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Book reviews

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Gregory E. Ganssle (ed.) *God and Time*. (Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001). Pp. 247. $49.95 (Hbk). ISBN 0 8308 1551 1.

Should God be conceived of as an exclusively timeless being, one that is not subject to any temporal determinations or distinctions, or should He rather be conceived of as having an endurance in time, which need not preclude His having a timeless existence as well? This volume contains a debate between Paul Helm, William Lane Craig, Alan G. Padgett, and Nicholas Wolterstorff, each the author of a valuable book on the topic. Helm alone defends the exclusively timeless or eternalist view. Although the other three are temporalists, they disagree among themselves about the manner in which God is in time. Wolterstorff is the purest among the three temporalists, holding that God has an exclusively temporal existence, enduring without beginning or end in the very same time as contains the universe; and he makes out a convincing case that the Bible favours this view. Craig and Padgett, on the other hand, although placing God in worldly time, also give God a mode of existence that transcends this time, in the case of Craig that being a timelessly eternal existence and for Padgett an endurance in a type of amorphous Bergsonian time. Helm gets outgunned in the debate, since it's three against one. The editor ought to have included a second eternalist, such as Brian Leftow or Eleonore Stump.

The format is to have each contributor give an extended statement of his position, immediately followed by critical comments from the other three, along with a response. This looks like a good format for securing maximum critical interaction, but in practice it results in a great deal of repetition that makes the book a pain to read. The editor is to be faulted for not stepping in and eliminating it. The major cause of the repetition is that, with the exception of Helm, who leads off, each contributor must offer criticisms of the presentations by others before he has a chance to give his own full-blown presentation. Another place at which the editor failed to do his duty was in not requiring Padgett to write a self-contained initial statement of his position. Over and over again, Padgett makes bold, controversial claims for which he gives no justification, instead referring to his book. This is bound to frustrate the reader. Padgett uses eighteen pages

compared to Helm's twenty-eight. He could have used these additional ten pages to provide, at least in an attenuated form, argumentative support for these claims.

Rather than attempt a running commentary on the debate as it unfolds, a topically-based synopsis and critical analysis will be given. Much of the ongoing discussion is centred around the following *modus tollens* argument, given explicitly or implicitly by all three temporalists (e.g. see Padgett, 95 and Craig, 177).

> If God is exclusively timelessly eternal, the B-theory of time is true.
> The B-theory of time is false.
> It is false that God is exclusively timelessly eternal.

The three temporalists give different arguments against the B-theory, and Helm attempts to parry all of them and mount a counterattack of his own.

The most basic tenet of the B-theory is that for every A-proposition (i.e. a proposition that reports an event as past, present, or future through the use of a sentence, successive uses of which could express propositions that differ in truth-value), there is a B-proposition (i.e. a proposition that reports a temporal relation through the use of a freely repeatable sentence, with which it is identical or logically equivalent). Thus, the A-proposition that event E occurs now is identical with the B-proposition that E occurs (tenselessly) at moment of time t_7, assuming that it is now t_7. Unless this tenet is true, a timeless God would lack omniscience, and thus not exist, since omniscience is among its essential properties. The reason is that an omniscient being knows all and believes only true propositions. And among the true propositions are A-propositions. But since a timeless being lacks a temporal perspective, it could know an A-proposition only if it is identical with or logically equivalent to some B-proposition. It might be thought that mere logical equivalence is not enough, since knowledge is not closed under entailment. True enough, but an omnipotent being knows every entailment, and therefore, since it knows both the B-proposition and that this proposition entails the A-proposition in question, it knows the latter as well.

Assuming that a necessary condition of propositional identity is that someone who understands two identical propositions could not have a propositional attitude toward one of them that she does not have to the other, it seems obvious that the translation tenet of the B-theory is false; for one could believe (know, etc.) that event E occurs now but not believe (know, etc.) that E occurs (tenselessly) at moment of time t_7. Thus, in knowing the latter proposition, Helm's exclusively timeless God does not succeed thereby in knowing the former. And since a timeless being can know only propositions that are expressible by freely repeatable sentences, Helm's God fails to be omniscient. All three temporalists press this objection.

For the most part, Helm seems to concede that the translation thesis is false, although at one place he makes an implausible attempt to support the translation thesis (215) but is quickly rebutted by Wolterstorff (229). Helm employs three

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strategies to show that, even if the translation fails, this does not decide the issue in favour of an at least partially temporal God. The first is a hint at an elimination theory of A-propositions, the second a plague-on-all-your-houses response to the effect that the temporalist's God fares no better than his timeless God, since there are things that it cannot know, thus resulting in a tie, and the third a refutation by parody based on an analogy between temporal and spatial indexicals.

One way in which the translation thesis could be false is if there were no A-propositions. For a non-proposition cannot be identical with or logically equivalent to a proposition. But in that case Helm's timeless God's omniscience is not impugned by His failure to know them, since there is nothing to be known. 'One may argue that the ''knowledge'' we possess when we say truly ''It is raining now'' is not propositional knowledge in the strict sense but more like know-how' (42). Knowing a tensed fact is a kind of knowing-how to get around successfully in the workaday world. 'So that what God lacks when he lacks ''knowledge'' of indexicals is a certain sort of skill. He does not lack knowledge but power' (42). It looks as if Helm is saving God's omniscience at the expense of His omnipotence. Helm's assimilation of knowledge of an A-proposition to knowing-how, however, badly misfires. Whereas one can know how to ride a bicycle, for example, without having any propositional knowledge, one's knowing how to get around successfully in the world, to be on time for appointments, for example, requires knowledge of A-propositions, such as that the meeting is to begin five minutes from now. Thus, Helm's attempt to eliminate A-propositions in favour of a non-propositional sort of knowing-how fails.

