

# Editorial

## NORMATIVITY AND BIBLICAL CRITICISM

### HUMANS, RELIGION, AND NORMATIVITY

The first thematic section of this issue of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*, on “Humans, Religion, and Normativity,” features two articles. Bruce Reichenbach analyzes three phases of philosophical thought regarding what it is to be human; for the last phase identified, strong artificial intelligence (AI), he asks the question of where in strong AI intentional action and providing moral justification, that is, normativity, is to be found—he sees an incompatibility between strong AI and a Christian understanding of personhood. Joonas Auvinen provides a critical examination of whether or not, and in what way exactly, the aims characteristic of religious practice are normatively significant; he argues that this is highly dependent both on controversial issues concerning the nature of religion, and on a number of controversial metanormative issues.

### SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND THE RISE OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM


In the “Symposium on Science, Religion, and the Rise of Biblical Criticism,” which was organized by James Ungureanu, the importance of and need for greater interdisciplinary collaboration between philosophers, theologians, scholars of religion, and historians is demonstrated in tracing the origins and development of the “conflict thesis” between science and religion. After Ungureanu’s introduction, seven articles highlight the often neglected role that biblical criticism played in guiding and constructing narratives of conflict. Paul Lim analyzes the early Boyle Lectures held around 1700, to show how science and religion were addressed by three representative Anglican clerics at the time; he argues that all three Boyle lecturers sought to re-instantiate the Renaissance desideratum of returning to the sources of pure religion and praxis. Diego Lucci searches for the roots of John Locke’s theory of personal identity and shows that this consciousness-based theory resulted not only from his agnosticism on substance, but also from his biblical theology; Locke rejected the resurrection of the same body and maintained that the soul dies at physical death and will be resurrected by divine miracle. Jon Thompson traces a naturalization of scriptural reason, or early Enlightenment attitudes to religious mysteries, across the seventeenth century, not so much to mainstream Reformed theology—as has been claimed in literature—but to

non-mainstream developments of Protestantism, the Cambridge Platonists, and John Locke. Ungureanu brings the Symposium to the nineteenth century, and particularly to Andrew D. White, the alleged cofounder of the conflict thesis; he demonstrates how White tracked the development of the “scientific interpretation” of the Bible in his magnum opus. Nathan Bossoh analyzes how at the end of the nineteenth century the boundaries of “law” shifted, using the eighth Duke of Argyll as his interlocutor; Argyll steered a middle position between the traditional acceptance and liberal rejection of miracles and biblical revelation. Stuart Mathieson shows how the Victoria Institute, established in London in 1865 and frequently accused of being early “creationists,” found similarities in the reliance on hypotheses of both Darwin and biblical criticism; this led to an approach that was later taken up by the authors of *The Fundamentals* (1910–1915). Samuel Loncar situates the recent historicized origins story of “science and religion” in the history of philosophy and its connections to theology and Scripture; he shows how science and religion, as historians’ categories, derive from philosophy’s tensions with theology in the transformation of the medieval university into a major research institution.

#### OTHER ARTICLES

This issue contains five contributions in the Articles section. Antje Jackelén, Archbishop of Uppsala and primate of the Church of Sweden, reflects on technology, theology, and spirituality in a digital age marked by polarization, populism, protectionism, post-truth, and patriarchy. Mirjam Schilling offers a virocentric perspective on evil; she argues on the basis of the biology of viruses that an additional layer of complexity on good and evil is needed over and above simply regarding viruses as malicious entities from an anthropocentric perspective. Glen Moran provides a glimpse into the use of online platforms by a prominent Muslim voice, Yasir Qadhi, to promote his views on Islam and evolution; Qadhi turns out to hold a relatively nuanced position on the compatibility between Islam and evolution, based on his understanding of the scientific consensus and Islamic scripture. César Marin et al. study the effects of academic degree and discipline on religious and evolutionary views in Chile and Colombia; they find that these effects differ between the two countries studied and attribute this to especially marked differences in high school and university curricula. Emily Qureshi-Hurst and Christopher Bennett address outstanding issues with Robert Russell’s model of Non-Interventionist Objective Divine Action, focusing on quantum biology and the problem of evil; they offer potential solutions to weaknesses that they identify in the model, to improve the viability of its application to theistic evolution.

The issue ends with my review of Elaine Howard Ecklund's *Why Science and Faith Needs Each Other: Eight Values That Move Us Beyond Fear*.

Arthur C. Petersen 

Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy, University College  
London, London, UK  
arthur.petersen@ucl.ac.uk