

Editorial

EVOLUTION, ORIGINAL SIN, AND RACE

EVOLUTION, ORIGINAL SIN, AND THE FALL

This issue's Symposium is dedicated to the topic of "Evolution, Original Sin, and the Fall," with five articles and an introduction by the Symposium's guest editors, Helen De Cruz and Johan De Smedt. As De Cruz and De Smedt point out, original sin and the Fall have taken a central place in Christian contributions to the religion and science discussion. The first two articles reflect on Aquinas, who is still central to the Roman Catholic tradition; the third article stems from the presbyterian tradition; and the fourth and fifth articles draw on literary science and sociology, respectively—this Symposium definitely includes an interesting mix of disciplines. Paul Macdonald shows how traditional Thomistic claims about the creation and fall of the first human beings—or "Adam"—are compatible with the claims of evolutionary science concerning human origins. He defends Aquinas's claims that God created Adam in a state or condition of original justice, wholly subject to God and so fully virtuous, as well as internally immune to bodily corruption, suffering, and natural death. Julie Loveland Swanstrom finds space in Aquinas's thinking for evolutionary thought. She argues that individual or original sin is an inadequate explanation for variation within kinds of creatures and she shows that the existence of argumentative parallels between Aquinas's treatment of women and mules challenges presumptions about what medievals meant by "static kinds." Hans Madueme maintains that although the search for a post-Darwinian doctrine of sin has prompted fascinating areas of research, coming up with an evolutionary theology of sin remains a remarkably difficult project. He critically surveys recent theodicies that aim to explain why evolution results in so much suffering. Austin Freeman argues that because God is the author of history and has a purpose for his creation, evolution has a plot and can be analyzed with tools drawn from literary criticism. He engages with the "epic of evolution" genre of scientific literature, distinguishing between a purely naturalistic epic of evolution and a goal-oriented Christian epic of evolution. Finally, Jack Mulder addresses ways in which one important view of racism parallels the Christian doctrine of original sin. Using an epistemology of ignorance, he argues that the dichotomy between two main strands of Christian thinking about original

sin, Augustinian versus Irenaean, is short-sighted, and he proposes a model of original sin similar to an epistemology of racist ignorance.


NATURAL DIVINE CAUSATION REVISITED

In this issue's Comment section, Daniel Lim offers a fresh comment on Mikael Leidenhag's (2019) article in *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* and on Leidenhag's (2020) response to an earlier comment. Lim critically assesses the way that Leidenhag uses Jaegwon Kim's work on causal exclusion to critique what he calls "Natural Divine Causation" (NDC). Although he agrees with Leidenhag that questions about divine action can fruitfully be posed in terms of Kim's so-called "Causal Exclusion Argument," the technical way that this is done requires amendment. The comment provides new possibilities for those who wish to construe a noninterventionist picture of divine action based on emergence theory or nonreductive physicalism.

OTHER ARTICLES

This issue contains six contributions in the Articles section. John Calvin Chatlos proposes a "framework of spirituality" for the future of naturalism; this framework identifies part of the "unseen order" of religion as opening a "spiritual core" within persons as a source of healing and happiness. Libby Osgood delves into interpretations of Teilhard de Chardin, in order to address ecological eschatological questions; she disentangles the "nature of nature" in his work by distinguishing thirteen distinct definitions of "nature" that can be summarized into five categories. Harvey Cawdron develops a model of pantheism in which God's embodiment in the cosmos allows all, including all nonbelievers, to have a relationship with God; his model does not require subjects to recognize that they are in a relationship with God. Robbert Zandbergen writes about antinatalism—the conviction that existence is not intrinsically more valuable than nonexistence—and the "death of God"; he describes how antinatalism is the most modern outgrowth of the death of God and represents the most radical face of secular humanism. Hussein Ali Agrama discusses the reports and results of recent official studies of UFOs and argues they may pose a challenge to contemporary science, religion, and secularity; current knowledge on UFOs renders both science and religion uncanny, placing them in a domain where they become irreducibly strange while unshakably familiar. Lari Launonen calls out "debunking arguments"—that belief-forming processes underlying belief in supernatural agents are unreliable—based solely on cognitive science of religion; he highlights that in conjunction with claims about evolutionary epistemology and religious diversity, cognitive science of religion can provide an explanation of why

people might believe in gods even if gods did not exist. The issue ends with Lluís Oviedo's review of Gavin Flood's *Religion and the Philosophy of Life*.

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REFERENCES

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- 2020. "The Problem of Natural Divine Causation and the Benefits of Partial Causation: A Response to Skogholt." *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 55: 696–709.