“Yearley might have been conscientious if he did become a Buddhist on that morning in Korea. If his admiration for Buddhism had been strong enough and he had trusted it more than the other aspects of himself he would have had to change if he became a Buddhist, I think he would have been a conscientious believer. But he didn’t change... He genuinely admires Buddhism, but he does not like the self he would become if he converted to Buddhism…. *The bottom line is that he doesn’t like himself as a Buddhist. He trusts that emotion, and I not only think that he can be conscientious in doing so, but I’ve tried to show that he has few other options*.” (74)

What does Zagzebski mean? Person A meets person B. A and B are of different religions. After extensive interaction with B, A realizes that A admires B in a large number of ways. In particular, A admires B’s religious beliefs and the methods B used to form their religious beliefs. But A does not like who they would become if they converted.

1. “A does not like who they would become” means A has practical reasons to not become this different person.
2. Thus, it is practically rational for A to not change their current religious beliefs.
3. “A does not like who they would become” means A has practical reasons to not become this different person.
4. A thus has some practical reasons for keeping their current beliefs, and some epistemic justification because they admire for their current self.
5. This outweighs the defeaters they get from their admiration for B.
6. Thus, A’s current religious beliefs are epistemically justified.
7. “A does not like who they would become” means “A does not admire who they would become.”
8. A’s lack of admiration for their alternate self, and admiration for their current self, gives A epistemic justification for their current religious beliefs.
9. This outweighs the defeaters they get from their admiration for B.
10. Thus, A’s current religious beliefs are epistemically justified.

*x* is practically rational:

practically rational vs epistemically justified

**Buchak on faith**

A has faith that *p* is true if:

* A is willing to act like *p* is true without looking for more evidence that *p* is true
* And A will continue to act like *p* is true even if A encounters (some) evidence that *p* is false

Note: the faithful person continues to *act* like *p* is true even though their justification for *p* is (partly) removed and their (degree of) belief that *p* potentially goes away.

What would Buchak say about the Yearley example (from above):

1. Yearley starts believing in Christianity.
2. Yearley meets many admirable Buddhists.
3. But Yearley doesn’t like the person he would become if he converts.
4. So, Yearley does not convert to Buddhism.

How would Buchak interpret each of these? Think about epistemic justification and defeaters, practical rationality.

1. Give some plausible examples of acts of faith that do seem practically rational.
2. In your opinion, is faith in scientific or political claims practically rational? Why or why not?