

SELF-ANNIHILATION OR DAMNATION? : A DISPUTABLE QUESTION IN CHRISTIAN ESCHATOLOGY PAUL J. GRIFFITHS pdf

1: Full text of "Irenaeus of Lugdunum : a study of his teaching"

A disputable question in Christian eschatology Paul J. Griffiths In Philip L. Quinn & Paul J. Weithman (eds.), Liberal Faith: Essays in Honor of Philip Quinn.

The Logic of Violence: Murphy Bibliography Contributors Index Introduction Christopher Yates Turning and turning in the widening gyre The falcon cannot hear the falconer; Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold. Both consist in an inner drive to affirm and delineate the contours of higher, perhaps transcendent, truths. And yet there are moments in which the distress of a given age or the force of given events situate the muse of the poet and the task of the thinker in the ache and strain of his or her historical horizon. Yeats penned his verse in the grim aftermath of the Great War. Heraclitus, it is fair to surmise, conceived his metaphysical aspirations amid the strife of Asia Minor. Though occasioned by the concrete, such works are also tethered to their respective traditions even at a point of origins, and lay an inevitable accent on the larger registers of the poetic and the philosophical. Yeats will ghost the verse of Auden; Heraclitus will worry the minds of Plato, Nietzsche, and Heidegger. Today one feels the reverberations of violence tumbling in and through the specters of genocide, racism, oppression, terror, poverty, sexual trafficking, abuse, addiction, and war. With the fleet of analytical tools available to us in this age of media and information, we are able to make empirical estimations that nearly overwhelm our capacity for moral reckoning and remedy. We can learn, for example, that 27 million persons are enslaved today, and that owing to the prevalence of debt-bondage arrangements, nearly 50 percent of forced labor victims are under the age of 18. Often these violations relating to the integrity of the person are in countries where conflicts are occurring. In many countries, human rights defenders are singled out for particularly harsh treatment and, in the most egregious cases, they are imprisoned or even attacked or killed in reaction to their advocacy. What kind of entities, communities, or nations would we be if we did not respond to savagery with abhorrence? But do we have appropriate and resilient intellectual and juridical bases for response? What are the discourses and traditions by which we understand, critique, and seek to redress manifestations of violence? Sometimes a frank appeal to moral conscience and responsibility does provide traction for remedying the default preponderance of a violent state of affairs. The strategy is by many counts successful. In Cincinnati, the local Ceasefire team saw a 50 percent reduction in gang-related homicides between 2008 and 2012. The delineation of, and adherence to, an authoritative code of rights subsisting domestically and between nations is not only the living premise assumed by the U.S. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor in its annual human rights report, but is, of course, vital to the ongoing adjudication of the Geneva Convention accord concerning the treatment of prisoners of war. How much violence is justifiable in preventing violence? Are so-called unlawful enemy combatants entitled to the same rights as conventional prisoners of war? Are the democratic nations of the West and the policy-makers of Washington, D.C. At the same time, they begin to illustrate the manner in which the analysis of violence, the strategies for mitigating it, and the viability of critiquing those discourses and their attending policies necessarily press us—as individuals, citizens, and scholars—back upon the terrain of philosophical reflection. Empirical data, anecdotal evidence, and social-political argumentation present us with pathways into the theme, but the fact remains that violence is not a subject matter reducible to a single medium of interpretation or a single academic discipline. It goes by many names, ghosts manifold discourses, and is manifest in numerous phenomena. Waldenfels describes how such violence preys on vulnerabilities in orders ranging from law, morals, and politics, to technology, religion, and language itself. Its character, cruelty, and subtlety are cultural and symbolic, bodily and mental, private and collective, even anonymous. Violence is as much at issue in the basic events of otherness between strangers as it is in the extraordinary hostilities of war and genocide. At times partner to rank evil, at times legitimated as necessary, the spectrum encompassing militance and just reprisal does not lend itself to ready measure. Few thinkers have had understood the aporetic nature and force of this topic as acutely, or with as much influence, as Walter Benjamin. Written in 1977, his Critique of Violence

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contains an incisive prolegomena to breaching the endsâ€”means cycle in which violence is traditionally understood and justified under the paradigms of law and justice. Moreover, beyond its appearance under the paradigm of legal theory and practice, violence also enjoys a mythical aspect at the very foundations of law. If violence alone guarantees law, then the law is indirectly dependent on the very thing it fears. The result is a continued period of overlaid oscillation between concrete occasions of violence and concerted efforts toward understanding and critique. It is in this sense that philosophy faces the return of violence, time and again. One recent thinker whose work is caught up in this movement in a pivotal way is Iris Young. It assumes that the individual is ontologically prior to the social. To set philosophy to the task of understanding and confronting violence is to engage an occasion confronting this age, and to simultaneously engage 8 Philosophy and the Return of Violence a tradition of reflection and critical methodology for which questions of peace, justice, and personhood are already vital. This task is obviously limited on both fronts. The philosopher, with important exceptions, is seldom a reformer, peacemaker, or advocate in any practical sense. Scholarship is usually not mistaken for social activism, nor typically credited with concrete gains in the economy of socialâ€”political utility. It does not pretend to mimic or attain the clarifying work of socioâ€”cultural analysis, good journalism, daring humanitarianism, or legal legwork. But what the philosopher knows is that the distress of an age has very much to do with the ideas of that ageâ€”with the assumptions and terms that give rise to potentially scandalous ideology and rigid dogmatism. In an industrial and hypertechnologized society, academic space is less than ever the monadic or monastic ivory tower that, in any case, it never was. At times, it may well be an enterprise in freedom that is itself vulnerable. What is clear for the situation in which this volume finds itself, and the freedom its contributors no doubt embrace, is the basic notion that to work amid ideas, even to work selectively amid a tradition that formulates and wrestles with these same ideas and the discourses surrounding them, is in the very least to set a necessary work of reflection in motion. Accordingly, the goal of this volume is to offer a compilation of some of the finest recent scholarship on matters provoked by questions of violence and nonviolenceâ€”philosophical work that is occasioned at once by the hard realities of our day, and by the sharpest implements of our tradition and its methods. The aim is, thus, a critique in a broad and two-fold sense of the term: Readers may expect to find in Introduction 9 these chapters careful and insightful discussions of violence in the following modes: Common to each of the essays contained herein is, thus, a labor of reflection occasioned by the question of violence and conceived as a work of vital clarification that, in varying ways, means to stave off the entropy of thought in the widening gyre. The discussion is organized into three sections. We begin with a group of papers exploring the intersection of philosophical vigilance, political necessity, and the precarious course of peace and justice. If the Enlightenment devotion to freedom is now imperiled by charging fundamentalisms and lingering metaphysical dogmatism, it is for philosophers, precisely, to join together and take up what McCumber calls a vindication of life. His aim is twofold: Can democracy today adapt its power and escape its totalizing tendencies such that the singularity of the individual is recovered and meaningfully sustained? A similar question could be asked of the tendency of modern republics, such as the United States, to trust themselves as the authors and arbiters of peace. Robert Bernasconi uncovers a historical and textual route to the heart of this dilemma. The result, Bernasconi explains, is a posture bent on enduring war fought for perpetual peace, letting loose the agony and horrors of war by couching them within a historical framework. Proximate to the appraisals of democracy and peace stands, for Simon Critchley, the abiding question of meaningful political engagement in an era of deep-seated antagonism. It ends with a call for protest and action to oppose the inheritance of foundational violence. He traces manifold figures, including the integration and neutralization of the strange in Modernity, radical strangeness, the ambiguity of the strange, iterative strangeness, as well as the issues of hostility and hospitality caught up in the cultural and emotional topography of otherness. Radical Hospitality and Religious Identity. For Jeffrey Bloechl, the roots of normative order may also be exhibited in the underlying existential borderâ€”country that marks the very encounter of otherness. Framed by recent scholarly interests in the possibility for an eschatological ground for pitting peace against violence, he trains his phenomenological focus on the root relationship between

