an introduction to this debate, I think it will help the reader understand the current questions that need to be asked, in addition to equipping the reader with the basic tools to answer them. In concluding, it would behoove anyone who wants a good introduction into this field to read this book.

JAMES ARCADI
Fuller Theological Seminary

J. P. Moreland, Khaldoun A. Sweis, and Chad V. Meister (eds), *Debating Christian Theism,* **Oxford University Press, 2013**

Debating Christian Theism is a unique text with a creative format. The structure will make it an attractive volume for many purposes. In what follows I will describe and evaluate the format, before weighing in more specifically on a select subset of the overall contents.

This text divides into 20 debated issues under a general heading of Christian theism. Each of these 20 issues is treated by two scholars, one defending a traditional understanding of the issue, one demurring from said understanding. Thus, for instance, under the issue-heading 'Science and Christian Faith' Keith Ward defends the view that the title of the essay captures: 'Science is not at Odds with Christianity' while Julian Baggini demurs with 'Science is at Odds with Christianity'. Not all chapters fit as neatly into a *pro-* / *contra-* structure, but the general format of defend/demure occurs throughout. Each chapter is relatively short and focused.

What is particularly helpful is the manner in which the editors have chosen contributors who are or were participants in the debates on these issues in the contemporary literature. According to the introduction, the contributors were not privy to their issue-interlocutor's work for this volume, nevertheless many of the articles interact with their issue-interlocutor's publications from other venues. This often results in something like a real dialogical debate and not just two unrelated opposing treatments of an issue.

What this dialogical format also entails, is that these articles are not 'state-of-the-art' summaries of the debate on an issue in the contemporary literature. Occasionally that happens in piecemeal form, but more often these chapters are new contributions to the literature or the updating of the author's previous contributions to the field. The first half of the

book treats arguments concerning God's existence: cosmological, teleological, ontological (a new modal version by E. J. Lowe, that I found very attractive), moral, from consciousness, and God and evil. These arguments are followed by treatments of specific Christian beliefs in areas as diverse as 'Miracles and Christian Theism', 'The Atonement', and 'Heaven and Hell'.

Having discussed the format of *Debating Christian Theism*, I will now weigh in more substantively on only two of the many worthwhile subsections. I am particularly interested in attempts by philosophers to engage with the traditional loci of systematic theology, and the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation are at the heart of these loci.

Thomas Senor is charged with defending the position that the doctrine of the Trinity is coherent. He begins by defining the doctrine as a conjunction of these claims: 'There is one God' and 'The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct divine persons.' He then proceeds to delineate 'Latin' and 'Greek' methods for explicating this conjunct. Rather than choose one over another, Senor proposes to incorporate the best of both perspectives. The first step, à la Greek, is to see each person as tokens of the divine type. However, to avoid tri-theism, Senor describes the relationship between the persons as an exhaustively necessary relation. Additionally, à la Latin, Senor wishes to describe the divine nature itself as the only token of the divine type. To account for this, Senor employs the notion that 'The Father is the source of the Son and the Holy Spirit (perhaps with the Son, perhaps not)'. The result is that the Son and the Spirit are ontologically dependent on the Father in a manner that the Father is not dependent on the Son or the Spirit. Senor asserts that this dependence relation does not diminish the equality of the persons with one another.

One worry that might be raised from traditional Trinitarianism focuses on Senor's description of three distinct wills in the Trinity. As he says, 'there are three willing faculties'. This is a worrisome move for a Christological reason, in that traditional Christology (at least Christologies submissive to the deliverances of the Sixth Ecumenical Council) has aligned wills with *natures* not *persons*. Thus, Christ, being one person with two natures, has two wills (technically known as *dyotheletism*, Constantinople III deeming *monotheletism* heretical). But if this alignment works for Christology, the consistent position would be to assign one will to the divine nature that is shared by all three persons of the Trinity (this, in fact, is the position Pope Agatho's

letter to the council asserts). This is not the route that Senor follows. A three-will explication of the Trinity seems internally coherent, but it may be a worrisome path for those holding to the theology commended by Constantinople III.

Following a defence of the coherence of the doctrine of the Trinity, one might expect certain things of the following chapter, entitled 'The Trinity is Incoherent' by Timothy Winter. One might expect an evaluation of the coherence of the doctrine as expressed by the early Councils or Creedal statements. One might expect an evaluation of any one of the numerous explications of the Trinity in the contemporary literature. One might expect some claim that 'threeness' and 'oneness' simply may not be coherently combined. However, Winter takes on none of these projects. Instead, Winter describes the Trinity failing 'on two internal Christian criteria and hence is, as a purportedly Christian belief, incoherent'. This move is puzzling. He seems to be saying that based on Christian criteria, belief in the Trinity is incoherent. I should think that most Christians throughout time and location would instead hold that the Trinity is the criterion by which the coherence of other purportedly Christian beliefs are judged. But instead Winter offers these 'two internal Christian criteria': A) the faith of Jesus and the apostolic generations and B) the assent to the doctrine by the faithful.

