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EDITORIAL

CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE DIVINE: CONNECTIONS IN THE WORKS OF NAGASAWA AND ZAGZEBSKI

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This issue of *Agatheos* has its origins in an important passing of a torch within the philosophy of religion. Linda Zagzebski was the Kingfisher Chair in Religion and Ethics at the University of Oklahoma for over twenty years until her retirement in 2021. She was succeeded in January of 2024 by Yujin Nagasawa, who left a research chair in Birmingham for the honor. Zagzebski and Nagasawa, in addition to being leading figures in the philosophy of religion, have robust interests in the philosophy of mind. In both cases, there are important connection points and overlaps in their work in these two areas of philosophy. In particular, both see important connections between the unique place of consciousness and subjectivity in our lives and debates in the philosophy of religion that are not always or even typically prosecuted in that light. In addition, Nagasawa has an abiding interest in panpsychism, both its promise and problems, while Zagzebski has a similar interest in the prospects and peculiarities of panentheism as an elaboration of theism.

To celebrate the instalment of Prof. Nagasawa as the Kingfisher Chair, a conference was convened with leading figures who work in both the philosophy of religion and the philosophy of mind giving talks in addition to keynote addresses by Profs. Nagasawa and Zagzebski. This volume reproduces those keynote addresses, now complemented by four papers solicited by *Agatheos* that interact in one way or another with the themes explored there.

An early example of this intersection between the philosophy of religion and philosophy of mind in Nagasawa's work comes in the form of his first monograph, *God and Phenomenal Consciousness* (2008). In that book, he traces unappreciated parallels between arguments concerned with the epistemic status of someone who has an experience of something for the first time and certain atheological arguments.
In Frank Jackson's famous thought experiment (1986), Mary is a color scientist who lives in a black and white world. Despite Mary having a great deal of propositional knowledge about, say, the physiology and physics that come with color processing, it seems like Mary comes to know something new when she sees red for the first time. It seems like no knowledge about the physical underpinnings of red experiences or the

function they play could bridge the gap between experiential knowledge of red and merely propositional knowledge. That is, merely propositional knowledge does not seem to entail or predict that there is something it is like to see red and what that experience is like. This raises certain questions as to whether this epistemic gap has ontological implications.

By way of contrast, what is unique or special about perceiving that a chair exists seems grounded in, among other things, the fact that we enter into distinctive causal relations with a thing that has reality outside of us, a chair. Perception cannot be accounted for by characterizing the features of an ontological inventory that includes all and only the self. There is no way to reason from the fact that the self exists to the fact that a chair exists because of the ontological gap between the self and the chair. Similarly, one might think that if everything there was to say about consciousness ontologically could be captured by suitably detailed descriptions of the physical, there should not be this seemingly unbridgeable epistemic gap between the kind of knowledge acquired when a conscious being experiences something and pertinent physical facts.

In Nagasawa's early book, he notices that there are unappreciated relationships between arguments like this one related to the Mary thought experiment and certain arguments that God does not exist. Suppose one thinks that the Mary thought experiment tells us something important about ontology and not just epistemology. If so, one is probably committed to the idea that Mary lacking knowledge of a certain sort while in the black and white world condition, despite the presence of the properties the physicalist maintains are sufficient and exhaustive for their model of the world, produces an inconsistency best resolved by inferring that physicalism is false. What Nagasawa noticed is that something similar holds for certain arguments regarding tensions between the divine property of omniscience and other properties like omnipotence and moral perfection. In particular, one potent reason to suppose that the two might be in tension is that we expect God not to have experienced various negative states such as fear or envy. Even if God knows all the facts about fear or envy, if there is something unique about actually experiencing these emotions, then one might suppose that either God must not know everything (e.g. because God does not know what it is like to be envious) or God knows everything but lacks some other relevant perfection (e.g. by having moral character that can envy). If Mary's lack of knowledge is ontologically meaningful, then, so the thought goes, God lacking experiential knowledge that creatures possess is likewise ontologically meaningful, hence atheism.

