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Becoming Gods

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
of the Australian National University.

July 1994

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This thesis is my own original work.

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Abstract of Becoming Gods

The central question of this work is whether humans are capable of realizing the unity of thought and being, i.e., the complete truth of the universe and our place in it, i.e., absolute knowing. This question is pursued from the point of view of several different conceptions of the nature of philosophy. Part I considers this question from the point of view of the Platonistic conception of philosophy. The conclusion of part I is that absolute idealism offers the best prospect for the Platonist who believes that humans are capable of realizing the unity of thought and being. Part II is a skeptical critique of the conclusion of part I. It is argued that there is little reason to suppose that humans are capable of realizing the unity of thought and being, given the Platonistic conception of philosophy. In part III this question is pursued from the point of view of philosophical naturalism. This view is also subjected to a skeptical critique. It is argued that there are good scientific reasons for supposing that humans are incapable of realizing the unity of thought and being, given that they pursue this goal along naturalistic lines. Part IV suggests the outlines of an experiment which would put to the test the question of whether humans are capable of realizing the unity of thought and being. By genetically manipulating the human genome it may be possible to create beings which are as far removed from humans in intelligence and comprehension as humans are from chimpanzees. If this experiment succeeds then these newly created beings will have a much better chance than humans of realizing the unity of thought and being. It is argued that these beings might merit the name 'gods'. Part IV also considers the pragmatists' rejection of the central question of this work. It is argued that the experiment described provides a rejoinder to the pragmatist.

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Preface

-31. The thesis of this work is that in order to complete philosophy, philosophers must attempt to become as godlike as possible, and that to achieve this end, humans ought to attempt to create a new species of philosophers. In all probability, this new species of philosophers will greatly transcend human abilities to philosophize, for this new species may indeed merit the appellation 'gods'.

-30. Put schematically, and somewhat more formally, the argument is as follows:

P1: If we humans are to complete philosophy, then philosophers must become as godlike as possible.

P2: If we humans do not attempt to create a new species of philosophers, then it is not the case that philosophers will become as godlike as possible.

C: If we humans are to complete philosophy, then we humans must attempt to create a new species of philosophers.

The conclusion is conditional. The conclusion of this work is not that we ought to create a new species of

philosophers; for this would require the ethical premise that we ought to complete philosophy as far as humanly possible, however this ethical question is beyond the domain of this work.

-29. The argument of this work is completely derivative and unoriginal. The premises are drawn, for the most part, from Hegel and Darwin.

-28. The first (Hegelian) premise intimates a link between the godlike and philosophers. Hegel, of course, is certainly not original in intimating a link between the divine and philosophers. There is a long tradition of speculation on this matter, predating and postdating Hegel's own discussion. It will perhaps be best to say something first about the tradition to which Hegel is responding before discussing his original contribution.

-27. The question of how godlike or divine human philosophers might become is usually made by comparing the nature of human wisdom with that of the divine form of wisdom. The divine is thought of as the perfect form of wisdom, the standard by which other forms of wisdom might be compared. Philosophers, as lovers of wisdom, might hope to attain such a standard. Whether human philosophers are in fact capable of attaining such a standard of wisdom is a much contested question in the history of philosophy.

-26. Xenophanes was pessimistic about achieving such a standard:

(Fragment 18) Truly the gods have not revealed to mortals all things from the beginning; but mortals by long seeking discover what is better.

(Fragment 34) And as for certain truth, no man has seen it, nor will there ever be a man who knows about the gods and all the things I mention. For if he succeeds to the full in saying what is completely true, he himself is nevertheless unaware of it, and Opinion (seemingly) is fixed by fate upon all things.

[1]

Commenting on these fragments, Wilbur and Allen note the following:

Certainly Frgs. 18 and 34 can be understood as a direct result of his view of the extreme difference between man and the divine...

