

# Foreword

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The growth of controversy in the early centuries of the Church obliged Christian thinkers to construct a theology. In developing this theology they were aware of their debt to the scriptures, but perhaps not so deeply aware of their debt to contemporary Platonist philosophy. They drew quite heavily on a world-view that we do not share. Thinking about this, I decided to invite the 1988/89 Royal Institute of Philosophy lecturers to lecture on 'The Philosophy in Christianity'.

The lecturers have tended to assume that the audience, and readership, would be acquainted with at least the broad outlines of Platonism. What I am going to say first is addressed to those for whom this assumption is false.

## Platonism

In the *Phaedo* Plato makes Socrates describe his experiences in natural science. Socrates 'thought it would be marvellous to know the causes for which each thing comes, and ceases, and continues, to be'. He had heard someone reading from a book, said to be by Anaxagoras, 'asserting that it is mind that produces order and is the cause of everything', and this explanation pleased him:

Somehow it seemed right that mind should be the cause of everything, and I reflected that if this is so, mind . . . arranges each individual thing in the way that is best for it. . . . These reflections made me suppose, to my delight, that in Anaxagoras I had found an authority on causation who was after my own heart. I assumed that he would begin by informing us whether the earth is flat or round, and would then proceed to explain in detail the reason and logical necessity for this by stating how and why it was better that it should be so . . . I thought that by assigning a cause to each phenomenon separately and to the universe as a whole he would make perfectly clear what is best for each and what is the universal good (*Phaedo*, 97c–98b).

Socrates' hopes were quickly dashed when he bought the books by Anaxagoras. Like most people, Anaxagoras evidently regarded such things as air and æther and water as causes. He neither looked for, nor believed in, 'a power which keeps things disposed at any given moment in the best possible way'.

Socrates' description of his experiences in natural science concludes with his saying that he would be delighted to learn about the workings of such a cause from anyone, but that since he has been unable either to discover it himself, or to learn about it from another, he has worked out his own makeshift approach to the problem of causation.

What Socrates calls his 'makeshift approach to the problem of causation' is what has become known as 'Plato's Theory of Forms' (or, in an older terminology, 'Plato's Theory of Ideas'). Suppose we have to give the reason why a given object is beautiful. What we ought to say, Plato suggests, is that 'the one thing that makes that object beautiful is the presence in it, or association with it, in whatever way the relation comes about, of absolute beauty' (*Phaedo*, 100d). 'Absolute beauty' is the 'Form' of beauty.

It is not at all clear, from what Plato goes on to say in the *Phaedo*, what he is getting at. What does he mean by 'absolute beauty', 'absolute equality', 'absolute tallness'? In short, what are 'Forms'? And what is the relationship of the Forms of beauty, equality, tallness to the beautiful, equal, tall things we see around us?

The first part of an answer is suggested in another dialogue, the *Republic*. It involves a distinction between 'the visible' and 'the intelligible'. Plato introduces the distinction with what he says about 'opposites'. Opposites are things like thick and thin, tall and short, great and small, beautiful and ugly, just and unjust, holy and unholy, wise and stupid, one and many, equal and unequal. In one dialogue (*Greater Hippias*, 289a–d) Plato quotes Heraclitus. Man is both wise, by comparison with an ape, and stupid, by comparison with a god. He is both wise and stupid. Wisdom and stupidity are together, confounded, in man. In Book VII of the *Republic* (523b–524d) Plato contrasts seeing that something is a finger with seeing how big it is. Vision seems adequate for the judgment that the object is a finger, but not for how big it is. The finger next to the thumb is large by comparison with the outside, or 'little' finger, but small by comparison with the middle finger. 'The great and the small are confounded' in the finger. So it cannot be by vision that one is aware of largeness or smallness. It must be in some other way. It is, Plato says, 'by intelligence':

Intelligence is compelled to contemplate the great and the small, not thus confounded but as distinct entities, in the opposite way from sensation. . . . And this is the origin of the designation *intelligible* for the one and *visible* for the other (*Republic*, 524c).

His idea seems to be that one can be aware, by vision, of a finger as large only because one can be aware, by intelligence, of largeness itself, a distinct entity that he calls 'the great'. And the same for all the other opposites, such as beautiful and ugly, tall and short. In visible things

the opposites are always ‘confounded’. We apprehend the largeness, confounded with smallness, in the finger, through its reminding us of the absolute largeness we have previously apprehended by intelligence.