There is, however, a much more promising way of eliminating A-propositions that neither Helm nor any other participant in the debate considers. It is the Russell–Kaplan–Perry *de re* analysis of an indexical proposition into an ontological mixed bag comprised of the real-life referent of the indexical term and a Fregean unsaturated concept. Thus, the A-proposition that now is when E occurs is comprised of a moment of time, which is the referent of 'now', and the unsaturated concept of being when E occurs, which is the sense of the predicate. Thus, there aren't any abstract *de dicto* indexical propositions. The participants in the debate also fail to consider Hector Castenada's brilliant attempt to show how a timeless God can indirectly know A-propositions through the use of quasi-indictors. Their narrowness of focus, unfortunately, is all too typical among those who have been a party to the dispute between A- and B-theorists in recent years.

The plague-on-all-your-houses response accepts, at least for the sake of argument, that a timeless being cannot know an A-proposition, but then points out that there are certain types of propositions that a temporal being cannot know, thus resulting in a tie between the timeless and temporal Gods with respect to their omniscience. Initially, Helm appears to contend that a temporal being cannot know any proposition that is expressed by a freely repeatable sentence when he writes: 'For if God is in time, then there are also types of propositions

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that such a temporal God cannot know – propositions that express knowledge of the universe from the perspective of timeless eternity' (41).

Helm is unwittingly laying the foundation for the following dilemma argument against God's existence:

(1) Either God is timeless or He is temporal.
(2) If He is timeless, He cannot know A-propositions and thus isn't omniscient.
(3) If He is temporal, He cannot know eternal propositions and thus isn't omniscient.
(4) God is not omniscient.
(5) God does not exist.

Fortunately for theism, Helm's contention that a temporal being cannot know a proposition that is expressed through the use of a freely repeatable sentence is blatantly false, for we time-bound creatures certainly know many of them, such as the B-proposition that the American Civil War begins (tenselessly) in 1861. Just this objection is lodged by Craig, and Helm's response is that

> I agree with him that a temporal being can know tenseless truths, and so perhaps I wasn't careful enough to make clear what I meant by knowing the universe from the perspective of timeless eternity. The point I should have stressed is that in my view there are propositions available to a timeless God which are not available to anyone in time, including temporal knowers' knowledge of tenseless propositions. (89)

Helm never produces an example of such a proposition that can be known only by a timeless being, and I doubt that it can be done. What Helm does is to introduce an obscure notion of a difference in the way a timeless and temporal being knows a proposition. (Helm's appeal to differences in ways of knowing has already been seen to be ineffective in eliminating A-propositions.)

The difference consists in how temporal and timeless beings index their knowledge claims. 'There is the equivalent for a timeless knower of temporal indexicals for a temporal knower. Let us call this equivalent the eternal indexical. God's timeless knowledge of all truths, and especially … of contingent matters of fact, knowledge that must be tenseless, is eternal indexical knowledge' (90). The three temporalists rightfully find this hopelessly obscure, though they don't explain just why it is. I think it is because Helm's eternal indexical is not an indexical at all. An indexical term systematically shifts in its reference across some dimension, temporal indexicals over times, personal indexicals over persons, etc. But we have no idea of what the dimension is in which an eternal indexical systematically shifts in its reference. Are there many different eternities that are parts of some encompassing eternal dimension?!

Helm primarily relies on his refutation by parody response in his book, *Eternal God*, but oddly mentions it only in passing late in his opening presentation.

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> It is plausible to suppose that each of us has unique knowledge of ourselves – call it 'me-ness'. I know that it is I who is typing this paper. You can know that it is Paul Helm who is typing, but you cannot know that fact as I know it; and similarly with you; and similarly with God's knowledge of me. (42)

Analogous considerations hold for God's inability to know A-propositions, for even time-bound creatures have such limitations in that they can know an A-proposition only if they exist at the time referred to by its temporal indexical term. Craig responds that 'the difference between knowing ''I am Paul Helm'' and knowing ''He is Paul Helm'' is [not] a matter of differing propositional content … . These sentences express the same propositional content but are differently grasped by or presented to different persons' (64–65). Craig need not claim that the correct use of these differently indexed counterparts express the same proposition. It suffices that they express logically equivalent propositions, given the principle that if a person knows both that *p* and that *p* entails *q*, then she knows that *q* as well.

But the real force of Helm's analogy between 'now' and other indexicals is not to show similar types of limited accessibility with respect to knowledge, but rather to bring out the subjectivity of our tensed perspectives, thereby excusing God from having to know propositions expressed in terms of them. Toward this end he writes, 'just as I use utterances of ''now'' to refer to times temporally present to my utterances, so I use ''here'' to refer to places spatially present to the place where I make my utterance' (215). The implication is that these indexical perspectives are subject-dependent because both are expressed by token-reflexive utterances. Thus, without speakers who utter 'here' and 'now' there would be no here and now. Wolterstorff rightly objects that A-propositions are not token-reflexive; for 'when I assertively utter [a tensed sentence] I make no claim whatsoever about my act of utterance nor about the token produced' (200). But Wolterstorff is not willing to concede Helm's analogy between now and here, for he thinks that now is objective in a way that here is not. He finds the key disanalogy between them in terms of 'here' alone being token-reflexive.

> I have argued that in speaking of some event as happening *now*, I am not just speaking about the event's relation to my act of speaking – namely, that the two are simultaneous; I am saying that the event has the ontological status of *presently happening*. By contrast, when I say that something is here, I am doing no more than making a claim concerning its relation to where my body is (presently). (209)

But Wolterstorff fails to realize that the same arguments that show that A-propositions aren't token-reflexive work equally for spatial indexical propositions; for, just as it is possible that E happen now although unspoken of, it is possible that E happen here although unspoken of.