Although Xenophanes does not believe that it is possible for the finite to encompass the infinite, man may yet acquire

some understanding through experience and
"long seeking." [2]

-25. Heraclitus expresses similar sentiments in the
following passages:

(Fragment 78) Human nature has no power of
understanding; but the divine nature has it.

(Fragment 32) That which alone is wise is
one; it is willing and unwilling to be
called by the name of Zeus. [3]

Two further fragments from Heraclitus encapsulate central
themes of the present work:

(Fragment 83) (The wisest man will appear an
ape in relation to God, both in wisdom and
beauty and everything else).

(Fragment 79) Man is called childish compared
with divinity, just as a boy compared with
man. [4]

Fragment 83 expresses humanity's wisdom in terms of a phylogenetic analogy. The difference between the wisdom of homo sapiens and apes is analogous to the difference between the wisdom of a god and humanity's wisdom.

Fragment 79 expresses humanity's wisdom in terms of an ontogenetic analogy. The difference between the wisdom of adult homo sapiens and young homo sapiens is analogous to the difference between the wisdom of a god and an adult homo sapiens. Taking these fragments to heart has enormous consequences for the view that humans might bring philosophy to its completion, for if at least one desideratum of a completed philosophy is the complete truth about the universe and our place in it, then, it seems that, given that Heraclitus is correct, a completed philosophy is forever beyond human ability and indeed our ken. Such a conclusion seems to follow given that we accept Heraclitus' analogies, for it seems hard to deny that by the very nature of their minds apes and children are never going to be able to grasp the complete truth of the universe. For instance, it seems plausible that no ape or child of five say will ever understand Einstein's theory of relativity, Godel's proof, or Dostoevsky's Notes from Underground. It might be conjectured that there are certain concepts and thoughts which could never be entertained by an ape or a five year old. This inability

might explain in part the idea that the complete truth about the universe might elude an ape or a child. Of course, if one maintains with Heraclitus that we stand in exactly the same relation as compared with a god, then it follows that there are certain thoughts and concepts which we might not be capable of entertaining, i.e., it seems that we must conclude that the complete truth eludes adult humans as well. Given that a completed philosophy has as one of its desiderata the complete truth, it follows, a fortiori, that philosophy cannot be completed by humans. In any event, this is simply a quick sketch of one of the main arguments of this work, an argument which of course takes its cue from Heraclitus. However, some of the greatest philosophical minds take issue with Heraclitus on precisely this point.

-24. Heraclitus' phylogenetic and ontogenetic analogies suggest or at least seem to allow the possibility of a continuum of wisdom and intelligence between a child or ape on the one hand, and a god on the other. There are differing views on where humans lie on this continuum. Plato, Aristotle and Hegel seem to believe that (at least some) humans lie close to the god end.

-23. Plato never identified humans with the divine but he seems to have believed that at least some humans could come very close to the divine, at least in terms of their wisdom. To see this, consider Plato's descriptions of the

divine:

So the mind of a god, sustained as it is by pure intelligence and knowledge, like that of every soul which is destined to assimilate its proper food, is satisfied at last with the vision of reality, and nourished and made happy by the contemplation of truth, until the circular revolution brings it back to its starting-point. And in the course of its journey it beholds absolute justice and discipline and knowledge, not the knowledge which is attached to things which come into being, nor the knowledge which varies with objects which we now call real, but the absolute knowledge which corresponds to what is absolutely real in the fullest sense. [5]

In the last part of the quote Plato is apparently referring to knowledge of the Forms. God's knowledge is apparently knowledge of the Forms. Plato goes on to suggest that, of all the different types of humans, philosophers come closest to a godlike vision. [6] Of the life of the philosopher Plato says that,

Because he stands apart from the common objects of human ambition and applies himself to the divine, he is reproached by most men for being out of his wits; they do not realize that he is in fact possessed by a god. [7]