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excessive violence and humanity in the thought of three figures for whom the event of otherness captures the precise and volatile tension between the capacity for violence and the possibility of nonviolence. This displacement toward the material dimension of language and the bareness of human experience enacts an exposure, as opposed to a declaration, of the ontological roots and communicability of human rights at the birthplace of the political and the origin of the contemporary subject. The role of the political and the violence of logos in the question of rights make for a fitting point of departure for the four focused studies that comprise our final section on power, nonviolence, and discourse. What is the precise relationship between violence and nonviolence? Foucault on How Power Kills. It is with this renewed sensitivity to the concrete and discursive modalities of violence operative in modern rationality and power that we turn to the urgent question of social norms and human vulnerability. It is by virtue of the singular merits of each of these essays that we are able to offer in this volume a contribution to the larger task of posing and treating the questions of violence. Our hope is that the reader will find this to be done in a manner equal to the restless resourcefulness felt by philosophy in an age that occasions concerted discernment. Mark Gedney of Gordon College, as well, deserves high praise for pulling translation duty on two of our texts, in two different languages; without his skill and discipline this volume would lack the pivotal contributions of Paul Ricoeur and Bernhard Waldenfels. Development Fund for Women and U. See also Kennedy, Deterrence and Crime Prevention. Arendt, The Human Condition, Does any other discipline come after so many historic events? What it means, in general terms, to philosophize after a historic event is a question I can hardly hope to answer here. I will begin with this last term. What makes an event historic? Before an event can be historic it must first be historical, and the James example shows us that historical events never stand alone: We can say that an event is historic as well as historical if it affects the later history in which it is embedded, and does so in important ways. Not all historic events matter to philosophy. Though coming up with an example of one that does not matter is surprisingly difficult, I think it can be done. We can put this as follows: This means that it comes before us, not merely on the universal timeline but in a particular history—the history of philosophy. Since that history is longer than that of any other discipline except poetry, we can say that philosophy in its cumulative sweep indeed comes after more 18 Philosophy and the Return of Violence events than any other discipline—though all disciplines are equal in the number of events to which they are subsequent on the universal timeline. The very fact that that there are historic events affecting philosophy makes some people uncomfortable. Yet it seems obvious that historical events do affect philosophy: And who can say that Plato did not change philosophy? What, for that matter, is philosophy other than just the results of philosophizing? There are good reasons not to answer this question, as very serious damage has been done to philosophy in the last years, and continues to be done, by people who think they know what it is well enough to exclude those who work on its margins. Philosophy is a type of discourse, and, as such, it has, like all discourse, various objects or themes. It follows that there are two ways in which historical events can affect philosophy: To philosophize after an historic event thus means that the event in question was historical, that is, it stood in a sequence of events; it affected the subsequent components of that sequence in important ways and, thus, was historic; and among the things it affected was philosophy itself, either directly or indirectly. If it means anything to say that philosophy is an autonomous discipline, it means that philosophers are free to determine what they will discuss. Historical events become philosophical objects or themes, affecting philosophy indirectly, only when philosophers choose to start talking and thinking about them. This does not mean that philosophers always eagerly seek out those objects or themes—often they discuss matters they would rather avoid.

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2: The Darkling Lights of Lucifer: Annihilation, Tradition, and Hell | Ross Mccullough - www.enganchecubana.com

A Disputable Question in Christian Eschatology," Pro Ecclesia 16, no 4 (): Emphasis added to show that Griffiths, unlike Mayhue, recognizes that there was at least at least a small amount of opposition.

Such prophecies were always believed, no matter how many times they had been proved wrong in the past. There was a wish for, as well as a fear of, punishment. Once nuclear weapons were invented, the prophecies gained plausibility, although now they were couched in lay terms rather than religious ones. Evidence, the more convincing because governments tried to suppress it, proved that the world could be ended at the touch of a button. Brian Aldiss, *Helliconia Winter* On the island of Eniwetok, site of the atomic bomb tests of , a man named Traven walks among the concrete blocks, searching for something he fears to find. He is haunted by memories of the bombing runs against Japan and by the deaths of his wife and son in an automobile accident for which he blames himself. He has sought out these sands, fused by the weapons tests, as the setting for his expiation, blending his guilt with the larger guilt of humanity in creating the possibility of nuclear war. Ballard uses the imagery of nuclear war to summon feelings of guilt, despair, emptiness, and self-annihilation. World War IIIâ€”the nuclear holocaustâ€”has been fought over and over in the pages of books and magazines. In a way, these are war stories; but nuclear war is different from earlier wars in ways that affect its depiction in fiction. First, it is short. Although some of our fiction depicts lengthy atomic warfare, most of it assumes the war will be over in minutes, or hours at most. Concepts familiar from other wars become irrelevant: Indeed, the distinction between civilian and military is largely erased except that the military personnel most directly engaged in conducting the war are the most sheltered, and innocent civilians the most likely casualties. A Novel of the Day After Tomorrow , one character comments: Today men ask their children to die for them. No amount of loyalty, determination, self-sacrifice or heroism will deflect an incoming intercontinental ballistic missile one jot from its programmed course. The hope of victory, which is all that makes war worthwhile for most, is absent. Mere retaliation can produce at best a pyrrhic victory, at worst, the end of life on Earth. And where traditional war fiction appeals to the notion that in combat human character is tested and the inner self revealed, nuclear war stories are dominated by machinery, not human beings. The rockets and bombs dwarf the officials who launch them, and the logic of battle is dictated by technological considerations as much as it is by the strategic decisions of such officials. The paradox that the entire point of nuclear war is its own preventionâ€”deterrenceâ€”leads to yet other paradoxes. A commander in chief must convince the enemy that he is determined to fight, if necessary, a war which can only be a catastrophe for his own nation. The details of strategy must be carefully laid out so that they may never be used. The more unthinkable the war becomes, the more we must think about it. Unlike in other wars, the enemy must be well informed of our plans and resources, for a secret deterrent is no deterrent at all. A peculiar feature of the age of nuclear combat is the possibility of accidental war. Wars have in the past been begun on the basis of trivial incidents, misunderstandings, and errors in judgment; but the notion that civilization might be ended or life on Earth be destroyed through a technical malfunction or an error in judgment presents an absurdity of such enormous dimensions that it can scarcely be grasped. The resultant air of futility about much nuclear war fiction is convincing in ways that similar views of conventional war could not be. Even those few writers who try to establish that atomic war might be purposeful or beneficent seem led by its internal logic to depict it as absurd. The author of a nuclear war story, then, lacks many of the resources of traditional war narratives. The genre it has most in common with is not in fact the war story at all, but the narrative of a great catastrophe: Nuclear war fiction has necessarily evolved its own conventions, the specifics of which will be explored in the following pages. Yet the genre has also produced thoughtful, powerful works, even a few works of high literary merit. Hiroshima has had nothing like the literary impact of other great military events. Even though this study surveys well over fourteen hundred itemsâ€”even allowing for a generous number overlookedâ€”the number of novels, short stories, and plays depicting nuclear war and its aftermath published in English in any

