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Concerning Natural Religion as insincere in a certain respect; indeed if he was convinced *first* of the logical incoherence (and not just the falsity) of theism, why should he not *then* view the way of life that springs from it as absurd? I am not here to defend him in his conclusions, but to wonder whether Herdt is correct in her accusation, which implies that Hume argued from the charge of absurdity. Perhaps Hume's disdain for religious factionalism in eighteenth-century England motivated his discussions; did it also motivate the conclusions of particular arguments? It is up to Hume's readers to ask whether his arguments concerning religious belief are sound.

NOTES

1. Páll, Árdal, *Passion and Value in Hume's Treatise* (Edinburgh University Press), 1966, and Mercer, *Sympathy and Ethics: A Study of the Relation between with Special Reference to Hume's "Treatise"* (Oxford Clarendon Press), 1972.

2. See, for example, Annette Baier, *A Progress of Sentiments: Reflections on Hume's Treatise* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 1991; Charlotte Brown, "From Spectator to Agent: Hume's Theory of Obligation," *Hume Studies* XX (April 1994): 19-36; Rachel Cohon, "Is Hume a Noncognitivist in the Motivation Argument?" *Philosophical Studies* 85 (March 1997): 251-66; Don Garrett, *Cognition and Commitment in Hume's Moral Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 1997): Chapter 9; Elizabeth Radcliffe, "Hume on Motivating Sentiments, the General Point of View, and the Inculcation of Morality," *Hume Studies* XX (April 1994): 37-58.

3. She also cites Annette Baier as an ally in this.

4. See Elizabeth Radcliffe, "Hume on Motivating Sentiments," and "How Does the Humean Sense of Duty Motivate?" *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 34 (July 1996): 47-70.

5. Hume's claim that reason alone does not produce motives has mostly been understood as the view that beliefs do not motivate, although a few critics have recently questioned this interpretation. Herdt might want to take the view that Hume's thesis about the inertness of reason leaves it open that the products of understanding can motivate, but I think the orthodox interpretation, which rules this out, stands on solid ground. She says herself that the intentional, rational activities of the judge, rather than the sense of taste, do the work in Hume's account (125); so it's difficult to see how she can argue that reason and sympathetic understanding are two different things.

God Without the Supernatural: A Defense of Scientific Theism by Peter Forrest (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996). ISBN 0-8014-3255-3. Pp. xiv, 256.

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Near the beginning of his book, Peter Forrest tells us of "the sensitive New Age cat who never eats meat and never hunts birds and lizards. Does it, I ask, ever get the chance? Likewise," he goes on to add, "it is no wonder that intellectual conversion to religion is rare—no one ever

tries" (15). Forrest wants to let the cat out of the Bagwan and provide an intellectual argument for anthropic theism. This is the position that asserts the existence of a personal God and the creation of the world largely for the sake of embodied persons. To be more precise, Forrest intends to provide intellectual grounds for rejecting atheism. His approach is one of best-explanation apologetics: theism provides explanations of a number of phenomena that are superior to the explanations provided by naturalistic alternatives. This makes irrational the atheistic rejection of theism. However, since we cannot rule out that some further explanation may come along that outdoes theistic explanation, Forrest does not take issue with the agnostic, whose position he sees as warranted. (A short conclusion to the book does take some steps towards showing that theism is to be preferred to agnosticism, but on emotional, rather than intellectual, grounds.)

The book's title derives from the fact that although Forrest intends to show the inadequacy of naturalism, he eschews supernaturalism. Naturalism posits only entities for which well-confirmed scientific theories provide a precedent. Supernaturalism, by contrast, is prepared to posit entities for which neither science nor the familiar facts of everyday life provide any precedent. Forrest splits the difference: he will allow entities for which science provides no precedent, so long as the familiar facts of everyday life do.

Forrest is admirably clear about what, exactly, he needs to show. His case for anthropic theism has three major components. First, he must show that such theism does indeed provide explanations of his chosen phenomena superior to those provided by its naturalist alternatives. (It would have been nice also to have seen theism compared to some non-naturalist alternatives such as Platonism. Perhaps Forrest would argue that Platonism should be dismissed as a form of supernaturalism.) The second thing to be shown is that anthropic theism is a genuine epistemic possibility, by which Forrest means that it is "a hypothesis that is not too improbable on background evidence" (26). Much of Forrest's discussion of the nature of God takes place under this rubric. A third and final component in the defense of anthropic theism is required, though, since however superior the explanations provided by some hypothesis, and however genuinely epistemically possible that hypothesis is, a good solid argument against it can still show it to be unacceptable. Consequently, the major outstanding argument against anthropic theism, the problem of evil, must be shown to be capable of a solution.