Plato's view then, in a nutshell, seems to be as follows: the knowledge of a god is true knowledge for it is knowledge of the Forms. Most humans do not possess true knowledge for they mistakenly believe knowledge to consist of acquaintance with sensuous particulars, not the Forms; thus most humans possess only opinion, not knowledge. However, philosophers distinguish themselves among humans in that they understand that true knowledge is knowledge of the Forms. Hence, in terms of their understanding, philosophers are most godlike among humans. The perfection of a human life consists in becoming as godlike as possible. [8]

-22. Aristotle is perhaps even more to the point. In the Nicomachean Ethics he argues that philosophical activity, that is, the activity of our intelligence, is the most virtuous form of human activity:

...it follows that the activity of our intelligence constitutes the complete happiness of man, provided that it encompasses a complete span of life; for nothing connected with happiness must be incomplete.

However, such a life would be more than human. A man who would live it would do so not insofar as he is human, but because there is a divine element within him. This divine element is far above our composite nature as its activity is above the active exercise of the other (practical) kind of virtue. So if it is true that intelligence is divine in comparison with man, then a life guided by intelligence is divine in comparison with human life. We must not follow those who advise us to have human thoughts, since we are (only) men, and mortal thoughts, as mortals should have; on the contrary, we should try to become immortal as far as that is possible and do our utmost to live in accordance with what is highest in us. [9]

Aristotle believes that, qua philosopher, one ought to become as immortal or godlike as possible, a conclusion which is consistent with the present argument.

-21. As a preliminary conclusion it is perhaps fair to say that the question of to what extent humans are godlike has a long history, one which can be traced to the Pre-Socratics. Here we have seen Xenophanes and Heraclitus suggesting that there is a large and ineliminable gulf between a divine intelligence and wisdom and the human form thereof. Plato and Aristotle, on the other hand, suggest that at least some humans might become close to gods in intelligence and wisdom. This debate is continued by Kant and Hegel, and more recently, by Nagel and Davidson. Some of this debate will be considered in more detail in later chapters. For the present only Hegel's contribution to the debate will be briefly considered.

-20. We have confirmed that Hegel's originality does not lie in asserting that, if we humans are to complete philosophy, then philosophers will become as godlike as possible, for Plato and Aristotle seemed to have agreed with this statement. According to them, the most perfect example of wisdom and intelligence is characterized by a god, and philosophers are most godlike among humans.

-19. Hegel's original contribution to this debate is in effect to say that Heraclitus and Xenophanes correctly

characterize humanity at the beginning of history, whereas Plato and Aristotle are correct about humanity at the end of history, i.e., Hegel sees humanity in developmental terms. Humanity passes from a finite being to an infinite being via the process of history. Hegel describes this developmental process in a number of ways from various points of view, e.g., from the perspective of art, religion, and philosophy. Kojève summarizes one such developmental sequence whereby Christianity is assimilated to the Hegelian philosophy:

Now, according to Hegel, one can realize the Christian anthropological ideal (which he accepts in full) only by "overcoming" the Christian theology: Christian Man can really become what he would like to be only by becoming a man without a God--or, if you will, a God-Man. He must realize in himself what at first he thought was realized in his God. To be really Christian, he himself must become Christ. [10]

For humanity to become Christ is for humanity to become God. Hegel's appropriation of Christianity, of course, is

actually an inversion since "...it is a Man who has become "God," not "a God who has become a Man..." [11] The first God-Man was Hegel himself, at least according to Hegel. For Hegel was the first to solve the "riddle of history". History is revealed to be a progressive sequence of events which culminates in humanity passing from being merely finite beings to being infinite beings; hence even the ancient Greeks, who Hegel much admired, were merely finite beings. It is only with Hegel himself that humanity fulfills its potentiality and becomes infinite. Furthermore, it is only with Hegel that philosophy (and history) can be completed; for merely finite beings are never capable of a perfected wisdom, of absolute knowing. Philosophy can only be completed by a God-Man. In opposition then to Xenophanes and Heraclitus, Hegel maintains that there is no unbridgeable chasm between divine wisdom and human wisdom. There is a chasm, but it is bridged by history: history being the process whereby humanity progresses from finite to infinite being. To Heraclitus' remark that "Man is called childish compared with divinity, just as a boy compared with man", Hegel might agree as long as it is interpreted in a certain way. Hegel might say that "Man is called childish compared with the Man-God, just as a boy compared with man," for as Hegel notes the wisdom of mature people of a former age is taught to children of the present age as preparatory