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given year since has seldom exceeded two dozen. Stories of the atomic holocaust have never rivaled in number stories of other conflicts such as the American Civil War or World War II. Even in those years when a good many nuclear war stories were published, they were rarely widely read: There is another, more important reason for the relative unpopularity of nuclear war fiction: Even at its most escapist, it deals with a war many readers felt to be as inevitable and final as death itself. Unlike historical wars, World War III will not stay safely in the past to allow itself to be enjoyed. Nuclear war must be the most carefully avoided topic of general significance in the contemporary world. People are not curious about the details. Once in a decade a book will receive a broad audience: So thoroughly neglected is the genre that there are many notable novels which have been almost entirely overlooked or forgotten. This study aims to bring them to the attention of a wider public. Some authors of this fiction are mere hacks, unthinkingly using the atomic holocaust as just another setting for escapist fiction; but most, talented and untalented alike, are trying to project and thus warn of the danger that confronts us. Novelists did not wait until August 6, to begin writing accounts of atomic warfare. Popular fiction was not slow to adapt the new knowledge to military uses. The atom was viewed as harboring world-shattering power as early as *Digby, Long*, a group of madmen are barely thwarted in their plot to use an atomic device to undo creation. Novelists were particularly prodigal in the invention of all manner of miraculous rays. The British fleet is manipulated into destroying itself when it fires its guns at the ray-wielding enemy fleet of wooden ships. But Anglo-Saxon ingenuity and civilization triumph as the English retaliate with helium-radium bullets of stupendous explosive power. A History [New York: Also in Upton Sinclair wrote a play concerning atomic weapons which remained unpublished and unproduced until he revised it as a novel in *A Comedy of the Year 2* volumes, Girard, Kansas: In it tiny radium weapons are carried by guards. The new element radiumite, which produces atomic energy, kills all life on Earth when a mad professor smashes a jar full of it. Only eleven humans who happen to be flying in an airplane survive. Wells in when he wrote what is usually cited as the first novel depicting a war involving atomic weapons, *The World Set Free* published in , on the eve of World War I. As Ritchie Calder points out in his introduction to the Collins edition, Wells made plenty of errors. He imagined bombs behaving rather like reactors, sustaining continuous seventeen-day-long volcano-like explosions. He confused chemical and atomic reactions and erroneously supposed that the end product of radioactivity would be gold fortuitously destroying the precious-metal monetary standard. Indeed this sanguine view was a mere repetition of the hopes expressed upon the invention of weapons such as TNT, which were also supposed to make war inconceivable. Growing interest in the theme is illustrated by *Wings Over Europe*: The British cabinet is confronted by a young man, the son of the prime minister, who has penetrated the secrets of the atom sufficiently to create world-wrecking bombs and the transmutation of matter. He envisions a utopia administered by benevolent England, but the greed and militarism of the cabinet members frustrate his endeavor. In despair, he determines to destroy the world, but is killed by a truck just before setting off the explosion. Just as the world seems safe for capitalism and warfare once more, word arrives that the Guild of United Brain Workers has independently discovered the secret and has placed atomic bombs in airplanes circling above all the major capitals of the world, aiming at global rule, underlining the theme that scientific discoveries cannot be kept secret indefinitely. The ending is left in suspense. The play was staged with some success in New York as well as in London. Also in , Capt. In Harold Nicolson, diplomat and biographer also the husband of Vita Sackville-West , published another early muscular disarmament novel, *Public Faces*; in it the British impose universal disarmament through their monopoly of atomic bombs delivered by rockets strongly resembling cruise missiles. Nicolson was less interested in technical matters than in the political maneuvering of the great powers in which peace and British supremacy are ensured by the boldly illegal stroke of an imaginative, headstrong minister. In contrast, Eric Ambler, in his first spy thriller, *The Dark Frontier* , depicted an atomic bomb whose power to dig a mere eighty-foot-wide crater is treated as a terrible threat to civilization. An idealistic and adventurous physicist risks his life to destroy the creator of the weapon and all of his notes in the Baltic dictatorship of Ixania. He does take into account that what has been once invented can always be reinvented later, but imagines that the

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world might become peaceful enough in the meantime to be able to handle atomic power. Having had a scientific education and through it gained access to academic journals, I had read about the early work of Rutherford, Cockcroft and Chadwick in the field, and understood some of its implications. The Mysterious Press, , p. The fuzzy physics described in the novel have nothing to do, however, with the physics of a real atomic bomb. But throughout the twenties and thirties most popular articles and books on atomic energy focused on its peaceful uses. The utopia of tomorrow would be created through cheap and abundant atomic power, not through atomic blackmail. But just before wartime censorship was imposed, the announcement of the successful splitting of uranium and the possibility of power derived from a chain reaction led to a spate of newspaper and magazine articles hailing the atomic utopia of the future and darkly hinting at the possibility of weapons being designed by Nazi scientists; see, for instance, the front page article by William L. The basic principles of atomic fission and the possibility of a uranium bomb were common knowledge, and wartime censorship hid little that spies did not already know; but popular articles on the subject ceased to appear and the public seemed to forget about the whole issue during much of World War II. Only in science fiction did speculation continue, principally in the pages of Astounding Science Fiction. He was fascinated by things atomic, and continually urged others to create stories on the theme. Throughout the s he had written stories depicting the atomic weapons of the future. Evidently unaware of the wartime ban, Campbell published in May a story with a more alarmist view, Robert A. Accordingly, we are outlawing war and are calling on every nation to disarm completely at once. In the war the enemy is destroyed, but power is seized by the colonel who conceived of using the radioactive dust in the first place. Comic books do not come under the purview of the present study, but it is interesting to note that the July, issue of Bill Barnes: The story is remarkable in not being more technically sophisticated than any preceding one, and one assumes it must have slipped unnoticed past the FBI. He is blown up on a return trip when he stumbles with his pockets full of the miniature bombs. Ballantine, , which describes a near-disaster in a malfunctioning atomic power plant which threatens to destroy several states. The scientists who keep the true extent of the danger secret from the public are depicted as heroes whose titanic efforts preserve the future of atomic energy by preventing the unscientific hysteria which would inevitably result were the nature of the threat to become generally known. This story has been told many times with little variation. See, for instance, H. DAW,], ; but the definitive version would seem to be Albert I.

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3: Social Aspects of Hell: A cross-cultural approach

self-annihilation or damnation? a disputable question in christian eschatology -- a version derived from this was published in Pro Ecclesia 16 (), disowning knowledge -- the text of a lecture given at the University of Durham (UK), subsequently published in various forms and various places.

