International Studies in Philosophy 29:2

A NEW THEORY ON PHILO'S REVERSAL

DAVID N. STAMOS

Perhaps the most engaging of controversies in Hume studies concerns Philo's reversal in Part XII of Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. To one who reads the *Dialogues* for the first time, nothing comes as more of a surprise to find that, after a long barrage of largely unanswered and seemingly devastating criticisms of the argument from design, Philo, the main interlocutor, for apparently no reason, in the final Part reverses his position in line with his main opponent. One senses, as with Plato's *Symposium*, that nothing in such a masterpiece of literary architecture happens by chance, but instead must be significant. The difficulty with Philo's reversal is that its significance is not immediately clear. Indeed it seems a deliberate riddle, a dying man's final gift and challenge to (and perhaps joke on) posterity. At any rate, one senses that, whatever its meaning, its significance is such that if one could but uncover the reason for Philo's reversal, one would have in one's possession the key to unlocking the correct interpretation of Hume's philosophy of religion.

There have been, of course, quite a variety of theories offered over the years to explain Philo's reversal. Given all of those theories, one has to wonder how it is possible that so many professional scholars could produce such a wide spectrum of interpretations on the twelfth and final part of a fictional dialogue. It seems that Hume scholars, too, have a particularly strong need to eke out their own individual exegetical niche, with the consequence that no possible niche will remain for very long without being taken seriously by some scholar or other.

And then perhaps there is something occurring here similar to what Albert Schweitzer, in his classic *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, observed in studying the diverse multitude of *lives of Jesus* based on the Gospels. Each author of a *Life*, he said, tended to infuse into the teaching of Jesus his own doctrinal beliefs, liberal or otherwise, instead of remaining detached and objective. Perhaps, then, many scholars interpret Hume's philosophy of religion in accordance with their own theological (or atheological) designs.

It is also possible that the fault lies more with Hume himself than anyone else. It is possible that Hume constructed his *Dialogues* in such a way as to follow an ancient tradition begun, arguably, by Heraclitus and furthered by Plato. The tradition is one in which the *form* of a philosophi-

cal work (or body of works) is intentionally constructed to reflect its *content*. For Heraclitus, "Nature loves to hide" (fr. 123); accordingly it is probably not a coincidence that he wrote obscurely, paradoxically, and probably originally in aphorisms. Like the oracle at Delphi, which he says "neither speaks nor conceals, but gives signs" (fr. 93), the form of Heraclitus' writings reflect their content.

A similar argument can be made (and has been) in the case of Plato. Not only does Plato think that rational discussion is the most important and the most difficult part of philosophy (*Rep.* 498a), but also, if *Letter VII* is authentic (and most scholars today think it is), we must take seriously Plato's remarks (241c-d) that he has never put his true philosophy into words, that there is no way to put it into words, that a grasp of his philosophy is possible only after a long period of dialectic and close companionship, and that the knowledge of which his philosophy is concerned is entirely ineffable. In this light his numerous dialogues appear as reflections on water, far removed from truth and reality, their purpose mainly introductory and initiatory rather than expository.

If for Hume, as he wrote in the final paragraph of his *Natural History*, apparently in reference not so much to the history as to the truth of religious belief in general, "The whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery," perhaps we should then not be surprised if with an eye to posterity he intentionally constructed his *Dialogues* (the evident sequel of the pair), particularly Part XII, to reflect this riddle, enigma, and inexplicable mystery by being itself a riddle, an enigma, and an inexplicable mystery. All of this, of course, would fit perfectly well with Hume's well-known penchant for irony.

But of course Hume himself may have thought he had the answer to this riddle, or maybe the only reasonable answer available to a man of letters, and yet he may have deliberately chosen to make this also a riddle. As James Noxon (1964) noted, "It seems that every precaution has been taken to elude readers who want to fix Hume's own position" (p. 250).

Granted that this is so, I cannot myself forbear the opportunity to offer my own solution to the latter riddle. So as to indicate why yet another theory on Philo's reversal is called for, a critical review of the theories of my predecessors would seem called for. Unfortunately, limitations of space prevent me from providing this in the present work. Nevertheless, the reader may deduce many of my criticisms in the course of the development of my own theory.[1]

Following the suggestion of Norman Kemp Smith (1947: pp. 35-36) and Antony Flew (1992: p. 57), it seems to me that Hume's own position on religion is a form of *Stratonician atheism* (I should call it a weak form, since it could not for Hume be dogmatic), which may in a peculiar way be thought a theism (the matter does, in a way, seem entirely verbal),

following the lead of Strato of Lampsacus. Interestingly Cicero, in his *De Natura Deorum*, describes Strato as "the so-called natural scientist, who thought that all divine power was to be sought in nature, which may indeed provide the forces of birth, growth and decay but lacks any specific form or conscious purpose" (McGregor 1972: p. 84).

This is a thesis which, to my knowledge, has yet to be systematically defended, particularly with a Part-by-Part examination of the *Dialogues*. To do so would require a separate (and somewhat long) paper. (I myself have completed this in manuscript form.) Suffice it for the present to recall to mind Philo's two general definitions of God, the first one in Part II—"the original cause of this universe (whatever it be) we call God" (p. 142)—the second in Part IV—"By supposing it [the material world] to contain the principle of its order within itself, we really assert it to be God" (p. 162). Compare this, finally, with Philo's classic characterization of nature in Part XI: "The whole [the universe] presents nothing but the idea of a blind nature, impregnated by a great vivifying principle, and pouring forth from her lap, without discernment or parental care, her maimed and abortive children" (p. 211).

With this we now turn to my own theory on Philo's reversal. It is founded upon basically two points. First, it seems to me that scholars published on the topic of skepticism in the *Dialogues* have failed to perceive (let alone appreciate) a crucial dynamic between Cleanthes and Philo on this matter, a dynamic that would go far to explain Philo's strange reversal in Part XII. Second, it seems to me that scholars published on the combined topic of Hume, belief in God, and natural belief have failed to apply to this discussion a distinction which one would think absolutely indispensable, viz., Hume's distinction in the *Treatise* and first *Enquiry* between *beliefs* and *ideas*. Application of this distinction, it seems to me, would prove as *overstated* both (i) the views of Pike (1970) and Tweyman (1986) and others, including the stretched version of Penelhum (1983), who have argued that belief in God for Hume is a natural belief, and (ii) the views of Gaskin (1988) and Andre (1993) and others who have argued the opposite, that belief in God for Hume is in some degree a rational belief.[2] Having failed to perceive and apply these two issues, previous writers on Philo's reversal, it seems to me, could not help but fail to satisfy. Indeed I suggest that the above two issues, properly analyzed, jointly provide the key to unlocking the riddle of Philo's reversal.