If we go along with Plato in this, to us, strange line of thinking, then we are faced with two questions. First, *when* did we apprehend absolute largeness, absolute beauty, absolute tallness, etc.? Secondly, what is meant by saying that these absolute things are *intelligible*?

Plato deals with the first of these two questions in the *Phaedo*, 65d–66a, 74a–75d. This time the opposites he considers are equality and inequality. Socrates asks ‘Do they (the things we see) seem to us to be equal in the sense of absolute equality, or do they fall short of it in so far as they only approximate to equality?’, receives the answer that they fall a long way short, and continues as follows:

. . . it must be through the senses that we obtained the notion that all sensible equals are striving after absolute equality but falling short of it. . . . So before we began to see and hear and use our other senses we must somewhere have acquired the knowledge that there is such a thing as absolute equality. Otherwise we could never have realized, by using it as a standard of comparison, that all equal objects of sense are desirous of being like it, but are only imperfect copies. Did we not begin to see and hear and possess our other senses from the moment of birth? But we admitted that we must have obtained our knowledge of equality before we obtained them. So we must have obtained it before birth (*Phaedo*, 75a–c).

Plato is committed, by this argument, to the view that we exist before birth, but in a non-bodily state so that the soul is not impeded, by the senses, from ‘applying its pure and unadulterated thought to the pure and unadulterated object’ (*Phaedo*, 66a). He evidently thinks of the pre-birth soul as existing in the same intelligible world as the Forms. Incidentally, much of the argument in the *Phaedo* is directed to proving that some of us return to this intelligible world after death.

Secondly, what does Plato mean by saying that absolute largeness, absolute beauty, absolute tallness, absolute equality are intelligible? He means that we can, in theory at least, know and say what they are. We can, in theory, define them. Plato does not represent discovering the definition as being at all easy. It is not simply a matter of finding out how the word is used, to what sort of things it is applied, or what the conventions are for its use. Plato had inherited Socrates’ distaste for the conventionalism and relativism of the Sophists. This comes out in the way he formulates his questions. If it is about holiness, for instance, his question is: ‘What is the essential form of holiness which makes all holy actions holy?’ (*Euthyphro*, 6d). It is a question about the eternal, unchanging thing, holiness, not about our possibly changing use of the

word 'holy'. Plato was a firm believer in there being two worlds with two different modes of existence: the Forms have Being, but visible things are for ever changing; they are in a world of Becoming. The realm of Becoming is dependent on the realm of Being.

Socrates called all this his 'makeshift approach to the problem of causation'. It strikes us as strange to call it a causal explanation. Moreover, Plato himself did not seem very happy with it. First, unlike the sort of explanation for which Socrates longed, it makes no mention of 'what is best for each and what is the universal good'. Secondly, while absolute beauty, the Form of beauty, may be said, in some very wide sense of 'cause', to be the cause of beautiful things being beautiful, it cannot be said to be the cause of beautiful things existing.

Plato dealt with the first of these two deficiencies in his theory by giving a special status to the Form of the good. He gave it a role in the apprehension of the other Forms comparable to that of the sun in the apprehension of visible things. It 'gives their truth to the objects of knowledge and the power of knowing to the knower', and so is 'the cause of knowledge, and of truth in so far as known' (*Republic*, VI, 508c). Although Plato calls the Form of the good a Form it is not like other Forms. Just as 'the sun not only furnishes to visibles the power of visibility but also provides for their generation and growth and nurture though it is not itself generation' so 'the objects of knowledge not only receive from the presence of the good their being known, but their very existence and essence is derived to them from it, though the good itself is not essence but still transcends essence in dignity and surpassing power' (509b). The ultimate aim of the philosopher is to attain the apprehension of this supreme reality. When the philosopher 'attempts through discourse of reason and apart from all perceptions of sense to find his way to the very essence of each thing and does not desist till he apprehends by thought itself the nature of the good in itself, he arrives at the limit of the intelligible' (VII, 532a–b).

Plato deals with the second deficiency in the *Timaeus*. The Forms are 'copied' in the sensible world. This requires there to be a 'receptacle' for the copies, a 'being which receives all things and in some mysterious way partakes of the intelligible' (51a). Plato suggests that it requires, also, a being that does the copying, a craftsman-like God ('Demiurge'). Now, something cannot partake of the intelligible and be devoid of soul. So the sensible world is 'a living creature truly endowed with soul and intelligence by the providence of God' (30b). That is, there is a 'World Soul' at work. Plato says he is here 'using the language of probability'. He may have been trying to find a place, in his creation hypothesis, for Anaxagoras' view 'that it is mind that produces order and is the cause of everything' (*Phaedo* 97c).