Him that is weak in the faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations. Strong and weak I. For those who are strong in the faith. Nor despise those who are weak. For those who are weak. Not to judge their stronger brethren. To think and let think. To give each other credit for sincerity. The weak in the faith to be received, or the duty of mutual forbearance 1. The question was, did Christianity or did it not require abstinence from certain meats, and observance of certain fasts and festivals? The man who maintained that it did is here held to be weak in the faith. Now, the apostle assumes that the latter was right. But he was not wrong Romans The Mosaic law on these subjects had been done away in Christ Colossians 2: The question was whether the man who conscientiously abstained and observed might, or might not, be received into the Church. He was certainly not required in order to salvation to disregard the Jewish festivals, nor to eat unclean meats. But it never could be tolerated that he should set up his scrupulous conscience as the normal standard of Christian faith Galatians 2: No one must bind burdens upon men which the Lord had not bound. Hence the weak in faith is to be received, but not to judgments or condemnations of opinions. If he is content to enjoy the advantages of fellowship with you, without insisting that you are all wrong, let him be received; but if his object is to promote contention, etc. Let not the strong in the faith despise them that are weak, for their convictions rest ultimately upon Divine revelation. The law of Moses was of Divine authority, and, although done away in Christ, was subject to it. Therefore it was not surprising if some of the Jewish converts still felt insuperable objections to its abandonment. It was a matter of conscience, and the man who respects his conscience deserves respect, even when prejudiced and wrong Romans This may be done-- 1. By a contempt of his scruples. The disposition to sneer at his stupid weakness will not convince him that he is either stupid or weak, but will rather drive him utterly away from those who tolerate such an ungenerous spirit, and perhaps to apostasy. Now, though the strong had a perfect right to disregard the distinctions of meats, he had no right to imperil the salvation of any one for whom Christ died Romans The weak are not required to abstain from meats, but you are not bound to eat them 1 Corinthians 8: By example or persuasion. It was quite lawful for the strong to employ argument in order to convince the weak that he misapprehended the character and purpose of Christianity:

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4: Department of Theology and Religion : Past Seminars - Durham University

paul j. griffiths, cv/page 2 of 28 Luce Fellowship at the Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion, University of Chicago Summer stipend, National Endowment for the Humanities.

Annihilation, Tradition, and Hell. This is a curious conjunction, for while Gregory connects them more than adventitiously, the tradition of the Eastern Church has largely received the former and rejected the latter. This will not be an attempt to reconcile epektasis with Western eschatology. I care to describe hell, darkly and in part, not to defend the mere compatibility of some two of its attributes. Here also Maximus gives the keynote: Brian Daley San Francisco, Calif.: Ignatius, , 60 2 Although the doctrine of epektasis has antecedents in the ante-Nicene Fathers and in the other Cappadocians,⁴ it receives its most articulate treatment in Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory bases the idea of perpetual progress on the principle that the desire for God is never satisfied, expanding even as it is fulfilled. He writes of the follower of God: This, too, Gregory asserts: Now that which is always in motion, if its progress be to good, will never cease moving onwards to what lies before it, by reason of the infinity of the course to be traversed: Here we see the connection between epektasis and apokatastasis: Wander in wickedness long enough and you will reach its end, which can only give out upon the good. It is alien to man right from the start, whereas that [good] alone with which we are familiar and are on intimate terms is both desirable and agreeable. This is matched by the stability of the natural desire for God that grounds perpetual progress, from whose good sense we never defect: The Unmaking of Man I do not mean to synthesize these anthropological and metaphysical accounts but to work from a weakness they share. For while Gregory defends the expansion of the capacities of those approaching God, he puts less emphasis on the parallel condition of those receding from God: Apokatastasis is a possibility only if we retain sufficient 11 On the Making of Man Brill, , Vrin, , But in appending apokatastasis to the descent, Gregory assumes that we reach the bottom of evil still free to return to the good. He assumes, in brief, that we exhaust evil without also exhausting ourselves. But what if there is no demonstration or Dante or deus ex machina to open a door from the basement of hell into the vestibule of heaven? What if persisting in perverse desires, however unstable, eventually prevents our reversion to the stabler passions? What if the finitude of evil is measured not against the infinite good but against the finite evildoer, and our descent kills us before it can save us? Fortunately there is the Western Church, whose genius lies in producing saints intimately familiar with evil, and whose critics, though they might question how far it sees into heaven, do not doubt it sees rather far into hell. That sin could kill is a possibility held open by Paul Griffiths, who works from an insight in the greatest of such Western saints, though indeed it is shared by most of the Fathers. Note that in other places Gregory suggests that the evil are not so much making a single-minded descent but seeking to ascend upon shifting ground and so failing to make progress e. Life of Moses, Whether this is a separate class of sinners or an alternate description of the descent or simply an equivocation is not clear. Sin is the rejection of gift, and thereby the rejection of participatory being. The result is loss of a properly ontological sort. The only way to descend without annihilation is never fully to exhaust those capacities whose exhaustion is a symptom of sin; it is never fully to plumb the depths of evil, which would be destruction. Sin corrupts both the force and the direction of her will: University of Notre Dame Press, , A Philosophical Dead End? A Philosophical Anthology Farnham: Ashgate, , Indeed, as Thomas says, the damned are properly speaking still in time. That desire expands when fulfilled, which is the motive force of epektasis, might be disputed by those Western Christians who would see in heaven our capacities entirely engaged and our desires entirely satisfied. But as Griffiths represents, no one in the Augustinian heritage “no one with a doctrine of the Fall” would deny that the turn from God that is consummated in hell involves not only disengaging our capacities but their real diminishment. Hell, like the sin which is its seed, is not just a failure to look upon God but a loss of our very clear-sightedness; it is both the misuse and the destruction of our freedom. It is ontological loss, if not through continued post-mortem sin then through the progressive actualization of that decisive break with God that

