comments on implications for the meaning of *imago Dei* and our understanding of body and soul.

The Problem of Evil section opens with the theological implications of natural hazards. Miller questions if natural catastrophes are a consequence of the Fall described in Genesis 3, satanic manipulations of nature, or generally reflect God's judgment on sinful humankind. Considering the testimony of the Psalms and other biblical narratives, he concludes that post-Fall creation is good. As well, the geologic record reveals that severe natural events occurred with regularity before the Fall. Disturbances we perceive as hazards are essential to the maintenance of natural systems (the natural order). Past attempts to control hazards, such as wildfire suppression, coastal modifications, and flood control often make those hazards worse. Biblical concepts of environmental stewardship can be applied in order to live in harmony with creation.

"'And God Saw That It Was Good': Death and Pain in the Created Order" addresses the question of "natural evil" that leads to unbelief when unresolved, "as it was for Darwin, himself" (p. 198). Miller reviews traditional and novel approaches to theodicy. Recognizing that crucified Christ participates in the suffering and death of his creation, Miller proposes that "physical death, pain, and suffering are opportunities for the expression of Christ-like character" (p. 205). Miller draws insights on the problem of evil from J. R. R. Tolkien's *Silmarillion* and *Lord of the Rings* in the section's final essay.

Science as Christian Vocation is an article co-authored with Ruth Douglas Miller, "Staying on the Road Less Traveled: Fulfilling a Vocation in Science." The Millers encourage students and early career scientists to look to their faith, in its teaching and traditions, to motivate and guide their work in ways that glorify God and further his kingdom.

Throughout, Miller is keen to avoid the sacred/secular dichotomy, believing that God "has a claim on all aspects of our lives" (p. 1). Professors at some Christian colleges are required to write a "faith and learning" paper in order to achieve tenure, an onerous task for those not used to engaging theology in their professional work. Here, Miller has written seventeen such papers while employed by a "secular" university! Science educators can benefit from reading Miller's work to develop a sound understanding of the purviews of science and theology applicable to topics such as origins, climate change, and public health. I assigned multiple articles found in this volume as reading in several of my college courses. Remarkably, Miller was often three to five years ahead of resurging interest in many of these topics among evangelical scholars. Rather than republishing separate articles with modest overlap in material coverage, Miller might have organized the material into a unified text that could reach a wider or more targeted audience. Perhaps that's next?

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HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

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PIERRE GASSENDI: Humanism, Science, and the Birth of Modern Philosophy edited by Delphine Bellis, Daniel Garber, and Carla Rita Palmerino. London, UK: Routledge, 2023. 416 pages. Hardcover; $160.00. ISBN: 9781138697454.

Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655) is one of those names in the history of science whose contribution remains only vaguely understood or remembered. A French Catholic priest, philosopher, mathematician, humanist, and astronomer, Gassendi's advocacy of a theologically re-worked ancient atomic theory of matter was a significant factor in the demise of late medieval Aristotelian conceptions of informed matter. Gassendi was also highly influential in reviving ancient Epicureanism, the hedonist moral philosophy from which modern utilitarianism traces its origins. Advocating a theologically modified form of Sextus Empiricus's ancient skepticism—in which we have knowledge only of observable appearances rather than of metaphysical essences—Gassendi shaped the way modern scientific knowledge came to be understood. Gassendi was thus a key figure in the emergence of modern empiricism, which brought him into prominent conflict with Descartes.

This is a beautifully researched and presented volume by thirteen fine Gassendi scholars. The contributions are divided into three parts: Gassendi's Epicurean Project, Its Genesis and Its Sources; Gassendi the Polemist; and Gassendi's Science and Philosophy in

Context. Further, for a book of niche historical interest, the writing is delightfully clear and accessible. However, for theologically interested readers of *Perspectives in Science and Christian Faith*, this volume has a glaring—yet also illuminating—problem. It is theologically blind.

For the academic specialist in Renaissance studies and early modern science, this volume is eminently solid. The editors and the contributors are all highly credentialed academics who are well respected in Gassendi scholarship circles. The detailed engagement with primary sources, the density of notes and bibliographies, and the scholarly rigor of all contributions are highly impressive. The specialist reader is going to have their understanding of Gassendi incrementally expanded with some interesting new details brought to light, and some existing evaluations in the literature carefully modified and improved. Even so, there are no significant new discoveries in its very carefully researched pages. The great merit of the book is not as a must read for Gassendi specialists, but as an accessible and rich guide for the nonspecialist.

The editors and contributors all seek to demonstrate how important a thinker Pierre Gassendi was. The nonspecialist reader can learn from this book's pages what a powerful influence this remarkable priest and humanist had in his own world, and how that influence remains deeply with us to this day. His influence on significant streams in early modern philosophy, mathematics, science, and theological thinking is deep and lasting. A knowledge of Gassendi is necessary for thinkers interested in understanding the roots of contemporary science and its relation to Christian faith. If you do not know much about Gassendi, I highly recommend reading this book.

Gassendi's legacy is his formative role in modern empiricism, modern hedonic ethics, and modern atomistic materialism. In these domains, Gassendi's influence is remarkably deep. Any good scholarly work that opens our eyes to what he did for us is valuable for helping readers understand the assumption-framing sources of the life-world we now inhabit. But theologically, what Gassendi did for us is more complex than any contemporary historian of modern science can be expected to unpack.