Christian philosophers did not simply take over where Plato left off. They drew on what is now called 'School Platonism', a tradition inaugurated by Plato's successor Xenocrates, who attempted to bring together Plato's disconnected suggestions to form a coherent system. For some two centuries this system was overshadowed by other developments in Greek philosophy that had less permanent influence on Christian thought. But in the first century BC Platonism came back into fashion. This was for two reasons: the literary excellence of Plato's own writings, and a revival of interest in religion and in the thought of a better and more orderly world.

The attraction of Platonism for religious thinkers can be seen in the writings of the Greek-speaking Jewish aristocrat Philo of Alexandria. Philo took over Plato's concept of an intelligible world, and amalgamated it with the biblical notion of a heavenly realm in which God dwells. He used Plato's creation narrative to confirm the biblical account given in Genesis. The Demiurge of Plato's *Timaeus* was assimilated to the Form of the Good; and a personal, active deity was now seen as the supreme principle of explanation. Philo conceived God as completely simple and immutable; but also as a wise and beneficent world ruler. A Platonist philosophy of this type was adopted by most thoughtful Christians in the first few centuries.

### **The Lectures and the Lecturers**

I can now make a start on saying something about the lectures in this collection, and the lecturers.

The lectures are not printed in the order in which they were given. I have re-ordered them into four groups, as follows:

- (i) Lectures relevant to the Trinity and the Incarnation:
  - 'Logos and Trinity: Patterns of Platonist Influence on Early Christianity', by John Dillon, Regius Professor of Greek at Trinity College, Dublin;
  - 'Reason in Mystery' by Norman Kretzmann, Susan Linn Sage Professor of Philosophy at Cornell University;
  - 'The Philosophy in Christianity: Arius and Athanasius', by the Reverend Maurice Wiles, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford University;
  - 'Could God Become Man?', by Richard Swinburne, Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion at Oxford University.
- (ii) Lectures on God and his creation, including the problem of predestination and freewill:
  - 'Augustine's Philosophy of Being', by the Reverend Christopher Stead, formerly Ely Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University;

- 'Predestination and Freedom in Augustine's Ethics', by Gerard O'Daly, Lecturer in Classical and Archaeological Studies at the University of Nottingham;
- 'God as Creator', by the Reverend Keith Ward, Professor of the History and Philosophy of Religion at King's College, London;
- 'Foreknowledge and the Vulnerability of God', by J. R. Lucas, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford.
- (iii) Lectures on man's approach to God:
- 'On Not Knowing Too Much About God', by A. H. Armstrong, formerly Gladstone Professor of Greek at Liverpool University;
- '"When Two Are to Become One": Mysticism and Monism', by Grace Jantzen, Lecturer in the History and Philosophy of Religion at King's College, London;
- 'Faith and Goodness', by Eleonore Stump, Professor of Philosophy at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University;
- 'Hope', by Stewart Sutherland, Vice-Chancellor of London University.
- (iv) Lectures on philosophy, religion and truth:
- 'Christian Averroism, Fideism and the "Two-fold Truth"', by Stuart Brown, Professor of Philosophy at the Open University;
- 'Does Philosophy "Leave Everything as it is"? Even Theology?', by Renford Bambrough, Sidgwick Lecturer in Philosophy at Cambridge University.

### **The Trinity and the Incarnation**

Dillon takes it as being 'generally agreed that Christian thinkers were profoundly influenced in the development of their theology by their growing acquaintance with contemporary Greek philosophy, and in particular with Platonism'. The two issues he addresses are (i) the need for, and the nature of, a mediator between God and Man, and (ii) the internal structure of the supreme principle itself, a structure which sacrificed absolute unity and simplicity in the interest of developing the relationship, within deity, of essence, potency and activity. On each of these questions Platonism had much to offer, specifically by providing models for relationships between a supreme god and a secondary, creator god, or alternatively a supreme god and his creative reason-principle (*logos*). (Admittedly these models were ultimately rejected by orthodox Christianity.) Platonism offered models, too, for the various aspects of the supreme divinity itself—or, more exactly, its three possible aspects, whether they be denominated Being, Life and Mind, or Essence, Potency and Activity.

