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Eric Watkins (Editor). *The Divine Order, the Human Order, and the Order of Nature: Historical Perspectives*. xxviii + 240 pp., index. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013. $74 (cloth).

The philosophical and natural-philosophical developments of the early modern period have long been subject to an especially pervasive grand narrative, that of the conflict between empiricism and rationalism and its eventual synthesis in Kant. For quite some time now, that narrative has been routinely rejected. And yet there remains something attractive about such an all-encompassing approach, and the historiography of the early modern period has a tendency to seek out a replacement for the empiricism–rationalism opposition. Eric Watkins' collection aims to provide that replacement. In his introduction to the volume, Watkins notes the value of the alternative narratives that have appeared in the scholarship over the last twenty years or so (grounding of sciences, scepticism, evil, freedom, etc.) but criticises them for being too piecemeal. 'What is thus needed', he writes, 'is a broader perspective that could unite these partial narratives into a single account' (p. xvii). The goal of this collection is to show how the notion of order (whether natural, divine, human or moral) provides that unifying account.

The individual essays are all of high quality, as is to be expected, given the impressive roster. The first section of the book provides some context from medieval Aristotelian and Jewish thought. Marilyn McCord Adams' piece is a thorough overview of the relationship between the divine and natural orders in the work of Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham, while Steven Nadler's succinct chapter argues that, for Maimonides, the intellectually virtuous can avoid the misfortunes of the natural order via knowledge gained from the overflow of God's intellect.

Daniel Garber opens the book's second section (on the pre-Kantian early modern period) with a comparison of Descartes, Leibniz, Hobbes, and Spinoza on God's involvement in laws of nature. Garber concludes with the apposite (although underdeveloped) suggestion that modern science has maintained an early modern conception of natural laws while ignoring their metaphysical baggage – similar points are later raised, but again not developed, by both Peter Harrison and Eric Watkins. Robert Adams then presents an extensive account of Malebranche's occasionalism. Malebranche recurs in Tad Schmaltz's chapter, which argues that he is the originator of a particular tradition of addressing the natural and moral orders through universal laws that extends through Berkeley and (more surprisingly) Hume. Peter Harrison analyses the relations between Descartes, Cambridge Platonism, and Newtonianism through the lens of laws of nature. Both Donald Rutherford and Martha Bolton then turn that lens on Leibniz. Rutherford argues for a reconciliation of laws with powers, where each is as explanatorily fundamental as the other, while Bolton argues in favour of an interpretation of monadic appetites as exclusively desire-like.

That Kant gets the final section to himself appears to be a nod towards the traditional narrative. Andrew Chignell gives a detailed analysis of the notion of hope in Kant's philosophy of religion, showing how its role in the moral order rests on a minimal conception of the possibility of God. The volume concludes with Watkins' argument that certain features of the natural and moral orders are only possible on the basis of the divine order. The claim is revisionary in redirecting Kantian anthropocentrism back towards the divine order, which, given Watkins' aims for the volume, makes perfect sense.

The advantage of the volume's approach is that it is wonderfully ambitious. If early modern philosophy really does turn out to have order as its overarching theme, it will provide us with rich, more historically adequate insight into the period. However, the volume does not quite reach its goal. Firstly, more needs to have been done to justify the assumed need for a unifying narrative. It may well be that the period involved various philosophies that overlapped piecemeal in various ways without any single unifying thread. Secondly, even if we accept the need for a unifying narrative, the volume would have benefitted from an extended, programmatic attempt to argue that it is order that plays that role. The introduction includes a few general remarks about how order was at issue (p. xviii), but the justification is missing. Presumably, the evidence in favour of order is intended to come out of the individual essays that make up the collection. What they show, however, is that order is *an* issue for certain early modern philosophers, but not that it is *the* issue that provides a united, single account. The picture that comes out of these essays is ultimately not that of order as a new grand narrative, but of order as a partial narrative that usefully highlights various features of various philosophies and various connections between them. Which is no bad thing.