Beginning with the distinction between beliefs and ideas, we see that Hume has a very interesting concept of belief. It rests upon his doctrine of impressions and ideas. According to Hume, the difference between a belief and an idea is the same between an impression and an idea, minus the temporal priority criterion. As revealed in the opening Section of Book I of the *Treatise*, Hume has essentially two criteria for demarcating

between impressions and ideas. The first is temporal priority: impressions always (initially at least) precede their ideas and the latter are copied or derived from the former. The second criterion is force and vivacity: generally, impressions have more force and vivacity than ideas, although the latter in some cases (e.g., the idea of causation) can acquire the level of the former.

Applied to the idea of existence, Hume's classic discussion is to be found in Book I of the *Treatise*, Section VII of Part III. According to Hume, "when after the simple conception of any thing we wou'd conceive it as existent, we in reality make no addition to or alteration on our first idea" (p. 94). In other words, existence is not a quality of anything, of which we have an additional idea. Accordingly the belief that x exists and the belief that x does not exist are not two beliefs with different content. They have virtually the same content. What, then, is the difference? Hume's answer is that the difference consists merely in "the *manner* of our conceiving them" (p. 96). More specifically, the difference is one of "force and vivacity" (p. 96), just like the difference between actually tasting pineapple and merely remembering that taste (p. 5). In the matter of belief, in the former case (believing that x exists) the force and vivacity of the idea is so great as to be on the level of an impression; in the latter case (believing that x does not exist) the force and vivacity of the idea does not go beyond that which is common to ideas.

Now what of belief in God? If belief in God is to be what Hume scholars call a natural belief, it must begin first as an *idea* before it can be increased in force and vivacity to the level of a genuine *belief*. In the *Treatise* this follows from (i) not only that we have no innate ideas (p. 158), but (ii) that we have no direct impressions of God: "our idea of that supreme Being is deriv'd from particular impressions, none of which contain any efficacy, nor seem to have *any* connexion with *any* other existence" (p. 248; cf. pp. 94, 96n, and 160).[3]

In anticipation of my overall argument, *I submit that for both Philo and Hume the fact of design in the world is sufficient to cause no more than the bare idea of an intelligent designer.*

At this point we may note that the possibility of genuine atheism is not precluded. An atheist may have the *idea* of God and still be an atheist. Merely having an idea does not constitute *belief*. If, however, the force and vivacity of his idea of God should be increased to that of an *impression*, he would no longer be an atheist, whether he liked it or not.

Turning now more closely to the matter of natural belief, it is clear in the *Dialogues* that Cleanthes is an advocate of the view that belief in God is a natural belief, a belief like the belief in external existent objects, where the force and vivacity is supplied by sensation. With his articulate voice and vegetable library analogies in Part III we distinctly find an

appeal to natural instinct. "Could you possibly hesitate a moment . . . " (p. 152), Cleanthes says in regard to the former analogy, and "Could you possibly open one of them, and doubt . . ." (p. 153), he says in regard to the latter analogy. Indeed Cleanthes already in Part III seems to have felt the force of Philo's *logical* objections to the argument from design. He accordingly now falls back on and appeals to what he calls *irregular* arguments. Acknowledging the possibility of the defeat of his *regular* argument, his argument from design in Part II, he says:

> And if the argument for theism be, as you pretend, contradictory to the principles of logic: its universal, its irresistible influence proves clearly, that there may be arguments of a like irregular nature. Whatever cavils may be urged; an orderly world, as well as a coherent, articulate speech, will still be received as an incontestable proof of design and intention (p. 155).

Interestingly, the matter of irregular arguments has caused some debate and argument among modern scholars. What exactly does Hume mean by "irregular" arguments? It seems to me somewhat obvious that in Part III what Cleanthes means by an "irregular argument" is *not*, for example, his articulate voice and vegetable library analogies. Rather these are thought experiments which *analogically appeal* to irregular arguments. Irregular arguments have the force of (valid) regular arguments, but they are not made by man. Instead they are made by nature. Their force is the force of *instinct*. And their conclusions are *irresistible*.

When Cleanthes, then, puts forward his articulate voice and vegetable library analogies, he is, I suggest, performing (or intending to perform) what J. L. Austin calls *perlocutionary* acts, speech acts that produce some sort of natural effect on their hearer (other than mere cognition). In putting forth his two analogies, his two thought experiments, Cleanthes is attempting to connect their instinctual force with what he claims is their close analogue, the evidence of design in nature (i.e., order and means-ends relationships). Indeed he gives us a description of an example of one of these irregular arguments. He says:

> Consider, anatomize the eye: Survey its structure and contrivance; and tell me, from your own feeling, if the idea of a contriver does not immediately flow in upon you with a force like that of sensation. The most obvious conclusion surely is in favour of [intelligent] design; and it requires time, reflection and study, to summon up those frivolous, though abstruse, objections, which can support infidelity (p. 154).

Cleanthes's claim, then, in other words, is that the force of the argument from design is really instinctual, not logical, that only a Pyrrhonian could resist it, and that such resistance would be "frivolous," meaning that it could be maintained for only a short time.

Whether my interpretation of the nature of irregular arguments is

correct or not, I suggest it is supported by reference to Book I of the *Treatise*, Section V of Part IV, in a passage in which Hume specifically mentions irregular arguments. In contradistinction to human reason and human arguments, Hume says: "Thus we may establish it as a certain maxim, that we can never, by any principle, but by an irregular kind of reasoning from experience, discover a connexion or repugnance betwixt objects, which extends not to impressions . . ." (p. 242). This passage specifically refers back to Section II of the same Part, in which Hume makes much of the power of natural instinct over and against excessive skepticism.

At any rate, it is important to realize that from Part III onward in the *Dialogues* Cleanthes relies exclusively upon irregular arguments.[4] That reliance, however, is so closely intertwined with the dynamic between Cleanthes's and Philo's different kinds of skepticism that it is best to proceed with that dynamic, keeping an eye open for Cleanthes's continued appeal to irregular arguments.

We should begin by noting that early in Part I Philo expresses himself in a way that would clearly suggest that his criticisms throughout the *Dialogues* are going to be Pyrrhonian. He says: "Let us become thoroughly sensible of the weakness, blindness, and narrow limits of human reason: Let us duly consider its uncertainty and needless contrarieties, even in subjects of common life and practice: Let the errors and deceits of our very senses be set before us . . ." (p. 131).

Cleanthes's reply is classic and memorable: "Whether your scepticism be as absolute and sincere as you pretend, we shall learn bye and bye, when the company breaks up: We shall then see, whether you go out at the door or the window" (p. 132).

