

There is another route to maximal greatness. Suppose a necessary causal foundation (as a whole) would lack *arbitrariness*: so, for example, the necessary reality wouldn't be shaped like a bike — why *that* shape rather than another? Then, if the least arbitrary degree of greatness is *maximal* (else: *perfect*), one might infer that a necessary causal foundation (as a whole) would be maximally great. On this proposal, while Conee may be right that a certain type of Ontological Argument fails to show that a maximally great being must, in fact, exist (chapter 7), there may be reason to think that a reality that must exist would, in fact, be maximally great. Oppy doesn't break this line of thought.

Finally, the Subtraction Argument, if sound, would show that a necessary foundation is not spatiotemporal.

### 5. Conclusion

Intriguingly, one finds threaded across the chapters a novel assessment of a traditional, broadly Anselmian answer to the ultimate 'why' questions. Each chapter has a key piece — such as important objection, an answer to an objection, or reasons to accept a certain premise or inference. What is especially fascinating, and ironic, is that most of the authors aim for targets that, by themselves, have little to do with defending a traditional answer. It's as though no piece contains the whole picture, but fitted together they display new materials for thinking about an old solution to the puzzle of existence.

## TYLER M. TABER

*Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam/Cambridge School of Dallas*

**Adam Green and Eleonore Stump (eds.): *Hidden Divinity and Religious Belief: New Perspectives*. Cambridge University Press 2016, 295pp.**

Crudely stated, the problem of divine hiddenness (hereafter PDH) asks why God, if there is a God, is not more evident or apparent or obvious. In 1993, J.L. Schellenberg published *Divine Hiddenness and Human Reason* (Cornell Univ. Press; hereafter *DHHR*) which helped spur an entire subsection of philosophy of religion devoted to PDH, spanning several books and

countless journal articles, including (for instance) Daniel Howard-Snyder and Paul K. Moser (eds) *Divine Hiddenness: New Essays* (Cambridge Univ. Press) in 2002.

In this volume, Green and Stump consider new perspectives on PDH by bringing together a collection of fifteen essays that aim ‘to come to grips with this problem in a new, deep way’ (p. 2). ‘Taken together’, the editors write, ‘all the essays present a deep and powerful reflection on the problem of divine hiddenness and its implications for religious belief’ (p. 2). The book claims to be ‘of great interest to researchers and advanced students in philosophy of religion and theology’ (back cover).

This volume unfolds in six parts; in Part I, ‘The Argument from God’s Hiddenness against God’s Existence’, the sole essay is Schellenberg’s (‘Divine Hiddenness and Human Philosophy’, pp. 13-32), whereby he advances an argument against a perfectly loving God from what he calls nonresistant non-belief (pp. 24-25); those familiar with Schellenberg’s work will note, since *DHHR*’s initial 1993 release, that he still thinks PDH points toward atheism but that he now holds to *ultimism*, ‘which says only that there is a metaphysically, axiologically, and soteriologically ultimate reality of *some kind*’ (p. 32). This ultimate reality can be personal or non-personal; in this essay he argues for the latter (cf. also his recent *The Hiddenness Argument: Philosophy’s New Challenge to Belief in God* [Oxford Univ. Press, 2015]).

In Part II (‘God’s Hiddenness: Overlooked Issues’), Meghan Sullivan describes ‘The semantic problem of hiddenness’, (pp. 35-52), where she examines the ability of language to accurately convey information about God (cf. p. 37). Helen De Cruz’s essay on PDH and the cognitive science of religion (CSR) is stimulating. One longstanding debate in the PDH literature is whether nonbelief in God really is nonresistant (or inculpable), and some theists suggest that sin can produce in humans resistant (or culpable) non-belief; De Cruz argues from the findings of CSR, however, that nonbelief is *not* a result of sin but is rather ‘a result of our evolutionary history’ (p. 58). Comparable themes concerning nonbelief are found in John Greco’s essay ‘No-fault Atheism’ (pp. 109-25); he writes that the “‘flawed atheist” response’ to PDH, often given by theists, ‘is unsupported by an adequate epistemology of religious belief’ (p. 109). He also engages recent work in social epistemol-

ogy to make his case. Both De Cruz's and Greco's work will challenge theistic explanations that nonbelief arises from sin.