One of the things that makes this exploration of the connections between the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of religion especially interesting is that one might have thought that taking the distinctive ontological import of consciousness seriously would naturally pair well with theism. After all, for the theist, God is a conscious being. Physical reality owes its being and its nature to divine fiat, and, for many theists, conscious beings like us are ontologically distinctive in virtue of being

made "in the image" of this perfect, maximal conscious being. Hence, the theist might well suppose that a close examination of consciousness would be a boon to the theist either acting as evidence of a creator or at the least providing mutually enlightening insight into the nature of the divine.

This theme of finding surprising pairings of positions by comparing issues in the philosophy and epistemology of mind with the philosophy of religion is continuous across Nagasawa's work, finding their most radical form in the essay published here. The bridge between Nagasawa's early ruminations about color-deprived Mary and omniscience and his Kingfisher keynote address is his recent book on the problem of evil (2024). In that book, he argues that the problem of evil is not a problem that is unique to theists. Instead, it is a problem for anyone whose axiological orientation is optimistic. The idea is that for very few humans is one's picture of how and why the world works the way it does predictive of the suffering that many humans experience. Once one realizes that the suitably optimistic atheist has something to explain as well, then one is empowered to realize that many theistic responses to the problem of evil have corollaries for the atheist. In that way, we see that the dialectical parallels that Nagasawa is wont to bring out cut both ways, being potentially inconvenient or surprising for theist and atheist alike.

To use my own illustration, an Enlightenment optimist like Steven Pinker (2011, 2018) has a picture of human nature and the world we occupy such that science and the cultural heritage of the Enlightenment are making the world a better and more humane place. When critics contest the moral track record of the Enlightenment (e.g. child-labor in the industrial revolution; being implicated in the transatlantic slave trade) or the tradeoffs of a science-enabled capitalist world (e.g. climate change), a Pinker could claim that the great goods he points to outweigh the costs, that the costs were necessary to the goods, that the costs were the responsibility of counter-Enlightenment historical forces that are being overcome, or that the nature of these supposed costs is inscrutable because of the complexities of broad socio-historical movements.

The counter-moves open to the Pinker-ian have certain obvious relationships to a theist's appeal to goods like eternal rewards that might outweigh sufferings on earth, the putative necessity of suffering for greater goods like the development and exercise of moral character, the free will defence's deflection of responsibility onto humans or demons, and skeptical theism respectively. Detecting these structural parallels within alien philosophical worldviews is in some ways a more abstract exercise than Nagasawa's 2008 original teasing out of how the same issue arises at the content level within discussions of our knowledge and discussions of God's knowledge. With this intermediate step in hand, Nagasawa's essay in this volume moves from structural parallels within alien worldviews' treatment of the same problem to parallels in philosophical neighborhoods that do not share a common content (e.g. the import of knowledge limitation) or a common problem (e.g. the surprisingness of suffering) but rather a generic problem type (e.g. violated expectations *simpliciter*).

Nagasawa's keynote published here identifies five types of responses to the problem of evil and six types of response to the hard problem of consciousness. In both cases we can think of one proposition ("a wholly good and omnipotent God exists"; "the world is entirely material") as rendering another proposition unlikely or surprising or in need of explanation ("There is evil"; "There is phenomenal consciousness"). The first proposition creates an expectation for the kind of world in play ("a world a good God chooses or voluntarily permits"; "a world where every single thing is material"). Call this the background proposition. The second proposition is an existential proposition that draws attention to something that violates the expectations generated by the first proposition ("something of negative value from an objective point of view exists"; "something that looks to be irreducible to and not obviously entailed by the kinds of properties characteristic of the material exists").

One can respond to this tension in a number of ways. There is dialectical pressure, however, to treat like things alike, and, once again, one of the interesting things about Nagasawa's work both in the past and in its most recent manifestation is that taking the same tack with both problems does not align well with the largest demographics who tend to be involved in both debates. For instance, on Nagasawa's reconstruction, there is no way of responding to the dialectical structure of the two issues on which one gets to explain away the problem of evil for the theist while affirming the deep import of consciousness on the one hand or explain away the threat consciousness poses to materialism while affirming the potency of the problem of evil.