At this point we may be reminded of Pamphilus's characterization of Philo in the Introduction, specifically "the careless scepticism of Philo" (p. 128). The key word is "careless." Admittedly it is suggestive of Hume's characterization of Pyrrhonian skepticism in Section XII of the first *Enquiry*, wherein Hume speaks of Pyrrhonism's "undistinguished doubts" (p. 161). Following Tweyman (1986: p. 23), however, I agree that it is not to the first *Enquiry* that we should turn for an interpretation of the word "careless" but to the *Treatise*, wherein Hume writes:

> This sceptical doubt, both with respect to reason and the senses, is a malady, which can never be radically cur'd, but must return upon us every moment, however we may chase it away, and sometimes may seem entirely free from it. . . . *Carelessness* and inattention alone can afford us any remedy. For this reason I rely entirely upon them; and take it for granted, whatever may be the reader's opinion at this present moment, that an hour hence he will be persuaded there is both an external and internal world . . . (p. 218; italics mine).

Contra Tweyman, however, it seems to me that, far from implying Pyrrhonian skepticism, Pamphilus's characterization of Philo's skepticism as "careless" refers (inadvertently) to this mitigated skepticism we see here expressed in the *Treatise* by Hume.

Indeed Philo's reply to Cleanthes's door-or-window charge above seems clear: "To whatever length any one may push his speculative principles of scepticism, he must act, I own, and live, and converse like other men; and for this conduct he is not obliged to give any other reason than the absolute necessity he lies under of so doing" (p. 134). Indeed Philo even makes clear what will be the nature of his philosophizing in the ensuing discussion:

> To philosophize on such subjects ["natural or moral subjects"] is nothing essentially different from reasoning on common life; and we may only expect greater stability, if not greater truth, from our philosophy, on account of its exacter and more scrupulous method of proceeding.
>
> But when we look beyond human affairs and the properties of the surrounding bodies: When we carry our speculations into the two eternities, before and after the present state of things; into the creation and formation of the universe; the existence and properties of spirits; the powers and operations of one universal spirit, existing without beginning and without end; omnipotent, omniscient, immutable, infinite, and incomprehensible: We must be far removed from the smallest tendency to scepticism [in other words we must be a dogmatist] not to be apprehensive, that we have here got quite beyond the reach of our faculties. . . . We are like foreigners in a strange country . . . (pp. 134-135).

The stage is thus set. Philo's program against Cleanthes is not going to be Pyrrhonian skepticism but rather mitigated skepticism (as more fully elaborated in Part III of Section XII of the first *Enquiry*). For the purpose of argument, instead of employing Pyrrhonian skepticism, Philo is going to presuppose the level of the vulgar.

Nevertheless, in spite of his early speeches, Hume sometimes gives Philo the appearance of being an excessive instead of mitigated skeptic. Philo's talk of the "triumph" of skepticism, of "counterpoising" or "counterbalancing," and of achieving "suspension of judgment," is all reminiscent and suggestive of Hume's writings in Section XII of the first *Enquiry*, in which Hume uses these modes of speech to mark the usefulness of Pyrrhonian skepticism against dogmatism. Indeed Cleanthes, as we shall later see, along with Pamphilus as we have already seen, seems clearly and persistently to think Philo's criticisms Pyrrhonian. But that is all part of Hume's strategic interplay in the *Dialogues*, and I suggest that it is inappropriate on the part of the reader to infer along with Cleanthes in this way.

Nevertheless let us look at some of those passages which might seem

to imply that Philo's criticisms are excessive. Beginning with the matter of counterpoising, in Part III of Section XII of the first *Enquiry* Hume mentions counterpoising in relation to the positive use for Pyrrhonian skepticism. Hume says that in the absence of counterpoising (meaning counterbalancing) arguments most people are naturally impelled into a dogmatic position: ". . . while they see objects only on one side, and have no idea of any counterpoising argument, they throw themselves precipitately into the principles, to which they are inclined; nor have they any indulgence for those who entertain opposite sentiments" (p. 161). The palliative Hume suggests is to counterpoise their position with "a small tincture of Pyrrhonism," thus making them sensible of the frailty of their position and inspiring in them some "modesty and reserve" and tolerance toward others with different beliefs and opinions.

From this the program of counterpoising is naturally associated with the positive use of Pyrrhonism. When we therefore find the program of counterpoising employed by Philo in the *Dialogues*, it is only natural to conclude that Philo's program is Pyrrhonistic. But I suggest that this temptation should be resisted, for Part III of Section XII of the first *Enquiry* is not the only place in which Hume discusses the usefulness of counterpoising.

Hume's most extensive discussion on counterpoising is in fact found in Section X of the first *Enquiry*, the famous Section titled "Of Miracles." In his discussion there the main value of counterpoising is not as a palliative against dogmatism; now its value is that it results in the "mutual destruction of belief and authority." In Part I of Section X Hume notes the effect of counterpoising on the matter of conflicting human testimony. It "may diminish or destroy the force of any argument" (p. 113).

In the case where the conflict is not between individual pieces of human testimony, but between, on the one hand, accumulated human experience which establishes a connection between testimony and reality, and, on the other hand, someone's claim to having experienced a miracle, Hume explicitly uses the word "counterpoize" and says "from which contradiction there necessarily arises a counterpoize, and mutual destruction of belief and authority" (p. 113). In other words, the experience of the majority destroys belief and authority in the individual who claims experience of a miracle, while the latter destroys belief and authority in the experience of the majority.

The application of all of this to religion Hume makes explicit in Part II of Section X:

> [I]n matters of religion, whatever is different is contrary; and that it is impossible the religions of ancient Rome, of Turkey, of Siam, and of China should, all of them, be established on any solid foundation. Every miracle, therefore, pretended to have been wrought in any of these

> religions (and all of them abound in miracles), as its direct scope is to establish the particular system to which it is attributed; so has it the same force, though more indirectly, to overthrow every other system. In destroying a rival system, it likewise destroys the credit of those miracles, on which that system was established . . . (pp. 121-122).

In this light, Philo's use of counterpoising in the *Dialogues* appears remarkably consistent. In Part III of Section XII of the first *Enquiry* Hume had argued that a little Pyrrhonian skepticism could counterpoise the position of the dogmatist sufficiently long enough to alleviate the latter's dogmatism. But we also know that according to Hume the force of nature always wins out. One can be a Pyrrhonian for only a short time, only while one is engaged in philosophical contemplation, never in practical life. In Part I of the *Dialogues* Philo, interestingly, makes essentially the same point, but then adds to it an allusion to the counterpoising point we found in Section X of the first *Enquiry*:

> All sceptics pretend, that, if reason be considered in an abstract view, it furnishes invincible arguments against itself, and that we could never retain any conviction or assurance, on any subject, were not the sceptical reasonings so refined and subtile, that they are not able to counterpoise the more solid and more natural arguments, derived from the senses and experience. But it is evident, whenever our arguments lose this advantage, and run wide of common life, that the most refined scepticism comes to be upon a footing with them, and is able to oppose and counterbalance them. The one has no more weight than the other. The mind must remain in suspense between them; and it is that very suspense or balance, which is the triumph of scepticism (pp. 135-136).

