

## Reviews

*The Great Living System: The Religion Emerging From the Sciences.* By JOHN RUSKIN CLARK. 2d ed., rev. Boston: Skinner House Books, 1984. 290 pages. \$7.95 (paper).

This republication of John Ruskin Clark's book in handsome paperback with revisions and an updating in gender-inclusive language is very welcome. It had quickly gone out-of-print after the original of 1977, but it remains, without question, the most careful and complete effort of its kind—to spell out specifically the influence of scientific method and knowledge both upon the processes of religious thought and, just as important, upon its substance.

Much has been written about the impact of science upon religion and about the conflict of beliefs, but never has there been so comprehensive an effort to master both fields of knowledge and to integrate their findings into a single theory of religious naturalism.

Clark begins with a survey of the important life questions which are the subject matter of both scientific and religious exploration, especially as relates to the "creative origins of order and of living beings." There are new answers to some of the old questions which point towards new theological substance, although they may, and indeed often do, reaffirm the patterns of our ancient religious responses.

The most radical change is in today's general acceptance of the epistemology of the sciences, which requires a new effort to integrate scientific knowledge with one's religious response. For example, the most fundamental question any of us must answer is that of the nature of the total situation in which we human beings find ourselves in the universe. What creates, orders, and sustains it? How does this affect us? Is it a single, unified system, an order, or is it many contradictory systems, a chaos? If it is a unified, living system, can we, or should we, seek to relate to it as to a God? Does the directionality of the behavior of such a unified, evolving, living system as we seem to inhabit constitute anything close to what we are accustomed to calling "purpose"? Have the sciences discovered "purpose" in the universe at any or all levels, and how does this affect the destiny of human beings? Have the sciences discovered anything which can be described as "cosmic" purpose?

In his description of "the great, living system" revealed by scientific exploration, Clark details the new picture of the living universe of which all human beings are "children," children of a *living God*! He then proceeds to explore the implications of this cosmology for *Homo sapiens*, "the unfinished animal." Considering humanity's place within the larger system of evolving life, he writes: "We are part of our own environment; we are the most creative, dynamic and flexible part of the environment, but anything we do that affects the system in which we are involved (and everything we do does), must be done with care, lest we start a destructive chain reaction we did not anticipate" (p. 112).

Out of this situation of dire responsibility arises the necessity for some human consensus or method for discovering an ever-changing, ever-

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deepening truth of the nature of our life and its relationships. Science may here hold a unifying and corrective influence superior to the revelatory faiths and doctrines of the past. "If we are to have life, and have it more abundantly, our faith must be congruous with the continuity of being as best we can visualize it. Faith should be reserved for doctrines which are beyond rational demonstration, . . . it should not be required regarding phenomena whose structure and dynamics we understand. . . . Since religion is one of our necessary survival processes, faith projected from true concepts is essential to the survival of the human race" (pp. 169, 170).

In this context Clark explores the meaning of freedom, the problems of choice, the reality of good and evil, and the need for social solutions to social problems—for ever higher and better political and social answers to our human problems on this constantly changing, rapidly uniting planet.

Finally, he describes the importance of a reformed, scientifically valid, religious outlook as the cultural component in human evolution. Without such an outlook biological evolution cannot guarantee either individual or social morals or morale, or survival in this age of exploding knowledge, power, and increasing complexity of all interrelationships. We humans can and must, Clark believes, achieve that kind of scientific, religious reformation which can give us the confidence and constant correctives we need to keep ourselves and our society in harmony with the great living system in which we live and move and have all our being.

The text is a gold mine of quotations from the top-ranking scientists of our time integrating or contrasting scientific knowledge with traditional religious views. This helps the reader to distinguish those traditional views which, with the aid of science, we can reinterpret and reaffirm from those which we must discard as no longer tenable. Further, the book deepens and updates our understanding of the complexity of modern life, the interpenetration of good and evil, and the ways in which science and technology have both enlightened and threatened our lives.

Clark sees the universe as the single "great living system." This is the ultimate reality of which we are a part and to which we must relate with understanding and reverence. Both religion and science are needed if we are to succeed in this. John Ruskin Clark has made that possible in this superb, integrative work.

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*Science and Reality: Recent Work in the Philosophy of Science.* Edited by JAMES T. CUSHING, C. F. DELANEY, and GARY M. GUTTING. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984. 195 pages. \$21.95, \$11.95 (paper).

