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INTRODUCTION

Editorial introduction: special issue on *panpsychism and pan(en)theism*

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Abstract

The editors of the special issue on *panpsychism and pan(en)theism* introduce the issue. This includes brief summaries of each of the articles.

Keywords: mind; ultimate; god; panpsychism; pantheism; panentheism; cosmology

The articles in this issue are devoted to exploring the intersection of the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of religion. More specifically, they are focused, either directly or indirectly, on the relationship between versions of panpsychism in the metaphysics of mind and pantheistic and panentheistic conceptions of God in the metaphysics of the divine. The recent history of both the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of religion has witnessed a resurgent interest in alternatives to the standard orthodoxies. In the philosophy of mind, we have witnessed growing dissatisfaction with business as usual, with an upswing of work examining alternatives to both orthodox physicalism and dualism, and in the philosophy of religion, there has been growing interest in work that explores alternatives to traditional theism and outright atheism (or, better, eliminativism about any sort of ultimate). This has led, in part, to renewed consideration of the merits of panpsychism in the philosophy of mind and examinations of pantheism and panentheism (along with other options) in the philosophy of religion. Given the historical connections between these conceptions of mind and the divine, it seems timely to explore how they might relate to one another. The articles in this issue aim to explore these connections.

Most of these articles were presented in some form at a workshop on the theme of 'Panpsychism and the Divine Mind' at Durham University, in Durham, England, in November of 2024. The event was the second of two workshops that were part of a John Templeton Foundation funded project (Grant #62683) co-directed by Andrei A. Buckareff and Philip Goff on the theme of 'Panpsychism and Pan(en)theism: Philosophy of Mind Meets Philosophy of Religion'. Anand Jayprakash Vaidya and S. Siddharth's essay, entitled 'Rāmānuja's Cosmopsychist-Panentheistic Solution to the Hard Problem of Consciousness', was the winner of an essay competition hosted by the project.

The opening article, by J.L. Schellenberg, entitled 'Redirecting the Incredulous Stare: Contemporary Complacency and the Flanking Manoeuvre of Developmental Scepticism', presents what he christens 'developmental scepticism' and applies it as a methodological

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tool for metaphysical theorising. In particular, the developmental scepticism he sketches is applied towards the attitude of rejection that has contributed to 'inhibiting progress' of '*unconventional metaphysical propositions*' (which he refers to as 'MUPs'). He argues that the application of developmental scepticism should open the door to a sort of epistemic humility that is conducive to the exploration of positions, such as panpsychism, that have heretofore been regarded by those who reject them as unworthy of serious consideration.

Tim Mulgan adopts an Anselmian starting point in his article, 'Anselm on THAT, THIS, and Panpsychism'. More specifically, his article involves a reimagining of Anselm's claim in the *Proslogion* that God is 'that than which a greater cannot be thought'. Mulgan aims to explore how the THAT which Anselm tries to prove exists relates to what is not-THAT ('THIS'). Mulgan argues in defence of a 'principle of cosmic humility'. We should not overestimate our importance, and we should expect that THAT would prefer plenitude about worlds and creatures. He then applies this same principle to the metaphysics of mind, arguing that the attitude of cosmic humility should lead us to endorse a version of panpsychism over the alternatives.

In her article, 'Does Panpsychism Entail Anti-Realism? The Worm in the Panpsychist Apple', Miri Albahari explores whether anti-realism may be an ontological commitment of panpsychism. Ontological realism commits one to an observer-independent world. But if panpsychism is true, then, given that consciousness is fundamental, it seems that physical reality is *observer-dependent*, in some sense. She argues that both the inner–outer problem and the combination problem that plague panpsychism are symptoms of the assumption of realism. Albahari argues that once we abandon realism, the problems dissolve, but such a strategy requires endorsing a more idealist version of panpsychism.

Sam Coleman presents the panpsychist with a new problem. Coleman notes that an implication of panpsychism is that subsystems within systems, such as human organisms, are also conscious subjects. If being a conscious subject is sufficient for moral standing, then questions about the welfare of the inner subjects become salient. Thus, a form of the moral problem of evil presents itself for panpsychism. A salient upshot for those working in the philosophy of religion is that the problem of evil may be compounded for versions of theism, panentheism, and pantheism that embrace panpsychism.

In their article, 'Rāmānuja's Cosmopsychist-Panentheistic Solution to the Hard Problem of Consciousness', Anand Jayprakash Vaidya and S. Siddharth's essay considers the hard problem of consciousness. While Albahari's work is inspired by the Advaita Vedāntic tradition, Vaidya and Siddharth consider resources found in the work of the eleventh century CE philosopher, Rāmānuja, and the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedāntic tradition. They argue that a cosmopsychist-panentheistic metaphysics inspired by Rāmānuja provides us with the tools we need to develop a solution to the hard problem.