exercises. [12] (Euclidean geometry, for example, was a great achievement made by the ancient Greeks but is now taught in grade schools). To Plato and Aristotle's suggestion that the wisdom of at least some humans is similar to that of the divine, Hegel would agree--but only given that human wisdom has matured through the mediating process of history. On Hegel's view, neither Plato nor Aristotle could have had a divine form of wisdom because of the historical epoch in which they lived. Absolute knowledge was not possible for Plato or Aristotle--only with Hegel does absolute knowledge arrive on the scene.

-18. Whatever plausibility it had in its own day, Hegel's thesis that humans have developed to the point where they are now Men-Gods is untenable. It is untenable for perhaps any number of reasons. [13] For the present purposes, it will be most useful to concentrate on Hegel's thesis in light of Darwin's theory of natural selection. Certainly there are at least superficial similarities between the views of these two thinkers. Both Hegel and Darwin view humanity as the result of an evolutionary process--neither believed that humanity had arrived on this earth as the completed product of some extramundane process. Beyond these points of agreement, there is not much in common between the writings of Hegel and Darwin.

-17. One obvious way to distinguish the work of Hegel and Darwin is that, while both agree that humanity is the

result of evolutionary processes, Hegel tends to explain humanity as the product of cultural evolution, Darwin concentrates more on humanity as the result of biological evolution. This in itself does not put the work of these two thinkers in conflict. Indeed, it might be pleasant to think of humanity as the sum of its "nature and nurture", and that Darwin describes the evolution of our nature and Hegel describes the evolution of our nurture. While there is perhaps a possibility of complementary analysis here, there is also the potential for conflict.

-16. Perhaps the greatest potential for conflict stems from the differing teleological notions employed by these two thinkers. As often noted, what bothered Darwin's contemporaries so much was not the idea that species might evolve--this idea had been around for some time--but that the whole process was not goal directed. Species did not evolve according to some preordained plan. It was the sheer contingency of Darwin's notion of evolution which many found disturbing. In contrast Hegel's conception of evolutionary development employs, in some sense, the idea of necessity, for Hegel there is a goal or a plan for humanity, namely: to arrive at absolute knowledge. [15] The various stages in humanity's evolution to this goal are laid out in a pattern which is in some sense necessary.

-15. Naturally, these two differing conceptions of the

teleological processes need not necessarily conflict. Perhaps one could maintain the picturesque view that Darwin describes the origins of the biological species homo sapiens in terms of a contingent process: the natural selection of random mutations; while Hegel describes the necessary progression of the culture of homo sapiens to its final goal: absolute knowing. This picturesque view is thrown into question when one starts to wonder whether natural selection did in fact produce a species which has the potential for absolute knowing, i.e., how do we know that homo sapiens are not congenitally incapable of realizing absolute knowledge? After all, there is nothing about the nature of natural selection which guarantees that a creature capable of absolute knowledge will evolve.

-14. Most intellectuals today agree in broad outlines with Darwin's account of the descent of homo sapiens. As to the question of whether this account of our genesis has potential ramifications for our quest for the complete truth, absolute knowledge, there are three distinct attitudes. Some are optimistic about our chances of achieving absolute knowledge, despite accepting a completely secular account of our origins. Such optimism is expressed by some physicists who believe that we might find a "final theory", a "theory of everything" or "discover the ultimate laws of nature". Similar optimism is expressed in Davidson's "transcendental anthropology".