As can be seen from a consideration of this strategy, while the book as a whole is supposed to provide an argument that it would be unreasonable to reject theism, Forrest rarely has to argue for the truth of any particular theistic claim. Instead, he shows that various theistic hypotheses can be framed, can explain various phenomena, are genuine epistemic possibilities, and so on. This gives him a wide latitude. Instead, for instance, of arguing in favor of an account of why and how God creates the world, he can simply elaborate a number of different, sometimes even competing accounts as evidence that a theist can offer explanations superior to those of a naturalist. One of the more interesting parts of the

book, in fact, is Forrest's discussion, in chapter I, of the legitimacy and the epistemological implications of this method of speculation.

The topics raised and discussed in the course of the book are many and varied. Combined with the method of speculation, which often results in multiple answers to a single problem, the book induces a breathless vertigo. Countless capitalized Principles, Conjectures, Theses, Arguments, Razors, and Positions swim on and off a single page, never to be heard of again. Highly controversial issues, such as the nature of consciousness or moral reasoning, are dispensed with relatively quickly and superficially. Anyone reading this book is bound to feel at some point that a favorite subject is being unfairly and unthoroughly treated. The phenomena which Forrest argues can be best explained by a theistic hypothesis include the fitness of the universe for life, the regularity of the laws of nature, our capacity for intellectual progress, the supremacy of moral reasoning, beauty, and mathematics. The discussion of the fitness of the universe for life, in turn, involves considerations about creation, and hence about action in general; and about the afterlife, and hence about personal identity and survival. The attempt to establish the genuine epistemic possibility of theism is based on an examination of the nature of persons, consciousness and the relation of mind and body. The attack on the problem of evil takes in Leibnizian theories of possible worlds and Hick's views on soul-making.

I shall focus on one area in which I felt my own philosophical toes being trodden on. This concerns the part of Forrest's book in which he attempts to show that theism is a genuine epistemic possibility. To begin with, there is some unclarity on how the theistic position claimed to be a genuine epistemic possibility relates to traditional conceptions of God. Near the beginning of the book, Forrest says that although he is not "committed to the classical doctrines of the necessity, eternity, and simplicity of God... [his] speculations indeed support something like these classical doctrines" (9). How these classical doctrines are supported is never explained, and as Forrest's conception of God (or rather, his speculation about God) is articulated, it often seems downright inconsistent with these classical positions. Indeed, it turns out that Forrest supports what he calls an objective, but non-objectual theism. That is, while he holds it is an objective fact that there is a God, there is no object (of *any* kind) that God is. For this reason, Forrest prefers the expression of theism as "There is a God" rather than "God exists." However, the issues involved in distinguishing these two formulations (for instance, the apparent ambiguity over whether "God" is a proper name or a general term) are never adequately discussed, nor is the issue of how the classical doctrines should be translated into non-objectual terminology. The classical claim that God is a necessary being, for instance, is clearly not equivalent to the claim that necessarily there is a God.

Although it was explicitly not part of Forrest's object to defend the classical doctrines about God, I spend so much time on this because his own speculation about the nature of God is sufficiently strange (at least relative to traditional monotheistic theology) to make it virtually obligatory to relate it to more traditional thought about God if his defense of

theism is to be of interest to many readers. Furthermore, he himself relies so much on objectual-sounding discourse that when we finally learn that, on his theistic speculation, there is no object God, we must seriously question everything that has hitherto been said.

