence qualifies as truly "contemporary"? He posits that contemporaries aren't simply those living in this era, but those who can establish a distance from the temporal torrent. This is a Baudelairean "flâneur" state, wandering between identification and estrangement.

Only within this distance can one truly perceive the epoch and understand its deep structures. Furthermore, Bartleby epitomizes the contemporary, standing at the nexus of potentiality and realization, always on the brink of decision, neither fully accepting nor fully rejecting. His mode of thought—"I would prefer not to"—is a philosophical hesitation, a resistance to utter affirmation or negation. He isn't merely rejecting reality but offering a suspension of potentiality, forging a new language and grammar to engage with reality.

Perhaps every genuine "contemporary" somewhat resembles Bartleby. We all seek ways to distance ourselves from this rapidly changing world, hoping to find our true positioning within this distance. It's not just a resistance to reality, but a quest for authentic selfhood. Through the "I would prefer not to" approach, we aspire to balance with the times, to converse with the self, and amidst ceaseless flux, to discover the true self.

#### References

- Agamben, G. (2000). *Means without end: Notes on politics* (Vol. 20). U of Minnesota Press.
- Agamben, G. (2011). Nudities. Translated by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella. In: Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Agamben, G., & Sacer, H. (1995). Sovereign power and bare life. *Homo sacer*, 1.
- Aguilar, R. G. (2019). On the Bearability of Others-Being: Bartleby, Expression and Its Justification. In *Empathy: Emotional, Ethical and Epistemological Narratives* (pp. 142-151). Brill.
- Agyingi, E., Ngwa, M., & Wiandt, T. (2016). The dynamics of multiple species and strains of malaria. *Letters in Biomathematics*, 3(1), 29-40. <https://doi.org/10.30707/LiB3.1Agyingi>
- Chen, X. (1997). Jean-Paul Sartre, "Being and Nothingness", . *Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore*.
- Dmitriev, S. V., Bayazitov, A. M., Korznikova, E. A., Bachurin, D. V., & Zinovev, A. V. (2020). Dynamics of supersonic N-crowdions in fcc metals. *Reports in Mechanical Engineering*, 1(1), 54-60.
- Ji, G., & Hangzhou. (2014). Zizek: "The Parallax View,". *Zhejiang University Press*.
- Liang, H. (2023). Public Reason of Interpretation. SHS Web of Conferences,
- Liu, Y., & Cao, D. (2012). Gilles Deleuze: "Critique and Clinic,". *Nanjing: Nanjing University Press*.
- Maderová, B. (2010). WAYS OF SELF-MAKING: EMERSON, MELVILLE AND BARTLEBY. *Litteraria Pragensia*, 20(39).
- Matteson, J. (2008). A New Race Has Sprung Up": Prudence, Social Consensus and the Law in" Bartleby the Scrivener. *Leviathan*, 10(1), 25-49.

- Radu, L. A. (2016). *The theme of alienation in "Bartleby, the Scrivener" and Bleak House*
- Stern, M. R. (1979). 'Towards 'Bartleby the Scrivener'. *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Herman Melville—New Edition*, 13-38.
- Tian, M. (2015). "The Complete Works of Aristotle" (Volume 3), . *Beijing: Renmin University of China Press*.
- Van Munster, R. (2004). Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. Kevin Attell, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2004, 120 pp., ISBN 0804747385, \$15.95. *Leiden Journal of International Law*, 17(4), 833-840.
- Wang, L., & Yan, H. (2014). Giorgio Agamben: Potentialities. *Guilin: Lijiang Publishing House*, .