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happens at the Judgment. The damned have chosen, finally, for the idols, and out of respect for their free choice, God allows them to become more and more like their silver and gold. Whether this eternal purgative process might be effectively indistinguishable from an eternal destructive process is not clear, and as Gregory does not explore his suggestion in any way systematically, it is hard to know what to make of it or its relation to apokatastasis. For as in that great mystery we participate accidentally in a form that makes little sense unless understood in some extended sense at the level of substance — Form, or the form of God — so here we are participating accidentally and increasingly in the dissolution of substantial form. That we never finally realize these substantial changes substantially, and that the exact nature of their accidental application therefore remains unclear, is as much a charge against the adequacy of the empyreal explanation as against the infernal one. And the charge is just, for these are not very clean explanations; but then our subject does not admit of cleanliness. It is clear that we can take on accidentally the essential properties of others, as water takes on an essential property of fire when it is heated. And it is clear that our essential properties can be expanded or occluded, if not destroying us then at least rendering us unrecognizable, as gods or beasts. This is all to say that the picture of hell sketched here coheres with broader Christian claims about ontology, mutability, and evil. But why should this ontological loss be progressive? Why not a hell in which each sinner is locked into that degree of attenuated being that she has chosen for herself? There are two reasons a specifically progressive view is attractive: Traditional views of hell and its eternity have long faced a proportionality objection: How is it just to set up an order in which the mistakes of a short and nescient life result in limitless torment? The common traditional answer is that our continued defiance in hell justifies the continued suffering it entails: The immediate rejoinder is that those in hell traditionally conceived cannot turn back toward God, and it hardly seems just to be punished for actions you can in no way avoid. Some indeed hold a mild form of escapism — 9 defending the ability of the damned to leave hell, however improbable — on precisely these grounds. In particular, if the damned are forever diminishing, it is reasonable to think that their ability to suffer diminishes as well. What Christ calls the destruction of both soul and body in hell presumably includes the destruction of those sensory faculties that mediate between the two, as it also includes the destruction of those cognitive capacities that allow mere pain to be experienced as suffering. Granted, then, that our ability to suffer diminishes in hell, and that the amount of suffering diminishes correspondingly, it is entirely plausible that hell last forever without its torments exceeding a finite limit. The traditional view of hell contains punishments of varied intensities, from mere loss of beatitude through to serious torment, but if all are punished by a sort of progressive destruction, can we preserve this variegation? Dordrecht, , A sort of apokatastasis could be smuggled through the possibilities opened by escapism, though Seymour notes the power of habit in confirming us in hell. Nor do I defend my larger premise that these capacities depend for their excellence on our right relationship with God, and for their existence on a bare relationship with him, except to note that this is traditional. Cain dismisses the idea of a suffering of diminishing intensity on the grounds that it would eventually grow small enough to no longer be a barrier to overall happiness, which is presumably not allowed to the damned. He does not consider that the intensity of the suffering might diminish in a way that does not allow for its replacement by happiness, as for instance by a diminishment of our ability both to enjoy and to suffer. But this is to assume a closer connection between torment and ontological loss than necessarily obtains. The traditional poeni sensus, the pains of sense, can be added or subtracted as justice requires from the poeni damni, the pains of loss shared by all in hell. On this suggestion, our freedom extends farther than was traditionally supposed, and the decisive decision for or against God that results in heaven or hell includes within it a decision for or against our very existence. This destructive hell would be a harsher hell, for it robs us progressively of that existence which is a good, but its harshness stems from, and is justified by, a larger scope for our free choice. This conception is a sort of progressive annihilationism; but there are also Christians who deny aspects of the traditional position and defend a strict annihilationism, holding that the damned cease to exist altogether in the post-judgment state. I have spoken of hell as if it were a continuation of time, even citing Thomas on the point, but that may just be an approximation: The similarity is

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implied in Matthew. This is why Thomas, in the passage quoted above, takes hell to be a sort of extended temporality, reading its eternality as everlastingness. But this is not the only way to understand the progression of progressive annihilation. Hans Urs von Balthasar writes: In this context we are only concerned with the different kinds of timeless duration, which can become mutually opposed depending on whether there is a participation in, or a depriving of, divine eternity. If he is excluded from the contemplation of God and from a participation in the Divine Being, he is also excluded from this inclusion and so is restricted to the timelessness of his own being, deprived of all contact with God and with his fellow creatures. San Francisco, , It has neither before-and-after nor does it come to an end. It is everlasting, if pictured temporally, or instantaneous, if pictured as the end of time, and the two held together by a chimera of gerund and progressive participle: The damned are dying: For the annihilationist to remain in continuity with historical orthodoxy, he need only affirm that there is no point at which the damned are no more, that, to adapt a phrase from the Arian controversies, there will be no time at which they are not. God does not judge, and kill or let die, and contemplate the corpses; God judges the damned, and kills them, and contemplates their dying. This is where the strict annihilationist demurs, but she need not demur to remain true to her annihilationist instincts: She need only say with the Psalmist that though the wicked sprout like grass and all evildoers flourish, they are doomed to destruction for ever. How to 34 The medieval idea of aeviternity is motivated by the notion that time itself, as part of creation, is somehow elevated or drawn closer to God in the new creation. Sub-ternity is the inverse of that. Successive loss of our capacities suggests how suffering might be both eternal and finite: The first suggests an infinite addition of moments whose overall sum is finite; the second suggests a finitude, because a singularity, of moments. But I would suggest that the latter option is closer to what annihilationists want in their annihilation. There is at least this difference: In that sense, the second death is more nearly like the first: It is beyond my purposes to survey and settle that exegetical debate, but three points might prove helpful in laying a biblical ground for the suggestions that have so far been advanced. First, exegetical answers are constrained by the perceived philosophical options. The exegete takes it as her task to bring the figures and contradictions of Scripture to something nearer a univocal, propositional statement "there is a hell of such-and-such a character" and the sorts of propositions deemed sufficiently stable and pellucid for this task will depend on philosophical explication. Second, the New Testament, which is more explicit about the afterlife than the Old, uses language suggesting both destruction and eternality.

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5: Pro Ecclesia | Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology

paul j. griffiths, cv/page 3 of 27 publications (2): books as co-author, editor, or co-editor 1. Reason and the Reasons of www.enganchecubano.com coeditor with Reinhard Hüßler.

October 28, Brad East on two major works of Christian thought Perhaps no part of the biblical story is so well-known or so contested as its beginning or ending. In the span of a week, God calls forth a universe of light and life with nothing but speech. Creatures soar, swim, crawl, and walk upright, blessed with divine approval and charged to reproduce, filling the earth according to their kinds. The human story—and, because the creator deigned to become a creature, the story of creation, too—will come to a close with a great travail, a baptism of the cosmos, a purging of all evil and death. And on the other side: On such an account, in the broadest of brush-strokes, most could agree. But the devil is in the details. Start at the end. What of the character of life in the new heavens and new earth? What continuity, if any, will there be with the present life? Who will populate the world to come? Do the dead already inhabit it? Can any of us know with assurance whether we will join them? What of the wicked or the unbelieving? Can Christians, with St. Thomas Aquinas, affirm that the saints in heaven will know and see the damned in hell, delighting in divine justice? Compared to last things, first things may be less fraught, but are no less controversial. Who has not heard of the famed year 4, B. One version of this battle has Christians in a perpetual rearguard action, beginning with the Renaissance, ceding ground inch by painful inch to the godless gains of secular knowledge, scurrying to move the goal posts, frantic to find gaps for God to fill. Theologically literate historians of science like Peter Harrison have, thankfully, put that myth to bed not to say that everyone has gotten the message. But further questions arise. If the Bible does not contain scientific truths about human or cosmic origins, do not such accounts become merely ornamental, superfluous, a matter of values whose sphere of authority does not—should not—overlap with empirical knowledge? Two recent works of Christian theology take up these and related questions with candor and sophistication. Their answers are at once deeply traditional, aiming to reclaim rather than replace the classical doctrines they seek to expound, while being subtly attuned to the specific scientific, philosophical, and moral challenges that confront these doctrines today. Each book in its own way exemplifies the intellectual contribution systematic theology can make in the academy. Church fathers like St. Augustine used the story of Israel taking Egyptian gold with them in the Exodus as a trope for Christians appropriating pagan knowledge. But the reverse applies as well. So gather round, ye heathens, come: A Theology of Creation, Louisville, Westminster, , pp. His argument is a sustained analytic unpacking of the seemingly simple claim that God is not a creature, everything that is not God is a creature, and there is no third category. Every entity that is or will be or ever has been, from seashells and single-cell organisms to quarks and dark matter to humans and moths to angels and archangels and all the company of heaven: In the order of being, there is no greater or lesser proximity to God. McFarland abjures the notion of a chain of being, or of more or less likeness in this sense to God. The doctrine is hardly undisputed. Any number of ancient and modern religions and philosophies deny creation from nothing. Instead, God and creatures occupy an ontological continuum. Metaphysical continuity marks the relationship between divinity and the world. From another perspective matter, however chaotic, is coeval with deity; neither omniscient nor omnipotent, such a deity nevertheless seeks to coax and woo stubborn, ignorant corporeal beings such as us into relationship with itself, in an irresolvable succession of intimacy and relapse. These, per McFarland, are the cosmogonies most ready to hand, past and present, not *creatio ex nihilo*. In recommending the historic Christian doctrine, then, he also wants to make it strange again. There is no continuity of being between God and creatures. God exists from and to all eternity in perfect, flawless beatitude, a fullness of life, goodness, power, and love that lacks for nothing. This life is triune, the inexhaustible and irreducible relationships among and between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Indeed, God just is these relationships, the personal relations of giving and receiving that they name. God alone is from everlasting to everlasting; but