The second attitude is one of pessimism: it may be that we are congenitally incapable of absolute knowing, knowing the complete truth. Such pessimism has been expressed by various philosophers and speculative psychologists. The third attitude is one of indifference. The generality of the question of whether homo sapiens are capable of absolute knowledge is such that it extends beyond the specialized interest of most intellects. It is probably safe to say most intellects do not ponder or have a view on the question of epistemological ramifications of Darwinianism. This work is mainly concerned with undermining the first attitude in favor of the second. This work does not speak to the third attitude because there is no ethical argument here to the effect that we ought to ask questions about the possibility of absolute knowledge.

-13. In a sense then, the main thrust of this work is to suggest a certain skepticism with respect to the idea that human philosophers might ever be able to realize one of the central ambitions of philosophy: namely, to arrive at the complete truth, i.e., the unity of thought and being, i.e., absolute knowledge. This succinct formulation glosses over a number of complications, not the least which is the fact that both "skepticism" and "philosophy" come in a number of varieties.

-12. To say that one of the central ambitions of "philosophy" is to arrive at the unity of thought and

being is already to presuppose particular conceptions of philosophy, e.g., I argue that there are good reasons for understanding at least one strand of pragmatism as rejecting this ambition. Furthermore, even if one's preferred conception of philosophy accepts the ambition to realize the unity of thought and being, there is still the question of the method by which this goal is to be reached. Platonists might demand a presuppositionless demonstration of the unity of thought and being, while naturalists might suggest that the proper method of realizing this goal is exemplified by the empirical sciences. The moral is that any grand claims made about "philosophy" require sensitivity to various competing conceptions of "philosophy".

-11. The problem of differing conceptions of philosophy is further exacerbated by the strategy I have chosen for handling this problem. Some writers are content to describe (or more often than not, simply assume unannounced) their preferred conception of philosophy. The strategy I have employed--one which is certainly not indigenous to this work--is to examine several competing conceptions of philosophy according to their own standards, e.g., as noted above, Platonists demand that epistemological claims be demonstrated in a presuppositionless manner, while naturalists might demand that epistemological claims be shown to be "scientifically

respectable".

-10. Prior to criticizing a view, I attempt to construct the best case for that view, e.g., about half this work is devoted to constructing what is intended as the best possible case which accords with the Platonic conception of philosophy. This position is constructed only to be criticized in the latter part of the work.

-9. While I employ this same strategy for each conception of the nature of philosophy (i.e., for each of the various proposed metaphilosophies), the attention each receives varies greatly. As the previous paragraph indicates, most of this work is devoted to criticizing the Platonic conception of philosophy. Some readers of an earlier draft of this work have expressed surprise that I should devote so much space to criticizing a conception of philosophy which most contemporary philosophers do not accept, for I understand the Platonic conception of philosophy as an attempt to provide a presuppositionless demonstration of the unity of thought and being. As a sociological observation, it is probably true that most contemporary philosophers reject this conception of philosophy. As a somewhat trite observation, I should say that because most of the philosophers living near the end of the twentieth century reject this conception of philosophy, it does not seem to follow, necessarily, that this conception of philosophy is incorrect. It is true, as

many have observed, that there is more philosophical output at this point in history than ever before--but this observation of course speaks only to quantity not quality.

-8. There are two reasons why I concentrate so much attention on Platonism. The first reason for this focus is simply that this conception of philosophy is in fact central to any understanding of philosophy hitherto. Clearly, the Platonic conception of philosophy has dominated the history of philosophy--at least from Plato to Hegel. Many of the ancient and modern philosophers held to the ideal of a presuppositionless demonstration of the unity of thought and being. But even various alternative conceptions of philosophy, such as pragmatism and naturalism, are only fully comprehensible as a reaction against Platonism. While I believe this is in fact correct, I do not argue this claim in the text. My strategy is not to demonstrate any claim of "guilt by association", rather, as previously noted, I attempt to criticize these various metaphilosophical models according to their own standards.