When Philo, at the end of Part V, proposes in succession "some infant Deity," "some dependent, inferior Deity," and "some superannuated Deity," and then goes on to claim that "these, and a thousand more of the same kind, are Cleanthes's suppositions, not mine" (p. 169), he is employing that destructive kind of counterpoising that we found in Section X of the first *Enquiry*. When Cleanthes dismisses Philo's argument as mere "rambling," he entirely misses the point. In first proposing the argument from design, Cleanthes's intention was clearly to establish a solid foundation for religion. In fact at the end of Part V he explicitly states his intention, using the words "a sufficient foundation for religion" (p. 169). Philo's point, then, is *which* religion? Since Cleanthes's empirical theism equally supports thousands of them, they are all destructively counterpoised and annihilated. As Philo says at the end of Part V, "I cannot, for my part, think, that so wild and unsettled a system of theology is, in any respect, preferable to none at all" (p. 169).

The most Philo will allow is what I have called weak Stratonician atheism, which, as we saw with Strato himself, may include the appellation of divinity in some nonconscious and natural and purely innocuous

and ineffectual sense, without any of the consequences common to popular religion. As Philo said in Part IV, "By supposing it [the material universe] to contain the principle of its order within itself, we really assert it to be God" (p. 162). This is Philo's "true system of theism" (p. 165), in contradistinction to Cleanthes's "experimental theism" (p. 165) and Demea's "rigid inflexible orthodoxy" (p. 128). It is a theism, if it may be called that, and the only one possible, that is devoid of that "licence of fancy and hypothesis" (p. 169) which characterizes all the vulgar religions, including that of Cleanthes still in Part XII (cf. p. 224). And indeed it is the "true system of theism" that Philo elaborates in Part XII, a theism, or atheism—call it what you will[5]—born out of wonder and awe at both the immense and intricate workings of the universe, a wonder and awe that has inspired scientists from Strato to Einstein. As Philo says, "*To know God . . . is to worship him.* All other worship is indeed absurd, superstitious, and even impious" (p. 226).

Returning to the matter of counterpoising, we find the same destructive program being employed at the end of Part VI:

> Push the same inference a step farther; and you will find a numerous society of Deities as explicable as one universal Deity, who possesses, within himself, the powers and perfections of the whole society. All these systems, then, of scepticism,[6] polytheism, and theism,[7] you must allow, on your principles, to be on a like footing, and that no one of them has any advantages over the others. You may thence learn the fallacy of your principles (p. 175).

We find the same program at the end of Part VIII, perhaps in its most classic form:

> All religious systems, it is confessed, are subject to great and insuperable difficulties. Each disputant triumphs in his turn; while he carries on an offensive war, and exposes the absurdities, barbarities, and pernicious tenets of his antagonist. But all of them, on the whole, prepare a complete triumph for the sceptic; who tells them, that no system ought ever to be embraced with regard to such subjects: . . . A total suspense of judgment is here our only reasonable resource. And if every attack, as is commonly observed, and no defence, among theologians, is successful; how complete must be *his* victory, who remains always, with all mankind, on the offensive, and has himself no fixed station or abiding city, which he is ever, on any occasion, obliged to defend? (pp. 186-187).

Tweyman (1986: pp. xii, 120) argues that by using and italicizing the word "his" in the third line from the bottom, Hume meant to imply a dissociation on Philo's part from the position of the skeptic there discussed. Tweyman finds in this further evidence for his general thesis that in Parts II to VIII Philo's approach is a disingenuous Pyrrhonism for the purpose of abating Cleanthes's dogmatism and bringing him to a position of mitigated skepticism (Philo's real position all along). Accordingly Philo will no longer employ Pyrrhonian skepticism in the rest of the *Dialogues*.

To this I reply that there is no need to infer any dissociation whatsoever. Philo's argument here concerning counterpoising is perfectly consistent with his previous speeches on counterpoising. By using and italicizing the word "his" Hume is merely generalizing the victory of all mitigated skeptics who dispute religion. By saying they (including himself) have "no fixed or abiding city" he is merely pointing out that they have no dogmas (religious or atheistic) of which they are "obliged to defend."

To fully warrant this interpretation we need only turn to the very last passage in Hume's *Natural History*, expressed in Hume's own person, which provides us with another classic passage on counterpoising:

> The whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery. Doubt, uncertainty, suspence of judgment appear the only result of our most accurate scrutiny, concerning this subject. But such is the frailty of human reason, and such the irresistible contagion of opinion, that even this deliberate doubt could scarcely be upheld; did we not enlarge our view, and opposing one species of superstition to another, set them a quarrelling; while we ourselves, during their fury and contention, happily make our escape into the calm, though obscure, regions of philosophy (p. 182).

A more serious difficulty for my view presents itself at the end of Part X, in which Philo seems to characterize his own arguments in Parts II to VIII as mere "cavils and sophisms" (p. 202). This passage deserves some discussion.

In an interesting passage in the *Treatise*, Hume writes of the cavils of total skepticism, skepticism with regard to both reason and the senses, that "Whoever has taken the pains to refute the cavils of this *total* scepticism, has really disputed without an antagonist, and endeavour'd by arguments to establish a faculty, which nature has antecedently implanted in the mind, and render'd unavoidable" (p. 183; cf. first *Enquiry*, p. 152).

The word "cavils" is thus associated in Hume with total or excessive skepticism, or in other words Pyrrhonian skepticism. When we turn now to the end of Part X, we find the following speech by Philo, placed in the middle of the two-Part discussion on the problem of evil: "Here, Cleanthes, I find myself at ease in my argument. Here I triumph. Formerly, when we argued concerning the natural attributes of intelligence and design, I needed all my sceptical and metaphysical subtilty to elude your grasp" (pp. 201-202).