The contributors demonstrate that Gassendi was a very attractive person and thinker, and one cannot help but like him when reading about his life, his scholarship, and his astonishing intellectual and scientific achievements. But any close look at Gassendi cannot fail to notice both how theologically embedded his work is, and also how inexorably his work leads us away from Christian theology itself over the following two centuries. This "leading away" is, where recognized, assumed to be obvious "progress" in this volume. Gassendi's Christian empirical skepticism, his theologically adjusted form of Democritean atomism, and his complex integration of Epicurean hedonism with Catholic virtue ethics are all remarkable feats of theological innovation. These innovations are latent in the intellectual milieu of seventeenth-century Europe, but it is Gassendi who is the genius who is able to winsomely articulate them. Harnessing forces that have been at work in the Western theological, natural philosophy, and Renaissance mind for some time, this humble man of great learning and astonishing output manifests the intellectually reforming spirit of his times. But the currents are more powerful than this one man. Gassendi could not have known its outcome, but his writings are a significant part of a new movement that firmly takes us out of medieval Christendom and into the secular, and eventually post-Christian, scientific age. The Whigs have labeled this adventure "Progress," but the "Death of God" has been integral to it, which Gassendi himself would no doubt have been horrified by. And the process itself is more difficult to understand than any blithe secular optimism or merely positive historical objectivity can account for.

Given how Renaissance and early modern European natural philosophy grew out of Western Christendom, the manner in which it gave birth to a nineteenth-century science that broke entirely free from Christian theology is hard to explain and complex to evaluate theologically. Anti-religious Progressives of the nineteenth century are clearly the heirs of Gassendi in their atheistic skepticism, agnostic empiricism, calculative hedonism, experimental and mechanistic instrumentalism, and materialistic atomism. Yet not only "they," but "we" Christian naturalists who accept the validity of Thomas Huxley's domain demarcation between science and theology are Gassendi's heirs.

Gassendi raises significant "science and religion" questions for us today that this volume of tightly historical accounts has no interest in. But it is not even that simple, for underneath the contributors' theological indifference is the influence of Gassendi's non-essentialist view of knowledge—in which one can know only observable facts, never essential meanings. Guiding their every evaluation is the assumption that where our modern scientific life-world follows trajectories that trace back to Gassendi, in those trajectories, Gassendi was right. There is no critique of "us" in such a "history"; this idea makes the volume more of a self-congratulatory hagiography of present post-Christian naturalistic prejudices than anything else.

All the really interesting theological questions about our knowledge of nature that Gassendi throws up, are simply not present. The contributors never consider what a world-shaping metaphysical innovation this new philosophy of matter is. The idea that Aristotelian hylomorphism (where all physical beings are matter-and-form composites) might have gotten something right never comes up. Hylomorphism—today totally displaced by Gassendi's atomism—holds that intelligible qualities, such as purpose and essence, are integral with physical being's material and efficient causalities. But contemporary sciences—and particularly the life sciences—are trying (ironically?) to understand a world without purpose or intrinsic meaning (what then is a mind and a cosmos for? asks Thomas Nagel). What if there really are purposes and essential meanings embedded in nature that we can to some degree know? We cannot follow up those possibilities if we are determined to stick with Gassendi's purely atomist philosophy of matter. And the idea never comes up in this book, that Descartes—though, indeed, totally whipped by Gassendi's skeptical and non-essentialist critiques—may yet have grasped something true about the nature of intelligibility (rational and essential truths) that cannot be explained by an entirely external and phenomenological epistemology. The supposedly objective and merely positivist historical scholars in this volume are all firmly on Gassendi's side.

The glaring problem with the book—at least to a Christian interested in "science and religion"—is that it has absolutely no interest in what theological lessons we might learn from better understanding the life and thought of Pierre Gassendi. The book never asks what Gassendi's atomist, hedonist, and epistemic legacy means for theology and science today. But readers who ask those questions will be better equipped to so do by reading this very fine work of (alas, theologically and metaphysically eviscerated) modern historiography about the life and thought of Pierre Gassendi.

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WHO ARE YOU REALLY? A Philosopher's Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Persons by Joshua Rasmussen. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2023. 304 pages. Paperback; $30.00. ISBN 9781514003947.

In this text, philosopher Joshua Rasmussen attempts to understand the nature of human persons (Part One) and their origin (Part Two) through a study of human consciousness. While his book is an exercise in philosophical analysis, he offers reflections on the plausibility of his arguments in light of recent findings in psychology and theoretical physics.

In the first two chapters, Rasmussen establishes the framework for his analysis. Of particular significance is his use of introspection to argue against reductionist accounts of consciousness. By introspection, he means attention to first-person experience of the data of consciousness, such as thoughts and feelings (pp. 8–10). Such attention shows that the best explanation of consciousness will be one that accounts for the reality of mental states. Since we can have what Rasmussen calls a direct, introspective awareness of mental states, we can know these states are real (pp. 30, 40).

The next four chapters build upon this realist account of the contents of consciousness by attending to thoughts, perceptions, intentions, and values. In each case, Rasmussen concludes that the best way to account for the existence of these mental states is by changing our orientation from a "mindlessness frame" to a "mind-first frame" (p. 123). So, for example, introspection reveals that thoughts are real, but are not the same as, nor are they simply reducible to, brain states (pp. 57–59). Likewise, introspection reveals that the elements necessary for a free choice—i.e., agency, intention, and options—are present in