(A) makes some sense. But, rather than giving us good reason to suppose that Jesus did not hold to the divinity of himself, the Father, and the Spirit, Winter just gestures around how the notion of hard it would have been for a first-century resident of Palestine to believe anything other than monotheism 'in the Jewish sense'. Winter does not give any substantive reason for doubting Christ's divinity other than to say that there are other ways of interpreting the New Testament data about Christ without having to hold that he is divine. But Winter gives us no reason to think that his manner of reading the New Testament is to be preferred. Nor does he engage with the mountainous amount of argumentation for the divinity of Christ. Plus, Winter does not tell us who these 'apostolic generations' are who did not hold to Christ's divinity. Does he mean the Apostle Paul who refers to Christ as having the fullness of God dwelling in him? Does he mean the Apostolic Fathers who commend the worship of Christ as God? Does he mean the Nicene fathers who describe Christ as of one substance with the Father? Winter concludes his discussion of the divinity of Christ with the argument that the Islamic literature the 'Holy Hadiths' give a more plausible picture of Christ's self-understanding

as a prophet speaking *for* God, but not actually *being* God. It hardly seems an 'internal Christian criteria' to argue that the experience of a Muslim prophet better describes Christ's self-understanding than the apostolic generations who settled their minds on Christ identity centuries before Muhammad's birth.

On B, Winter opens and closes his chapter with the assertion that Christians today simply do not really believe in the Trinity, and in fact are embarrassed by the doctrine. To support this claim, however, he only cites anecdotal evidence from the Church of England. At best this is a sample size of 26 million out of the 80 million Anglicans worldwide; 26 million out of the over 2 billion Christians worldwide (to make things worse for this sample, the Church of England can only boast less than 2 million attending worship weekly). This seems weak evidence to support B, and even if it did support B, I do not see how B would constitute a charge of *incoherence* against the Trinity.

Continuing with the theme of the divinity of Christ, Katherin Rogers pens the Incarnation chapter and advocates for a traditional 'two-natures/ one-person' view of Christ. This allows her to continue her Anselmian explication of the Incarnation as *divine action*, as 'God doing something', which she has undertaken elsewhere. The analogy she uses is that of a state of affairs, called 'Nick Playing' (NP) which involves a boy, 'Nick', playing a first-person video game, his character being 'Virtual Nick'. Thus, the Incarnation is a state of affairs akin to NP. NP being composed of two parts is a picture of Christ composed of divine and human natures. Virtual Nick allows Nick to act in the virtual sphere, as Christ's human nature allows the Word to act in the human sphere. Her hope is that this kind of composition avoids some of the mereological issues that have plagued other Christological composition theories.

Coincidentally, as with Senor's treatment of the Trinity, I have worries that Rogers' analogy paints a rosier picture for monothelitism than the tradition typically allows. It is not entirely clear how Virtual Nick, even allowing latitude for the sake of the analogy, can be said to have a will in the manner that the Sixth Council wishes us to say that Christ had a human will. Of course, Rogers herself states that this is where the analogy breaks down because video game characters do not have free will; video game characters do not seem to have wills at all. But if an account of the Incarnation as divine action is to be pursued, it seems that more analysis of the causal chains inhering in this action needs to be pursued.

Michael Martin's chapter, 'The Incarnation Doctrine is Incoherent and Unlikely', picks up some of the arguments he has previously made in *The Case Against Christianity* against Thomas Morris' Christology from *The Logic of God Incarnate.* As such, Martin focuses on Morris' construal of Christ as having two minds. Martin makes roughly this argument: Minds correspond to persons. Either Christ had one mind and was one person, or he was two persons with two minds. If one takes the former, then one's view conflicts with Morris' account of Christ. If the later, then one's view conflicts with Christian orthodoxy. However, Martin fails to motivate the first premise, that the ratio of minds to persons is exactly one-to-one. It might be the case that our natural experience of persons and minds usually links these at a one-to-one ratio, but God Incarnate goes against our natural experience (Trinitarian considerations might also push against this).

Further, Rogers' NP scenario might be able to make sense of one person possessing two minds. Given the constrains of the video sphere in which Virtual Nick dwells, Virtual Nick is only able to have mental experiences inside that sphere. But, during NP, Nick is able to access both Virtual Nick's mental states and Nick's own. The mental states of Virtual Nick might not accrue to Nick, or only in some derivative sense as when Virtual Nick falls down a Warp Pipe, and Nick says, 'I'm falling down a pipe!' This is where Rogers' exposition of the *qua-* move comes in. *Qua*-Virtual Nick, Nick is aware of the fall, *qua*-Nick, he is not, but the state of affairs NP includes this action. Again, this might be outside of our natural experience, but seems to avoid the charge of incoherence.

These reflections are just a brief foray into the many fruitful selections in *Debating Christian Theism*. For those broadly interested in Christian philosophy, philosophical theology, and philosophy of religion, this volume really contains something for everyone. Many a professor will be able to assign sections of this text for a variety of courses on the upper division undergraduate and graduate level. Additionally this book will serve as a good reader for a general Christian philosophy of religion course and the advantage of this text over other readers is the presentation of two chapters per topic, thus the ability to engage the class in a clear dialogue.