The first move Nagasawa entertains for resolving both debates is to treat the dissonance between the propositions at issue as reason to accept that the gap between the background proposition and the existential proposition is real and unbridgeable. In the case of the problem of evil, accepting that the existence of evil cannot be reconciled with theism would take the form of denying that God exists. In the case of the hard problem of consciousness, this would result in a form of dualism ("type-D") on which two types of things exist and can operate independently of one another. In both cases, one treats the existence of an expectation mismatch as reason to reject the background proposition ("God exists"; "Only material things exist"). One could, of course, be methodologically consistent by way of being both an atheist and a dualist, but few people make their way to these debates with that set of commitments.

One could, however, take the tension between the background and existential propositions to be reason to revise one's ontology while arguing that the effect of doing so has a minimal impact on the background proposition. Nagasawa thinks this is the strategy of the free will defense, which claims that one of the good things God created was free will and that responsibility for evil can be shifted from God onto creatures' use of free will. Here the idea that God exists and that God's nature is inconsistent with doing evil is maintained but a buffer is added to that background picture that is meant to soften the threat of the fact that evil exists. Similarly, Nagasawa thinks that certain kinds of dualism, such as epiphenomenalism intend to soften the import of an

expanded ontology by insisting that, even though there are properties that are not material, what is not material is causally inert. If all causes are material, then a materialist's expectations for how the world will unfold are, arguably, not violated as deeply and in some sense the materialist picture can still be relied upon as a guide to interacting with the world.

Alternatively, one might claim that the violated expectations in question are either not meaningful or only meaningful in an epistemic sense. Nagasawa takes privation theories of evil to be examples, at least on their own, of denying that the existence of evil in fact poses a challenge for the proposition that God exists. Certainly, if one thought the primary alternative to theism is a dualism on which good and evil have their origins in and reflect different fundamental sources of reality (e.g. Augustine's arguments against Manicheanism), then the idea that evil has no positive reality of its own amounts to the claim that, properly understood, there is nothing on the inventory of existence that is inconsistent with a theistic explanation. Interestingly, the eliminativist in the philosophy of mind can be thought of similarly as an example of a view which claims that, properly understood, there is no gap between the material and the mental to bridge. Material brain states are the only mental states that need to be accounted for, but the existence of brain states hardly threatens the idea that only material things exist.

Affirming that the gap between background and existential propositions is real but only epistemic in nature allows one to honor the fact that most people can identify with the posing of these problems in terms of expectation mismatches while at the same time denying that one should reject the background proposition in consequence. In the philosophy of mind, this might take the form of acknowledging that we lack the conceptual or epistemic resources to discern how phenomenal consciousness is grounded in one's brain while also contending that the best and most defensible position as to how many types of things exist is that there are only material things. One might, for instance, think that the tight correlation between brain states and mental states revealed by neuroscience is evidence that the mental is realized by the physical somehow even if one does not know how brains realize mental states. Nagasawa thinks that greater good theodicies follow a parallel strategy. This is initially surprising, but comes into focus on reflection. If one thinks that a given evil is only rendered consistent with God's existence by its relation to a greater good, then by itself the evil in question would be a problem for all one knows. Yet, in most cases, we at best have candidate greater goods that a given known evil might be related to. Very few theists are willing to say they know how some greater good relates to individual evils for any significant range of evils. Rather, the more typical strategy is to illustrate how some evils may be linked to some greater goods and then posit that all evils are grounded in greater goods in like manner. Hence, it is implied that there is no ontological discrepancy between the existence of God and evil even though there are epistemic limitations such that the theist can no more explain how every evil relates to

a greater good than a materialist can explain how every state of phenomenal consciousness bottoms out in particular brain states.

The last parallel between these literatures Nagasawa draws is between positions on the problem of evil and the problem of consciousness that claim that their respective problem is epistemic and that it can be known to be unbridgeable by us. Skeptical theism claims that we are not in a position to know the reasons a being like God might have for permitting evil. Hence, in a sense, we have no right to the expectation that is violated when a theist confronts evil. Similarly, the obvious candidate in the philosophy of mind is Colin McGinn's mysterionism on which what we know about the hard problem of consciousness is not necessarily reason to believe that dualism is true but is reason to think that it would be foolish to have any expectation that we would know how phenomenal consciousness relates to the material.

