Editorial

PUTTING "RELIGION AND SCIENCE" IN ITS PLACE: DIVERSITY

Putting Science in Its Place is the title of a study by David Livingstone (2003) on geographical and institutional contexts for science. He writes about laboratories and fieldwork but also about the responses to Darwin's work within different countries. In Ireland, some responses are shaped by the tension between Protestants and Catholics; in Charleston, in the southern United States, white attitudes toward former slaves fuel resistance against "common ancestry," while settlers in New Zealand could use the idea of evolutionary competition to justify their dominance over Maoris.

Reflections on "religion and science" deal with issues considered universal, such as our highest values or ultimate origins, but these discussions are also situated, as I argue at greater length elsewhere (Drees 2009). Education is situated, as is clear in the article by Tonie Stolberg in this issue, with data on ideas of students in the United Kingdom, distinguishing between epistemic and pragmatic views of science and of religion. Even the fact that one speaks of religion and science introduces assumptions. Jacek Tomczyk and Grzegorz Bugajak study attitudes in Poland. The Polish and British cases differ from each other and also from the polemical and reconciliatory disputes on evolution that are a major export product of the dynamics in the United States—issues are global and local, and hence glocal.

A wider span of East and West is behind Richard Maxwell's proposal for the physiological foundation of chakras. Colin Campbell's study *The Easternization of the West* (2007) shows that the rise in prominence of "Eastern" practices and beliefs says something about the West. Confronting the vocabulary of chakras with regular scientific-medical vocabulary is an interesting cultural phenomenon as it draws on "Western" science to provide legitimacy for concepts that have come from a counterculture within the West. The data provided by Ruth Stanley regard physiological consequences of prayer. She distinguishes carefully between different types of prayer—supplication, devotion, intercession, gratefulness, and contemplative—and shows that in the small group studied, the less self-oriented types of prayer are more closely associated with innate healing.

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One of the great figures in the history of biology is Carolus Linnaeus, who provided the main structure of biological classification. Peter Harrison studies the theological background of the professional attitude of taxonomy, including the understanding of Adam as giving all creatures their proper name. Perhaps, as a different perspective, classification could be analyzed in relation to the social roles of Western science in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as in the colonial contexts there was a need for classification to control the diversity of plants and animals encountered. Among the creatures classified by Linnaeus is the human, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, placing us within the order of nature as its most wise form. Subsequent contributions in this section thus consider theories of human nature (Mikael Stenmark), the reach of biological explanations (John F. Haught), and theological ideas on the evolution of vice and virtue (Celia Deane-Drummond).

Not only scientific practices but also religious convictions are situated, often in the life of a community. Among the expressions of religious life, besides the more theoretical side of reflective theology, are the hymns. Antje Jackelén's (2005) hermeneutical study on beliefs about time and eternity draws on science, scripture, and theology, but is perhaps most original in the way hymns are brought into the analysis. This book is discussed in four essays by authors who add their own voices to the ideas considered: James M. Byrne, Varadaraja V. Raman, Hubert Meisinger, and John R. Albright.

The other articles address three major dimensions of religion and science: the *aesthetic* dimension in an analysis of beauty and the sublime in science (Peter K. Walhout), the *metaphysical* quest for understanding ultimate origins (Lawrence Cahoone), and the *moral* engagement with the messy world of stem cell research (Tadej Strehovec).

This 44th year of *Zygon* concludes with a great set of book reviews, organized by book review editor Gregory Peterson, philosopher of religion at South Dakota State University. Again, the various dimensions of the religion-and-science discussion are well presented: the cosmic and the human scale, the aesthetic and the moral. This is the last issue for which he serves as book review editor. He deserves our gratitude for this great service during many years.

Willem B. Drees

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