

must be superfluous and ineffective; whereas, if it has not happened, then its hypothesised future cause will need to make to have happened something which has not happened. If Anglin and others are refusing to allow that that requirement is self-contradictory, then I am at a loss to suggest any alternative refutation which they might at last admit to be decisive.

In Chapter 5, 'God's Goodness', Anglin tries first to establish that God is not merely contingently but necessarily good. He then proceeds to ask whether, in that case, God can deserve praise; and to invoke the Principle of Double Effect in order to explain how God can be morally good notwithstanding that "he freely chooses to create a universe in which a person with free will may do evil" (p. 104). Chapter 6 treats 'The Problem of Evil'.

It is perhaps just worth saying why the questions of these two chapters simply do not arise for anyone who is not already more than half persuaded of both the existence and – whether it be necessary or contingent – the goodness of a Creator. For anyone who was still openmindedly considering these only as possibilities must, surely, be inclined to dismiss as a piece of arbitrary wishful-thinking the suggestion that a Creator would as it were take sides within the creation? The a priori probability is that any Creator would be – as I am told that some Indian religious thinkers have maintained – 'beyond good and evil'.

Chapter 7 'Immortality' is remarkable for the author's apparent unawareness of any of the philosophical difficulties which have these last forty years and more been raised about the significance of what psychical researchers used to dub 'the survival hypothesis'.

In the final chapter on 'Revelation' Anglin argues that, because the purpose of God's 'communicating is to establish a personal love relationship with us' (p. 186), God cannot provide us with knock-down decisive evidence of his existence and nature. So to do would, allegedly, deprive us of our libertarian free will. This is ridiculous. Is it now to be a precondition of genuinely loving relationships that one or both parties should be reasonably uncertain about not only the character but even the existence of the other? No doubt in the face of such overwhelming evidence we should be hard put to deny the existence and nature thus evidenced. But assent to the truth of existential propositions was not the stated object of the exercise. To that object such detached assent is not sufficient. Unless this knowledge included promises of incentives or threats of sanctions we should, surely, remain perfectly free to reject God's amorous approaches?

UNIVERSITY OF READING

ANTONY FLEW

*The Future: An Essay on God, Temporality and Truth*

By J. R. LUCAS

Basil Blackwell, 1989. x + 246pp. £29.95

In this intelligent and sophisticated book, Lucas discusses a cluster of issues pertaining to the description and analysis of the future. Does the future exist (in some sense)? If so, how can we talk about it? Further, can God – or

anyone – know about future free actions? In tackling these traditional questions, Lucas discusses the nature of truth, knowledge, and freedom. He develops a tense logic with a special semantics, ‘Tree semantics’. Lucas claims that this semantics helps to resolve traditional puzzles pertaining to time, especially the puzzles generated by Aristotle’s Sea Battle Argument. (The ingredients putatively necessary to analyse this argument are presented in a chapter entitled, ‘Contingency Planning for Naval Logicians’.)

Lucas gives considerable attention to the problem of the relationship between God’s omniscience and human freedom. First, he claims that freedom to do otherwise is essential to a human freedom which is theologically acceptable. He points out that on a plausible conception of God, according to which God is infallible, His foreknowledge would be incompatible with human freedom to do otherwise. (This follows from the fixity of the past: God’s prior beliefs about one’s future behaviour cannot be rendered false.) But Lucas takes the position that God’s perfection need not require that He have foreknowledge. He says, “. . . God cannot, so long as He has created us free and autonomous agents, infallibly know what we are going to do until we have done it. But this is no imperfection, but a corollary of His creative love” (p. 226).

I wish briefly to raise some questions about two major propositions in Lucas’s treatment of the relationship between God and freedom. First, Lucas claims that a suitably robust freedom must imply freedom to do otherwise and ‘freedom of the will’. Lucas says, “Many thinkers have . . . denied that responsibility requires a real possibility of doing otherwise. It is only pride, they say, that makes man think he is free. In truth he is utterly dependent on his Creator, and can do nothing, attempt nothing, without God. We have no power of ourselves to help ourselves, and should ascribe all might, majesty, dominion and power to God . . . To deny man’s freedom of will is to deny an essential attribute to humanity, and to undercut the specifically Christian attributes of the Christian religion” (p. 31).

Here I would claim that Lucas has offered us a false dichotomy. It is not true that either we have freedom to do otherwise or we are utterly passive and cannot ‘help ourselves’. It is at least possible that we can act freely without being free to do otherwise; the lack of alternative possibilities need not imply passivity. If this is so, then there might be a kind of freedom and autonomy which could ground moral responsibility and the Christian attributes which does not require freedom to do otherwise. (See, for example, Harry Frankfurt, ‘Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility’, *Journal of Philosophy* vol. 66(1) December, 1969, pp. 828–839; and John Martin Fischer, ‘Responsiveness and Moral Responsibility’, in F. Shoeman, ed. *Responsibility, Character, and the Emotions* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 81–106.) Thus, even if God’s foreknowledge rules out human freedom to do otherwise, it would not follow that God’s foreknowledge rules out acting freely in the sense required for moral responsibility and the ‘Christian virtues’.

The relationship between acting freely and freedom to do otherwise is extremely controversial. I certainly would not claim that it is *obvious* that a

theory of moral responsibility and of various moral (and religious) virtues can be developed which does not require genuine alternative possibilities. And it is fair to say that traditional views about moral responsibility and the Christian virtues do indeed require such freedom. In fact, although there has been much discussion of the merits of a theory of moral responsibility which does not require alternative possibilities, I am not aware of a similar discussion of an approach to the Christian virtues which does not require such possibilities. But I simply wish to point to this approach as a possibility worth considering. Note that on this sort of 'actual-sequence' approach, God could have full and robust knowledge of the future, thus avoiding the apparent attenuation of God's knowledge implied by Lucas's view.

Second, I wish to point out that Lucas simply assumes that God's beliefs are 'hard', i.e., genuine and temporally non-relational, features of the past. It is in virtue of their hardness that God's beliefs about the past are alleged to be fixed. Now it may well be true that God's beliefs in the past are hard facts about the past, but it should at least be noted that this is highly contentious. Many philosophers – 'Ockhamists' – argue that God's beliefs are 'soft', i.e., temporally non-genuine or relational, facts. (For a selection of papers on this topic, see John Martin Fischer, ed., *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom* (Stanford University Press, 1989).) Further, they argue that such beliefs are in the class of soft facts that are not fixed at later times. It is not clear whether these Ockhamistic claims are true, but a more comprehensive discussion of the theological fatalism would surely need to address them.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

JOHN MARTIN FISCHER

*The Concept of Music*

By ROBIN MACONIE

Clarendon Press, 1990. xii + 187 pp. £22.50

*Listening to Music*

By MARTYN EVANS

Macmillan, 1990. viii + 160 pp. £35.00

These titles are by a composer and a philosopher respectively, and some of their strengths and weaknesses are to that extent predictable. Maconie's central thesis is that the understanding of music as a process of communication has been imperfect, and that we need a "new language" to talk about music. Music used to be central to civilisation, but it is now peripheral; ours is a visual, not at all an aural culture (a fact bemoaned also by Berendt in *The Third Ear* (Element Books, 1989)). Music, he argues, is an "essentially dynamic information process" working on many different levels, some language-like, others language-transcending (pp. 3–8); the cumulative impact of music as a process of continuous change is ignored by traditional linguistic or pictorial analyses (p. 45). Music represents the "world of sound" as painting and sculpture represent the "visual world" (p. 47). "An orchestra . . . represents the world of sounds, and also the world of human