Finally, Nagasawa points out that not only are the parallels between the problems of evil and consciousness striking but the absence of one key parallel is also instructive. As an answer to the problem of consciousness, panpsychism is the claim that one should not reject the idea that only material things exist so much as reject the idea that all material things aren't intrinsically also minded things in some sense. Human minds are a particular manifestation of a trait found throughout nature including in the parts that compose a human, much like humans have mass because their parts have mass. The over-arching strategy is to not reject the background proposition but rather to revise how one thinks about it so that one can see how it is consistent with the existential proposition. Applying this same logic to the problem of evil is not straightforward, however. Nagasawa thinks it would have to take the form of microevil properties aggregating to form macroevil properties much like for the panpsychist bits of minded matter aggregate to produce human bodies with minds.[1]

What is interesting for our purpose is that Nagasawa considers the parallel move in the problem of evil case untenable and uses this as evidence that panpsychism is in trouble. That is, he takes the structural parallel in the respective dialectics to be so robust that not being able to make a certain move in response to one of these debates is reason to suspect the parallel move in the other debate is untenable. One could have thought, after all, that not being able to make a parallel move was evidence that one has run into a disanalogy between the two topics, but that is not Nagasawa's conclusion. This is striking since, as I have pointed out, making the analogous move in the two debates appears to create nothing but philosophical odd couples—

[1] Perhaps a better parallel would be that one would have to think differently about what it meant to be God such that God could value both good and evil. Rather than the parallel occurring at the level of the relation of micro to macro properties or parts to wholes, one could locate the structural parallel at the level of responding to a gap between two categories by looking for a hybrid that might combine them. The result would still be unpalatable to one's typical theist, a God beyond good and evil, but I think it is more plausible on this reconstruction that there exists some admissible panpsychist parallel for the problem of evil.

eliminativists who endorse privation theories of evil; atheistic substance dualists; Colin McGinn cosplaying as a skeptical theist, etc.

In Linda Zagzebski's work, like that of Nagasawa, we see a long-running interest in the intersection of theism and subjectivity understood as being the subject of consciousness states. As with Nagasawa's work, we see that this leads to certain puzzles for the theist. Moreover, just as Nagasawa's exploration of the intersection of philosophical issues for theism and consciousness leads him to reflect critically on the prospect of panpsychism, so Zagzebski's explorations of issues relating to subjectivity and theism leads her to ruminations about panentheism. The two pan conceptions are not the same but have an important parallel. Panpsychism is the idea that consciousness is ubiquitous and that there exists a form of consciousness more primitive than the human variant which forms a background to the existence of consciousness as we experience it. Panentheism as applied to subjectivity ends up being the idea that God's subjectivity is all-encompassing, overlapping and interpenetrating human consciousness despite our being unaware that all our experiences also show up within this more fundamental field of conscious first-person awareness. Thus, both pan conceptions are views on which consciousness as humans experience it is juxtaposed to some more fundamental and ubiquitous sort of consciousness where positing a more fundamental variant of consciousness is supposed to resolve philosophical quandaries.

For the better part of two decades, Zagzebski's primary scholarly focus has centered on the uniqueness of subjectivity and its relation to what is distinctive about persons. One can find echoes of these concerns in earlier work. For instance, one way of interpreting Zagzebski's ground-breaking work in what became known as responsibilist virtue epistemology is that it was a dissatisfaction with a picture of the intellectual life that did not take subjective cognitive excellence seriously enough (1996). We don't just have causal mechanisms in our head that eventuate in true or false beliefs. We are persons who love and pursue the truth or do not. Similarly, Zagzebski's exemplarist moral theory is among other things an attempt to root ethics in the moral qualities of persons we admire as persons, not lists of principles, rights, or outcomes (2019). Nonetheless, she has turned in the last ten to fifteen years to a special focus on subjectivity. This has taken on explorations of subjectivity directly, as in her 2021 monograph *The Two Greatest Ideas*, but the biggest impact of Zagzebski's re-centering on subjectivity in the philosophical literature has been her positing and exploration of a new divine attribute, omnisubjectivity (2008, 2013, 2023).

