

Editorial

Change and continuity are prominent themes in both scientific and theological discussions. They have figured just as prominently in the 36-year-long career of this journal. As *Zygon* has been both observer and voice on the interface between religion and science, it has reflected change and continuity in the conversation, and it has also articulated them. It is one thing, however, to assert the cliché of change and continuity and something else again to identify them and grasp the significance of their interactions. In this issue (our 144th!), the continuity exists in the very fact that the authors are concerned to advance the conversation. In this sense, they wish to build on the past and direct the future trends on the religion-and-science interface. The tone, however, is for innovation. Every one of our eighteen authors issues a call for new ideas, new methods, and new themes.

These authors give testimony, in other words, that the chief activity on the terrain of religion-and-science is not solidifying gains that have already been made but rather exploring the terrain in new ways and interpreting the discoveries that are being made.

Ursula Goodenough and Paul Woodruff, in the opening think piece, move their explorations in religious naturalism into the arena of values and morality. It is clear that, in her two years writing think pieces, Goodenough has begun to fashion a coherent body of reflection that sets forth a definite option for responding religiously to contemporary science. Greg Peterson asks for new attention to the question of what the subject matter of theology is. He surveys what he considers to be inadequate views, most of which amount to a reductionism of theology to the social sciences. His own proposal is that theology carves its most appropriate niche as the study of ultimate purpose and meaning.

The center section of this issue presents eight major articles, each of which lays exciting, sometimes controversial, ideas before us. The range of these proposals is staggering in its breadth. Each of them, however, goes to the heart of the religion-science discussion and therefore claims a place on every reader's agenda. Marc Bekoff brings to the discussion years of experience in the study of carnivore animal behavior—a field that has not been much represented in our pages. He combines his empirical studies in a personal synthesis that contributes in fundamental ways to our understanding of human nature and spirituality. For many readers, anthropologist

Ian Tattersall's article will appear against the grain, in its critique of evolutionary psychology and his insistence that *Homo sapiens* came on the scene in a relatively accelerated process of emergence, in contrast to the view that we are the result of a process of evolutionary fine-tuning.

John Teske offers another in his series of contributions from the field of neuropsychology. He throws light on how human memory and related cognitive functions that pertain to "temporal ordering" play a role in understanding human mortality and in forming our ideas of purpose and intent, including those we consider to be divine. Also from psychology, Maurice Schouten challenges those strategies that seek to preserve a classical image of human persons through dualistic interpretations of mind and nature. He suggests that reshaping concepts of God can turn reductionist scientific accounts of human nature into theological resources. In their article that is dedicated to our late friend, Eugene d'Aquili, his collaborators Charles Laughlin and Jason Throop provide a striking interpretation of imagination and myth within a neurobiological framework.

Theologian Mary Hunt presents a cogent argument for new approaches to the religion-science discussion. Speaking particularly (but not exclusively) from a feminist viewpoint, she elaborates the important distinction between the pluralism that includes differing answers to familiar questions and that which brings different questions to the discussion. Chemist-theologian Frank Budenholzer reports on his experience of teaching religion and science in a Chinese culture and goes on to indicate how the perspectives from this culture should influence the wider discussion. In the concluding article in this section, Geoffrey Cantor and Chris Kenny, from their field of history and philosophy of science, argue that new categories, new taxonomies if you will, are needed for conceptualizing the relationships between religion and science. Their chief conversation partner is Ian Barbour.

In the final section, theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg carries further his proposals of some years ago that the concept of *field* is a useful point for discussing the intersections between natural science and theology, particularly when field is interpreted in terms of the Spirit of God. Physicist John Polkinghorne, who has responded in the past to Pannenberg's proposals, presents a brief response, in which he expresses his continuing reservations about the theologian's interpretation of the scientific concept of field. Pannenberg also offers a rejoinder. This exchange is an instructive example of continuity and change in the religion-science discussion, since Pannenberg retains his original ideas, with new elaborations, to which Polkinghorne responds with continuing critique. This particular instance of the continuity-change process is an occasion for struggle to sharpen the issues, in the face of persisting differences of opinion.

Philip Hefner adds to this discussion with an interpretation of Pannenberg's distinctive methodological contribution. LeRon Shults also ana-

lyzes Pannenberg's methodology, in dialogue with Jacqui Stewart's recent book-length critique of his work.

The reader will note that, although none of the authors knew in advance what this issue's Table of Contents would include, there is considerable cross-referencing between the articles. Indeed, most of the articles presented here are dialogical in character. The reader is invited to join the conversation—as exciting as it is daunting!

—Philip Hefner

Coming in March 2002

SCIENCE AND THE RELIGIONS: A SYMPOSIUM

with articles by

Solomon Katz

Pinit Ratanakul

Varadaraja V. Raman

Norbert Samuelson

Viggo Mortensen

Ingrid Shafer