The challenge to the opponent of Helm's parody argument is to produce disanalogies between 'here' and 'now' that show the use of 'now' to be objective in ways that the use of 'here' is not. None of Helm's opponents in the debate do this.

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I have attempted to do this in my essay, 'God eternal and Paul Helm', which is to appear in his *Festschrift*, based on ways in which now is non-selective and common among observers that here is not, but I do not have the space to give the details in this review. Although Wolterstorff fails to produce the needed disanalogies, he says interesting things about the nature of the divine–human dialogue that can be marshalled to show an important relevant disanalogy, which I also explore in my essay. For there to be a dialogue that involves intimate interaction, each party moving the other, there must be a coincidence of temporal indexical perspectives (76–70). This sort of intimate interaction cannot be achieved if you know that your correspondent timelessly knows everything you say in the course of the 'conversation' and timelessly causes you to hear his 'responses' at certain times, as would Helm's timeless God. But to have meaningful personal interactions it is not required that the parties share the same spatial indexical perspective – the same here.

All three of the temporalists object to the B-theory's timelessly true B-propositions, because this allegedly has the consequence that all the events that comprise history (the B-series) exist eternally (See: Padgett 104, 169; Wolterstorff 69, 74, 171, 206–207; Craig 133–134, 151–152, 177, 180). Nothing begins or ceases to be, which is absurd. I am quite certain that this objection confounds the timeless truth of a B-proposition with the timeless existence of what it reports. I urge the reader to read carefully the pages just referred to see if this isn't so. In place of the alleged 'static' world of the B-theory, all of our temporalists assert that temporal becoming is an irreducible objective feature of reality, but none of them explain or define this perplexing notion (see Padgett 95–96, 104; Craig 134, 151, 179). Furthermore, some version of presentism, that only the present or only the past and present is real, is defended by each of them, but again no explanation or justification is given.

The major strength of the debate is that it makes manifest the advantages and disadvantages of the eternalist and temporalist views of God's existence, thereby explaining why most of us are conflicted about the issue. What we really want is a God who can have the advantages of both views, which would enable Him to escape between the horns of the above dilemma argument. He would have the sort of self-sufficiency and completeness that mystics admire but also be a suitable object of communion for the theistic moral agent. We really want something like a doctrine of the Trinity in which God has both a timeless and a temporal guise. It is surprising to find Craig peremptorily dismissing the idea of a God who is both timeless and temporal as 'flatly self-contradictory and so [not] true' (129), since of all of the participants he comes closest to espousing just this doctrine, for according to him 'it is not only coherent but also plausible that God existing changelessly alone without creation is timeless and that he enters time at the moment of creation' (160). Craig claims to see 'no reason to think God is either *essentially* temporal or *essentially* timeless' (138). God is only accidentally

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temporal for Craig, because He becomes temporal only if He freely chooses to create a temporal universe; however, Craig holds views that entail that God is essentially timeless. In his previous book on the Kalam cosmological argument, he argues against the conceptual possibility of there being an infinite past. He alludes to this argument on 158 ('and all of the difficulties of an infinite past return to haunt us') but does not supply it, which causes Wolterstorff later to ask for Craig's justification for asserting this (173). (Here is yet another place at which the editor is asleep at the wheel, since he should have required that Craig either give his 'Hilbert's Hotel' argument or supply a bibliographical reference.) This has the consequence that God could not be exclusively temporal, since He would then begin to exist, and thus God must be essentially timeless.

RICHARD M. GALE
University of Pittsburgh, Emeritus
University of Tennessee, Adjunct

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Mikael Stenmark *Scientism: Science, Ethics and Religion*. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001). Pp. xi + 152. £40 (Hbk), £16.99 (Pbk). ISBN 0 7546 0445 4 (Hbk); 0 7546 0446 2 (Pbk).

This careful study of scientism by Mikael Stenmark, Associate Professor of the Philosophy of Religion in the Theology Department at the University of Uppsala, is really in three parts, though the author does not lay it out quite like that. The first part is concerned with the concept of scientism in general; the second part with Darwinian explanations of morality, and the third part with Darwinian accounts of religion.

The first part is the most careful conceptual analysis of scientism that I know, and really helps to clarify the concept. In Chapter 1, Stenmark distinguishes various kinds of scientism, specifically methodological scientism (the extension of the methods of natural science to other disciplines), external scientism (the reduction of all essential areas of human life to science), epistemological scientism (the claim that the only reality we can know about is the one science tells us about), rationalistic scientism (the view that science is the only basis for rational belief), ontological scientism (the claim that the only reality that exists is the one studied by science), axiological scientism (the view that science is the most valuable part of human culture and can explain and replace morality), and existential scientism (the claim that science alone can explain and replace religion). I have summarized these various types of scientism rather baldly, and skated over some of the helpful subtlety that Stenmark introduces into his discussion of each of them. It is a very useful conceptual analysis, even though, as Stenmark

acknowledges, all these aspects of scientism can come together in 'comprehensive scientism'. Chapter 2 begins with a helpful discussion of the extent to which various facets of scientism entail one another.

The main focus of Chapter 2 is on epistemic and ontological scientism, especially the claim that the only kind of knowledge we can have is scientific knowledge. Stenmark challenge this on the grounds that it is not itself a scientific statement. If only scientific statements can be accepted, this particular non-scientific statement cannot be accepted. Thus, Stenmark argues, it is self-refuting. Further, he argues, if this claim falls, so does the claim that the only things that exist are the ones that science can discover. This is a serious and interesting criticism of scientism. Though it is not wholly novel, it is laid out with care and rigour. However, I would have appreciated more discussion of the possible responses that might have been made to his argument, and how he would deal with them.