Returning to the example of Mary the color scientist makes for an easy illustration. When Mary exits her black and white world, she gains knowledge of what red looks like, but she also is put in a better position to relate to the subjectivity of others. Suppose that Mary can speak to people over the phone when she is in her black and white world. They can describe their experience of red to her. This may be sufficient for her to realize that there is something she is missing that her textbooks cannot provide for her. Once she sees red for the first time, she is able to better appreciate the

color red but also other people's experience of red. She is better able to relate to people in a particular respect. And yet, there is some question as regards how far one can go in appreciating the subjective experiences of others. One might well think that one is walled off from the subjectivity of others such that there are many experiences that they have had which one has no reason to believe are matched to like experiences in one's own life. If one knew what it was like to be a man and a woman, to be rich and poor, to have tasted the food from all over the world, etc one might be in a position to appreciate the subjective experiences of all persons. However, any given human has only had some of the possible subjective experiences a human can have. That is, the average human is not so unlike black-and-white Mary having had only a fraction of the subjective experiences that are possible. Since this is the case, one might well wonder what it would look like to relate perfectly to others in their subjectivity, to relate in a maximal, perfect way to the subjectivity of others.

Zagzebski posits omnisubjectivity as the corresponding perfection. She describes it as the ability to relate to the mental states of other persons such that one knows what they are like from the other person's first-person perspective. If God does not know what it is like to be a bat and what it is like to be Thomas Nagel, God would not be omniscient. Zagzebski provides three models for how we could think about this. The first, which Zagzebski favors, relies on a thought about how empathy works. The idea is that the empathic person creates a corollary of the other person's state in themselves and they do so by imagining what it is like to be the other person. Readers familiar with debates in the theory of mind will recognize the psychological mechanics of the simulation theory in play. To make this model work, one has to ascertain whether it is possible for God to simulate mental states of ours that are limited or morally tainted without compromising some other relevant divine perfection. God hosting the first-person state of "hating Abel like Cain does" seems problematic in one way. Trying to understand what it would mean for God to simulate being so filled up with despair that they can think of nothing else seems problematic in another way. The first appears to be a morally tainted state; the second is a state that, while not necessarily morally tainted, appears to be of a sort that only a finite being could host.

The second model Zagzebski entertains is the perception model. If it might be problematic for God to host creaturely first person states, it is less obvious that it would be a problem for God to experience them from the outside. If God could detect every last feature of another's mental state via perception, then one might think one the result would be an epistemic state that is both comprehensive and yet immune from the worries that come with a view based on imaginative simulation. After all, seeing that Cain is hateful is not as problematic as feeling hateful, and seeing that another is full of nothing but despair does not require one to have no room for another emotion oneself. Yet, this very separation entails that the perceptual model is a nonstarter for Zagzebski. A feeling is what it feels like. For Zagzebski, any distance between the knower and the known is too much distance to support omnisubjectivity. Zagzebski also thinks that omnisubjectivity should be related not only to an enhanced

perspective on the demands of omniscience but with omnipresence and providence. If one supposes that omnipresence requires God to be present to someone in their subjectivity and not just aware of it, it is not clear how a perceptual model by itself would guarantee such a thing. Likewise, if one wants a model of omnisubjectivity to put God in an enhanced position to choose which created world(s) to actualize because God appreciates what the subjective experiences of creatures in those worlds will be like, it is less than clear how a perceptual model by itself would help.