-7. This strategy is perhaps no more apparent than in the discussion of Platonism itself. This discussion centers around the epistemology of a certain logical law. My thinking is that if there is any area of discourse which is amiable to the Platonic conception of philosophy, it is logic. This thought is hardly original, especially

when one considers that the discussion of the epistemology and metaphysics of logical laws are inevitably intertwined with notions such as a priori versus empirical knowledge, analytic versus synthetic propositions, and necessary versus contingent propositions. These contrasts, of course, were of great interest to the Enlightenment Platonists. The positive case made for the Platonist in the first part of this work, in fact, continues a tradition which has Kant as a central figure. Kant, as is well known, thought that there were enormous metaphysical consequences which followed from the existence of synthetic a priori truths. Kant thought that such truths were in some sense necessary and indeed termed his investigation "transcendental logic". [16] Hegel in effect criticized Kant for not taking this insight far enough, for Kant studied only a few concepts--e.g., cause and effect--from the point of view of a transcendental logic. Hegel, in contrast, attempted to provide a "transcendental logic" for all our concepts. This work, in effect, makes a similar criticism of Hegel in that he too did not push this insight far enough, for it is argued that Kant's insight concerning "transcendental logic" also applies to "formal logic", to the most abstract of all logical laws. In any event, the point here simply is that I concentrate the discussion of Platonism around the epistemology and metaphysics of a certain logical law because I think that

this is the best case a Platonist could make. In the second part of this work, however, I attempt to criticize this "best possible case".

-6. The second reason for discussing Platonism in such detail is closely related to the first. If alternatives to the Platonic model of philosophy are at least implicitly defined in terms of the failure of the Platonic project, then, the vindication of Platonism might have repercussions for these alternate models. One may wonder why I should be concerned with the possible vindication of Platonism given that I criticize what is intended as the best possible case for Platonism. The reason lies in the fact that the "best possible case" is ambiguous between the "best possible case a human might construct" and "the best possible case a God might construct". Naturally, even the most optimistic understanding of this work would suggest that it refutes the best possible case which a human Platonist might make. Accordingly, this means that at best it may be said that the Platonic conception of philosophy is an ideal which humans cannot attain, but, for all we know, the Gods might be Platonists. At least this is what I shall argue.

-5. It might seem strange that I should raise the question of whether divine beings might be Platonists given that I claim to be a Darwinian. After all, the Darwinian world is a godless world. I agree that there are

no Gods at this point in history, but the future may see Gods. Indeed, it maybe that some of those alive in the last decade of the twentieth century might still be alive for the arrival of the gods.

-4. Darwinianism suggests our secular origins, but it does not prohibit the idea that our destiny might lie in the divine--at least this is what I argue. On the Darwinian view, there is no reason to believe that homo sapiens stand as some sort of crowning phylogenetic achievement. It is perfectly consistent with Darwinianism to suppose that there might be another species which exceeds homo sapiens in wisdom and intelligence by the same margin that homo sapiens exceed apes, i.e., it may be that such a "higher species" evolves from homo sapiens. Unlike the evolution of homo sapiens, I suggest that this species might evolve as the result of genetic engineering. To paraphrase Heraclitus, it may be that the wisest homo sapiens will appear an ape in relation to such a "higher species", both in wisdom and beauty and everything else. Indeed, if I am correct in my contention that there may be reason to call such "higher beings" 'gods', then it may be that we can say with good reason that "the wisest man will appear an ape in relation to God, both in wisdom and beauty and everything else".

-3. To these gods we ought to bequeath the task of philosophy. By this I mean not only that the gods might

complete philosophy according to a certain conception, but that they must also adjudicate between the competing conceptions of philosophy (e.g., Platonism, pragmatism, naturalism, historicism, etc.).