This is what Kretzmann calls the 'inert' philosophy in Christianity. Christianity would be unrecognizable without the later Greek meta-

physics around which Christian doctrine first developed, he says, but it is inert. It is active philosophy, philosophical theology, that is 'the only philosophy of more than historical interest . . . in Christianity.'

Philosophical theology is broader than natural theology. It admits doctrinal propositions, not accessible to observation and reason, such as the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation. Its ongoing project is that of supporting, elucidating, extending and connecting these propositions by means of analysis and argument. Medieval philosophical theologians, especially in the thirteenth century, were attempting to follow Augustine in enhancing faith based on authority, with understanding based on reason.

Kretzmann defends Bonaventure's defence of philosophical theology against Gregory the Great's charge that it is destructive of faith as a theological virtue, and against Peter Lombard's warning that mysteries of faith cannot be investigated in a way conducive to salvation. Christian doctrine includes mysteries, but the Church takes them to be ridiculous and impossible only *prima facie*, not *per se*. It is possible to clarify and defend them. Genuine philosophical theology is out to discover reason in mystery, not to turn reason against mystery. An illustration of this is Aquinas' confirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity by uncovering connections between it and other doctrines, and thereby aiding one's understanding of creation and salvation.

Wiles' lecture is about the heresy of Arius. I looked this up in my favourite book on the philosophy of religion, A. Seth Pringle-Pattison, *Studies in the Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford, 1930).

In the beginning of the fourth century an acute crisis was provoked by Arius, who definitely taught that the Son, or the Logos, is not co-eternal with the Father, but a creaturely being, created by the Father out of nothing, to be the mediator of further creation. Arius propounded this theory apparently in the interest of monotheism; but the Arian Christ, a demigod called into existence to create the world, is a purely mythological figure, neither god nor man, but standing midway between the two. As against Arianism, the Church at the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) declared its belief in the deity of Jesus Christ in the fullest sense: 'God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten not made, Being of one substance with the Father'. And the position of Athanasius, though on the face of it more incredible than the heresy it combated, lent itself in the sequel more readily to philosophical interpretation (pp. 244–245).

Wiles indicates a more sympathetic approach to the thought of Arius on the part of contemporary scholars. He sees Athanasius and Arius as engaged in essentially the same task of making sense of their scriptural faith and doing so in a way which gives to philosophy a less straightfor-

ward and less external role than has often been suggested in the past. He picks out as crucial to the debate the question of how the Christian can participate in the divine. The Athanasian Christ can mediate this participation because, as truly divine and also incarnate, his very nature constitutes the bridge which makes participation in the divine, salvation, a possibility for us.

Whereas Wiles is concerned with the Son being co-eternal with the Father, his Oxford colleague, Swinburne, is concerned with the Son becoming, at a certain moment in human history, human. The Council of Chalcedon assumed that an individual, God, could become human, or cease to be human, while remaining the same individual. Is this internally consistent? Is it consistent with the picture of Christ in the New Testament?

In answer to the second of these questions Swinburne says that many readers of the New Testament feel that it pictures a Jesus rather more like ourselves than the Christ of the traditional exposition of the Chalcedonian definition; and that this is required by the Christian doctrine of atonement. He advances a new interpretation, utilizing the Freudian doctrine of the divided mind. The consciousness of God includes the consciousness of God incarnate, but not conversely. This enables us to say that God could become man in a rather fuller sense than the traditional interpretation allowed. This is consistent with the Chalcedonian definition, which did not affirm total interpenetration of two natures.

### **God and His Creation; Predestination and Freewill**

Much of Stead's lecture is about the Platonism of Augustine. But he mentions, in passing, the moral problems raised by God's knowledge of his creation. He writes:

It might appear that if God foreknows that X will sin, then it is inevitable that X will sin; and if it is inevitable, then X is not free and cannot be blamed. Augustine replies that God does not cause X to sin by foreknowing it; what God foreknows is that X will freely choose to sin, and his foreknowledge depends on X's choice. In two later works he takes a different line, suggesting that God does indeed contrive that some individuals shall sin, and sin of their own free choice; he does this by omitting to supply the grace to overcome temptation. I do not think this in the least acceptable as a way to vindicate God's goodness. Nor do I think Augustine gives an adequate account of human freedom.