Zagzebski's final model is the panentheist model on which God knows what creatures experience because the subjective reality of creatures is contained within God. There are different ways one might try to explicate the embedded metaphor of creatures existing in God, but the relevant feature of panentheist views for omnisubjectivity is that they offer a different way of getting around the gap between creator and creature. As just noted, Zagzebski thinks that gap fatal in the case of the perceptual model, but it is relevant to the empathy model as well. After all, on the empathy model, God has states in which God alone occupies the first-person slot of the replica state. While one might initially be more worried about the idea that God hosts states that are unworthy of God or impossible for God, there is still a potential issue here. God imagining Godself as Cain is still God fabricating a divine mental state. It does not by itself entail access to the first-person reality of Cain. While one could simply stipulate that God's imaginative simulations are perfect, lacking nothing, one could so stipulate on behalf of the perceptual view as well. Having a matching content is not directly relevant to bridging the gap between having first-person acces to a state and having any other kind of relation to it. If one is convinced that divine knowledge of subjectivity must bypass any epistemic gap between knower and known, one might need a way of thinking of the God-world relation on which there is no separation between God and creation to overcome. One might think panentheism offers exactly that.

If all experience occurrs *in* God on some acceptable gloss, then one might think that the gap between knower and known disappears. Just as one has an intimate acquaintance with what it feels like to stub one's toe despite not being confined to one's phalanges, so one might think that creaturely reality being realized in God puts God in a position to have an insider's view of our experiences without having to be restricted to the insider's view. It is less than clear, of course, whether the panentheist can help themselves to all first-person experiences in virtue of their occurring in God absent a precise specification of what it means for us or our experiences to exist in God.

If God and I share the exact same first-person perspective, then it looks like creaturely experiences help to compose divine knowledge of subjectivity, in which case we are going to run into a parallel of panpsychism's combination problem. It is has hitherto proved elusive how it could be that things with "less" mind can come to compose a more advanced mind, as Nagasawa points out in his piece. If the higher mind is, in fact, a perfect mind, then understanding how finite subjectivities could build into a perfect omnisubjectivity does not promise to be an easier problem. In

Nagasawa's discussion, looking at the combination problem through the lens of a structurally identical approach to the problem of evil provided reason to take the combination problem that much more seriously. Similarly here, the combination problem provides a helpful backdrop for thinking of the problems faced by a panentheist approach to omnisubjectivity due to the structural parallels between building human consciousness out of subhuman consciousness on the one hand and building a perfect subjectivity out of limited, flawed human subjectivities on the other.

In like manner, panentheism comes with worries about collapsing the distinction between creature and creator. The distinction between creator and creature is, after all, not just something to be overcome. It is implicated in other doctrines like that of transcendence, holiness, and worship worthiness. Furthermore, on the panentheist option, there is a worry as to how creaturely taint could wash out of divine omnisubjectivity if God's knowledge is partly composed of tainted creaturely states. Garbage in, garbage out. If God does not simply perceive or imagine a sinful state but, rather, God's mind is partly composed of tainted states, states like Cain's hating Abel, that would accentuate what has colorfully been called the problem of creepy emotions (Mullins 2022).

In her prior work, Zagzebski recognizes that no model of omnisubjectivity is without its problems. Yet, what she thinks is more clear is that, if God exists, there must be some way for God to be omnisubjective, and God's being omnisubjective must be important. In her keynote published here, Zagzebski extends her reflections on the relation of human and divine subjectivity in ways that she acknowledges are potentially more controversial than her prior work on omnisubjectivity. The launching point for these new reflections is the idea that a conscious state includes constitutively some relation to the subject having that state. If two people go to the same concert and have the same type and degree of euphoric response to the music, Zagzebski thinks the content of the experience is in fact different. Person A has an experience as of person A experiencing the music. Person B has an experience as of person B experiencing the music. In consequence, even in the best of cases, humans do not really know what the experiences of other humans are like. If one has the exact same background beliefs, emotional dispositions, and sensory stimuli as another person, one might get closer to understanding what their experience was like than if one did not have these things. But, strictly speaking, there will always be some component, the relation to the subject, that cannot be the same between the two humans despite being partly constitutive of the state. If one takes this idea seriously but retains Zagzebski's prior conviction that God must have all subjective experiential knowledge, then a significant new barrier has been raised to developing an account of God's subjective knowledge. In fact, an atheistic interlocuter might see here an avenue to re-posing one of those arguments from omniscience to atheism that played an important role in Nagasawa's 2008.