Philo here is quite disingenuous. He certainly in Parts II to VIII has not employed all the skeptical and metaphysical arguments within his grasp. He has not used any of the possible Pyrrhonian machinery that Hume had elsewhere constructed and used himself (viz., his doctrine of impressions and ideas). And yet he (Philo) provided strong argument—so strong that many or most today consider his arguments decisive. Indeed

in a number of places he claimed complete triumph. But now he denigrates those arguments in favor of his present one. I suggest that Philo here is merely exhibiting what Hume in Section XII of the first *Enquiry* claims "is a degree of doubt, and caution, and modesty, which, in all kinds of scrutiny and decision, ought for ever to accompany a just reasoner" (p. 162). That Philo claims complete triumph against Cleanthes's theodicy does not contradict this. Philo's argument and victory against Cleanthes's theodicy is essentially a simple point of logic: "The consistence is not absolutely denied, only the inference" (p. 205). The nature of Philo's arguments in Parts II to VIII against Cleanthes's empirical theism are, on the other hand, of the nature of probability arguments, and that *against* a probability argument, and thus require some modesty.

To return to Philo's speech at the end of Part X, we continue immediately from where we left off: "In many views of the universe, and of its parts, particularly the latter, the beauty and fitness of final causes strike us with such irresistible force, that all objections appear (what I believe they really are) mere cavils and sophisms; nor can we then imagine how it was ever possible for us to repose any weight on them" (p. 202).

What are the "mere cavils and sophisms" here? Philo's arguments in Parts II to VIII against the argument from design? No. The "mere cavils and sophisms" refer to the arguments of those *total* or Pyrrhonian skeptics who, in their excessive skepticism, doubt even that there is design in the world (i.e., order and means-ends relationships). Philo nowhere in the *Dialogues* doubts *that*; he along with Cleanthes presupposes it all along. For Philo the question is concerning the *cause* of the design in the world. As he says in Part II, "order, arrangement, or the adjustment of final causes is not, of itself, any proof of [intelligent] design; but only so far as it has been experienced to proceed from that principle" (p. 146). In this same way is to be read Philo's controversial statement in Part X: "You ascribe, Cleanthes (and I believe justly) a purpose and intention to nature" (p. 198). Far from being a declaration of reversal, this is but a repetition (along with the other quotation from Part X above) of a premise held throughout by Philo, a premise, incidentally, consistent with mitigated but not Pyrrhonian skepticism.

Although I have long digressed here, all of this will prove necessary in understanding the dynamic that occurs between Cleanthes and Philo on the matter of skepticism. Without this background, the following cannot be fully appreciated.

Returning to Part III of the *Dialogues*, after having given his two analogies, we find Cleanthes (i) clearly associating himself with the position of mitigated skepticism (what he here endorses as "reasonable skepticism") and (ii) claiming that Philo's objections are excessive or Pyrrhonian (a misapprehension that we will now directly trace):

> The declared profession of every reasonable sceptic is only to reject abstruse, remote and refined arguments; to adhere to common sense and the plain instincts of nature; and to assent, wherever any reasons strike him with so full a force, that he cannot, without the greatest violence, prevent it. Now the arguments for natural religion are plainly of this kind; and nothing but the most perverse, obstinate metaphysics can reject them. Consider, anatomize the eye: Survey its structure and contrivance; and tell me, from your own feeling, if the idea of a contriver does not immediately flow in upon you with a force like that of sensation. The most obvious conclusion surely is in favour of [intelligent] design; and it requires time, reflection and study, to summon up those frivolous, though abstruse, objections, which can support infidelity (p. 154).[8]

That at the conclusion of his speech Pamphilus interjects with his observation that "Philo was a little embarrassed and confounded" (p. 155) need not only be interpreted (as so many have) as an indication that Philo was overwhelmed by the force of Cleanthes's appeal to irregular arguments. More to the point, Philo was "a little embarrassed and confounded" because Cleanthes still continues to insist that he (Philo) is a Pyrrhonian in this discussion when he is not!

We find that, from Part III onward, Cleanthes relies now only or principally on his appeal to irregular arguments. At the end of Part VII, confessedly unable to answer Philo's logical objections, he once more relies on the appeal to instinct:

> I am not ashamed to acknowledge myself unable, in a sudden, to solve regularly such out-of-the-way difficulties as you incessantly start upon me: Though I clearly see, in general, their fallacy and error. And I question not, but you are yourself, at present, in the same case, and have not the solution so ready as the objection; while you must be sensible, that common sense and reason is[9] entirely against you, and that such whimsies, as you have delivered, may puzzle, but never can convince us (p. 181).

Once again Cleanthes is doing two things: (i) he's appealing to instinct rather than logic, and (ii) he's accusing Philo of being a Pyrrhonian (key word "whimsies") and not a reasonable skeptic.

Philo's immediate reply to both charges is decisive:

> What you ascribe to the fertility of my invention . . . is entirely owing to the nature of the subject. In subjects, adapted to the narrow compass of human reason, there is commonly but one determination, which carries probability or conviction with it; and to a man of sound judgment, all other suppositions, but that one, appear entirely absurd and chimerical. But in such questions as the present, a hundred contradictory views may preserve a kind of imperfect analogy; and invention has here full scope to exert itself (p. 182).

Nevertheless Cleanthes persists. Once again, this time at the end of

Part XI, we find Cleanthes admit quite frankly, and this time in a tone of finality, the insufficiency of his *regular* argument from design. And once again we find the implication that Philo's criticisms have so far been Pyrrhonian. "Philo, from the beginning," he says to Demea, "has been amusing himself at both our expence; and it must be confessed, that the injudicious reasoning of our vulgar theology has given him but too just a handle of ridicule" (p. 213).

Indeed true to the end Cleanthes maintains his appeal to instinct and his dismissal of Philo's objections as Pyrrhonian (albeit logically irrefutable). This is evidenced no less in Part XII, near its beginning:

> The comparison of the universe to a machine of human contrivance is so obvious and natural, and is justified by so many instances of order and design in nature, that it must immediately strike all unprejudiced apprehensions, and procure universal approbation. Whoever attempts to weaken this theory, cannot pretend to succeed by establishing in its place any other that is precise and determinate: It is sufficient for him, if he start doubts and difficulties; and by remote and abstract views of things, reach that suspence of judgment, which is here the utmost boundary of his wishes. But besides that this state of mind is in itself unsatisfactory, it can never be steadily maintained against such striking appearances as continually engage us into the religious hypothesis. A false, absurd system, human nature, from the force of prejudice, is capable of adhering to with obstinacy and perseverance: But no system at all, in opposition to a theory, supported by strong and obvious reason, by natural propensity, and by early education, I think it absolutely impossible to maintain or defend (p. 216).

Once again we find the claim by Cleanthes that Philo's earlier criticisms were mere Pyrrhonian "doubts and difficulties." And once again we find an appeal to "striking appearances" and "natural propensity."[10] What we find new is an interesting reference to "early education," the significance of which I shall comment on shortly.

