

Editorial

Naturalism is thus the view that (1) only nature exists, (2) nature as a whole is nonpersonal, (3) the basic stuff of nature is eternal and necessary, (4) all natural events have natural causes, (5) only scientific method yields knowledge, and (6) ethics and the humanistic philosophy of man are adequate. At least, these are the basic family traits of naturalism.

Rem B. Edwards

In my September 1986 editorial I suggested that one of the basic challenges, as well as opportunities, for people seeking to unite contemporary science with religious thought is the challenge of the general outlook, one might say world view, of scientifically grounded materialism. Many of the papers in that issue of *Zygon* grappled with this challenge and its implications for religious thought.

The same challenge is presented in the above description of naturalism from Rem B. Edwards's *Reason and Religion: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979, p. 138). Edwards's delineation of the family traits of naturalism and a discussion of some of its varieties takes place in the first of three chapters on the topic of the relation of God and the world. The following two chapters consider the supernaturalistic and pantheistic positions. In the supernaturalistic view the basic characteristics of God are other than the basic features of the world; in the pantheistic view the basic characteristics of God include those that not only distinguish God from but also identify God with the basic features of the world. Together, these three chapters in Edwards's book provide an excellent analysis of some of the philosophical issues underlying the relations between theology and science.

However, in his discussion Edwards leaves out one interesting theological option—that of naturalistic theology. Naturalistic theology is a way of thinking about God that accepts all the above family traits of naturalism, except perhaps for the last one. Edwards, like many others, tends to see naturalism as atheistic and/or humanistic. The word God does not denote a reality that is more than or other than human; at best God is a human projection, perhaps expressing the highest of human potentials. Edwards uses the example of John Dewey: for Dewey the word God signifies "the unity of all ideal ends arousing us to desire and actions," or the "active relation between the ideal and actual." However, it does not denote any supra-human reality.

The intent of this issue of *Zygon* is to bring to the attention of our readers, both naturalistic and theistic, the possibility of uniting naturalism and theism in a way that accepts most of the basic assumptions of naturalism—assumptions usually understood to be compatible with the thinking of contemporary science. The focus of this attempt to unify naturalism and theism will be the thinking of the American philosophical theologian Henry Nelson Wieman. That Wieman's thinking is relevant for dialogue between religion and science is perhaps indicated by the fact that in the first volume of *Zygon* Wieman was the most published author.

The first four papers in this *Zygon* issue focus on Wieman's naturalistic, empirical theism. Marvin C. Shaw sets the context for Wieman's thought by exploring the differences between Wieman and Dewey on the question

whether a naturalistic vision implies a humanistic or theistic interpretation of religion. Then, Charley D. Hardwick argues that, while theologies often beg the question about the nature of religion by building metaphysical assumptions into its description, Wieman's theological naturalism does not and is hence more descriptively adequate to the nature of religion. Next, Nancy Frankenberry appraises Wieman's thought in relation to three philosophical forms of empiricism and concludes that Wieman's empiricism is problematic in some respects but helpful in others. Finally, Tyron Inbody, in a response to both Hardwick and Frankenberry, questions whether Wieman's theology is fully empirical from the viewpoint of radical empiricism and, thereby, raises the important question of the kinds of experience to which one appeals in a scientifically based naturalistic theism.

The last three papers in this issue were not intended by their authors to exemplify naturalism or empirical theology. Yet, the reader may wish to reflect on the degree to which these papers can be related to naturalistic humanism, naturalistic theism, or even other forms of theism.

The paper by Mária Sági and Iván Vitányi presents some reflection on research, using music and poetry, into the general creative capabilities of human beings. Since so much of the religion and science discussion has centered on creation, and since Wieman thinks of God as the creative process, the suggestion by Sági and Vitányi that the development of each person's "generative" creativity will bring about more fulfilled, better balanced people and societies is significant.

Michael Washburn also addresses the question of human fulfillment in a way that is compatible with but not necessarily limited to a naturalistic perspective. Washburn discusses five types of psychic dualism and suggests how they correlate with physiological aspects of the human nervous system. Then he proposes that human fulfillment takes place when psychic dualisms are transcended and unified into a higher whole.

While most of this issue of *Zygon* carries forward some of the concerns underlying the September 1986 issue, the concluding paper by Edward C. P. Stewart also furthers the discussion on religion, war, and peace in the December 1986 number of the journal. In fact Stewart's essay is one of those promised in my December editorial when I wrote that future issues of *Zygon* would contain papers analyzing those aspects of human cultures most determinative of human behavior. This topic has been identified as important by many who have written on the relationship between genes and cultures; in particular Ralph Wendell Burhoe has identified what he calls a "culturetype" that in symbiotic relation with the "genotype" shapes human thought and action. Stewart—in discussing deep culture and the primary sentiments toward ethnicity, race, language, religion, customs and traditions, and region—gives us a way to define empirically particular culturetypes. He further shows how cultural differences produce blind spots in thinking and barriers in values that impede cross-cultural understanding. The empirical analysis of primordial sentiments in various societies and how they can hinder human attempts to work toward greater peace is one good step that can be taken in achieving greater understanding and cooperation between diverse human societies.

To create greater understanding and cooperation between different cultural perspectives and between ancient and contemporary ways of thinking is one of the primary aims of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*. Exploring the possibility of integrating naturalism and theology is one more step toward the fulfillment of this goal.

As editor of *Zygon* I am aware that our objectives are not only fulfilled by publishing articles and reviews. For *Zygon* symbolizes not just printed ideas but a community of thoughtful people reflecting on matters of ultimate concern and commitment in the context of contemporary science. Therefore, an important task of the journal is to allow for ongoing dialogue between readers and authors through our own version of a "letters to the editor section" which we have called "Commentaries." Because I hope that what we have published in this and recent issues has been intellectually stimulating, I once again, as I did in June 1983, extend an invitation to members of the *Zygon* community to respond to articles with short (500 to 1,000 words) thoughtful statements of appreciation, analysis, and criticism. To commentaries judged worthy of publication authors will be invited to reply.

Karl E. Peters