

Harrison, Peter (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Science and Religion*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. 2010. Includes list of contributors, chapter endnotes, guide to further reading and index. Hardback ISBN-13: 978-0-521-88538-6. Pages vii-xi, 322. List price: \$ 85.00. Paperback ISBN 978-0-521-71251-4. Pages: vii-xi, 307. List price: \$ 24.99

Book review by Jitse M. van der Meer.

This edited volume is an attractive invitation to explore the engagement of science and Christianity. It introduces major historical episodes, hot contemporary concerns and prominent philosophical perspectives. Part 1 samples historical interactions. Lindberg illustrates how throughout the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era science and Christianity engaged each other with the variety and complexity characteristic of other realms of human endeavour. Henry argues that the medieval tradition of science as the handmaiden of theology continued into the early modern era when natural philosophers attempted to show how their science could be recruited against atheism by developing a natural theology. I wondered whether they might have been motivated by fear for ecclesiastical powers since the positive view of the church in relation to science available to us was not available to them. In a brief history, Topham offers helpful clarification of the meanings of natural theology. Roberts reviews the intricacies of Anglo-American religious responses to Darwin up to 1920 including differences between Catholics and Protestants. The religious implications of the decline of Darwinism by the late 19th and early 20th century, if any, are not discussed. In a fascinating analysis, Brooke locates the roots of secularization not in science, but in changing social relations and in organized religion itself. Ironically, the religious use of science to defend Christianity tended to backfire either because the science was obsolete or its explanations made God superfluous.

Part 2 reviews contemporary issues. Numbers recounts the story of scientific creationism and intelligent design and update it by describing its spread from conservative North American Protestantism into Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Islam and Judaism. He concludes that the controversy will not end anytime soon given the diversity of reasons for rejecting biological evolution. On the other hand, biology can invite a constructive religious response according to Morris. First, the emergence of similar adaptations independent of common ancestry such as the camera eye which occurs in jellyfish, snails, octopus and whales (convergence) could suggest the existence of a divinely created order of life. Moreover, "...religious identity can be regarded [] as an inevitable outcome of an evolutionary process that is intended to allow matter not only to become self-aware but first to intuit, then know, and finally love the Maker. This [opens] a genuine dialogue between religion and science." Stoeger uses a discussion of God, physics and the big bang to argue that physics and theology can never be in essential conflict because they complement each other. While recognizing that traffic between theology and psychology is bidirectional, Watts focuses on what theology has contributed to psychology primarily because in his view theology has not contributed much to the other sciences. He directs the reader to literature on applications of psychology in pastoral care and on the psychology of religion. Evans shows that in bioethics conflict remains a valid description of the relation between religion and science viewed not primarily as knowledge-producer, but as an institution with values, interests and resources.

Part 3 presents philosophical perspectives. Ruse argues that religion is unaffected by the claims of the new atheists or philosophical naturalists that science shows that God does not

exists. With Brooke, Ruse argues that this use of science misses its target because science is not what matters most to religious faith. Murphy reviews the religious implications of the reaction against ontological reductionism. This reaction is framed in terms of a stratified ontology with top-down causation complemented by bottom-up causation. This has overturned causal reductionism and she reviews the implications for views of free will and determinism, divine action in the world and theodicy. Several physicists have claimed that the universe has no purpose. But according to Haught science is compatible with a religious trust in cosmic purpose understood as the production of something good and the manifestation of infinite love. Haught counters that "... meaning is discovered not by scientific method itself, but by a pre-scientific faith or trust that truth is worth seeking." Finally, Stenmark reviews the barriers to an unbiased categorization of religion and science relations that avoid too much complexity and oversimplification. Even if no final solution emerges, this chapter is an excellent introduction into the reasons why there is no agreement of a classification of science and religion relations.

This is a successful introduction. It fascinates and each chapter invites further exploration with a reading guide.

Word count: 777 / 800