This philosophical analysis of scientism left me he wanting some accompanying historical analysis, though it may be unfair to be asking for that in what is clearly conceived as a philosophical book. It would clarify the history of scientism since the seventeenth century to look at it in terms of the conceptual distinctions that Stenmark makes. For example, it would be helpful to see which aspects of scientism go back to the scientific revolution. Some of them clearly do, and Enlightenment 'natural theology' was perhaps in some sense, though not in others, a product of a limited kind of scientism. However, other aspects of scientism probably do not arise until the Darwinian revolution and late modernity. Unravelling all this would be a good research topic for the future, and Stenmark provides the conceptual tools that would be required for it.

The next two chapters are devoted to the Darwinian explanation of morality. Clearly, this is an enterprise that has some of the hallmarks of scientism. In that sense it is fully justifiable to be considering it in a book on scientism. However, the Darwinian explanation of morality cannot be equated with 'the scientific explanation of morality', which is actually the title of Chapter 3. I would contend that the Darwinian approach is only one component of the scientific study of morality, but by no means the only one. If we are to make a fair assessment of the capacity of science to explain morality, then we need to look beyond the Darwinian approach, and to include, amongst other things, empirical moral psychology. The way in which Stenmark confines himself to the Darwinian approach to morality leaves the potential scope of a broader scientific approach to morality unexamined.

There is another aspect of these chapters that I found frustrating. Stenmark repeatedly reproduces phrases such as 'the most dominant determinant in human behaviour is maximizing fitness', and 'human behaviour (including morality) is firmly under the control of the genes'. The concepts of 'firmly' and 'most dominant' are among the most slippery and potentially misleading in sociological

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writings about morality, and it is regrettable in a book of this kind to find them reproduced with no critical examination. My complaint is not that Stenmark accepts these claims, but rather that there are crucial aspects of them that go unexamined.

No serious scientist can fail to recognize that human behaviour is the result of an interaction between nature and nurture. Given this, a lot hangs on exactly what is meant to by the suggestion that evolutionary-determined 'nature' is more important than the effects of learning and culture. The quantification of the influence of these different components is notoriously difficult, and I suspect that the phraseology of the sociobiologists that Stenmark reproduces cannot stand up to critical examination.

Another frustrating feature of this part of the book is that it does not clearly distinguish between different forms of sociobiological theory of morality. For example, Dawkins, though ostensibly a sociobiologist, largely replaces the biological concept of genes with the sociocultural concept of 'memes'. In this he differs from Wilson, who retains a much more significant role for genes. There is also an important difference between early and late E. O. Wilson. The theoretical work that Wilson did in collaboration with Lumsden, on the co-evolution of genes and culture, is arguably his most sophisticated, but it is not referred to here at all. Further, some sociobiologists see morality as counteracting the inherently amoral effects of evolution, while others see morality as a product of evolution. These major differences between sociobiologists are not adequately considered.

Stenmark does some very helpful clarification of the proposition that human beings are inherently selfish, even when they appear to be altruistic. He makes a useful distinction between biological selfishness (decreasing another entity's chances to survive and reproduce, to the advantage of one's own reproductive fitness), and moral selfishness (being motivated to satisfy one's own self-interest without regard for others). Stenmark makes the convincing point that you can be biologically selfish even when you are not being morally selfish. Even if it is accepted that all human actions are at root biologically selfish, there is still a distinction to be drawn between selfish and altruistic actions at a moral level. That distinction cannot just be obliterated by the assumption that everything is explicable in evolutionary terms. Stenmark also makes the important point that the assumption that all human actions are biologically selfish only holds if it is valid to assume that evolution is the main determinant of all human behaviour. However, that is another sociobiological proposition that goes beyond what can legitimately be concluded from the scientific evidence.

Sociobiology often claims that ethics is merely the product of evolution. However, against that Stenmark applies an argument that is similar to his more general argument that scientism is self-refuting. The argument that ethics has no objective force or validity, and merely serves reproductive ends, is part of a general claim that applies to all human beliefs. However, that claim can be

deployed against scientific as well as ethical statements. Science can also be seen as merely a product of evolution, and this undercuts the claims of evolutionary theory about ethics. Thus, as Stenmark argues, the claim that ethics is merely a product of evolution is self-refuting. Alternatively, if scientific statements are an exception to evolutionary reductionism and do not merely serve the needs of reproduction and survival, ethics may also be an exception to evolutionary reductionism.

In the third part of the book, Stenmark turns his attention to evolutionary explanations of religion. The arguments here are very similar to those that arise with evolutionary explanations of morality. However, the ground is less well tilled, so it is easier for Stenmark to advance the discussion. As he admits, there is no difficulty in suggesting an evolutionary account of religion, in that there are aspects of religion that can be seen as serving the requirements of reproduction and survival. However, it is another matter to claim that religion serves only evolutionary functions. There may be more to it.

Stenmark then makes what, to my mind, is a curious move; he suggests a non-Darwinian explanation of religion. Essentially, what he suggests is that religion serves existential rather than survival functions, and that religion is what people do 'to come to grips with their existential concern' (85). I happen to share his view that an existential explanation of religion is more plausible than a Darwinian one. However, it is still, in some sense, a scientific explanation. Advancing one scientific explanation of religion rather than another does not obviously undermine the credibility of seeking to explain religion in scientific terms. In that sense it is not an argument against scientism in general, but only against one particular form of scientism.

In considering the suggestion that evolution and religion are incompatible, Stenmark makes a helpful distinction between science and naturalism. Evolutionary naturalism is, almost by definition, incompatible with an approach to religion that takes religion seriously in its own terms. However, there are versions of evolutionary theory that have a proper claim to be regarded as scientific, but which are not naturalistic. In that sense, there is no difficulty in reconciling non-naturalistic forms of evolutionary theory with religion. In the course of this discussion, Stenmark makes some good points about the nature of religious claims, and how far they can be seen as scientific hypotheses.