This collection of essays is dedicated to Ernan McMullin, in honor of his sixtieth birthday. The contributions are by prominent philosophers, and the editors'

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stated intent is to offer a "significant sampling of some of the most important work currently being done in the philosophy of science" (p. 1). Beyond that, the essays are loosely woven together by themes McMullin has helped establish in contemporary philosophy of science. Particularly important, as the title suggests, is his project of exploring the nature of scientific realism and its place as a feature of real science.

McMullin should be proud of his birthday presents: each essay does offer a new piece of interesting philosophical work. Readers, however, may find that the sum of the volume's parts comes to more than its whole. It neither offers a concentrated treatment of its title theme, nor a comprehensive survey of the current agenda in the philosophy of science. Rather than impose either structure on the volume, the editors say that they "decided simply to ask a group of people who are both good friends of Ernan McMullin and important figures in contemporary philosophy of science to contribute major essays on topics that they regarded as central for current research" (p. 1). The resulting set of essays is predictably diverse. In fact, it includes at least four distinct *genre* of philosophical writing.

Two of the articles are programmatic proposals for doing philosophy of science. For the general reader, each is useful as an introduction to one of the two philosophical discussions that lie behind the volume's other essays. Thus, in the process of clearing the ground for his own approach, Larry Laudan provides an accessible (if opinionated) summary of the debate over realism and relativism in science from which the other essays proceed. Similarly, in offering his plan for integrating the "historical, logical, political, psychological and sociological aspects of science into a unified whole," Ron Giere reviews a central methodological debate in contemporary philosophy of science: the debate over the *theoretical* significance of what we know about the *actual* practice of science. This debate frames the question the other essays ask about scientific realism: What should we make of the fact that scientists, in their daily practice, seem to be realists?

By contrast, another pair of essays offers detailed philosophical analyses of the work of particular scientists. Adolf Grunbaum provides a spirited defense of the scientific status of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, and Arthur Fine examines Albert Einstein's writings in search of the correct interpretation of the realist remarks to be found there. Both of these essays are richly documented and clearly represent contributions to ongoing conversations among specialists.

Three more articles occupy something of a middle ground, exploring the conceptual foundations of contemporary physics. Nancy Cartwright and Henry Mendell provide an analysis of the distinction between "abstract" and "concrete" objects in physics. Their piece is intriguing for the useful way they have returned to Aristotle for insights. Bas Van Fraassen gives a careful, highly technical explication of the conceptual problems posed by realist interpretations of quantum mechanics. And in a complementary paper Edward MacKinnon reexamines the semantics of quantum theory to argue that their appropriate interpretation supports at least a minimally realistic vision of quantum theory.

Finally, there is one essay that stands apart as an example of philosophers' growing concern with the social context of science. In it Philip Quinn applies his analytic talents to the reasoning of a judge (rather than a scientist), to

contribute to the debate about the lessons that philosophers can (or should) bring to the controversy over "scientific creationism."

Despite this diversity, it is instructive to listen for the variations each essay provides on the volume's title theme. The resulting fugue is particularly provocative for those who study the relations of science and theology.

First, none of the authors endorses the simple view of scientific realism: that the cogency of scientific claims depends on whether or not they correspond to the actual state of the world. Several of the essays serve to critique this view. Useful here are Laudan's double-edged repudiation of naive realism and the radical relativism that often replaces it, Van Frassen's careful explication of the problems facing a realist interpretation of theoretical entities of quantum physics, and Quinn's critique of simplistic realist responses to scientific creationism.

The rest of the essays reflect McMullin's work on the topic by suggesting alternative ways to understand the work-a-day realism that scientists display. MacKinnon uncovers the heart of these suggestions in his essay when he appeals to McMullin's epistemological criteria of *predictive fertility* and *coherence*. McMullin argues that there are two features of scientific claims that are especially important to their success as pieces of knowledge: the degree to which they are heuristic for further inquiry, and the stability of their relations with other well-accepted knowledge claims. MacKinnon and his colleagues go a step further to suggest that scientists' realist assumptions are in fact the conceptual tools through which McMullin's criteria are applied in scientific practice.

