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Titolo Supper at Emmaus : great themes in western culture and intellectual

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"Supper at Emmaus" traces important intellectual topics from the ancient world to the modern period. Generally, as in its treatment of the question of whether the long-standing contrast between cyclical and linear views of history is helpful, it introduces eminent thinkers who have considered the question. One focus of the author is the appearance and reappearance across the centuries of patterns used to organize temporal and cultural experience. After an opening essay on transcendental truth and cultural relativism. Glenn Olsen traces a distinction, common in historical writings during the past two centuries, between an alleged ancient, classical "cyclic" view of time and history, used to describe the claimed repetitiveness of and similarities between historical events, and a contrasting Jewish-Christian linear view, sometimes described as providential in that it moves through a series of unique events to some end intended by God. In the latter. history is "about something," such as the education of the human race or the redemption of humankind. In each of the remaining essays, "Supper at Emmaus" attempts to draw out the limitations of what the current consensus on this topic has become, including, for example, the current understanding of religious tolerance, humanism, natural law, and teleology. Some of the essays, such as those on the debate about Augustine's understanding of marriage or the concluding essay

on the baroque city of Lecce, are published for the first time. Others are based on previously published contributions to the scholarly literature, although these chapters often conclude with a postscript that engages current scholarly debate on the subject. --Book Sleeve description.