This leads into a helpful discussion of the ways in which science can itself become a form of religion. This is an interesting possibility, and something that has not yet sufficiently discussed in the literature. As Stenmark says, there are at least two issues here. One is whether science can fulfil all the functions of religion; it can probably fulfil many of them, though perhaps not all. However, I think Stenmark is right in indicating that the real issue is whether, insofar as science develops some of the functions of religion, it is still a proper part of science. In order for science to become a religion, he argues, it has in some sense

to cease to be science. Science attracts much of its credibility from the record of success that it can claim. However, this record of success is for science as science. If science aspires to provide morality or religion, it is venturing into untried territory, and there is no reason to assume that its record of success can be transferred to these new enterprises. It is tempting, he argues, for science to claim the authority of its successful track record when it is actually embarking on essentially new and non-scientific enterprises.

There is much of value in this book, and more than I have been able to indicate in this review. The quality of argument is rigorous, and everything is carefully and systematically laid out. For the most part, I found the philosophical arguments convincing. However, the book is unremittingly negative about scientism, and I was left suspecting that there are at least some moderate forms of scientism for which a good defence can be made, despite Stenmark's arguments. I would like to have seen that explored more thoroughly.

Also, this book has the limitations of being a rather narrowly philosophical one. It never gets far into scientific material; and it does not consider the historical and cultural context in which arguments have been advanced. It thus treats the issues raised from the limited and particular vantage point of the discipline of philosophy. However, with that constraint, no doubt intended by the author, it does a good job.

FRASER WATTS
Queens' College, Cambridge

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Paul Copan and Paul K. Moser (eds) *The Rationality of Theism*. (London: Routledge, 2003). Pp. xi + 292. £19.99 (Pbk). ISBN 0 415 26332 8.

This collection of thirteen original essays on the rationality of belief in God, together with an introduction by the editors, is a joint product of faith and philosophical rigour. It is evident from the introduction and from some of the essays that the contributors have more than a professional interest in their subject; they wish to press the case for faith in God because they have that faith themselves. But they also have a commitment to philosophical argument, for which all of them are professionally trained.

The collection is organized into three parts. Part 1, 'Foundational considerations', addresses some preliminaries to serious discussion of belief in God, such as religious language and verificationism (William P. Alston), and the relation of theism to science (Robert C. Koons). Part 2, 'Arguments for God's existence', ranges from essays on traditional arguments, such as the various versions of the

cosmological argument (William Lane Craig), to work on more recent arguments such as the argument from consciousness (J. P. Moreland). Part 3, 'Potential defeaters for theism', offers theistic rebuttals to the two primary arguments against theism, the charge of incoherence (Charles Taliaferro) and the problem of evil (Gregory E. Ganssle).

The contributors share intellectual commitments that inform their work. They are, first of all, evidentialists who deny that 'faith is a leap in the dark, a commitment made in the absence of evidence', and who insist that faith and reason 'are not opposed at all' (2). Their aim, in seeking cognitively justified belief in God, is 'an accurate portrayal of reality' (3). They make frequent use of inference to the best explanation, arguing that '[theism has] a natural context for explaining important features of our world' (4), and for explaining them more convincingly than its rivals, including its 'most influential intellectual rival, *naturalism*' (3). Given their preference for 'best explanation' arguments, it is not surprising that they favour natural theology put 'in terms of good reasons rather than mathematical proofs' (7–8), and that they recommend bringing together all available evidence and arguments into a cumulative case for theism.

Not all theists in philosophy are evidentialists. This is for the very good reason that there exists a long tradition of robust atheistic evidentialism of the W. K. Clifford variety, according to which it is *not* rational to believe in God because there is not, and cannot be, sufficient evidence for his existence. This tradition has come under attack in the 'Reformed epistemology' of Alvin Plantinga, Nicholas Wolterstorff, and others, which claims that belief in God can be 'properly basic' for believers, such that they are rational to hold their belief even in the absence of evidence and argument.

The contributors to *The Rationality of Theism* are aware of Reformed epistemology, and have learned from it, but their interest is in using recent work in philosophy and science to build an evidential case for theism that is more than a match for atheistic evidentialism. In 'Faith and foundationalism', David K. Clark gives the book's only extended treatment of Reformed epistemology. In it he agrees that belief in God can be properly basic, and he excoriates pure evidentialism (the notion that rationality requires that *nothing* be believed in the absence of justifying evidence) as self-referentially absurd. He argues that belief in God as properly basic, i.e. the believer's claim to know by faith, does not place religious claims 'entirely beyond critique' (51). Clark maintains that believers should remain open to new information and be alert for potential defeaters for their beliefs. The other essays in the book pay little or no attention to Reformed epistemology.

Given the intellectual commitments of the contributors to *The Rationality of Theism*, this book is likely to appeal to persons for whom theism and naturalism are the only live philosophical options, and who believe that there is some point to reviewing whatever evidence there might be for the existence of God. Pantheists,

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theists who are fideists, and anyone strongly attracted to postmodernism are unlikely to read the book. The editors, and presumably all the contributors, are keenly interested in attracting readers among naturalists who do not think that there is any point in considering the existence of God. The editors recommend that these 'dissenters reconsider, with due care, the available evidence of God's reality' (1).

Theologians, philosophers, and others will vary in what they find to be most interesting and valuable among the many arguments in this book. I have chosen to comment briefly on arguments from Paul Moser and Charles Taliaferro, and to make a critical but friendly remark about a feature of the book taken as a whole.

