



Editorial preface

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In our first article in this issue, Joseph C. Schmid argues that a central claim of classical theism, namely, the doctrine of divine simplicity, denies its own claim that creation is a contingent and intentional act of God. According to divine simplicity, God's essence is identical to His existence. God's act of creation is identical to this one simple act, and so identical to God's essence/existence. God exists of absolute necessity. Therefore, his act of creation is of absolute necessity since it is identical to His essence/existence. Hence, God's creation is not a contingent and intentional act of God. Possibility collapses into necessity. Schmid argues that the classical theist can avoid this modal collapse only if God's act of creation produces its effects indeterminately.

Joshua Brown does not challenge the claim that the Principle of Sufficient Reason is a metaphysical principle. According to this claim, for every fact F, there exists some state-of-affairs that makes it the case that F obtains; or it claims that for some subset of obtaining facts, F, there exists some situation that makes it the case that every member of F obtains. In contrast, Brown presents an epistemological challenge to PSR. That is, he makes an epistemological argument, not a metaphysical one. On his account, to say that some fact, F, is unexplained, is merely to say that some knowledge seeker (or set of knowledge seekers), S, currently does not know the answer to the question: 'Why or in virtue of what does F obtain? But even if F is ontologically brute, as it might be, it is never reasonable to think that F can be known to be so.

In the next article, Joona Auvinen argues for the plausibility of a modally non-accidental adherence to the divine will. (A modally non-accidental action is one that is directly attributable to the agent.) The author takes it for granted that the divine will exists, which is something that many people would deny. Granting then that a divine will exists, Auvinen presents an argument that a non-accidental adherence to it does not depend solely on whether it is possible reliably to reason about what the divine will requires one to do. Going beyond this, she argues that it is possible to adhere non-accidentally to the divine will. While this can be denied, she nevertheless claims that it is reasonable to think that the divine will of a good God

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is something to which one's adherence can either succeed or fail. She admits that some theists would have a problem with this, namely, those who conceive of the divine will as something that is always fulfilled regardless of what we do. In contrast, she maintains that her conception of the divine will as something that we may non-accidentally follow or fail to follow merits attention because of its widespread acceptance in religious thought.

In the final article, Jan-Boje Frauen defines animation as an internal urge to make sense of what is 'out there'. And what the "out there" consists of, as defined by both science and cosmological arguments, is nothing more than inanimate objects, that is, objects that are ultimately reducible to particles in motion. And the task of both is to account for *how* the reality of the inanimate "out there" came to be. This is however quite different than the task of understanding *why* this "out there" came to be. This representation of how this objective "out there" came to be sidesteps the issue of sense, of subjectivity and its natural hunger for pattern and meaning, the subject's undeniable urge to represent the "out there" as ordered by a purposeful future and the self as a free agent involved in the constitution of this sense. This power of free imaginative creation resides in the subject alone and is not intrinsic in the objects represented. Even if it is fully understood theoretically *how* the subject came to be in the world, this will not dissolve the subject's urge to make sense of *why* it came to be and the agent's role as more than an observer. As the author says: "I can consciously watch a movie without having the illusion that I am acting in it. But 'being me' does not feel like watching the movie of my life. The subject feels like an agent, not merely as an observer. I can thus theoretically understand that this is what it actually is like. But I cannot practically feel that way. The urge in animation that makes subjective experience will not permit it." What makes the subjective argument more fundamental than the cosmological argument, or the objective argument of science, both of which deal with the past alone (its origins), is that the subjective argument deals with destiny, that is, with an imagined projection of a meaningful future that is constituted in part by me. Concentrating on the subject as the proper subject of spiritual discussions places it outside (or should I say, inside) the scope of what is objectively "out there."