O'Daly goes into Augustine's position on predestination and freewill in considerable detail. He critically examines Augustine's concept of



the will. He comes to much the same conclusion as Stead. 'A philosophical defence of Augustine's notion of the freedom of the will seems impossible: it remains a glorious and influential failure.' Similarly, Ward questions the legitimacy of Augustine's idea of a will that may justly be punished for its choice, given his belief that the whole world flows from the immutable and necessary being of God. He thinks that most present-day theologians would reject what follows from this: that God determines a will to make a choice which is then punished eternally. He contrasts the concept of the wholly immutable God, which the classical tradition developed, with the concept of God to be found in the Bible. 'The prophetic call is for repentance and trust in God. That implies a stress on choice, on acceptance of responsibility for one's actions, and on a belief that one should, and therefore could, have done otherwise . . . God himself is spoken of as responding to human choices. . . . The natural way to take all this is to say that some of God's actions, in judgment and mercy, are dependent on human choices.'

Lucas starts his lecture with passages from the Bible in which, he says, 'the clear picture is of a God who can change his mind':

Such a view accords with the natural reading of the Bible, preserves free will, and fits the higher, human view of God that Jesus enjoins us to adopt. But it has been discountenanced by most theologians, partly on logical, partly on theological grounds. Logically, it has seemed impossible for an omniscient being not to know all truths, including those about future contingents; theologically, it has been felt to derogate from the perfection of God that He should change his mind.

Lucas argues that both these grounds for rejecting the Biblical view of God are mistaken, and that 'once we cease imputing to the suffering God of the Christian religion the supposed perfection of the God of the philosophers, we can see how it is that God can be God without thereby depriving us of freedom and responsibility'. God is not only fallible, but vulnerable, and the vulnerability of God is the peculiar characteristic of Christian teaching. The symbol of Christianity is the cross.

A human father is certainly vulnerable to his offspring making a mess of things. Whether God is, similarly, vulnerable, I do not know. Despite what is said in the Bible, my tendency is to distrust applying to God the terms we apply to our fellow humans.

### **Man's Approach to God**

Armstrong's lecture has the lovely title, 'On Not Knowing Too Much About God'.

He thinks that Christianity's willingness to make extremely precise dogmatic statements about God is largely due to the influence of

Hellenic philosophy on Christian thinking. But there is a great deal in Plato's dialogues 'the reading of which can strengthen the tendency to diffidence and encourage the reader to develop it in various ways'. Armstrong's lecture is about two developments from this original diffidence: the Apophatic Way, or *Via Negativa*, of the Neoplatonists, and the ancient traditions of Scepticism, the Pyrrhonian and the Academic; and about how Scepticism and the Negative Way help one another 'in leading towards a salutary and liberating ignorance'.

Armstrong avoids the use of the word 'mystic' to describe Plotinus' intense experience of the presence of that which he knew he could not think or speak of. Jantzen avoids neither that term, nor the term 'monism'. She is concerned with the question whether 'mysticism requires monism as its underlying metaphysic, a unity of substance or essence between God and the soul'. Her answer is that it does not. The Creator-creature distinction is preserved in the mystical experience. The union is not a unity of substance; it is a union, or concurrence, of wills.

The role of the will, inspired by the agent's apprehension of goodness, in faith, is the subject of Stump's lecture. Current work in the philosophy of religion on the subject of faith has tended to concentrate on the connection of faith to evidence and rationality. She turns to Aquinas for an account which recognizes the place of the will in faith. For him the will is a natural appetite for goodness in general. The intellect can represent certain things as good, and move the will as a final cause does, but there can be considerations sufficient to move the will but not the intellect. It is then that we talk of faith. Faith is an intellectual assent to a proposition when the object of the intellect is not sufficient to move the intellect by itself. In faith assent is generated by the will, which is moved by the object of faith sufficiently to command the intellect to assent. Faith differs from opinion in holding to its object with certitude. In this respect it is like knowledge. The ultimate object of the will can be thought of in either of two ways. It is the happiness of the willer. It is God, who is the true good, and thus the perfect happiness of the willer. The propositions of faith, entertained by the intellect, describe the combination of these ultimate goods, eternal life in union with God, and present it as available to the believer by virtue of Christ's atonement for our sins on the cross.

Stump deals with three possible objections to this account of faith. Whether she would object to Jantzen's saying that union with God is a union of wills, I am not sure. Can it be said of God that he has a natural appetite for goodness? Are not his being and his goodness the same thing? I do not know how one is to deal with questions like this.