Jack Symes presents and defends a version of modal panentheism. According to modal panentheism, God is identical with all possible worlds. He identifies this view as a species of pan*en*theism rather than pantheism because God transcends the world in which we find ourselves. Symes argues for both panentheism and modal realism with perfect-being theology as his starting point. Symes argues that encompassment is a great-making property. He argues that an all-encompassing being would possess any great-making intrinsic property to the highest possible degree, and this includes God's being identical with the maximal set of possible worlds, where they are understood to be concrete and, hence, actual. Symes argues that the maximal set may be restricted by divine goodness. The upshot is a view that may avoid the problems that beset other conceptions of God, including the problem(s) of evil. Symes expands on the view, arguing that it leads to a form of modal cosmopsychism. He addresses challenges to this view based on concerns about the great-making attributes. In the end, he presents and defends a novel alternative conception of God that can tap on both traditional theistic resources and alternatives to traditional theism.

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The final article of this issue explores the evidence for cosmological fine-tuning and potential explanations. It includes a summary of the case for the fine-tuning of the cosmos for life by the physicists Luke Barnes and Geraint Lewis. This is followed by three different perspectives on how to explain fine-tuning. Geraint Lewis presents a multiverse perspective, Luke Barnes presents a theistic perspective, and Philip Goff rounds things out by presenting a pantheistic perspective.

We believe the articles in this issue are valuable additions to the growing literature exploring different models of the ultimate. And we hope that they will contribute to further exploration of the intersection between the metaphysics of mind and the metaphysics of the divine.

In concluding this introduction, we wish to acknowledge the untimely passing of one of the contributors to this issue, Anand Jayprakash Vaidya. Anand was Professor of Philosophy at San Jose State University, and he had a visiting appointment at the University of California, Los Angeles. Anand and Siddharth submitted their essay for the competition before Anand was admitted to hospital. He passed before learning that their submission had won the essay prize. Both editors were fortunate to get to know Anand, and we both considered him a friend – a friend we both hoped to get to know better and with whom we hoped to share more time. He made significant contributions to our discipline, doing pioneering work exploring points of connection between analytic metaphysics and traditional Indian philosophy. As well as being a great philosopher, Anand was one of the kindest, most affable people either of us had ever met. There is no better introduction to Anand and his work than the following beautiful poem written by his wife Manjula Menon. We miss Anand and we wish to dedicate this special issue of *Religious Studies* to his memory.

Things We Told Each Other

You told me you loved me first
And I was amazed.
You told me that mental states might be considered sources of knowledge
And I was skeptical.
You told me people shouldn't be forced to live if they didn't want to
And I was appalled.
You told me to never follow the crowd
And I wanted to save you.
You told me you wanted me to be happy
And I was scared for you.

I remember I was frightened
When my head was on your chest
And I was listening to your heartbeat
And you suddenly seemed
Unbearably fragile.

I asked if you remembered
That scene in Blade Runner
Where the replicant pokes out the eyes of his human creator
Because he learns he must die.
I told you that if I ever met my creator
I'd be angry too.
What a terrible thing to give us the capacity to love
But also make us necessarily die.
Your neck was warm and soft
And I could feel your pulse on my fingers.

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You told me what you wanted was to love people
And to be loved by them.
You told me what made you happy was to engage people
To do philosophy.
I'm interested in the truth, you said
But more in understanding.

I told you my sense of fulfillment was like a unit step function
Stepped up to one when you were with me
And down to zero when you were not.

I told you that in the year 256 BCE
After bloody conquest of a neighboring territory
King Ashoka began to grieve for the lives lost in war
And declared that he
The beloved of Gods
Would henceforth strive to ease the suffering
Of all living beings.

I told you in the sixteenth century
Emperor Shah Jahan had inscribed in his palace, the words
'If there is Paradise, it is this, it is this, it is this!'

Now you are gone
And I can never tell you anything again.
But if a mental state can be source of knowledge
Then I'd tell you that the multiverse contains
Infinite versions of you and me
Because I have drawn them
Here, to this reality.

Sometimes, as I wait for dawn
I'll sense a version of us
Looking at me
With sympathy.

On my walk, a version of you might bound ahead
Bubbling with energy
Jerking his head this way and that
As this thing or that, catches his curiosity
Just like you used to do.

When I'm feeling like I just can't bear your loss,
I'll sense a crowd of them,
A thousand variants of us,
Silently they support me,
With understanding.

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I want to tell you that it's true,
I feel their presence.
I want so badly to tell you.

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