Turning finally to the problem of Philo's reversal, the seemingly intractable problem is that Philo, from the beginning of Part XII, in spite of all his arguments beforehand, seems quite clearly, in more than one passage and in more than one form of expression, to perform a complete about-face and concede Cleanthes's original position. He says, for instance, "Supposing there were a God, who did not discover himself immediately to our senses; were it possible for him to give stronger proofs of his existence, than what appear on the whole face of nature?" (p. 215).

Perhaps Philo's most definitive statement of this kind is the one that appears two pages further in:

> No man can deny the analogies between the effects: To restrain ourselves from enquiring concerning the causes is scarcely possible: From this enquiry, the legitimate conclusion is, that the causes have also an

> analogy: And if we are not contented with calling the first and supreme cause a God or Deity, but desire to vary the expression; what can we call him but Mind or Thought, to which he is justly supposed to bear a considerable resemblance? (p. 217).

That Philo is quite disingenuous here strikes us in its own way with much force and vivacity. But why would he be disingenuous, particularly considering the quality of his earlier arguments?

We must remember that Cleanthes was consistent in his misconception of Philo's arguments as Pyrrhonian and that he never let up. We must also remember that Philo more than once attempted to answer this charge but to no avail. In addition to this, we must take notice of the fact that though Cleanthes from Part III onward shifts the weight of his argument off of his regular argument from design and onto his appeal to irregular arguments from design, Philo continues to deal with the regular argument. Strongly implicit is that Philo did not think Cleanthes's appeal to irregular arguments worthy enough to take seriously. Having his arguments persistently misunderstood as Pyrrhonian, however, and seeing Cleanthes continually revert to irregular arguments, I suggest that what Philo did was perfectly rational and indeed quite brilliant. Far from reversing his own opinion, *he has reapplied an earlier strategy*. In Part II, when the argument from design went first on trial, Philo said he was going to "argue with Cleanthes in his own way" (p. 145). Now, by Part XII, having fully exhausted the regular argument from design, having seen that Cleanthes's dogmatism has not abated, that it has only shifted from that argument to an appeal to instinct, and that Cleanthes still thinks Philo's criticisms frivolous, Philo is going to do what is perfectly consistent with his approach all along. He is going to do what any reasonable and intelligent person (specifically Hume) would do in such a situation. Once again, in Part XII, he is going to argue with Cleanthes "in his own way."

Accordingly we find him, as in the two quotations above, profess the force of Cleanthes's appeal to instinct. Having done that, Cleanthes's characterization of his (Philo's) earlier position as Pyrrhonian has ceased. This is evident after roughly three quarters of the way through Part XII, where Cleanthes says "Take care, Philo . . . take care: Push not matters too far: Allow not your zeal against false religion to undermine your veneration for the true" (p. 224).

Could this really be Hume's view? Did Hume really think, along with Cleanthes, that irregular arguments could naturally produce belief in God, have epistemological value, and could serve as a respectable foundation for religion?

This view seems clearly untenable. For one, it would mean that no intelligent and educated person could truly be an atheist, and so we would

have to therefore discount those places where Hume himself claims otherwise.

Also, we know that for Hume natural beliefs have a necessary survival value. As he says in the first *Enquiry*, ". . . all human life must perish, were his [the Pyrrhonian's] principles universally and steadily to prevail" (p. 160). If Hume thought belief in God a natural belief, he would then be committed to the view that belief in God has a necessary survival value. But Hume could hardly have thought that. He was well aware (as are we) that (i) there are genuine atheists, and (ii) that they (*ceteris paribus*) flourish as easily as theists.

Second, we know that Hume did not think natural beliefs have epistemological value. As he says in his first *Enquiry*, the natural belief in causation, "like other instincts, may be fallacious and deceitful" (p. 159).

Third, that Hume would not think belief in God, if not a natural belief, a respectable foundation for religion, is evidenced in those many places in his writings in which he expresses disgust and contempt for all popular religions.[11] Moreover, as with both Hume's and Philo's use of destructive counterpoising, the question could always be asked: Why this religion and not any of a thousand others?

What, then, was the point of Philo's new strategy, of his reversal?

It is at this point that, in addition to all of the foregoing, a heretofore unnoticed and yet crucially important distinction must be introduced into Hume studies, namely the distinction between *natural beliefs* and *natural ideas*. Hume scholars have coined and widely employed the phrase *natural beliefs* for those beliefs which Hume explicitly identifies as instinctually resistant to total or Pyrrhonian skepticism, the obvious examples being belief in material bodies, in causation, and in personal identity. But given Hume's explicit and important distinction between impressions and ideas, a corresponding companion term for natural beliefs absolutely cries out for discernment. *Natural ideas* seems to me the obvious candidate. Much like natural beliefs, natural ideas are instinctual and occur irrespective of any conscious considerations. But unlike natural beliefs (and there are obviously more differences than this), natural ideas do not have the force and vivacity typical of beliefs; instead their force and vivacity resides only at the level of ideas. Accordingly they can easily be dismissed by reason, although they nevertheless persist given the appropriate stimuli. Of course if one searches through Hume's writings for the phrase "natural ideas," one will search in vain, just as if one would search for the phrase "natural beliefs." But just as the latter *concept* is clearly to be found in Hume's writings, I submit that so is the former. Without going into a lot of examples, it seems to me that the clearest ones, and the most relevant for the present discussion, are to be found in Hume's 1751 letter to Gilbert Elliot of Minto (reprinted in Flew 1992: pp. 21-25). In this letter

Hume refers to "our Inclination to find our own Figures in the Clouds, our Face in the Moon, our Passions & Sentiments even in inanimate Matter" (p. 23). Hume immediately goes on to say that "Such an Inclination may, & ought to be controlled, & can never be a legitimate Ground of Assent." (Corroborating evidence, with some of the same examples and with much the same conclusion, is to be found in Section III of the *Natural History*.) Clearly such are *ideas*, not *beliefs*, although equally (in a sense) natural. What is so interesting and relevant is that Hume prods Gilbert Elliot for some sort of proof that such natural ideas are different from Cleanthes's appeal to irregular arguments in Part III of the *Dialogues*. But what is of especial significance is that immediately before the above passage Hume suggests that irregular arguments for God's existence do not have the same force as natural beliefs based on sensation. He says "I could wish that Cleanthes's Argument could be so analyzed, as to be rendered quite formal & regular. The Propensity of the Mind towards it, unless that Propensity were as strong & universal as that to believe in our Senses & Experience, will still, I am afraid, be esteemed a suspicious Foundation."