The point that emerges from the essays is that the working realism of scientists is not damaged very deeply by the weaknesses of naive epistemological realism, because the same research strategies which serve it also produce claims that are progressive by McMullin's alternative criteria. Seeking to frame claims that can be falsified "against nature" also serves to produce claims that pose new questions about nature and to suggest new lines of inquiry into it. Seeking to confirm the "objectivity" of claims through multiple testing methods and interdisciplinary corroboration also directly tests the claim's conceptual relations with other accepted knowledge.

Ironically, in other words, whether realist strategies are theoretically cogent or not seems to bear only obliquely on their ability to be reliable routes to knowledge. Thus, as Laudan argues in his essay, "We lose nothing by conceding that the methods of science are imperfect, and that the theories of science are probably false. Even in this less than perfect state, we have an instrument for inquiry which is arguably a better device for picking out reliable theories than any other instrument we have yet devised for that purpose" (p. 102). Again, the power of this device has little to do with its advertized ability to produce true and neutral accounts of nature: it does so rarely, if ever. Rather, its power comes through the utility and stability that its use of McMullin's criteria gives to the knowledge it does produce.

The essays come to this message indirectly and from different angles. In his paper, for example, Giere focuses on its implications for the nature of theories in science. By specifying the similarities (and, by implication, dissimilarities) between a given model and some natural system, a scientific theory both connects the system to an accepted frame and points the direction for further inquiry. Thus he says that "My account of theories, therefore, can legitimately be labeled 'realistic.' But it is a modest, *constructive* realism which acknowledges

that models are human constructs that could not be expected ever fully to capture the richness and detail of any real system" (p. 13).

Several of the essays underscore the point that, under this vision, constructing a scientific claim becomes a process of interpretation rather than simple testing. A claim's truth depends on the meaning we can give to it in the context of our inquiry. Thus, Grunbaum, in defending the scientific status of psychoanalytic theory, argues that "physicists too 'read' phenomena in the sense of interpreting them theoretically by hypothesizing explanatory causes for them. . . . Similarly, Darwinians 'read' biogeographical distributions by offering explanatory historical narratives for them" (p. 80). As a consequence, the realism of scientific claims becomes a function of their explanatory power. Thus, Cartwright and Mendel argue that the *concreteness* of an object for physics depends on the robustness of the explanations we can provide for it—that is, on the number of different ways we can identify it—rather than on some set of features of the object itself.

In the face of this account, why retain the rhetoric of realism? Primarily, it seems, because of its effectiveness as a heuristic for bringing other epistemic criteria to bear. In its demythologized form, in other words, scientific realism turns out to be justified by the same (nonrealist) standards it serves. For the working scientist, however, the myth of realism is still an important methodological guide. Fine puts the point in psychological terms: "Einstein's realism, then, is motivational. It is not adequately expressed by any set of beliefs about the world, nor even by the injunction to pursue realist theories. Motivational realism is really not a doctrine but a way of being, the incorporation of a realist *imago* and its expression in the activities of one's daily scientific life" (p. 128).

Again, the essays from which this view of realism has been extracted are devoted primarily to other arguments scattered across the philosophy of science. Nevertheless, for those of us interested in the relations between science and theology, it is intriguing to find this view peeking out between the joints of those arguments, providing a common background. It underscores the philosophical promise of the project that scholars like Ian Barbour and A. R. Peacocke have begun: exploring the relations between scientific and religious inquiry through the lens of (what they call) a "critical realist" epistemology. This project offers a fresh purchase on the relations of science and religion by providing a new bridge at the level of the *philosophy of science* and theological *method*. If critical realism provides standards for both science and theology, what does it suggest about their relations? Clearly, if the criteria of conceptual coherence and predictive fertility are as important when applied *across* science and theology as they are within each inquiry, an important approach to the relation has been uncovered indeed. For the first time, we have canons for our own metalevel inquiry and standards for assessing the claims of science and theology themselves in interdisciplinary terms.

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*Evil and Evolution: A Theodicy.* By RICHARD W. KROPF. Rutherford, Madison, Teaneck, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1984. 204 pages. \$27.50. [London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1984. 204 pages. \$27.50.]

Richard W. Kropf is author of *Teilhard, Scripture and Revelation* (Teaneck, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1980) and uses some themes from that work to help illuminate the problem of evil. The present volume is one of the profoundest and broadest attempts to wrestle with this question to appear in recent years; it is perhaps the most significant contribution to the matter since John Hick's *Evil and the God of Love* (London: Macmillan; New York: Harper & Row, 1958).

