

*Eschatology* is more like a manifesto, proposing a monumental agenda, than a parsimonious demonstration of the inadequacy of “old-style” natural theology’s ways and means. (Wright’s disposal of three classic strategies of apologetics in a “natural theology” mode—the cosmological, teleological, and moral arguments—takes barely three pages in chapter 7.)

As someone who is theologically sympathetic to Wright’s overall project, both in its design and in many of its details (others are decidedly not so sympathetic), I consider there to be room for debate over the role of such strategies in the contemporary exposition and defense of Christian faith. That debate is not to be found in *History and Eschatology*. The possibility of dialogue with more “traditional” natural theology seems far away by the time we get to the end of a book subtitled *Jesus and the Promise of Natural Theology*. And Wright, who, in most respects, is the paradigm of a careful, objective reader and historian, is still prone to annoyingly and unhelpfully broad generalizations on matters unconnected to his expertise (e.g., Adam Smith’s economic thought “has become highly influential ... ending up with the greed-is-good philosophy of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher” [p. 19]; Karl Barth could “launch a much fiercer protest” than Rudolf Bultmann against Nazism “partly because he was a Calvinist not a Lutheran” [p. 62]). These are real criticisms, but, I must admit, relatively minor ones in comparison with the impressive intellectual and spiritual vision on offer in *History and Eschatology*. More than many of its kind, this is a readable, preachable, shareable book.

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**SCIENCE AND RELIGION: A New Introduction**, 3rd edition by Alister E. McGrath. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2020. 272 pages. Paperback; \$28.99. ISBN: 9781119599876.

Alister McGrath is a major international scholar who is prolific in his output. He has produced many popular books and academic tomes, and as a theological educator his output also includes many textbooks for students. *Science and Religion: A New Introduction* is now into its third edition and is an excellent introduction to the whole field of science and religion. The restructuring and inclusion of new material is designed to be helpful to the student, and reflects comments on the previous editions. The book introduces most of the areas of interaction between these bodies of thought, and I myself have used earlier editions in my own teaching, giving students a chapter of McGrath to start with for an essay, followed by more detailed material from elsewhere.

McGrath notes that science and religion are wide categories and serious study entails narrowing them down. He describes Ian Barbour’s four models for interaction followed by what he calls four ways of imagining the relationship between them. The conflict model is rightly

dismissed as a late nineteenth-century myth, and areas where conflict has been perceived, notably with Galileo and Darwin, are given the more nuanced treatment they deserve, thus dispelling the myths surrounding them. McGrath also gives a broader historical overview, refuting the further myth that the scientific revolution owed nothing to the medieval period. He describes the development of the Newtonian mechanistic model of the universe and brings us to the twentieth century with the development of the Big Bang theory. Regarding this last, it would have been good to note the pioneering work of Roman Catholic priest Georges Lemaître, often dubbed the “Father of the Big Bang,” who, in contrast to Alexander Friedman, regarded solutions of Einstein’s equations as physically realistic and not just mathematical curiosities.

McGrath moves on to a helpful chapter on religion and the philosophy of science. Some form of realism seems predominant and, indeed, the most rational position to take. It is interesting to note the adoption of “critical realism,” including not only by science-religion scholars such as John Polkinghorne and others, but also such as the biblical scholar N.T. Wright and James Dunn. McGrath moves on to the role of explanation in science, noting how in science there are different methods for different sciences, and thus different levels of explanation across the different subdisciplines. Theology too has its own methods appropriate to its own object but there are differing views on the role of explanation. He discusses an important case study, that of “non-reductive physicalism” associated with Nancey Murphy and others. He also gives criteria for drawing an “inference to the best explanation.” Various perspectives on the philosophy of science—logical positivism and the criteria of verification, falsificationism, and Kuhn’s paradigm shifts—are discussed. Worthy of mention here would have been Imre Lakatos whose “methodology of scientific research programmes” has been applied to theology by Philip Hefner and Nancey Murphy.

Complementing the above there follows a useful chapter on science and the philosophy of religion. McGrath describes arguments for the existence of God, beginning with Aquinas’s five ways. A section on the Kalām cosmological argument notes how this has been given a new lease on life by the Big Bang theory’s postulation of a temporal origin to the universe, although it would have been good to note that the existence of the universe would demand an explanation even if it were to lack a temporal origin. He gives a careful analysis of Paley’s natural theology, noting neglected aspects of Paley’s work such as his responses to arguments of David Hume. He examines ways in which God may act in the world given the laws of nature uncovered by science, including through miracles, where he notes Hume’s critique. However, as McGrath rightly says, Hume’s critique needs to be qualified, since, on the one hand, he defines miracles as violations of laws of nature and yet, on the other, has a problem with

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inductive generalizations from past experience – which is just what laws of nature are. McGrath rightly sees evolutionary arguments debunking religion as committing the genetic fallacy and self-defeating if human rationality is flawed, since that could equally well affect judgments in areas other than religion, notably science. There is a good section on natural theology and the role of explanation.