As its title indicates, *The Rationality of Theism* is about, or ostensibly about, an unqualified or generic theism. Many of its arguments are in fact in defence of propositions that are accepted by all the principal theistic traditions. But all the contributors are Christians, and at certain places in the book this fact makes itself known. This is particularly true in the introduction, and in Paul Moser's assertively Christian essay, 'Cognitive inspiration and knowledge of God', which is full of biblical quotations. The presence of these explicitly Christian elements in the book may disturb some readers, but they serve as a reminder that the object of faith for theists is rarely a religiously neutral philosophical idea such as a 'first cause' or a 'maximally perfect being'. It is not unreasonable to supplement a cumulative case for generic theism with arguments for a particular theistic tradition.

Part of the traditional case for theism is a variety of appeals to religious experience. One helpful way to classify these appeals is as either 'inferential' or 'non-inferential'. In an inferential appeal, a person's testimony about his or her religious experiences can count as evidence for the reality of God as the source of the experiences. In a non-inferential appeal, the religious experiences count as non-inferential grounds for belief in God on the part of the person having them. In 'The evidential value of religious experience', R. Douglas Geivett discusses these matters at length, and in his essay Moser argues for what he believes is a neglected biblical basis for an appeal to religious experience. I will comment briefly on Moser.

What Moser believes to be neglected in philosophical discussions of religious experience is the power of God's Spirit. As he puts it, the Spirit 'brings new *power* to a person, and this power is felt by its recipient and is even observable by others' (62). This experience involves 'a kind of manifested power foreign to natural expectations' (62), and a 'cognitive inspiration' that 'yields knowledge of God' (63). Moser's thought is that a person who welcomes God acquires knowledge of God that transcends what is possible from publicly available evidence and argument. In other words, the religious experience Moser describes affords its subject non-inferential grounds for belief in God. And this power is not only 'felt by its recipient' but is 'observable by others', so that the testimony and

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any other relevant behaviour of the empowered believer becomes publicly available evidence for the existence of God. Moser, then, presents the power of God's Spirit as licensing both inferential and non-inferential appeals to religious experience. Although Moser's primary interest in the essay is in the private, non-inferential side of this double licence, it is the public, inferential side that makes a contribution to a cumulative case for the rationality of theism. For if (Christian) theism claims that God gives sincere believers power to live lives of type Y, and if lives of type Y are highly unlikely apart from this grant of power, then anyone who observes sincere believers living lives of type Y has a good reason for believing in God.

Any serious evidentialist attempt to answer the question of whether it is rational to believe in God will consider the evidence for theism (in this book, principally Part 2) in tandem with potential defeaters (Part 3). One of those defeaters is the charge that there is incoherence in the concept of God, a charge to which Charles Taliaferro responds in 'The possibility of God – the coherence of theism'. He is particularly concerned to explain 'why it is so difficult to show theism to be incoherent' (248), a difficulty that accounts in part for the large and inconclusive body of literature on the coherence of the divine attributes. Taliaferro suggests that the answer lies in 'the flexibility or elasticity of the metaphysics of theism' which derives partly from 'theistic convictions about God's perfection or excellence' (248). If God has unsurpassable excellence, this can help to explain apparent inconsistencies among His attributes. For instance, if God is morally excellent, it may be impossible for Him to do something a morally evil being might do. This suggests that God cannot be both morally excellent and omnipotent, because a morally excellent being would lack the power to perform evil acts. But given a 'perfect-being' conception of God these two attributes can be compatible. For in the case of a perfect being the power to perform evil acts may not count as a power, since it (the power to perform evil acts) is for acting 'in weakness and corruption', in contrast to omnipotence which is power only for acting 'in strength and excellence' (250). And appeals to divine excellence are not the only grounds theists have for rejecting claims of logical incoherence in the concept of God. Theists can, and do, propose various philosophical analyses of divine attributes, making it very difficult for their critics to 'pin down' a detailed philosophical account of God. Without such an account no-one can justifiably say that 'to be a theist one must believe A, B, and C, a logically inconsistent set of propositions'. As Taliaferro notes, this failure to secure the incoherence charge against theism had led 'many of the prominent atheist philosophers' to believe 'that theism is indeed possible' (256).

It seems to me that atheist philosophers should have known from the start that the charge of logical incoherence would fail as a defeater for theism. I have two reasons for saying this. First, the historical record is full of disputes between theists over their efforts to understand the concept of God, disputes that continue

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to the present day. This record should have made atheist philosophers wary of linking their arguments to precise formulations of divine attributes. Second, since all theists – at least all traditional theists – agree that God is the transcendent creator of the universe, it is reasonable to conclude that any apparent inconsistencies in the concept of God *could* be 'merely apparent' rather than real. This is because finite human minds have difficulty grasping transcendence. It was not for no reason that some early Christian thinkers called God 'ineffable', 'incomprehensible', and 'unknowable'.

The contributors to *The Rationality of Theism* argue carefully for their positions, and are frank about intellectual problems they have not solved. Alston, for instance, in discussing language about God, admits that 'none of our terms fits God adequately' (33) and Stephen T. Davis accepts as 'convincing' Michael Martin's critiques of some versions of the ontological argument (93). But the overall tone of the book is one of confidence, perhaps best expressed by Koons, who writes that 'the evidence for theism has never been so clear and strong as it is now' (73). This book is an excellent introduction to the arguments that give rise to that confidence.

DAVID CIOCCHI
Biola University, CA

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Quentin Smith and Aleksandar Jokic (eds) *Consciousness: New Philosophical Perspectives*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Pp. i + 532. £19.99 (Pbk). ISBN 0 19 924129 5.