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God is not alone. To say that God creates from nothing does not mean that nothing is a kind of something, a substance or source or disordered cosmic flux, from which God fashions the world. It is to say that God does not create from anything at all. It exists because God desires it so. Its existence is not grounded in itself or in anything else but the divine will and power. That last clause might set off alarm bells. McFarland constructs much of the book in order to address this particular concern. The other concern is scriptural: Using John 1 as hermeneutical lens for Genesis 1, he believes it is, following naturally from biblical claims about the person and work of Christ. McFarland argues, on the one hand, that the identity of the creator is central to answering this question; and, on the other hand, that we must clarify what it means to be a creature. But that presumes a metaphysical spectrum on which both God and I can be located. Such a vision makes God the biggest possibly the baddest creature around: And it is true that fellow creatures crowd out one another, for space, for resources, for the exercise of energy and pursuit of desire. If God is like that, then the more of God, the less of me. Following the classical tradition and, more recently, the work of Kathryn Tanner, McFarland opposes this view of God and creatures in relation, precisely because it does not follow the logic of creation from nothing to its proper conclusion. God is the absolute, direct, and enduring source of my being and action. God plus me, therefore, does not equal two; God does not take up space in the world, literally or otherwise. To be dependent on God in all that I am and do is not only an unavoidable fact of my existence. It is the ground of every good in my life. Far from repudiating dependence on God—“an endeavor with as much probability of success as Jonah catching a ship for Tarshish”—I ought, if I am at all solicitous of my own interests, to welcome, accept, and deepen my awareness of such dependence. To be, as a creature, is to be beloved. Throughout the book his approach never wavers: The sheer clarity of his writing is, shall we say, less than common in academic works. Across modern biblical scholarship, religious studies, and popular science-and-religion writing, creation from nothing has come to assume the status of doctrinal whipping-boy. At the very least, they are now without excuse. This is as it should be. It is very difficult, though it is certainly a temptation, for scholars to produce work that is both substantial and attention-grabbing, work that entices and exhilarates, that aspires to beauty as much as truth. For the scholarly task is ill served by the cheaply provocative and salacious. Scholarship takes time, and the patience formed in the process conduces to work that broadens and deepens the understanding in ways that would not otherwise be possible. Sobriety reigns, or ought to reign, in the academy. But theology has never quite been at home in the academy, and for good reason. Its subject matter is not an item in the world, something one can study in a lab or the field. Its principal epistemic form is contemplation: Accordingly, the German- and English-speaking universities have never quite known what to do with theology. This exilic status is often taken as a problem. There is a kind of sobriety in evidence here, most of all in the lucidity of the prose and the delimitations of the project. But there is also an enraptured, unadulterated pleasure of the soul at work. The subject matter must conform the discipline to itself. The radical difference of the one makes for radical difference in the other. And Griffiths is convinced that, thus unshackled from arbitrary conventions, theology can be free to be itself. The result is sublime. A three-page lexicon for what follows, it defines the peculiar usage of certain common terms as well as neologisms coined by Griffiths. Decreation is a work of Christian speculation into the novissima of every kind of creature of whose existence we are aware. Speculation is the heart of what Griffiths is up to in this book. For what could be more pleasing to the mind, not least the mind that seeks to take every thought captive for the Lord, than to ruminate on the teasingly unknown? Instead, they are the tracing out of a path, half of whose byways and detours will, he is confident, be shown to be false long after his death. The path goes like this. God creates from nothing, and in bringing creatures to be, God makes time to be as well: God creates cum tempore. Unlike the majority tradition, therefore, angels have bodies, or at least mass, however discontinuous; they are neither timeless nor immaterial in the way that Thomists have long supposed. First in being, the angels also were first to fall into rebellion against God. The result is the devastation. Humans, created in a fleeting haven from the devastation what we call Eden, fell more or less immediately, too, allying themselves with the being-towards-death definitive of the devastation. Such life, falsely so called perhaps, is an irresistible tending towards non-being,

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towards self-annihilation, towards the void from which creatures come and over which they are held at all times.

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6: Search results for `damnation` - PhilPapers

Self-annihilation or damnation?: a disputable question in Christian eschatology / Paul J. Griffiths Part III: Political philosophy Moral foundations of liberal democracy, secular reasons, and liberal neutrality toward the good / Robert Audi.

Targeting what she deems a Christian tendency to distinguish neatly and prematurely i. Such consideration, Rutledge argues, will lead to the twofold conclusion that 1 the biblical witness cannot be understood without substitutionary atonement, and 2 substitutionary atonement cannot account for all the biblical dataâ€”cannot bear the weight of the crucifixion, as it wereâ€”and thus must be supplemented and occasionally encapsulated by a treasury of other images liberation, Christus Victor, etc. Forgiveness must be understood in its relationship to justice if the Christian gospel is to be allowed its full scopeâ€”. Reconciliation is not an easy option. Rutledge repeats again and again: Justiceâ€”restorative, not retributiveâ€”must have its place. Rutledge employs a similar via media when treating what precisely happened on the cross. Though each unique in its own right, Rutledge suggests two over-arching categories: These twoâ€”the forensic and the cosmicâ€”are mutually dependent, such that one isolated from the other leads to a distortion of the Gospel. Yet they are not equal. Thus, Rutledge suggests that we must begin from the cosmic, and only within that framework does the forensic find its place. This Pauline concept, however, is prone to ease of conscience and idle faith. Rutledge recognizes these dangers and emphatically rejects them: The language of sin as power has another, more gnostic danger: To be clear, Rutledge never equates the two: In response to those struggling with suicidal thoughts or depression, Luther suggests laughing and cursing at the devil. In maintaining redemption and annihilation as the two last things, Rutledge adopts a conclusion identical to that recently speculated by Paul Griffiths in his impressive book *Decreation*, though for slightly different reasons. Griffiths convincingly suggests that the idea of a final annihilation lies in the grammar of Augustine, even if the Doctor of Grace refused to affirm it due to the biblical witness. Further, when Rutledge hints at a final redemption of all things, account must be made of the weight of individual human actions, an area, again, where Rutledge lacks emphasis. Heaven reposes upon freedom, and so leaves to the damned the right to will their own damnation. Rutledge exhibits a brilliant capacity to weave together otherwise diverse and sometimes opposed figures: She certainly has her heroes and villains. Despite this and other shortcomings, however, *The Crucifixion* is a timely tour de force, a powerfully accurate indictment of modern dilutions of sin and salvation, and an attempt to unite diverse sides of the atonement debate. Boniface Ramsey New City Press, , p. *Death and Eternal Life*, trans. Michael Waldstein CUA, , p.

