

As one would expect, many of the chapters in Part II argue for either loose affiliation between medieval and contemporary discussions on a given topic or outright discontinuity. Revealing such discontinuity offers a valuable service in and of itself, especially when continuity seems apparent. One such example is freedom of the will. In his chapter on this topic, Thomas Pink maintains that whereas the medievals understood freedom as a metaphysical power, modern and contemporary theorists either eliminate such a power entirely or reduce it to other powers. Likewise, Margaret Cameron's chapter on meaning—perhaps the area where most analytics turn to the medieval past, if at all—argues for what might be dubbed a “comparative skepticism.” This does not mean that historical comparison should not be done, but comparisons must not be drawn too quickly. For example, the simple reduction of supposition-theory to that of analytic theories of reference conflates two distinct problems—usually at the expense of the former. Turning to the history of philosophy only to dismiss it subsequently as bad “contemporary equivalent” commits an error not unlike those who would ignore altogether the history of philosophy.

Perhaps due to the volume's view toward contemporary analytic philosophy, the chapter distribution in Part II is uneven. Philosophy of Religion enjoys only two chapters, Metaphysics and Epistemology nine. Not to diminish the excellent contributions of the former—Graham Oppy on arguments for the existence of God and Richard Cross on the Trinity—Part II leaves a number of issues on Philosophy of Religion untouched, especially issues unique to Judaism or Islam and also matters of interreligious dialogue. In fairness, Marenbon warns the reader that the writers in the issues section tend to focus on the period of 1250–1350 in the Latin West. In a volume of this size, this choice should not be faulted, but simply noted for future consideration.—Andrew LaZella, *The University of Scranton*.

NAGEL, Thomas. *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature Is Almost Certainly False*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. x + 130 pp. Cloth, \$24.95—As the title immediately suggests, this book is an all-out assault on the dominant intellectual worldview of our age by one of its most accomplished philosophers. Reductionist materialism, Nagel argues, cannot account for the origin of life, life's development, consciousness, reason, or objective value.

In chapter one, Nagel begins the search for middle ground between reductionist materialism and theism. He finds the standard materialist story of life as a fortuitous accident simply incredible, given the complexity of the genetic code and the irreducibility of mental phenomena. In particular, he is unconvinced that complex life

developed from random mutations in the time available. To the sure horror of many, Nagel defends the work of intelligent design proponents. While not persuaded by their positive case for design so much as their negative attack on evolutionary materialism, Nagel holds that “the problems that these iconoclasts pose for the orthodox scientific consensus should be taken seriously. They do not deserve the scorn with which they are commonly met. It is manifestly unfair.” Yet he makes it plain that, for him, theism is simply not a viable option.

In chapter two, Nagel argues that reductionist materialism cannot explain the overarching pattern of Earth’s history through chance accidents and natural selection. A complete explanation should make the emergence of complex life something to be expected. Theism fares little better. It just pushes the explanation outside the natural order altogether. “Such interventionist hypotheses amount to a denial that there is a comprehensive natural order.” Here Nagel equates order with inviolable order. Surely, however, interruptible natural order is natural order nonetheless.

Nagel argues in chapter three that the problem of consciousness “threatens to unravel the entire naturalistic world picture.” The Scientific Revolution simply set aside questions about the mental. In doing so, it made great progress. But the failure of psychophysical reductionism to account for consciousness’s first-person perspective, he argues, should shape our entire view of natural history. Because (contra Cartesian dualism) mind is a biological phenomenon, any theory on which consciousness is unexpected is not comprehensive. Purely physical theories on which mental reality is an accidental by-product are therefore untenable. In their stead, Nagel proffers a dual-aspect monism or panpsychism according to which “certain physical states of the central nervous system are also necessarily states of consciousness—their physical description being only a partial description of them, from the outside. . . . brain processes are *in themselves* more than physical.” Evolution itself is, then, more than a material process. Governed by teleological laws, these dual-aspect elements had from the very beginning a propensity toward the evolution of conscious beings. Nagel’s monism requires a necessary connection between brain states and conscious states (lest the contingent connection require explanation). Unfortunately, this seems implausible—a fact highlighted by numerous, well-known thought experiments from zombies to inverted qualia.

Beyond explaining consciousness, an adequate theory must explain our ability to reason about the world beyond its appearances, Nagel argues in chapter four. While natural selection might conserve such rational faculties, it cannot explain their advent. But, he thinks, teleological laws “biased toward the marvelous” can. However, *pace* Nagel, given the possibility space how likely is it that the actual world should be governed by such teleological laws? The laws themselves, in other words, may still require explanation. It is also worth noting that

even Nagel cannot avoid agential language when describing natural teleology (“Teleological laws assign a higher probability to . . . certain outcomes”).

Finally, in chapter five Nagel argues that Darwinian materialism cannot explain the emergence of creatures recognizing objective values as reasons for action. Darwinism is incompatible with moral realism: Materialistic evolution might favor evaluative judgments promoting survival, but there is no reason to think it would produce faculties sensitive to objective moral truths. Where some might see a reason to abandon realism, Nagel sees a flaw in the Darwinian account of our moral judgments. We are motivated by our judgments of objective value, and any theory implying otherwise is mistaken. To account for this fact he thinks natural selection requires a nonrandom source of variation—perhaps “a cosmic predisposition to the formation of life, consciousness, and value.” This is admittedly speculative, but Nagel thinks his speculation licensed given the dearth of serious alternatives.

Nagel confessed up front that he is guided by “an ungrounded assumption, in not finding it possible to regard the design alternative as a real option.” Even so, conspicuously absent was any mention of cosmological and fine-tuning arguments which might favor theism over panpsychism. Likewise, one would have liked to see Nagel argue that the idea of aim or purpose is meaningful apart from agents. Still, one should thank Nagel for questioning at least one of the sacred cows of our time.—Logan Paul Gage, *Baylor University*.

POSNER, Eric A. and Alan O. Sykes. *Economic Foundations of International Law*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013. Vii + 372 pp. Cloth, \$65.00—This book was written, its authors tell us, for law students, professors of law, and other scholars who might be interested in its subject. Indeed, given the political instability in Middle East the volume is a timely reminder of the limitations of so called “international law.” If Western powers, Britain, France, and the United States, can intervene in the Middle East, and the Maghreb and bring down authoritarian rulers disfavored by the Western ruling class and the world media, does international law mean anything? Where, for example, is the international disapproval of the recent intervention in Syria or in the past of the Western intervention that brought down the governments of Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt?

If the term “international law” is not an oxymoron, what then is international law? A short answer may be: it is the system of laws that governs the relationships of states, for states make international law by entering into treaties with each other and by recognizing customary norms. International law creates obligations primarily for states, the exception being criminal law. States may decide whether to comply