the foreword, when stating, "The non-dualist alternative explored in the pages that follow is the resurrection of the body (XII)." Neither Cartesian nor non-Cartesian versions of substance dualism find their way into the discussion. This dismissal is intimately tied to the perennial problem concerning bodily persistence faced in the book.

Gasser in commenting on the views represented in the book, states: "No solution is able to preserve identity in the strict sense (p. 9)." If no view provides this kind of identity and personal identity depends upon a body that is strictly the same, then the materialist will have difficulty accounting for personal identity, as well, because for most versions of materialism personal identity is predicated upon same body/brain. Alternative solutions that are able to account for persistence of personal identity and, possibly bodily identity, include a form of immaterialism, substance dualism or Thomistic hylomorphism with the soul/form having *ens per se* kind of existence. Both of these views account for personal identity by affirming an immaterial entity endures through somatic death to the physical resurrection. Nonetheless, how might they account for the body? One answer may be that an enduring soul only needs a similar body, or, alternatively, the soul provides the sufficient conditions for the new body. In the final analysis, it is clear that to dismiss dualist views of persons is unwarranted. Unpopular though it may be, substance dualism has something to contribute to the contemporary discussion.

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Timothy Yoder. *Hume on God: Irony, Deism and Genuine Theism*. Continuum, 2008.

The title of a recent biography of David Hume is *The Great Infidel* and almost all interpreters of Hume, from his contemporaries on, have taken him to be an atheist, agnostic or some kind of deist. In Hume's works, though, there are many instances of what Timothy Yoder calls 'affirmation passages' where Hume seems to acknowledge the existence of the traditional God of theism. These are usually written off as mere irony and seen as part of a strategy of concealment for reasons of prudence given the dangers of open avowal of atheism in the eighteenth century. Much of Yoder's book focuses on these passages and on the purposes to which authors put various kinds of irony. He highlights 'covering

irony' – or, in the context of religion, 'theological lying' – in which there is a private and a public message: it is intended that an audience understand something different from the explicit declaration, and there is often a twist where the public message is portrayed as ridiculous and those shrewd enough to understand the private message thus see its superior force. Hume is usually taken to be adopting such a strategy: the private message is sceptical whereas the public message is pious. Yoder, however, asks us to 'not be too hasty to identify irony in an author's writings unless a straightforward reading can be ruled out' (p. 34) – 'not every religious proposition that [Hume] asserts is automatically to be viewed as disingenuous or insincere.' (p. 50) Yoder thinks 'it is time for a reevaluation of Hume on God, ... a fresh reading.' (p. 20) And in order to provide such a reading, Yoder offers a hermeneutic procedure for determining whether passages in a text should be taken as ironic and, if so, for determining their role. Suggestive of irony are certain explicit hints contained in titles and epigraphs, known errors and contradictory claims made by the author, inconsistencies in style or vocabulary, and conflicts between the text and the author's known or expected beliefs.

In certain ways Yoder's resultant interpretation of Hume is uncontroversial. His Hume is critical of organised religion and of Christianity in particular. Irony is sometimes used in his attacks on religion for reasons of politeness since many of Hume's friends were religious. Hume's irony also results in some very funny commentary on religion and examples are given of Hume's sometimes 'dripping sarcasm' (p. 27). (Hume's *History of England* could also have been mined for sarcasm and humour.)

There is, though, a surprise. Hume may be critical of 'vulgar' religious beliefs and practices – of, for example, petitionary prayer – but Yoder argues that Hume does accept that there is a transcendent being who created the universe, 'the one true and surpassing God, who created all and governs the universe according to his eternal laws, written out of his supreme power and wisdom.' (p. 92) Belief in such a being constitutes 'true religion' or 'genuine theism'. Yoder claims that 'the testimony of one of history's great sceptics and thinkers is that there is a god – a sobering message to a secular age.' (p. 146)

Yoder supports these claims with a close reading of some of Hume's works. In the *Natural History of Religion* (NHR), religions old and new come in for hostile criticism, but there are also several affirmation passages and Yoder takes these at face value.