Returning to the question of Philo's reversal, I suggest, then, that the advantage of Philo's new strategy, his not-so-obvious plan in Part XII to once again "argue with Cleanthes in his own way," is that, employing a strategy very different from counterpoising, he could show Cleanthes the insufficiency of his appeal to irregular arguments without being charged with Pyrrhonism. He could therefore be taken seriously by Cleanthes. I believe that Philo's (and Hume's) ultimate point, contra Cleanthes and all others who would share his view, is that irregular arguments for God's existence can get us no further than the mere *idea* of an intelligent designer, and therefore not to a *belief* in an intelligent designer. This is because the idea of an intelligent designer produced exclusively by irregular arguments must always be, to borrow Pamphilus's words in the Introduction, "*obscure* and *uncertain*" (p. 128).

Interestingly, there is external evidence that this indeed was Hume's own view. In his essay "The Sceptic" he says:

> [A]n abstract, invisible object, like that which *natural* religion alone presents to us, cannot long actuate the mind, or be of any moment in life. To render the passion of continuance, we must find some method of affecting the senses and imagination, and must embrace some *historical*, as well as *philosophical* account of the divinity. Popular superstitions and observances are even found to be of use in this particular" (p 167).

This is precisely what Philo seems to be getting at near the end of Part XII, the oft-quoted passage, wherein he says "If the whole of natural theology, as some people seem to maintain, resolves itself into one simple,

though somewhat ambiguous, at least undefined proposition, *that the cause or causes of order in the universe probably bear some remote analogy to human intelligence . . .*" (p. 227). Philo's point is that the idea of an intelligent designer (or designers) generated by the fact of order and design in the world can never by itself be sufficiently clear to be increased in force and vivacity to the level of a belief.[12] This is why he says less than half a page later that "the most natural sentiment [key words 'natural sentiment'], which a well-disposed mind will feel on this occasion, is a longing desire and expectation, that Heaven would be pleased to dissipate, at least alleviate, this profound ignorance, by affording some more particular revelation to mankind, and making discoveries of the nature, attributes, and operations of the divine object of our Faith" (p. 227).

If the design we find in nature is insufficient by itself to naturally increase the idea of an intelligent designer to the level of a belief, then what is sufficient? Part of the answer was hinted at earlier in this paper in a quotation from Cleanthes, namely education,[13] while another part is what Hume calls less politely in Part V of the *Dialogues* the "licence of fancy and hypothesis" (p. 169), what he calls even less politely in the final Section of the *Natural History* "sick men's dreams" and "the playful whimsies of monkeys in human shape" (p. 181).[14] Specifically what these do is add additional ideas to the core idea, thus making it less obscure and more comprehensible, and through inculcation, ritual, and so forth, increase the force and vivacity of this aggregate of ideas into a belief. That the various possibilities of this aggregate is immense, helps account for the great variety of belief in divinity throughout the ages and at any one time.

In this light Philo's apparently fideistic remark at the end of Part XII makes perfect Humean sense:

> A person, seasoned with a just sense of the imperfections of natural reason, will fly to revealed truth with the greatest avidity: While the haughty dogmatist, persuaded that he can erect a complete system of theology by the mere help of philosophy, disdains any farther aid, and rejects this adventitious instructor. To be a philosophical sceptic is, in a man of letters, the first and most essential step towards being a sound, believing Christian . . . (pp. 227-228).

That Hume was no sound, believing Christian, let alone a Christian, and that he was no fideist, is supported by overwhelming evidence (see my note 11). He was an infidel (see my note 8), who early in life gave up all religious belief (see Hume's 1751 letter to Gilbert Elliot), and who thought Christianity as bigoted a superstition as any (see his interview by Boswell). When Hume, through Philo above, implies that the dogmatist lacks "a just sense of the imperfections of natural reason," and claims that a philosophical skeptic will require revealed religion to become "a sound, believ-

ing Christian," he is but sealing the thesis I have here formulated. Far from prescribing any fideism on his or Philo's part, he makes the point that whether one is a dogmatist or a mitigated skeptic, whether he puts his trust in regular or irregular arguments, he will always find them insufficient for theistic belief, and therefore as a foundation for religion, and will find himself forced, if he wills to be a true believer, to add that "licence of fancy and hypothesis," or more specifically "revelation," which requires, as he says with delicious wit and humor at the end of his Section "Of Miracles" in the first *Enquiry*, a miracle for anyone to believe it, a miracle "which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience" (p. 131).

It is regrettable, perhaps, that Hume nowhere, particularly in the *Dialogues*, brought out clearly his belief/idea distinction and applied it to the matter of natural religion. But then to do so would have revealed his own position all too easily, and would have ruined the riddle.

What, then, finally, are we to make of Pamphilus's closing appraisal at the very end of Part XII, in which he says ". . . upon a serious review of the whole, I cannot but think, that Philo's principles are more probable than Demea's; but that those of Cleanthes approach still nearer to the truth" (p. 228)? Can this assessment reflect Hume's own view?

It has been argued by various commentators that this closing appraisal serves basically two functions: (i) to help avoid a one-sidedness and imbalance in the *Dialogues*, a problem that Hume was acutely concerned with, as noted even in the Introduction (p. 127), and (ii) to still any ecclesiastical recriminations.

At any rate, what seems decisive as to why we should not accept Pamphilus's closing assessment is a clue given in the Introduction itself. Not only is Pamphilus a close pupil of Cleanthes, as noted at the beginning of Part I, and thereby bound to be biased, but Pamphilus in the Introduction says of himself that his "youth" rendered him a "mere auditor" of the disputes. Pamphilus thereby admits incompetence on anything beyond mere recital, and any inclination to give weight to his appraisal at the end of Part XII, as expressing Hume's own view, ought to be counterpoised with this consideration.

1 The theories on Philo's reversal of which I take cognizance are those of Mossner (1936: pp. 346-347), Kemp Smith (1947: pp. 30, 39, 61-63, 70), Noxon (1964: pp. 259-260), Pike (1970: pp. 233-237), Penelhum (1983: pp. 171-180), Tweyman (1986: p. ix), Gaskin (1988: pp. 6-7, 125-127), Yandell (1990: pp. 39, 165), and Andre (1993: pp. 149-153).

2 My approach has the added advantage that it saves Hume from a large amount of self-contradiction. Certainly if Hume held the view that belief in God

is either a natural belief or a rational belief (vestigial or otherwise), he would then be contradicting himself in those places where he names true or genuine atheists (for instance Lord Marischal in his interview by Boswell, quoted in Wain 1992: p. 251). On either of the two above views it would be impossible for a man of letters to be an atheist. That Hume names true or genuine atheists, and educated ones at that, calls for a different interpretation of Hume.

