



Editorial preface

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In our first article, Kai Michael Büttner, explores Plantinga's definition of God as a maximally great being. As he notes, this definition was designed to provide Plantinga with a way of defending the ontological argument. His definition has been accused of begging the question. Büttner's aim is to make this criticism stronger. He accuses Plantinga's definition of God as being circular in the strongest sense of the term. Büttner reprises some examples of these previous arguments against the concept of God as a maximally great being. Using Wittgenstein's remarks about definitions (grammatical remarks), Büttner suggests that Plantinga's re-definition of God in terms of maximal greatness is less than convincing. Although Büttner questions whether Plantinga's definition of God as such a being is adequate, he does not think that it is necessarily so. Rather, he concludes that its adequacy cannot be established by employing Plantinga's questionable notion of greatness.

Our second article, by Alberto Oya, is a reply to a previously published IJPR article by Adam Buben in which the Makropulos case was discussed. This started a debate about the desirability of immortality. Bernard Williams raised this question in regard to the case of Elina Makropulos. Her father, the Court physician to a sixteenth-century Emperor, tried out an elixir of life on her. The elixir allowed her to live to 342. By this time, she was overwhelmed by boredom, indifference and coldness. "Everything is joyless: 'in the end it is the same', she says, 'singing and silence'. She refuses to take the elixir again; she dies; and the formula is deliberately destroyed by a young woman among the protests of some older men."

Oya thinks that it is unfortunate that Buben's paper fails to capture or even outline the reasoning behind Unamuno's claim that we all naturally (and so, inevitably) long for an endless existence—and consequently it also fails to clarify how Unamuno's position may (if so) contribute to the current philosophical debate on the question as to whether an endless existence would be something desirable. Oya tries to show that Unamuno's proposal is not philosophically relevant when addressing the current debate on the question as to whether living an endless existence would be something desirable. Even if some seeking for an endless existence were a natural (and so, inevitable, and thus nonvoluntary) inclination of us, it may still be argued

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that living an endless existence would be something undesirable or inadequate for other ethical, pragmatic or even existential reasons.

In our last article, Stefan Weir asks whether biblical descriptions of the intermediate state imply dualism of the sort that rules out physicalism. Certain passages in the Bible seem to describe persons or souls existing without their bodies in an intermediate state between death and resurrection. For this reason, these passages appear to imply a form of dualism. Weir proposes a linguistic objection to the biblical argument for dualism. The linguistic objection says that biblical descriptions of an intermediate state cannot imply dualism in the sense that contradicts physicalism because physicalism is defined by a concept of the physical derived from modern physics; and no term in the biblical languages expresses that concept. In the end, the prospects for Christian physicalists who wish to accept the biblical case for an intermediate state, are limited but remain open.

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