

Editorial

THE FUTURE OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE AROUND THE WORLD

THE FUTURE OF THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE

It might be argued that the modern American science and religion discussion started fifty years ago, with the first issue of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* and Ian Barbour's *Issues in Science and Religion*, both appearing in 1966. Both go back to work that started in the 1950s (Hefner 2014; Peters 2014). For the journal, the foundational event is the creation of IRAS, the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, and its first conference at Star Island in the summer of 1954.

In 2014, IRAS held its sixtieth conference, again on Star Island, not only to commemorate its past, but also to consider “the future of religion and science.” With this issue, readers will get their share of the plenary lectures. Karl Peters, former editor of *Zygon*, linked “the ghosts of IRAS past” to those of the present and future. Michael Ruse, philosopher and historian of biology, challenges those who seek some form of integration between science and religion, as he defends their coexistence as different and relatively independent human activities—which involves a particular view of science and of religion (see Ruse 2011; Wisdo 2011). Ruse considers a fairly traditional Christian concept of God. In contrast, in a personal essay Nancy Ellen Abrams—author of the recent *A God Who Could Be Real: Spirituality, Science, and the Future of Our Planet* (Abrams 2014)—prefers a rather different understanding of God, as a name for emergent features in our existence. In doing so, she assumes a different understanding of science and of religion and a more immediate link between scientific knowledge and spiritual beliefs.

Whitney Bauman speaks on the impact of globalization, which has made our situation quite different from the situation in the 1950s and 1960s. His examples mainly come from Indonesia—the land of the next author, Zainal Abidin Bagir, who also considers the impact of the pluralistic world on “religion and science.”

Sarah Fredericks and Lea Schweitz speak of those involved—not only academics, but also artists and amateurs—and illustrate their creative vision for the future of religion and science with various examples from their experience in teaching those subjects in a public university and a seminary in a big city. I, Willem B. Drees, focus on the way religion has changed in

the Western world. Not only has participation changed, but also what it means to be religious has changed, briefly summarized as a shift from an emphasis on authority that is outside us (Scripture, Church) to an emphasis on experience and authenticity.

RELIGION AND SCIENCE AROUND THE WORLD

While *IRAS* and *Zygon* are rooted in the North American context, globalization has changed our world. In this issue, we continue our series of review articles in the way science and religion interact in rather different contexts. South Africa is the focus of the contribution by Ernst Conradie and Cornel du Toit, showing the impact of social circumstances. Ignacio Silva informs us on developments in Latin America, including a mix of public and pontifical universities. Dirk Evers informs us of developments in the historic heartland of Protestantism, Germany, now among the secular European countries. Jianhui Li and Zheng Fu inform us of a particular issue that emerged in China, the rise of claims about traditional knowledge, extrasensory perception and extraordinary abilities in the Qigong movement, and the way this was facilitated and then suppressed by the government (see also Palmer 2007). This interesting mix of articles shows glocalization—the interplay of global and local (Drees 2015)—and thereby adds to the diversity of questions and contexts as shown in contributions on Japan (Kim 2015), Catholic Southern Europe (Oviedo and Garre 2015), and on Kraków, Poland (Brożek and Heller 2015).

INTELLIGENT DESIGN, CHRISTIANITY, AND NATURE

Sharon Woodill discusses “The Christian Core of Intelligent Design.” Whereas advocates sometimes seek to present intelligent design (ID) as a generic point of view, one that is scientific or philosophical but not partisan, Woodill argues that ID is deeply rooted in a Christian framework. Michael Behe’s notion of “irreducible complexity” scientizes the creation narrative of Genesis. William Dembski’s notion “specified complexity” does the same for the Logos account of the gospel according to John. Thus, not only is rational analysis of the formal arguments needed, but their psychological appeal deserves scrutiny as well (Recker 2010). Hence, it is useful to consider theological motives in the intelligent design discourse, as done previously in articles on natural theology (De Cruz and De Smedt 2010) and on blood, sin, and atonement (Rogers 2014), while it is also important to present more constructive ways of Christian engagement with evolutionary biology (e.g., Deane-Drummond 2012; McMullin 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Southgate 2011, 2014).

Philip Hefner, previous editor of *Zygon*, has also contributed extensively on constructive Christian thought in relation to scientific understanding of nature. In a contribution in this issue, Hefner returns to a classic,

Collingwood's *The Idea of Nature* (1945). Whereas Collingwood suggested three successive themes, nature as an organism, nature as a machine, and nature as a process, Hefner adds, as ideas deeply rooted in our experience, emergence, mystery, and the idea that nature is "God-intoxicated." He then outlines a new way to articulate how nature is thought of in Christian dogma, and thus how Christian dogma might be offered as an interpretation of nature.

Piotr Bylica considers approaches to the relation between scientific and religious ideas about reality at a more abstract level. He distinguishes five levels of analysis, from deeply metaphysical issues to statements about regularities and about observations, thus offering a conceptual structure within which one might place discussions about a scientific or religious understanding of nature.

We hope that with the articles and reviews in this issue, we provide you with a new set of informed and informative scholarly articles appropriate to the scholarly and existential purposes of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*, also in its fiftieth year.

Willem B. Drees

Tilburg School of Humanities, Tilburg University, The Netherlands

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