3 That Hume changes emphasis in the first *Enquiry* (pp. 19-20) to that of an idea derived from impressions of inner reflection, which thereby excludes impressions of sensation, does not contradict the present interpretation. There is a significant difference between the idea of an intelligent designer of the world and "an infinitely intelligent, wise, and good Being," and the idea of each may well be accounted for by very different types of impressions.

4 Interestingly, Cleanthes in this is being true to his namesake, namely Cleanthes the successor of Zeno, the founder of Stoicism. As J. M. Ross pointed out in his Introduction to H. C. P. McGregor's (1972) translation of Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*, "the Stoics postulated an instinctive criterion of certainty which compelled assent to any true perception" (p. 74n).

5 As Hume was fully aware, Cicero, on the one hand, as we have seen, characterized the Stratonician view as a theism, whereas Pierre Bayle, on the other hand, explicitly thought it an atheism (see Kemp Smith 1947: p. 85).

6 I suggest Hume more properly means here dogmatic atheism.

7 I suggest Hume more properly means here monotheism.

8 Interestingly, this is precisely how Hume characterized himself (viz., as an infidel). See, for instance, one of his letters quoted in Kemp Smith (1947: p. 7).

9 That Hume here has Cleanthes use the word "is" instead of the grammatically correct "are" seems to me significant. For Cleanthes, common sense and reason are one, just as, on his view, what he calls reasonable skepticism and empirical theism are perfectly in accord (p. 154). Cleanthes also thinks that irregular arguments have epistemological status. Philo and Hume, as we shall see, do not share this view.

10 I suggest that the sentence in which this phrase is found, so as to accord with the overall gist of Cleanthes's speech, be read as follows: ". . . supported by strong and obvious reason, *i.e.*, by natural propensity . . ."

11 See, for example, Hume's 1743 letter to William Mure of Caldwell, his essay "Of Superstition and Enthusiasm," his criticisms in the final Section of the *Natural History*, Philo's criticisms in Part XII of the *Dialogues*, as well as Boswell's interview with Hume. Indeed examples abound.

12 An important part of my argument would seem to turn on this very point. Among those who have thought that it is Cleanthes who speaks mainly for Hume, Pike (1970) fully admits that the conclusion of Cleanthes's appeal to irregular arguments is "regrettably vague and incomplete" (p. 233)—though I should think there is a lot more to it than just the fact that "it does not include mention of the *moral* attributes of the crucial matter is whether for Hume a vague

and incomplete idea can by itself be raised to the level of a belief. In the *Treatise*, the answer seems a clear "No." According to Hume, "all impressions are clear and precise" (p. 72), and only ideas may be "obscure" (p. 33; cf. p. 73). Since we must begin with an idea of God—as mentioned earlier, according to Hume we have neither an innate idea of God nor any direct impressions of God—it necessarily follows on Hume's account that we must first begin with a clear and precise idea of God if it is to be raised in force and vivacity to the level of an impression. This follows because (i) an impression is no different in content than its corresponding idea, and (ii) it is of the nature of impressions that they cannot be obscure and vague. The same would seem to follow for beliefs. But irregular arguments give us neither a clear and precise impression nor a clear and precise idea. Irregular arguments, then—not to mention regular ones—must in themselves be insufficient for belief.

13 Hume's most definitive passage on the power of education is to be found in Book I of his *Treatise*:

> I am persuaded, that upon examination we shall find more than one half of those opinions, that prevail among mankind, to be owing to education, and that the principles, which are thus implicitly embrac'd, over-ballance those, which are owing either to abstract reasoning or experience. As liars, by the frequent repetition of their lies, come at last to remember them; so the judgment, or rather the imagination, by the like means, may have ideas so strongly imprinted on it, and conceive them in so full a light, that they may operate upon the mind in the same manner with those, which the senses, memory or reason present to us. But as education is an artificial and not a natural cause, and as its maxims are frequently contrary to reason, and even to themselves in different times and places, it is never upon that account recogniz'd by philosophers; tho' in reality it be built almost on the same foundation of custom and repetition as our reasonings from causes and effects (p. 117).

14 To all of this we may add his discussion in the *Treatise* (repeated in the first *Enquiry*, pp. 51-52) on the practices of the Roman Catholics:

> The devotees of that strange superstition usually plead in excuse of the mummeries, with which they are upbraided, that they feel the good effect of those external motions, and postures, and actions, in inlivening their devotion, and quickening their fervour, which otherwise wou'd decay away, if directed entirely to distant and immaterial objects. We shadow out the objects of our faith, they say, in sensible types and images, and render them more present to us by the immediate presence of these types, than 'tis possible for us to do, merely by an intellectual view and contemplation. Sensible objects have always a greater influence on the fancy than any other; and this influence they readily convey to those ideas, to which they are related, and which they resemble (pp. 99-100).

On this account the teaching that God was made flesh, and of transubstantiation, may perhaps be included among the most vivid displays of this principle.

REFERENCES

Andre, Shane (1993). "Was Hume An Atheist?" *Hume Studies* (19:141-166).

Flew, Antony, ed. (1992). *David Hume: Writings on Religion.* La Salle: Open Court.

Gaskin, J.C.A. (1988). *Hume's Philosophy of Religion.* Second Edition. Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press International, Inc.

Hume, David (1739/40). A *Treatise of Human Nature.* Edition P.H. Nidditch (1978). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

——. (1742). "The Sceptic." Reprinted in Eugene F. Miller, ed. (1987). *David Hume: Essays Moral, Political, and Literary.* Indianapolis: LibertyClassics.

——. (1748/51) *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals.* Edition Nidditch (1975). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

——. (1757). *The Natural History of Religion.* Reprinted in Flew (1992:105-182).

——. (1779). *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.* Reprinted in Kemp Smith (1947:125-228).

Kemp Smith, Norman, ed. (1947). *David Hume: Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing.

McGregor, H.C.P., trans. (1972). *Cicero: The Nature of the Gods.* London: Penguin Books.

Mossner, Ernest C. (1936). "The Enigma of Hume." *Mind* (45:334-349).

Noxon, James (1964). "Hume's Agnosticism." *The Philosophical Review* (73:248-261).

Penelhum, Terence (1983). "Natural Belief and Religious Belief in Hume's Philosophy." *The Philosophical Quarterly* (33:166-181).

Pike, Nelson, ed. (1970). *Hume: Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.* New York: MacMillan Publishing Company.

Tweyman, Stanley (1986). *Scepticism and Belief in Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.* Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Wain, John, ed. (1992). *The Journals of James Boswell.* London: Mandarin.

Yandell, Keith E. (1990). *Hume's "Inexplicable Mystery."* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.