Kropf begins by laying down what he regards as the four essential elements of the problem of evil: (1) the existence of a personal God who is the creator of all, (2) the existence of evil as a tragic reality, (3) the existence of human beings as free and responsible agents, and (4) the existence of the universe as a dynamic, evolving reality with its own laws of growth and development.

It is the central importance in his exposition of this final element of a universe in evolution that at once renders his treatment significantly more profound than others and makes it important for the readers of *Zygon*. He relates evolution to the Creator God in the second chapter ("Almighty Goodness"). He writes: "May we not assume that if there was a better way for God to create than through evolution, with all its pains and joys, its catastrophes and triumphs, its display of human wickedness and holiness, God would have found this better way?" (p. 43). This leads him then to employ an evolutionary hermeneutic to interpret myths of evil and to conclude: "I feel that we are entirely justified in seeing paradise not as a lost garden of Babylonian mythology, much less a location of impossible geographical description, but as a shimmering symbol of a reality yet to be revealed and attained" (p. 61).

With chapter 4 ("The Reality of Evil") Kropf begins his discussion of evil itself. He dismisses the idealists' solution that evil is illusory, and he acknowledges that evil is both negative and positive: it is the privation described by Aristotle and Augustine, and it is also the concrete reality of disordered and deformed persons, societies, and things. He confronts the pessimistic view of the ultimate triumph of evil with the statement: "Christian belief holds that it could not be so, that the victory over evil and sin is, in principle already ours, that Christ has already prevailed. But the casualty lists have not yet been revealed. Unfortunately, they are not even yet complete" (p. 80).

In considering concrete evils, Kropf first deals with the problem of sin. He thinks it better to think of an "ultimate" sin, developing and growing in society throughout human history, than of an "original" sin lying in the past at the root of all human failure. More generally, sin is seen to be the inevitable statistical result of finite creatures exercising freedom, an endowment so precious that the Creator was willing to admit the possibility of sin into his work so as to make his creatures free. From sin flows much physical and psychological evil. But this is not the whole story, and a totally new vision is necessary to account for the suffering and death that seem to be nobody's fault except God's. For evil appears in the world process not just through the defective human choice but through the very chance that undergirds evolution, and it is manifested finally in the form of death that all individuals and most species must face.

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The suffering of the innocent focuses this problem. The imputation of universal guilt as an explanation for this has become increasingly unacceptable. It is necessary rather to see suffering as a basic condition of the universe, wherein the physical, biological, and psychological levels of existence are integrated not by reduction of them all to one but by intrinsic interrelationship. Thus, concludes Kropf, "There is a solidarity in sin, as well as in retribution for it, and there is a solidarity in freedom as well. But there is also a solidarity in suffering, which makes it one with life and death, sin and freedom" (p. 136).

The suffering of the world leads Kropf to explore the mystery of the God who suffers. The involvement of God in the suffering of the world can alone make God credible. This involvement appears especially in the Cross of Christ, where Kropf discovers the expression of a painful dialectic within God himself between wrath at human sinfulness and love of the sinning creature. The Cross is the sacrificial death of Christ to remove sin revealing thus God's wrath, and at the same time manifests "an excessive love that refuses to take No for an answer" (p. 157). The suffering of Christ embodies the suffering of the cosmos and offers hope to the world, for it leads to the resurrection of Christ and his triumph over sin and suffering on behalf of the entire universe. His triumph heralds the inauguration in power of the Kingdom of God at his coming.

The main contribution of this study is the careful working out of the implications of an evolutionary world for the presence of sin and suffering and disorder within it. Evolution makes it possible to maintain both the goodness, power, and wisdom of God on the one side, and the reality of evil on the other. The suggestion that suffering is a basic condition of the universe and reaches even into God is powerful and coherent with the development of the book; it would seem, however, to need still further exploration and explication.

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*Process Ethics: A Constructive System.* By KENNETH CAUTHEN. Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press, 1984. Toronto Studies in Theology, vol. 18. 353 pages. US \$59.95.