Peter Strawson once commented that there is no shallow end in philosophy. I suspect that there is a shallow end of the pool of philosophy, but you will not find it here. This new collection of papers begins and ends in the deep end of philosophy of mind. The papers explore the nature of intentionality and the phenomenal content of experience (Part 1), our awareness of mental states (Part 2), the relationship of consciousness and the brain (Part 3), and the bearing of quantum mechanics on the philosophy of consciousness (Part 4). I offer a brief survey of the main contributions.

One of the goals of Part 1 seems to be the naturalistic taming of the felt, phenomenological or subjective dimension of experience, sometimes called *qualia*. Brian Loar summarizes the problem:

> *Qualia* are not universally loved. They have been seen by many physicalists as a reactionary woolly-minded doctrine that would impede a fully naturalistic account of the mental. Others find them undesirable because of their contribution to Cartesian

> internalism, which is supposed to lead to bad things – scepticism or disconnection from the world (78).

Joseph Levine testifies that we have 'strong intuitions' that our conscious experience has a felt, subjective character. '*Qualia*', he writes, 'or phenomenal properties of experience, pose a deep and persistent problem for materialists' (57). Levine sees the quandary over phenomenal properties not so much in locating them in the brain (maybe feeling pain is identical with neurons firing), but in identifying or correlating them with specific brain states: 'There is something just utterly arbitrary about the idea that these neurons firing in this way should constitute a toe-throbbing and these others a reddish visual experience' (57).

Among the five contributions to Part 1, Michael Tye continues his project of defending the necessary correlation of visual experience and representational content. Familiarity with the literature is vital, for page 1 lands one in the midst of representationalism, content and phenomenal externalism, inverted earth and Swampman thought-experiments, and Tye's two prominent critics (Christopher Peacocke and Ned Block). There is a cost to some of Tye's arguments against recognizing phenomenal properties in one's sensory field. To take one example, this is his strategy with after-images and hallucination: 'It seems to me that there is a clear sense in which the basic experiences involved in seeing after-images are *always* illusory. For when one sees an after-image, there is nothing that one thereby sees' (21). He likens seeing an after-image to hallucinating an elephant. 'The spot [after-image] one apprehends, like the elephant, is unreal' (22). 'Unreal' is then explained as: 'Its status is that of an intentional inexistent, like that of the eternal life some hope for or the golden fleece Jason sought' (22). H. D. Lewis, the first editor of *Religious Studies*, would protest (rightly, I think) that this analogy is unsuccessful. After-images and the proverbial pink elephant are seen as coloured shapes. (As an aside, Tye presumably thinks Jason can seek the golden fleece without there actually being such a thing; I agree, but I suggest that *seeing* an after-image or hallucination is less like seeking the golden fleece but more like your having the *sensation* of ostensibly seeing it with its golden colour.)

Tim Crane proposes an intentional analysis of sensations. If successful, this would offer a unified treatment of the mental in terms of intentionality. There is a very interesting discussion on the location of pain (41–48), of general interest for those working on the relation of sensations to bodily parts. (Can there be a pain in your foot?) Levine correlates *qualia* and intentional content but he thinks his position does not further advance reductive naturalism. 'So much the worse for reduction', he concludes (75).

In the final entry of Part 1, Brian McLaughlin contributes a fine paper on colour-consciousness, defending its phenomenal, experiential character. One of his goals is to convince us that colour-consciousness might still turn out to be a

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physical property, notwithstanding its experiential character. McLaughlin's definition of physicalism is as follows 'I take physicalism to require that *all there is is whatever there must* (*of metaphysical necessity*) *be for the actual world to be exactly as it is microphysically*' (146). In one respect this allows the physicalist to concede that there are some non-physical properties. The definition does not, for example, rule out there being colour-consciousness *qua* non-physical property for that property, fixed and controlled at the micro-level. One of the problems with this version of physicalism, however, is that not just colour-consciousness would be fixed at the micro-level, but all our beliefs, desires, and reasoning. It would entail that when you conclude that $2+2=4$ this does not result from normative, intentional reflection. The underlying cause involves micro-physical factors which are non-intentional and non-reasoning. McLaughlin might propose that the relevant causal account of your reasoning could be both micro-physical as well as macro-physical, but his form of physicalism implies a bottom-up strategy in which it is the micro-physical which determines or fixes everything else (146).

In Part 2, Shaun Nichols and Stephen Stich propose an account of self-awareness they call the monitoring mechanism theory. Kristen Andrews employs an account of the way the prediction and explanation of other people ties into our self-awareness. David Chalmers has a superb defence of the existence of phenomenal beliefs that are not conceptually reducible to physicalist and functional analysis. His posture seems to me altogether sensible: 'Any plausible epistemological view must find a central role for experience in the justification of both beliefs about experience and beliefs about the world' (268). Ernest Sosa offers a measured, critical examination of the ostensible privileged access each person has to her mental states.

Part 3 includes James Fetzer's semiotic approach to the mind–body problem. Minds are sign-using systems. He challenges computational accounts of thinking the problem of other minds requires inference. 'Since minds and mental states are non-observable properties of brains and brain-states, their existence and properties must be approached inferentially' (320). David Papineau refines his physicalist approach to the mental, insisting on the causal closure of the physical world (there are no non-physical causal contributions). He does not deny phenomenal properties. Quite the opposite. One of the sub-headings of his paper is: 'How physicalists can stop worrying and learn to love phenomenal concepts'. He also concedes a modest, conceptual dualism: 'While I am a physicalist about determinate conscious *properties*, I am a sort of dualist about the *concepts* we use [to] refer to these properties' (355) (emphasis his). But anything short of a thorough physicalism is 'a wild-goose chase' (364). (Dualism is uncharitably described as positing a 'non-physical property floating about the physical' (364).) Two articles take aim at challenging quasi-dualist, non-physicalist positions: William Lycan takes to task those who defend the so-called knowledge argument

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(originating from Frank Jackson). He does so with little enthusiasm (384) and, I think, without sufficient grasp of the force of the knowledge argument. Anthony Brueckner and Alex Beroukhim challenge Colin McGinn's case for the mystery of consciousness.