To return to Mary the color scientist, when Mary goes from the black and white world to a world that contains the color red. She acquires the knowledge of what red

looks like, but more specifically, if Zagzebski's new reflections are right, she acquires the knowledge of *what it is like for Mary to see red*. If Mary has a friend out in the world of color, Bob, Mary's coming out of her black and white world is not sufficient for her to know what it is like for Bob to see red because Mary's red-seeing mental states include a relation to a different subject than Bob's and so the states must differ "more than numerically." The atheistic interlocutor might well wonder whether this epistemological impasse should be any different in the case of God. If the identity of the subject is built into the state such that one cannot have the same state in an epistemically relevant sense with a different subject, then one might think the same should apply to God. If God imagines seeing red for the first time, that state does not include the requisite relation to Mary such that God has recreated Mary seeing red for the first time. But if God must be omniscient if God exists and God must have all knowledge of subjective experience to be omniscient, then making the relation to the subject partly constitutive of subjective experience gives us an argument for atheism. God cannot have all knowledge, but nothing that lacks knowledge can be God. That is not, unsurprisingly, the direction Zagzebski takes her reflections. Rather, in her keynote, she takes this newfound conviction that subjective experiences include a relation to the subject and uses it as reason to revisit panentheism.

In one of his last pieces of work, Bob Adams (2022) postulates that there is more than one subject of each conscious experience and that one can situate and defend this idea within an over-arching panentheist framework. Important to Adams is the idea that diverse time slices of a human life can belong to the same human subject. The human subject exists in a way that is not restricted to the time slice, but it is still the case that the human can be the subject or owner of those experiences. In like manner, one might think of a panentheist God as hosting all the subjectivity of all the time slices in a manner just as intimate and as essentially bound to God's being as any creature relates to the subset of time slices in which they feature. For Adams, we can think of God as a kind of co-owner of our experiences.

Zagzebski is sympathetic with Adams' moves here but notions like belonging or ownership do not quite capture the relation to the first-person perspective for her. "God does not simply own a feeling; he is in the feeling". God does not simply contain a subject with a state like a Russian nesting doll of subjectivity. God does not co-own our states. There are not even two distinct subjects of the same state. In this latest work, Zagzebski suggests that the only way to overcome the separation of knower and known in the way that is required for God to cognize what our experiences are like from the inside perfectly is as follows. We must find a way of thinking about God's subjectivity such that it is not separate from the creature's. In a sense, every state must be a "we" state. Every mental state has a collective, joint subject.

Positing a joint subject to all mental states goes beyond Zazebski's old empathy model in a number of ways. First, God using God's imagination to know what it is like to be Cain is consistent with Cain being correct about the first-person phenomenology of his state. If Cain thinks "I hate Abel," he is correct that the subject of this state is his

and his alone. If this state is actually a collective state with "we" intentionality, then Cain is alienated from the true nature of his mental state as he is unaware that his hatred towards Abel is a joint state. In fact, all of us except perhaps a handful of mystics have been alienated from the nature of our mental states because the relation to the subject is epistemically individuating for each state, and humans do not experience God as joint subject of their mental states.

Second, Zagzebski hitherto has been wont to respond to the problem of creepy emotions by drawing a distinction between imagining a mental state and having it. On the empathy model, God imagines Godself as Cain, and we are supposed to think of God doing so as morally innocuous because the relationship of imagination to moral praise and blame is more indirect. If, however, God is the joint subject of Cain's state, God bears an intimate relation to the hatred of the state because God counts as a joint subject of the actual hatred. This has some resemblance to traditional lines of theological reflection concerned with God's preserving sinners in being, preserving the created order in which their actions take place and have effects, and enfolding sinful actions into providential plans. In that way, there is a familiar sense in which God can be held responsible for cooperating with bad actions. Yet, here the line goes deeper because God is supposed to have the same first-person relation to bad emotions and actions. After all, if God is "present" to Cain's hatred but does not feel it in a first person sense, does not concur emotionally with Cain's hatred as part of God's being, it is not clear how we have any right to talk of joint subjectivity. If for instance, God just detects what is happening in part of the being God chooses to share with God's creation, then we do not have joint agency but perception, albeit a perception that might be more like somatic sensation than vision.