> [T]he whole frame of nature bespeaks an intelligent author; and no rational enquirer can, after serious reflection, suspend his belief a moment with regard to the primary principles of genuine Theism and Religion. (NHR, Introduction; Yoder, p. 6)

The *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (DNR) is a work usually taken to be destructive not only of popular religion but also of the argument from design and natural theology in general. First, Yoder supports the plausible interpretation that there is no one interlocutor that speaks for Hume, but that we must 'distil the truths that emerge from the froth of the entire debate' (p. 99) between Philo (the sceptic), Demea (the mystic) and Cleanthes (proponent of the argument from design). Philo's perplexing 'reversal', where he seems to affirm belief in the existence of God after having in the preceding parts of the book undermined natural theology, is a conundrum for any interpreter of Hume. At first blush certain clues suggest irony – Philo, for example, seems to make contradictory statements concerning the existence of God – but this, Yoder argues, is because Philo is considering two distinct arguments: he is critical of arguments that support an anthropocentric idea of God but does affirm the existence of God via a distinct kind of argument from design. There is therefore no reversal. Philo's sentiments are unfeigned: 'no one has a deeper sense of religion impressed on his mind ... a purpose, an intention, a design strikes everywhere the most careless, the most stupid thinker.' (DNR 12.2; Yoder, p. 110) The argument that Philo accepts is not an argument from analogy (although Yoder admits the form of Hume's argument is not explicit in the text); rather, when we observe the intricate order of nature 'the idea of a contriver [designer] ... flow[s] in upon you with a force like that of sensation' (DNR 3.7; Yoder, p. 105). The awe we feel in the presence of nature entails that 'it is as if we have witnessed first-hand the fashioning of [for example] the human eye by the hand of God.' (p. 105) Given, though, the importance of Philo's beliefs to an interpretation of Hume on religion, this suggestion requires more careful development. In particular more could have been done to show how this interpretation is consistent with Hume's account of the mind. The awe to which Yoder refers would seem to be what Hume calls an impression of reflection, an emotional response to our experience of nature. But what is not clear is how such a response should be seen as having divine content.

Yoder compares Hume's position with that of English deists such as Herbert of Cherbury, the Earl of Shaftesbury and John Toland. Many of their views were shared by Hume: their condemnation of priestcraft and ecclesiastical corruption, their rejection of the Bible as the word of God and in particular their sceptical attitude to miracles. Hume, though – Yoder argues – should not be seen as a deist in this tradition since he did not see reason, in particular the analogical version of the argument from design, as providing support for his theistic beliefs, as deists did; neither did he take religion to be important with respect to morality (again something to which deists were generally committed, so Yoder argues). There are no practical consequences to Hume's true religion. We have no reason to believe in an afterlife or in particular providence, God's direct involvement with humanity, and Hume's God is morally indifferent. The affirmation texts may ascribe intelligence and power to God – Demea's mysticism is rejected; we can have knowledge of God and his attributes – but Yoder interprets Hume as arguing for 'amoral theism' (p. 143) and against Cleanthes' view that 'the proper office of religion is to regulate the hearts of man, humanize their conduct, infuse the spirit of temperance, order, and obedience' (DNR 12.12; Yoder, p. 110). Thus Hume's God requires and deserves no worship. Yoder also distinguishes his approach from John Gaskin's interpretation of Hume as an attenuated deist, that is, as only being committed to the minimal claim that 'the cause or causes of order in the universe probably bear some remote analogy to human intelligence' (DNR 12.32; Yoder, p. 111). Yoder takes such an interpretation to be anachronistic since it is purged of any of the religious aspects that were integral to eighteenth century deism. This minimal claim is also the conclusion of an argument from analogy, a form of argument (Yoder argues) that does not for Hume underpin true religion.

Yoder's book does have something valuable to offer Humean scholarship. Careful consideration of the affirmation passages must be an essential priority for anyone trying to get to the bottom of Hume's views on religion and Yoder provides a corrective to lazy ascription of irony to anything that is at odds with one's own favoured interpretation. It is all too easy to write off difficult passages as ironic – Yoder asks us to consider more carefully the alternatives. It is also good to see attention paid to how Hume relates to eighteenth century deism and the controversies surrounding it.