The fourth part of this collection is philosophically the most novel and exciting, assessing the possible resources of quantum theory for thinking about consciousness. The section concludes on a pessimistic note. The last paper is by Barry Loewer who writes: 'While the nature of consciousness and its relation to neurophysiological and other physical phenomena are indeed hard problems there is little reason at present to think that quantum mechanics will have much to say about them' (523). But prior to that, Quentin Smith delivers a rousing case for both the metaphysics entailed by quantum mechanics and for its indispensable contribution to philosophy of mind. Quantum cognitive science, according to Smith, will lead to a critique of folk psychology as well as folk physics. But this is not a version of eliminitivism for, as Smith explains, quantum physics 'makes use of the categories of common-sense psychology, such as consciousness, experience, perception, observation, etc' (418). Contemporary materialists often assume that an ideal and complete description of the cosmos will exclude all psychological terms. But Smith rejoins: 'A basic axiom of [quantum] physics … essentially includes psychological vocabulary' (418). 'A crucial part of my quantum consciousness hypothesis is the rejection of physical reductionism, since configuration space contains some physical dimensions and some nonreducible mental dimensions, such that conscious acts and the immediate contents of consciousness (*qualia* and thoughts) exist in the mental dimensions of configuration space' (428). Smith's paper is challenging (in the good sense of the word) and bold.

Michael Lockwood and Don Page contribute different essays that fill out a quantum scientific portrayal of consciousness. It is interesting that each of them pays some respect to the uphill struggle to achieve a completely naturalistic, physicalist account of consciousness. Page writes of the recalcitrant, stubborn appearance of a distinction of the mental and the physical:

> There may be a deeper level of understanding at which the 'conscious world' and the 'quantum world' are unified, but to get to this level it does not seem to me to help to pretend that at our present level of understanding our descriptions do not usually make a distinction between what appears to be these two different aspects of reality. (472)

Michael Lockwood's description of the current state of play in philosophy of mind is worth citing at length.

> Let me begin by nailing my colours to the mast. I count myself a materialist, in the sense that I take consciousness to be a species of brain activity. Having said that, however, it seems to me evident that no description of brain activity of the relevant kind, couched in the currently available languages of physics, physiology, or functional

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> or computational roles, is remotely capable of capturing what is distinctive about consciousness. So glaring, indeed, are the shortcomings of all the reductive programmes currently on offer, that I cannot believe that anyone with a philosophical training, looking dispassionately at these programmes, would take any of them seriously for a moment, were it not for a deep-seated conviction that current physical science has essentially got reality taped, and accordingly, *something* along the lines of what the reductionists are offering *must* be correct. To that extent, the very existence of consciousness seems to me to be a standing demonstration of the explanatory limitations of contemporary physical science. (447)

Readers of this journal may wonder whether *Consciousness: New Philosophical Perspectives* has a direct bearing on religious studies and philosophy of religion. I believe it does. Different philosophies of God seem committed to the falsehood of physicalism as a comprehensive theory of everything; (McLaughlin observes in a footnote: 'The existence of God should be incompatible with physicalism' (146)). And accounts of consciousness can impact views on religious experience, the coherence of an afterlife, miracles, divine attributes, the soul, and religious ethics.

I recommend this collection, especially for Quentin Smith's provocative essay.

CHARLES TALIAFERRO
St Olaf College

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Patrick R. Frierson *Freedom and Anthropology in Kant's Moral Philosophy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Pp. x+210. £40.00 (Hbk). ISBN 0 521 82400 1.

The aim of this book is to determine the place of Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798, to be found in vol. 7 of the Academy edition of the *Gesammelte Schriften*) in the Critical philosophy. This involves the author doing two things. On the one hand, he comments on a number of contemporary writers who have used the material in the *Anthropology* to soften the picture of Kant as turning his back on the emotions and the virtues in his Critical moral philosophy. The writers considered here include Nancy Sherman and Robert Loudon. On the other hand, he confronts a major charge laid against the *Anthropology* by Schleiermacher. This is to the effect that its account of how cultivation of emotions and the like can assist in the attainment and practice of virtue is clean contrary to the Critical claim that free acts are transcendentally, not empirically, caused. This claim appears to rule out the possibility that the free will, which accepts and rejects maxims of conduct, can be influenced in any way whatsoever by cultivation of the empirical human character.

The two tasks undertaken by Frierson are intertwined. He seeks to show that those he styles 'neo-Kantians' in contemporary ethics give us at best incomplete accounts of how the *Anthropology* ties in with the rest of Kant's mature ethics because they do not answer Schleiermacher's charge fully. Frierson's own answer to the charge consists in distinguishing between the free will *per se* in the Critical philosophy and *expressions* of that will in acts in the empirical world. While Kant's system clearly rules out empirical causes influencing the free will *per se*, the kind of phenomena described in the *Anthropology* – which seem more suited to an Aristotelian ethics – can influence the expressions of will in action. Frierson's readers will find this solution ingenious, but they may wish there had been more in the book on the notion of an expression of the will in action. Apart from the general light this book throws on Kant's ethics and Critical philosophy, this book will be of considerable value to students of Kant's philosophy of religion for its discussion of radical evil, the change of heart, grace, and related matters from the *Religion* in chapter 5. Much has been written on these topics in recent years, but Frierson manages to bring a fresh pair of eyes to them and to raise a series of penetrating questions about the interpretation and coherence of Kant's account.

PETER BYRNE
King's College London

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