Third, as Zagzebski notes, the panentheism she proposes has deep potential conflicts with classical theism, and one might add with common conceptions of God in the western world and the major monotheisms generally. It is easy enough to identify potential conflicts between the empathy model and classical doctrines such as divine impassibility or simplicity. Empathy involves being moved by the other, which is in tension with impassibility. Imaginative simulations look like mental state tokens distinct from and bracketed from one's other mental states, which is an awkward fit with most glosses of simplicity. Yet, at the end of the day, one might think that the over-arching thread of classical theism and related theistic variants is that all good things that persons do have analogues in the reality of God, even though God's way of realizing those analogues is beyond our comprehension. That does not automatically resolve the tension between classical theism and the empathy model, but it offers one some solace. If God can be the perfect lover, then surely there should be some way in which God can be the perfect empathizer.

This new gloss on panentheism, however, requires that creaturely subjectivity plays a fundamental constitutive role in divine subjectivity by way of these joint states. It is not just that we can never escape the all-encompassing agency of God, but rather God's agency and God's first-person experience is in part constituted by the states of

creatures that God is tied to as a joint agent. Unsurprisingly, seeking a deeper sense in which the gap between creator and creature can be overcome provides an even deeper reason to worry that panentheism collapses the distinction of creator and creature. Whether it is collapsed by way of subsuming creatures into the creator in a kind of Spinozistic monism or by making creatures partly determinative of the divine nature as more of a Hegelian zeitgeist doesn't necessarily matter. The point is that the empathy model preserves a gap between creator and creatures, and this is partly why Zagzebski has continued exploring alternatives, to find a way to overcome the gap. Yet, overcoming the gap has its consequences because the gap between creature and creator is arguably a more fundamental one to the western tradition and major monotheisms than, say, getting on the same page about the number of mental states God has.

Interestingly then, Zagzebski begins her exploration of what it would mean for a maximal, perfect being to relate to our subjective experiences in part motivated by traditional theistic doctrines such as that of omniscience. If our experiences as a subject of consciousness are important, that importance should be reflected in how one conceives of the divine. As she develops her models of omnisubjectivity, however, she exposes problems squaring theism with the uniqueness of subjectivity. In particular, she becomes convinced that the gap between knower and known needs to be bridged to know the subjectivity of another perfectly. This has led to the entertaining of proposals that are harder and harder to square with the intuitions and assumptions that her theistic audience is likely to have started with. Hence, like Nagasawa, investigation into the nature and relationship between theism and subjectivity has led her to develop combinations of positions that are surprising. They do not simply crown the prior convictions of her intended audience.

Thus, to draw together the essay's threads, in both Nagasawa and Zagzebski's past work there has been a concern with the uniqueness of subjectivity and the experiential knowledge that comes with subjectivity. Both appreciate that theists have special reason to take the import of subjectivity seriously and yet, in their own ways, they both underline that taking subjectivity seriously raises puzzles for the theist, puzzles that might lead one to countenance new ways of thinking about the divine and our relation to the divine. Moreover, they both affirm that solving these puzzles concerned with the divine is intimately intertwined with one's positions in the philosophy of mind. In their keynote addresses, published here, Nagasawa and Zagzebski extend these themes to unprecedented degrees. In Nagasawa's case, he comes to suggest that a breakdown in parallels between the problem of consciousness and the problem of evil can be an important consideration that tells against panpsychism. In Zagzebski's case, she explores a version of panentheism in which there is no gap between God's subjectivity and ours, in which all states are joint at the first-person level, in order to resolve puzzles related to omnisubjectivity. She thereby does not simply add a novel property to our conception of the divine but potentially revises standard conceptions of how creator and creatures are related. In both cases, the trajectory of the views of

these theorists is illustrative of the interesting but not always straightforward ways in which these topics are related. They also illustrate two striking examples of philosophers whose work makes good on the Socratic injunction to follow the argument where it leads.

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