In the next chapter, McGrath turns to models and analogies: first, as found within the natural sciences and then, within religion. After considering what the terms mean more generally, he gives specific examples for the sciences, including the kinetic theory of gases, wave-particle duality, Galileo's analogical reasoning which led him to postulate mountains on the moon, and Darwin's metaphor of "natural selection." In the theological sphere, he considers Aquinas's notion of *analogia entis* whereby the creation bears a likeness to its creator, and Ian Ramsey's model of the "divine economy" utilizing the Greek concept of *oikonomia*. He looks at Arthur Peacocke's theological application of models as linked to "critical realism," and Sally McFague's metaphors in theology – though he could perhaps have allowed more than one sentence on Janet Soskice. He then examines specific theological examples: creation and theories of the atonement. He has a helpful section on the notion of "mystery" in science and religion before returning to Ian Barbour on models.

McGrath's final chapter considers a number of contemporary debates. Noting Hume's distinction between "ought" and "is" he critiques the idea that science, say, evolutionary biology or neuroscience, can determine ethics and moral values. That leads to a more general critique of the imperialist stance that science can answer all interesting questions or that the only reality is that disclosed by science. An interesting example is mathematics, which discovers truths that do not belong to the natural sciences. It is also utterly astonishing that mathematics is effective in describing nature and very hard to explain on an atheistic view.

An important area considered is theodicy, which is arguably made more difficult by the long process of evolution, preceding the existence of humans by hundreds of millions of years. McGrath provides an overview of the helpful contributions of Christopher Southgate and his former student Bethany Sollereder. For these scholars, there is "no other way" for God to create such a rich diversity of creatures, with whom God suffers, and for whom God will bring eschatological fulfilment. On transhumanism, McGrath describes the approaches of Philip Hefner and Ted Peters who, while recognizing the creativity of technological enhancement, are also aware that, given fallen human nature, this can also be abused.

McGrath returns to the anthropic principle and fine-tuning. He says that fine-tuning is strongly consistent with a theistic perspective, but the debate about a

multiverse as a possible explanation continues. He also considers the legitimacy of teleological language and directionality in biology. Simon Conway Morris's notion of convergent evolution may be the "best explanation" of what is observed and is resonant with a religious perspective but, like cosmological fine-tuning, does not prove that God exists.

McGrath concludes with two sections on the psychology of religion, considering whether this field can "explain away" religion. Religion may be "natural," but it is debatable as to whether that has any implication at all about the existence of God. Moreover, it is a long way from primitive apprehension of some vague supernatural agent to the systematic theology of, say, Thomas Aquinas or Karl Barth. To my mind, this is not unlike the difference – to give a scientific analogy – between the discovery of fire by early humans and the modern scientific understanding of combustion.

This is an excellent introduction to the field and very well suited to its pedagogic purpose. There are a few typographical errors (e.g., "magisterial" for "magisteria"). I also noticed that British cosmologist Paul Davies is mistakenly described as American. But these and my earlier minor points should not detract from a volume that provides a vital resource to educators and their students.

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**ANIMAL SUFFERING AND THE DARWINIAN PROBLEM OF EVIL** by John R. Schneider. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2020. xii + 287 pages. Hardcover; \$99.99. ISBN: 9781108487603. Kindle; \$60.49. ISBN: 9781108767439.

In *Animal Suffering and the Darwinian Problem of Evil*, John Schneider seeks to tackle four interconnected difficulties of reconciling evolution with a Christian understanding of God's creation: (1) deep evolutionary time and the startling reality that there have been hundreds of millions of years of violence; (2) the "plurality of worlds," the masses of now-extinct life that once inhabited our planet; (3) the discovery of "anti-cosmic micro-monsters," the realization that microbial life shares the violent and competitive world that macro scale life experiences; and (4) "evil inscribed," the discovery that natural selection is the very driving mechanism of creation, if evolution is to be believed.

Schneider does not set out to create a theodicy, in the technical jargon of the field, but follows Michael Murray's lead in his 2008 *Nature Red in Tooth and Claw* and seeks a "*causa Dei*": a possible reason for God to allow animal suffering that is more plausible than not. Schneider does not claim to know the actual reasons for natural evil, but only suggests probable reasons. The central suggestion is that, in line with Marilyn McCord Adams's work, evil must be defeated for God to be