Forrest's most fully worked out speculation as to the nature of God is that God is unrestricted consciousness. This is reached in the following way. Human consciousness is a phenomenon that a purely naturalist account of the world must stumble over. Nonetheless, it is a familiar fact. It therefore creates a (non-supernaturalist) theoretical niche for God, a way of showing that if God can be construed as a kind of consciousness, then it is a genuine epistemic possibility that there is a God. Forrest, however, avoids reifying consciousness, preferring a Neo-Humean account on which a mind is a bundle of episodes of consciousness. Furthermore, an episode of conscious awareness is merely the appearance of something. What ties some episodes of consciousness into a bundle is simply the unity of that of which they are the appearances. On Forrest's account, a human mind is a consciousness of one integrated sub-system in the universe - a particular brain. God, being unrestricted consciousness, is the sum total of appearances of the universe. (A consequence of this, noted by Forrest, is that our minds are distinguished from God as parts are from the whole. Here we have another conflict between Forrest's theistic speculations and traditional conceptions of God since on such traditional conceptions, God is simple and without parts.)

This leads to a problem that Forrest acknowledges but does not adequately address. Awareness of something, in certain modalities, is necessarily awareness of something from a particular point of view. This is the case with visual awareness, for example. Thus, for any given object, there will be as many appearances of it as there are perspectives from which it can appear. (I presume this means there are an infinite number of appearances of each thing, though nothing that follows depends on this.) How, then, are we to understand the existence of a being described as unrestricted consciousness? There seem to be two possibilities. One is that for God, awareness is never from a point of view. God can thus be aware of all parts of a single physical thing in one episode of awareness. This option is fatal for Forrest's strategy, for the speculation about God as unrestricted consciousness was part of an attempt to demonstrate the genuine epistemic possibility of God on the grounds that human consciousness provided a theoretical niche for God. The option under consideration, though, undermines the similarity between human and divine consciousness, throwing into doubt the genuine epistemic possibility of God understood in this way.

The second option for dealing with the problem is to suppose that God is a simultaneous awareness of everything from every point of view, much like a giant bank of TV screens, each with the appearance of something from a particular point of view. At the very least, this option raises a number of questions, none of which are answered by Forrest. In the case of embodied persons, different appearances can be taken as appearances of a single thing because such persons themselves occupy a place in the world of things of which they are aware. It is precisely the

restrictions imposed by embodiment that allow consciousness to be synthesized into experience of an ordered world. This is a point urged by Kant and recently re-advocated by Strawson. In the case of *unrestricted* consciousness, however, there is no place occupied by the experiencer. There is, therefore, no way of correlating different appearances as appearances of a single object. Once again, therefore, we come up against a very substantial way in which divine consciousness fails to fit into the theoretical niche provided by human consciousness.

I am therefore left with the feeling that the speculation that God is unrestricted consciousness has been far from shown to be a genuine epistemic possibility.

Dialectic and Narrative in Aquinas: An Interpretation of the Summa Contra Gentiles, by **Thomas S. Hibbs**. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 1996. Pp. x, 288. \$17.95.

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There is much to be learned from Thomas Hibbs's excellent book on the *Summa Contra Gentiles* of Aquinas. Plainly, though relatively early in his corpus, the SCG is one of Aquinas's most important works and one whose overarching conception is least understood. This book is a solid aid to removing much of the incomprehension.

Hibbs's work is heavily preoccupied with questions of genre theory, and before turning to these it is worth addressing the question of the genre within which Hibbs himself writes. There is a fundamental problem of choice of style and idiom facing today's Thomist. On the one hand, the number of Aquinas's philosophical interlocutors was fairly limited, and he and they were more like minded than not. Metaphysical realism was far and away the background assumption of the day. Gaps between Platonists and Aristotelians, significant at the time, were small compared to the gaps between philosophical conceptual schemes today.

Moreover, Aquinas did not read his Greek philosophical predecessors in their own language, nor interpret their thought in its cultural context in any detailed way, as we can today. He was first and foremost a theologian addressing fellow Roman Catholics and, in so doing, making use of what were by his own judgment the best philosophical resources available at the time and in the manner in which they were then available. During the course of his lifetime he produced something which amounts to a philosophical system, a set of systematically interconnected philosophical theses, largely but not exclusively of Aristotelian provenance, covering the areas of ontology, natural philosophy, philosophical psychology, the theory of knowledge, moral theory, etc. And he did this to serve the presentation of revealed religious doctrine.

There is a spirit of Thomas Aquinas, a spirit which embraces both method and substance, and by which genuine devotees are, as it were, bound. On the former front there is the great commitment to philosophi-