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7: Philosophy and the Return of Violence: Studies from this Widening Gyre - PDF Free Download

Pro Ecclesia is a quarterly journal of theology published by the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology. It seeks to give contemporary expression to the one apostolic faith and its classic traditions, working for and manifesting the church's unity by research, theological construction, and free exchange of opinion.

Genesis 39 and the Present Presented by Prof. Johanna Stiebert, Leeds 13 November Giles Gasper, Durham University 8 November All are welcome; registration is essential. Raising Lazarus or Raising Cain? Lucy Winkett, Rector of St. Henson was Bishop of Durham between and and a well-known figure both locally and nationally. The series is a collaborative venture between the Departments of History, Theology, and Politics at the University, and Durham Cathedral. Keith Hanley, Lancaster University 18 October Welcome Lunch for all women in the department - both postgraduates and staff Presented by , 10 October A Fresh Look at 1 Timothy 5: Drinks will be served from 6: There is no charge for the event, but please confirm your attendance by emailing admin. Nicholas Adams, Birmingham University 7 June Francis Watson, Durham University 7 May Dietrich Bonhoeffer Meets Albert Schweitzer: Lecture in the Exhibition Hall 7. Drinks reception in the Refectory optional Lecture only tickets: Please click on "Additional Information" below to register. Those needing help with transport can book it free of charge through the registration site as follows: Departing from Ushaw College main entrance at 8. For more information, please see www. Joel Kaminsky, Smith College 1 May Thomas Karlsohn, Uppsala University 26 April Presented by Dr Colette Hawkins, 15 March Religion in the Ruins: Details of the rescheduled lecture will appear shortly. Byers, Durham University 5 March Hensley Henson and Lord Hugh Cecil. Lewis Ayres, Durham University 26 February Helen Bond, University of Edinburgh 29 January Nicole Reinhardt, Durham University 24 January Bodily Integrity, Resurrection, and Mark 9: Candida Moss, University of Birmingham 22 January Francis Watson, Durham University 15 January Please let us know you are coming by registering via www. Registration opens 3 weeks before each event. Preceded by a festive buffet and followed by the Ushaw Carol Service. Robert Hayward, Durham University 28 November Andrews 23 November Centenary Reflections on The Church in the Furnace: Can the Church of England learn from the British Army? The role of the clergy in the care of sadness and depression, and their collaboration with mental health professionals Presented by Dr Gloria Dura-Vila, University College London 9 November Constructive Adaptation in 1 Corinthians 8:

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8: Rowman & Littlefield " Pro Ecclesia Vol N4

83 *Four Self-Annihilation or Damnation? A Disputable Question in Christian Eschatology Paul J. Griffiths* By the fourth century, if not earlier, a picture of what happens to human.

Essays in Honor of Philip Quinn Published: February 01, Paul J. Essays in Honor of Philip Quinn, U. Griffiths, and political philosophy by Robert Audi, Paul J. Weithman, and Sumner B. In addition, Weithman includes a touching eulogy for Quinn at the end of the volume. Liberal Faith is a fine tribute to an excellent philosopher. As the diverse nature of the essays reveal, Philip Quinn had a remarkable range of interests in philosophy. Paul Weithman is to be thanked for bringing together this collection of essays. In particular, if we admire an adherent from a different religious tradition, self-trust commits us to trusting our respect for that person. As Zagzebski presents it, this admiration involves the thought that if I had grown up in a different context I would imitate this person. This strengthens the problem of religious diversity by including a deep respect for saints from other traditions which provides a window through which we may see an alternative self. It is unclear exactly what to make of this added dimension to the problem of religious diversity. I still continue to have a deep admiration for Siddharta and I recognize that if I grew up in a different tradition I would imitate Siddharta. How does this undermine my evidence that the central claims of Christianity are true? Griffiths paper "Self-Annihilation or Damnation? Griffiths observes that by the fourth century, Christian eschatology could easily yield the result that people can annihilate themselves, i. Griffiths notes, though, that both Augustine and Aquinas explicitly and yet unsatisfactorily resist this implication. Griffiths ends by sketching a view of annihilation that coheres with this earlier eschatological tradition. Like Lewis, Griffiths suggests that persons can gradually remove themselves from participating in divine life and so literally come to nothing. Griffiths observes that this frightening possibility helps to remove the objection that annihilationist views fail to uphold the moral seriousness of human sin. Audi argues that an intuitionist approach can provide an adequate grounding for liberal democracy, and further that this grounding can support a substantive view of human flourishing. In his introduction Weithman observes that contributors to a commemorative volume like this "are supposed to honor Phil by putting their talents to work advancing discussion of a representative sample of the questions he cared about" p. She begins by observing that "union between friends requires mutual closeness and personal presence" p. This observation leads Stump to distinguish between minimal personal presence and significant personal presence see p. A more valuable form of personal presence is significant personal presence. This, she says, is "a particularly significant or powerful way of being close to a person" p. This kind of presence is lacking when a person is "distracted all through dinner and [is] never really present to me" p. Stump then proceeds to criticize an earlier account of personal presence that she developed with Norman Kretzmann. On that account one person is present to another if "they have direct and unmediated causal contact with and cognitive access to another" p. Direct and unmediated causal contact requires only that the contact "does not have as an intermediate step the agency of another person" p. Stump thinks this account "misses something even in the minimal sense of personal presence" because the account falsely implies that, e. More importantly, this account is even more inadequate for understanding the nature of significant personal presence. What is second-person experience? One person Paula has a second-person experience of another person Jerome only if 1 Paula is conscious of Jerome as a person; 2 in being conscious of Jerome as a person, Paula has direct and unmediated cognitive access to Jerome and is in a position to have direct and unmediated causal contact with him; and 3 Jerome is conscious p. Assuming that cognitive contact is a kind of causal contact and that direct and unmediated cognitive access to J requires that J is conscious, we can express this necessary condition for second-person experience more succinctly as follows: For example, Paula can have a second-person experience of Jerome through email exchanges see p. An interesting question is whether one individual can have a second-person experience of a historical figure. Does second-person experience of another require that the other exists see fns 12 and 13, pp. For that kind of personal presence,