-2. It is perhaps already apparent that I believe that there is a crisis in European philosophy. Certainly this seems so if we think of philosophy in the tradition from Plato to Hegel. Consider that a recent collection of papers has been published under the title After Philosophy with the subtitle, End or Transformation?. This subtitle presupposes obviously that there is no prospect for continuing philosophy unchanged. The collection is interesting if for no other reason than it contains papers by some of the best known contemporary philosophers including, on the one hand, Dummett, MacIntyre, Rorty, Putnam, and Davidson; and on the other, Blumenberg, Derrida, Foucault, Habermas, and Lyotard. Although they differ on just about everything else, these thinkers are at least agreed that there is a crises in philosophy: philosophy must either be brought to an end or at least transformed. I agree with this "consensus sapientium" that philosophy ought to be brought to an end or transformed--if they are speaking about human philosophy. I think the "end or transformation" conclusion, however, is too hasty if it is applied to what the gods might be capable of performing, for it does not seem plausible to

me to assume that humans can delineate what is possible and impossible for the divine. It would seem, rather, that the wisest human philosopher will appear an ape in relation to God, in philosophical ability, beauty and everything else. It follows that it may be that the gods are capable of rejecting the "end or transformation" question, since, for all we know, it may be that they are capable of completing philosophy. To answer the question of this volume with a question: how do we know that it is philosophy which ought to be ended or transformed rather than the (human) philosophers themselves?

-1. Even thinkers who believe that philosophy ought to continue along its traditional vector are often pessimistic about the possibility of making much progress. Thomas Nagel is one such thinker. Nagel will have no truck with "...deflationary metaphilosophical theories like positivism and pragmatism, which offer to raise us above the old battles," rather Nagel suggests:

There is a persistent temptation to turn philosophy into something less difficult and more shallow than it is. It is an extremely difficult subject, and no exception to the general rule that creative efforts are rarely successful. I do not feel equal to the

problems treated in this book. They seem to me to require an order of intelligence wholly different from mine. [17]

The view suggested in this work has deep sympathy with that expressed by Nagel in this passage. Where Nagel says that philosophical problems seem to require an order of intelligence wholly different, I could not agree more. I say in addition that we might put this suggestion to the test by creating an intelligence which is wholly different. It might be that an intelligence which is wholly different, in that it is godlike, might be capable of making progress in philosophy where we humans have failed. In other words, the lack of any sustained progress in philosophy might not be due to the nature of philosophical problems, but due to our own human nature. The experimental hypothesis then is this: there will be no good philosophy until philosophers become gods or the gods become philosophers.

End Notes: Preface

1. The Worlds of the Early Greek Philosophers, edited by J. B. Wilbur and H. J. Allen, Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1979, p. 56.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. p. 64.
4. Ibid. p. 72.
5. Phaedrus, 247.
6. Ibid. 248.
7. Ibid. 249.
8. Ibid.
9. Nicomachean Ethics, 1177b my emphasis.
10. Alexander Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, trans. J. H. Nichols, Jr., Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969, p. 67. Of course Kojève's reading of Hegel is just one reading among many others. Some would interpret Hegel as a more traditional atheist--there is no God not even a God-man--while others would see him as a more traditional type Christian.
11. Ibid.
12. Phenomenology of Spirit, trans. A. V. Miller, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, para. 28.
13. Cf. Emile Fackenheim, The Religious Dimension in Hegel's Thought, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967, chapter seven; and Charles Taylor, Hegel, Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 1975, chapter xx.

15. Hegel rejects something very similar to the idea of natural selection at paragraph 249 of his Philosophy of Nature, trans. A. V. Miller, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.

16. Critique of Pure Reason, trans. N. K. Smith, Toronto: Macmillan, 1965, A55/B80, A57/B82. This work hereafter is cited as 'CPR'. References of course follow the standard 'A' and 'B' format which refers to the two editions of the work which Kant published.

17. The View From Nowhere, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986, pp. 11-2.