



## Editorial preface

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In our first essay by Raymond Perrier, the usual claim that Kant grounds morality in religious belief is contested and reversed. Perrier contends that we reverse the usual reading of Kant, according to which, morality is a consequence of religious faith. This reversal is based on the author's contention that Kant replaces the metaphysics of being with the metaphysics of morality. He argues that this replacement makes it clear that Kant thinks that it is morality that inevitably leads to religious belief, not the other way around.

Omar Fakhri defends the view that God's intrinsic nature is ineffable. This is because, in principle, no creature can fully understand God's intrinsic nature, and this is a function of the limitations of our language. These limitations keep us from being able to grasp the totality of the divine reality. On this account, the ineffability of God is explained in terms of the inability of our language and mental capacities to grasp infinity. No finite creature can produce a sentence or a thought that can perfectly express God's infinite structure.

This line of argument seems to require a doctrine of divine simplicity. If we deny the doctrine of divine simplicity and insist on thinking of God as one person (a very special one) among others, then we will inevitably miss the enormous difference between the finite and the infinite. Divine simplicity insists on the enormous difference between God as an infinite person and human beings as finite persons. In emphasizing this difference, and the inability of human language to grasp and express the infinite, Fakhri breathes new life into the plausibility of divine simplicity.

In the next article by Matthew James Collier, divine simplicity is again under consideration. The question at issue is whether it is consistent for traditional theism to embrace some form of modal realism. The traditional view, which adopts the doctrine of divine simplicity, seems to lead to what is called a modal collapse, that is, a collapse of all contingency (possibility) into necessity. Modal realism is the view that there are real and causally independent possible worlds, that is, worlds in which contingency (possibility) does not collapse into necessity. Can we have it both ways?

In the literature, many have suggested that modal realism and traditional theism are inconsistent. Collier explores various responses to this charge. He considers four

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prima facie options (1) God can be said to have a counterpart in each world; (2) God can be said to exist in each world in the way that a universal can be said to exist in worlds (if universals exist), i.e. through trans-world identity; (3) God can be said to be a scattered individual, with a part of God existing in each world; and, (4) God can be said to exist in each world, through his existing from the standpoint of each world. The author thinks that neither (1) nor (3) is defensible. The author also thinks that (2) and (4) are too hastily dismissed by detractors and that, in particular, (4) is defensible as a way of avoiding a modal collapse. On his version of (4), he says that there is a way to preserve the traditional theistic claim that God necessarily exists from the point of view of every possible world and yet avoid a modal collapse of possibility into necessity. The trick is to see that God has no place ‘in’ the world—He exists ‘outside’ it.

Finally, we turn to an essay that is interesting for its timeliness. In our contemporary world, we are daily reminded of the scourge, we might say, the sin of racism. In this paper Jack Mulder argues that racism’s subtle and insidious reach can open the door to a religious experience that may be capable of turning us around. Being open to this experience would entail a kind of spiritual self-examination that may disrupt our deepest prejudices. His recommendation is that we meditate on the work of the Christian mystic St. John of the Cross.

St. John of the Cross was convinced that it is possible for a person to have a unitive experience with God in which one finds an ecstatic and harmonious union with God. As the Saint understands it, a mystical union with God is best understood as a spiritual marriage, not simply a loss of the self in God. Mulder concludes as follows: “My own view is that any account of the depths to which racism has sunk us as a culture will be incomplete without unpacking its spiritual dimensions.”

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