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joint or shared attention is required as well. Stump discusses joint attention via recent studies on autism. Though joint attention is difficult to describe, it is clearly missing in some autistic children. Stump calls our attention to a more fundamental form of joint attention: Stump claims that part of the answer has to do "with the fact that there is voluntary control of attention" p. She thinks that dyadic shared attention has a special role to play in significant personal presence. Shared attention, thus, is like common knowledge. She begins by observing that shared attention is maximally rich when there is a relation of mutual closeness between the persons p. What is this relation of mutual closeness? It is difficult to say. This is because all three may be present even though the participants are radically isolated from each other see p. What then can be said about closeness? For Paula to be close to Jerome it requires that Jerome is willing to share significant thoughts and feelings with her p. Both have to be willing to treat the exchange as meaningful. Though hard to characterize, closeness requires a desire for the other person along with a vulnerability to the other person see pp. Finally, she observes that closeness requires that a person is not self-alienated p. Closeness demands that a person is integrated within herself and also that the person is wholehearted p. So what is the nature of union between beloved friends? In the final analysis this union requires significant personal presence and mutual closeness. This account carries interesting implications for union with God. Union with God requires a personal integration. In this case, if an individual is to enter into union with God it requires the divine grace to restore a person to wholeness. Again She writes, "if Paula wants God to be significantly present to her, the establishment of the relationship she wants depends only on her, on her single-mindedly and wholeheartedly wanting that relationship" p. Theists have attested to the dark night of the soul in which God removes his comforting presence for a time. The book of Psalms is replete with references to God hiding his face e. It appears, therefore, that God has the ability to withdraw his presence for a time, even though people may do what they can to enter into such a relationship. Furthermore, it is unclear why Stump thinks her analysis implies that significant personal presence with God depends only on the human person himself. But to achieve significant personal presence God has to choose to reveal himself in a particularly meaningful way. Self-revelation is risky and with respect to God self-revelation requires searing honesty. To borrow her earlier example of Jerome and Paula, if Jerome is unwilling to reveal his deepest motives and thoughts to Paula, then even if Jerome makes a show at self-revelation, there will be no union between beloved friends. If this judgment fits some relationships between persons, then we have even more reason to think that it fits a relationship with God. Stump is right, therefore, to lay stress on the role of the individual in entering into a significant relationship with God. Overall, her account of the nature of the union with a beloved friend raises a number of fascinating issues. I hope that her contribution will gain the attention it deserves.

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9: Project MUSE - Liberal Faith

Pro Ecclesia is the theology journal of the Center for Catholic SELF-ANNIHILATION OR DAMNATION? A Disputable Question in Christian Eschatology Paul J. Griffiths:

A flawless response to traditional eschatology? The broader the view, the easier it will be to understand what these different concepts truly mean, whether they have any sort of defensible biblical or theological basis, and whether the concepts are in any way plausible, or helpful to understanding what happens after bodily death. Part of the reason this topic is so complicated is because it seems that as a result of many of the viewpoints being the passionate beliefs of their authors, sometimes claims are made that are not entirely accurate, and as a result, misleading statements are made. Never, Forever, or Just for a While? Of these three positions, annihilation will be the focus of this exploration due to the way annihilationism seeks to combine elements from the other positions to develop an understanding that has been passionately argued for and against. As a result, certain questions emerge: What does the position of annihilation maintain? Does annihilationism have any sort of defensible biblical or theological basis? Finally, what strengths and weaknesses does the annihilation position have over the other positions? While it can be claimed that there are an extraordinary number of perspectives concerning eschatology partially because of the number of nuances that are possible for any given position, which would result in a new perspective, three general categories of positions are helpful as a general basis for understanding additional perspectives and nuances: While the focus of this effort is on annihilation, a working definition of the other categories is very important in order to understand how annihilation relates to those other positions. Again, the following definitions are meant to foster a general understanding of each position with the knowledge that there are many different perspectives based on nuances within each position for example, within universalism, different perspectives emerged based on whether particular universalists completely deny the existence of hell, or whether they affirm the existence of hell for a particular segment that is a special exception and not the general rule. Double destiny can be understood as the belief that after death, a person is judged by God, and then sent to one of two possible destinations for all eternity: Westminster John Knox Press, , ff. Universalism also has a number of variations. For example, it is often claimed that Rob Bell and N. Annihilation can be defined as the belief that those judged by God to be unworthy to enter heaven, would cease to exist at some point. Eerdsman Publishing Company, , The interview can be viewed at <http://www.eerdsman.com/Interviews/RobBellInterview.aspx>: A full transcript is also available at <http://www.eerdsman.com/Interviews/RobBellInterview.aspx>: Wright alludes to this understanding in an interview he did for the television series *Huntley Street*. Baker Book House, , With an understanding of basic definitions in hand, the arguments for annihilation can now be examined. Arguments Supporting Annihilationism The argument for annihilation or conditional immortality stems from multiple directions. Three of the strongest arguments of annihilation advocates are: It is important for any eschatological position to be viewed in light of Scripture, and to not contradict Scripture without justifiable reasons or explanations. To that end, John W. Wenham begins his case for annihilation on shaky grounds by immediately stating that he ignores any part of Scripture that is in conflict with any other part of Scripture with this weak logic, it leads one to wonder what percentage of Scripture would remain if any parts that stood in conflict were tossed 10 J. The title of this article, originally a lecture, is facetious. Another serious issue that annihilation supporters have with the traditional of heaven and hell is the implicit idea that all humans are immortal by nature. As a result, eternal-conscious punishment is impossible because only believers ever attain eternal status, and thus, those who are judged unworthy will cease to exist. Providential Press, , A few of those problems will be examined, along with my current eschatological position that seeks to avoid the problems, which still remain in annihilationism. Arguments for a Position Beyond Annihilationism There are a few problems inherent in annihilationism that are especially notable. First, there are serious implications regarding salvation if anyone is to suffer at all. To suggest that the salvation from Jesus is insufficient is a Rapids: InverVarsity Press, , If so, where exactly would the line be? Is torment for eternity Satanic, but

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torment for a thousand years acceptable? But the concept of annihilation also poses a problem for those in heaven. Differentiation I acknowledge that the arguments in support of the concept of annihilation do effectively highlight the problems with the idea of an eternal conscious torment. But I differ from those 20 Pinnock, HarperOne, , So, my position is different. Yes, that means I am stepping outside of the early tradition of the Church, but I believe the issues that remain even after adopting an annihilation understanding requires me to do so, and history permits me to do so. Emphasis added to show that Griffiths, unlike Mayhue, recognizes that there was at least at least a small amount of opposition. And, it would be quite a challenge to argue that torment or annihilation are ways to show someone love. My understanding not only is takes seriously those words of Jesus, but it is also consistent with the theology of the cross- the theology that the Incarnate Word loved his enemies so much, that he was willing to die for them. The only way anyone in heaven could celebrate despite mass torment or annihilation of others is if those in heaven have a great capacity for indifference, which 25 Pinnock, Pinnock continues on to list other ways in which the popular understandings regarding eschatology has changed, but I have left out the examples in the interest of space. Eric Flett for this line of reasoning as a result of his simple questions regarding whether the concept of hell is compatible with the theology of the cross. A serious reading of Scripture reveals that God is love, a love so extreme that it is beyond justice. With that revelation in mind, we are required to reject the idea of God causing torment or annihilation. As a result, I do not need to deny the existence of hell, rather, I can affirm that hell is a place for nonhumans. This is because that the desire of a person to be apart from God is to reject the image of God within that person, and by rejecting that fundamental aspect of humanity, that person ceases to be human. This is an understanding shared by prominent Christians including N. Wright and Rob Bell. But though annihilation is an improvement over the traditional understanding of hell, it is 29 Matthew My position extends beyond that the understanding of annihilation, and while I move further away from the traditional understanding of hell in my attempt to reconcile the remaining issues within the understanding of annihilation, I am able to do so without denying an existence of hell. Of course, I am certain that my understanding will continue to grow and evolve, but for this moment, I am comfortable with the basics of my position regarding a concept of hell. Augustine, *The City of God*. *The Christ Story*, 3rd Edition. Eerdsman Publishing Company, *A Disputable Question in Christian Eschatology*. Eerdmans Publishing Company, *The Fire That Consumes*. Westminster John Knox Press,

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