Moving against a trend within philosophy to think of ethics as independent of religion and metaphysics and against a trend within theology to think of contaminating New Testament ethics with philosophy as being dangerous, Kenneth Cauthen, professor at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, hopes "to produce a synthesis of Christian ethics based on the Bible and moral philosophy based on reason and experience" (p. 26). Cauthen's process ethics is an "ellipse with two foci . . . revelation and reason, or . . . Christian ethics and philosophical ethics" (p. 12). From one focus he presents a *Christian* natural ethics, from the other a *Christian natural* ethics (p. 20).

His metaphor of an ellipse with two foci is useful, applicable repeatedly throughout a wide-ranging essay. Rights-based (deontological) and utilitarian (teleological) ethics are twin foci in moral philosophy. *Agape* and *eros* are twin foci in the Christian ellipse of love. Love will rotate around both sacrifice and

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equality; ethics will turn on both love and justice. A completed ethic will have complementary centers in individual and community. A strength of this work is its capacity to synthesize by dialectical process.

After an initial chapter setting out this goal and strategy ("The Task and Method of Christian Natural Ethics"), Cauthen turns to an overview of contemporary moral philosophy, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of teleological and deontological ethical theories, in the end blending the two in "An Inclusive Ethical Strategy." Then he turns to Biblical ethics in "An Ethic of Sacrificial-Equalitarian Love." Finally, in two chapters ("The Just and Good Society: A First Approximation" and "A Second Approximation") he sets forth an account of the just society. This involves theoretical accounts of the good life, the good person, the good society, and also examination of many practical, specific issues faced in American life. There is an appendix on economic justice in a capitalist society. In these chapters, correcting a prevailing overemphasis on individuals, Cauthen leads away from individualism toward a corporate view of society.

*Zygon* readers will be particularly interested in how little tension Cauthen feels between the naturalistic (and Christian) ethics he advocates and the evolutionary processes in nature. "Stated philosophically the principle is this: Respond to the creation of life in the evolutionary process by honoring the intrinsic value of living beings and by promoting the fulfillment of their potential. Stated theologically, the principle is this: Respond to the action of God in creation and redemption by loving others as God has loved you and by actualizing the Society of God on earth" (p. 127). Also, Cauthen's analysis of the legitimate place of self-love (to which we are biologically impelled) in a constructive tension with love for others (to which we are ethically urged) can help those who are puzzled over the seeming stronghold of self-interest so omnipresent in biological organisms and the seeming impossibility of producing genuine altruism in a human nature evolved from the beasts. Cauthen, however, does not face the tangled issues raised for ethics by biology (especially sociobiology). The naturalistic dimension of his ethics would have been more credible had he done so.

Cauthen is evidently at home in the literature of both theological and philosophical ethics and moves between these fields with unusual freedom and competence. Within Christian ethics, his discussion of self-giving love and its relation to self-love ("Love your neighbor *as* yourself") is perhaps the strongest chapter in the book. One reason is that it imports analytic skills honed in philosophical ethics to solve the dilemmas of *agape* and *eros*.

Cauthen concludes his Biblical ethics with the self speaking to the other:

I will love you and seek community with you unconditionally. I will stand ready to sacrifice for the sake of that ideal without ceasing come what may. What I seek is mutual self-realization in a fellowship of giving and receiving in which responsibility and benefits are shared. But I will keep my part of the bargain whether you keep yours or not. I will count your needs equal to mine and will sacrifice my own interests for the sake of meeting your greater needs. But I will not cease to count my own needs as worthy of equal attention and will guard my own rights and my own just access to my own good (p. 171).

Some will feel that this has compromised those topsy-turvy commands in the Sermon on the Mount that urge a radical self-emptying love. It is a little hard to imagine the last sentence of the conclusion above on the lips of Jesus. The reservation is too calculating, too guarded. But perhaps this is what an operational Christian morality comes to when the self is given equality with the other,



and both loved—when a philosophical, naturalistic ethic blends with a Christian ethic.

Within philosophical ethics, in the chapters on the just society, Cauthen is impressive in his capacity to argue with John Rawls and Robert Nozick. There is much of value in these chapters, although they have some tendency to treat too many issues too lightly. A more serious shortcoming is that Cauthen does not show here enough capacity to bring the Biblical sense of justice (righteousness) into social concerns for justice. God's righteousness, as portrayed in both Testaments, does not so much assess competing claims as it does deliver and save the unjust. "In thy righteousness deliver me and rescue me" (Ps. 71:2). God "himself is righteous [=just] and . . . he justifies him who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). The divine justice actively makes things right, delivers unjust persons not simply by vindicating them against oppressors or competitors but by making them just. Cauthen touches this saving element in divine justice (p. 209) but does not actively integrate it into his account of the just society.