However, Yoder's interpretation of Hume is not persuasive. The most serious omission is wider discussion of Hume's scepticism. It looks difficult to align Yoder's interpretation with Hume's mitigated scepticism and claims such as this from the *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (EHU 8.1):

> [I]f men attempt the discussion of questions, which lie entirely beyond the reach of human capacity, such as those concerning the origin of worlds, or the economy of the intellectual system or region of spirits, they may long beat the air in their fruitless contests, and never arrive at any determinate conclusion.

Yoder focuses mainly on the *Natural History* and the *Dialogues* whereas it would be useful to look elsewhere, particularly at the *Treatise*, of which there is much relevant to religious belief. A particularly surprising claim by Yoder is that '[i]t is clear, Hume argues, that divine providence stands behind every cause and effect that we observe.' (p. 137) A passage in the essay 'Of the Immortality of the Soul' is taken to support this view, but Yoder makes no mention of how this is sharply at odds with Hume's *Treatise* account of causation. According to a traditional interpretation of Hume, causation amounts merely to constant conjunction and thus there is no room for the idea of God's *power* to bring things about – we do not therefore have any idea of God's omnipotence or his providence with respect to particular effects in the world. The alleged subversively irreligious consequences of Hume's *Treatise* account of causation were well known to his contemporaries and they demand more attention than Yoder affords. Hume's candidacy for the chair in moral philosophy at Edinburgh University was opposed by those who took his religious views to be suspect. That it was in part his account of causation that caused offence is clear from Hume's *A Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend in Edinburgh*, his reply to a no longer extant pamphlet that was circulated in opposition to his candidature.

Yoder does consider a passage concerning causation from the first *Enquiry* (EHU 11.30), but admits that it 'ends on a note of skepticism' (p. 119): Hume argues that we only come to infer the existence of a cause when we have experienced the constant conjunction of particular causes and effects before, and such an interpretation is therefore problematic in the context of the singular event of divine creation. Yoder's response to this worry is unsatisfactory. He claims merely that 'Hume is rounding out the give and take of a philosophical conversation, and laying out the

options for the reader to consider' (ibid.). Interpreting Hume's views on religion is no easy task, but Yoder's interpretation is rather forced and it is hard not to see the author projecting his own views onto Hume.

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Earl Stanley B. Fronda. *Wittgenstein's (Misunderstood) Religious Thought*. Brill, 2010.

Earl Stanley B. Fronda does not want to give a new interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion. His book is more or less the defence of the orthodox Wittgensteinian philosophy of religion against its widespread criticism. Although the interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion given by Dewi Zephaniah Phillips and other followers of Wittgenstein is very well known among Wittgenstein scholars, there are still rather unconvincing prejudices concerning this subject in the academic community. There are still many philosophers who claim that Wittgenstein was a fideist, a non-realist, or a crypto atheist. Fronda wants to show that none of these claims is true. He argues that it is necessary to adopt the perspective of apophatic theology if you do not want to misunderstand Wittgenstein. This idea is very well known since the 60ies and 70ies of the last century, although in the last decade no scholar defended this idea as intensely as Fronda does. As Fronda did not deal more deeply with Wittgenstein's and Wittgensteinian philosophy of religion before 2005 and as Fronda seems to have been confronted with many strong prejudices against Wittgenstein, he thinks that it is necessary to write a book which shows that many scholars still misunderstand Wittgenstein as a fideist. Thus, although there is nothing new in Fronda's book and nearly nothing of deeper interest for Wittgenstein scholars, it may be a helpful book for people who are not so familiar with Wittgenstein's religious thought searching for a first introduction. For serious scholarly work, it might be interesting how profoundly Fronda stresses the importance of apophatic theology for the understanding of the whole philosophical work of Wittgenstein. Although this idea is rather familiar in Wittgensteinian scholarship, it has – as far as I know – never been elaborated at such length before.