Stump contrasts Aquinas' view of the will as an appetite for goodness with the view of it 'as the neutral steering capacity of a person's psyche'.

Sutherland contrasts the hope that has a place in the Pauline trinity of faith, hope and charity, with the concept of hope developed by three empirically orientated English philosophers, H. H. Price, Jonathan Harrison and J. P. Day. The philosophers agree that hope is not simply a feeling of desire, or wish; it also contains elements of belief. They disagree about the belief content. Is what I hope for 'probable' (Day), or simply 'neither inevitable nor impossible' (Harrison), or both 'logically and causally possible' (Price)? Sutherland prefers Harrison's view, but has reservations. What interests the French philosopher, Gabriel Marcel, on the topic of hope, is that it has 'roots in the very depth of what I am'. This, for Sutherland, is a matter of a 'moral vision': 'the essential content of hope is a moral vision of what might be'. He lists four implications of the characterization of the content of religious hope as vision: one is dealing in pictures rather than in empirical predictions; hope founded on vision pays due regard to uncertainty; hope focused by vision is discussable (one can examine, defend, moderate, develop the moral vision); vision expressed in hope helps redirect our minds from total preoccupation with this immanent world, and provides a standard against which the particular and immanent may be measured.

The most distinctive object of religious hope is the hope for heaven, whether in this life or in a life to come. I am reminded, by some of the things Sutherland says about the religious hope for heaven, of something Dietrich Bonhoeffer said about salvation, in his *Letters and Papers from Prison* (27 June 1944):

Salvation means salvation from cares and needs, from fears and longing, from sin and death into a better world beyond the grave. But is this really the distinctive feature of Christianity as proclaimed in the Gospels and St Paul? I am sure it is not. The difference between the Christian hope of resurrection and a mythological hope is that the Christian hope sends a man back to his life on earth in a wholly new way which is even more sharply defined than it is in the Old Testament.

### **Philosophy, Religion and Truth**

It is all very well when Christians are in sympathy with the ideas of philosophers, and can even make use of them in formulating their doctrines. But what happens when religion and philosophy are at odds? Plato seems to have believed in the possibility of an individual surviving death. But not Aristotle. Should one attempt to interpret what Aristotle says so as to make it compatible with the Christian faith? Or can there be two truths: one of philosophy and one of religion?

In the 1270s, Brown says, the Bishop of Paris attacked the Averroists for saying that something could be 'true in philosophy, but not accord-

ing to the Catholic faith, as if there were two truths'. Brown raises three issues for discussion. The one to which he devotes most attention is the controversy about the nature of faith:

There is a controversy about the nature of faith, with the Averroists presenting it for the most part as non-rational, as quite different from rational belief, as not requiring the support of rational belief and indeed as, perhaps unlike other kinds of belief, a matter of what we resolve.

Brown comes down on the side of saying that faith has to involve beliefs of the kind that call for reasons. Does this mean that he disagrees with Stump, who holds that in faith assent is generated by the will? I think it does. He certainly disagrees with the twentieth-century philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. He says that Wittgenstein's later philosophy offers more support to the Averroists than to their opponents.

In the final lecture in the volume Bambrough considers whether philosophy, if it is purely descriptive, 'leaves everything as it is'. Does it leave theology as it is? He distinguishes three different understandings of God's question to Job: 'Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?' One can take the account of the conversation between God and Job 'in a way that one might call *literal*, and is sometimes called fundamentalist'. A second group of believers 'would put more emphasis than the first group on the pictorial and analogical character of the formulations of their faith . . . yet the members of this group will reasonably take themselves to be serious in their commitment to the absolute truths of their religion'. The members of the third group read the Book of Job 'as literature'. This is 'to dispense with, or at least to regard as inessential, the doctrinal basis'. Does giving this sketch of believers and unbelievers 'leave everything as it is'?

Bambrough's answer to this question, in the context of what else he says, seems to me to be a defence of Wittgenstein against Brown's charge that on three important issues he is on the Averroist side. It makes me wonder what Bambrough thought of John Cook's paper on 'Wittgenstein on Religious Belief' in *Philosophy* 63 (1988). Perhaps this will emerge in the course of discussion after the 1989/90 lectures. They are to be on Wittgenstein, who was born in 1889.

I am grateful to the lecturers not only for their lectures, but also for their comments on an early draft of this foreword. I am especially grateful to the Revd Professor Christopher Stead and to the Rector of St Peter's, Bedford, the Revd John Schild.