Paul K. Moser's 'Divine Hiddenness and Self-Sacrifice' (pp. 71-88) and Evan Fales's 'Journeying in Perplexity' (pp. 89-105) both make up Part III ('God's Hiddenness: Faith and Skepticism'). Like Schellenberg, Moser is a leading voice in the PDH literature and one facet of his argument here is that, just as God has sacrificed his Son for humans, humans can 'overcome divine hiddenness' by cooperating 'with the self-sacrificial love [from God] on offer' (p. 87). One remark from his essay will stand out to readers: 'Perhaps hiddenness,' he writes, 'is ultimately more characteristic of humans than of God' (p. 87). Fales responds to much of Moser's past work on PDH; he also examines the relationship between divine silence and the problem of evil by analyzing Eleonore Stump's work on evil and suffering, particularly regarding its emphasis on the biblical book of Job (Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering* [Oxford Univ. Press, 2010]); readers will find Fales's comments on Job, with reference to Stump's *Wandering in Darkness*, to be thorough and insightful, although for those who have not read Stump, Fales's argument can be tedious to follow.

Part IV is titled 'Reasons for Hiddenness and Unbelief.' Daniel Howard-Snyder's piece, 'Divine Openness and Creaturely Nonresistant Nonbelief' (pp. 126-38), challenges Schellenberg's argumentation, found in this volume's first chapter, on the nature of nonresistant nonbelief; this is a particularly helpful article since it gives the reader a chance to see how a theist can engage much of Schellenberg's opening essay. (Greco's essay, mentioned earlier, also falls under Part IV.)

The analytic-philosophical PDH literature is often concerned with Christian theism; but part of this volume's strength is its diversity. Part V, 'God's Hiddenness and God's Nature in the Major Monotheisms,' contains stimulating essays on PDH from Islamic and Jewish perspectives (John McGinnis and Jerome Gellman's articles respectively). Comparably this volume also considers PDH and Eastern conceptions of God (from Hinduism, Buddhism, and Eastern Christianity) in N.N. Trakakis's essay. Similarly PDH is typically spelled out to be a cognitive or an epistemic problem; but both Yujin Nagasawa and Ian DeWeese-Boyd, in separate essays, analyze PDH from a more *experiential* perspective. Nagasawa's interest, for example, 'is on God's hid-

denness from *devout believers*' (p. 246) — not analyzing formal arguments from PDH against God's existence — and he uses gruesome stories of the persecution of Japanese Christians in the seventeenth century in order to inquire why God seemed absent in their suffering. Both Nagasawa's and DeWeese-Boyd's essays are in Part VI, 'God's Hiddenness: Suffering and Union with God.'

Sarah Coakley's contribution, also in Part VI, explains how St. John of the Cross can dissolve a contemporary philosophical dilemma (i.e., PDH); Coakley's essay is insightful, although the 2002 Moser and Howard-Snyder volume on PDH already contained an article on John of the Cross and PDH, so Coakley's piece feels repetitive. Still, what other past theologians and philosophers, I wonder, can be utilized in the current analytic PDH discussion?

The Stump and Green volume also shows the *continued* scholarly importance of Schellenberg's original 1993 atheistic argument in *DHHR*, even if Schellenberg's own thought on PDH has since progressed; one critical premise in his 1993 argument there is that if a perfectly loving God exists, then reasonable nonbelief does not occur. Michael Rea's essay in this volume ('Hiddenness and Transcendence', pp. 210-225; in Part V) argues that Schellenberg's conception of God and God's love (in the mentioned premise) hinges on a faulty conception of God as a *heavenly parent* and that such a conception of parental divine love is foreign to historic Christian theology, given divine transcendence, in which case Schellenberg, at least in his 1993 atheistic argument, may have in mind a 'straw deity' (p. 224). Nonetheless, I suspect that the last word on *DHHR* 1993, even after more than two decades, has yet to be written.

My own conjecture is that this volume, much like the 2002 Moser and Howard-Snyder volume, will set the standard in the literature for years to come on PDH. Green and Stump ought to be commended for bringing together such a fine collection of essays, all of which analyze one of the most important themes in contemporary analytic philosophy of religion. This volume is truly a must read.