Rather, the agenda for the debate in the last two chapters is almost entirely set by philosophical ethics, a matter of adjudicating conflicting interests. One could wish, for instance, speaking from their focus in the *Christian/natural* ellipse, that Christians could contribute more insight into how to make for righteousness in affirmative action and reverse discrimination cases (pp. 257-60, 305), in the abortion debates (pp. 268-74), in deciding whether society should provide a guaranteed annual wage (pp. 282-84), in permitting or prohibiting tax exemption for schools practicing racial discrimination (pp. 274-77), or in inheritance policy (pp. 287-89). So far as Cauthen moderates the discussion here, Christians seem no better able to debate these issues than are secular philosophers or ordinary citizens; the Christian faith offers little truly prophetic perspective on justice. There ought to be some baptism of justice. If this cannot be done in the courts of a nation constitutionally neutral to religion, where each must be given his or her due, then surely the Christian community present in that society ought to add something more positive than an otherwise unaided humanism can supply.

To some extent this issue reflects a still larger, unresolved issue throughout the book—the mix of Christianity and of philosophical naturalism in this blended ethics. Seen as two foci in an ellipse, it would seem that, while the two centers are often congenial, each pulls ethics to some extent in directions contrary to the pull of the other. I gather that this generally is Cauthen's intent. But he can also say that his humanism and his Christianity "coincide"; they meet in "a convergence of claims" (p. 132). He proposes "a congruence . . . between moral philosophy and New Testament ethics" (p. 156). "I maintain that there is a correspondence, if not identity, between *agape* and the philosophical claim that we are obligated to honor the intrinsic worth of every person" (p. 130). Congruence, converging claims, identity—these pull the foci closer and closer together, and often Cauthen seems to say, or to hope, that Christian ethics and philosophical ethics, if both are done well, will uniformly recommend the same conduct.

But he also complains that philosophical ethics has been, and must be, shallow. "Philosophical ethics as generally practiced in American universities tends to be truncated and superficial . . . lacking anchor in bedrock reality" (pp. 116-17). "A secular ethics without recourse to a transmoral resolution is metaphysically shallow and existentially inadequate" (p. 118). One's ethic does depend on one's metaphysics; the way one believes that the universe is built governs what conduct one judges to be fitting within it. "At the ultimate level it

may be said that ought can be derived from is" (p. 104). "Moral living is attuning oneself to the character and aims of the universe" (p. 106). At this point, philosophical ethics does not know grace or God's justice. It cannot deal redemptively with tragic choices (see p. 118). "Beyond all human limitations or analysis and action is the final appeal to the religious resources of grace, of divine forgiveness and shared suffering amidst the tragic conflicts of existence. An autonomous ethics divorced from the ultimate situation of human beings involved in both finitude and sin knows neither the heights nor the depths of existence and experience. Such an ethics finally fails both philosophically and morally" (p. 249). Further, the rationality of Christian ethics comes within the experience of that faith. "A Christian natural theology or ethics can justify its claims rationally but only or mainly to those who stand within the same circle of faith" (p. 15).

In such moods, Cauthen provides a useful challenge to the autonomy of ethics, at least to the autonomy of certain kinds of ethics. But then it is no longer clear how the New Testament and moral philosophy can converge in recommended conduct, be congruent, commensurable, complementary; indeed they no longer seem to be the twin foci of a single ellipse. Cauthen wants to have his cake and eat it too.

In Cauthen's account ethics is clearly a process, a dialectic between ethical concerns in tension. I did not, however, find this work to be especially informed by process philosophy as a metaphysical tradition descending from Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne. Cauthen notes that he intends process philosophers to be a seminal presence but not use their technical (and rather formidable) language (p. 4). His argument keeps polar elements in tension, often with a creative synthesis, but it does not evidently owe much directly to process philosophy. If "Process Ethics" had been dropped from the title and something like "A Synthesis of Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy" substituted, I would not have noticed the difference.

The book would have been easier to read with an expanded table of contents and with titled section heads. Its price will also deter many readers.

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