

Issues in Science and Religion: Publications of the European
Society for the Study of Science and Theology

Anne Runehov
Michael Fuller *Editors*

Science, Religion, the Humanities and Hope

Essays in Honour of Willem B. Drees



 Springer

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Anne Runehov • Michael Fuller
Editors


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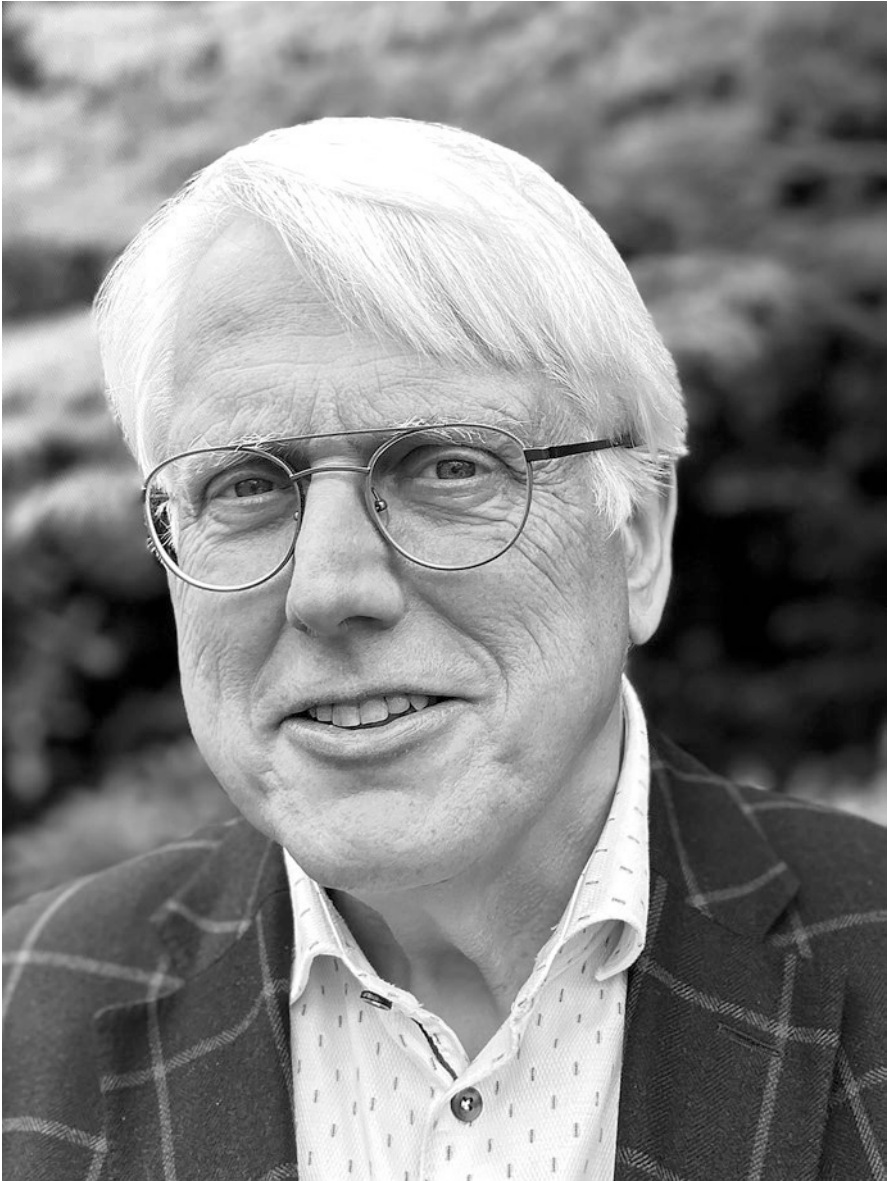
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Willem B. Drees

Preface

Let me be frank. I am a huge admirer of Wim Drees. His contributions to the science-and-religion field have been formational and normative, to such an extent that, without Wim's guiding influence managing one of our leading journals, *Zygon*, and one of our leading societies, ESSSAT (the European Society for the Study of Science and Theology), it is difficult to imagine that our field would be where it is today, a major influence on theological, philosophical and historiographical appraisals of modernity's encounter with religious belief. And speaking personally, Wim has played a key role in my own formation as a science-and-religion scholar, although he may not realise it. When I was appointed by the University of Edinburgh in 2012 to set up its new masters programme in Science and Religion I spent many hours reading Wim's editorials in *Zygon* and scanning its contents pages to get a sense of how the field worked, where its main interests lay, and how it was evolving. And then I discovered Wim's book of 2010, *Religion and Science in Context: A Guide to the Debates*. Like some of the other seminal books of our field (Ian Barbour's *Issues in Science and Religion* of 1966, and John Hedley Brooke's *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives* of 1991), Wim's title does little to give a sense of the magisterial and definitive overview one finds inside; it may not be the most comprehensive or exhaustive guide to our field published so far, but to my mind it is the most devastatingly honest and insightful, setting out clearly what we have achieved and where we have failed. To this day I still find myself reflecting on (what I thought was) a new realisation about our field and then remembering, 'Ah, yes, Wim said that'. It will not be a surprise then, if I say that generations of Edinburgh masters students have also been shaped by Drees' view of the science-and-religion field.

Hence, I will finish this Preface by saying that, although I was invited to write it as the President of ESSSAT (remembering that Wim was President himself from 2002 to 2008), I write it gladly out of a purely personal admiration for Wim's formidable accomplishments. It is a great privilege to provide the opening words to

this volume, and I hope that through reading what follows Wim will gain a clear sense of the enormous esteem in which he is held by science-and-religion scholars across the world.

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First and foremost, our gratitude goes to Professor Willem Drees for the rich body of research with which the contributors to this volume have engaged. Our thanks go also to those contributors, for their diligence and for the rich range of material which they have supplied. We also want to express our gratitude to all the members of the council of the ESSSAT for their encouragement and support of this volume, and to the editors at Springer who have facilitated its production. Last, but certainly not least, we would like to extend our grateful thanks to Zwanet Drees-Roeters for all her support, and for her practical help and assistance in providing us with information about Wim Drees (and with the photograph which is used as a frontispiece).

Trelleborg and Edinburgh
September 2023

Introduction

Science, Religion, the Humanities and Hope is a Festschrift in Honour of Professor Emeritus Willem Drees Jr. in response to his prominent scholarship in the research fields of Science and Religion, and Theology and the Humanities; for his talented leadership, not least during his time as President of the European Society for the Study of Science and Theology (ESSSAT) (2002-2008); and, last but not least, also as a tribute to the humble and warm-hearted person that he is.

This volume highlights and honours Wim Drees' research, writings and philosophical ideas. It engages scholars of different disciplines and ages, thereby broadening the research field of Science and Religion/theology and the Humanities in a significant way, as he himself has done and continues to do.

One such endeavour of Drees becomes apparent, in our opinion, in his book *Religion and Science in Context: A Guide to the Debates* (2010). In this intriguing and important work, he guides us through different landscapes of the 'religion and science' universe. His aim is to provide different understandings of human culture and society, focusing on how humans handle religious identities and scientific knowledge. Science, he argues, makes the world intelligible but human beings live in that world together with their values and convictions. Hence, according to him, there is not only a need for serious study *of* Religion and Science, as a subject of study, but also for serious reflection *in* Religion and Science.

The philosophical problem is that, on the one hand there is the scientific quest for reliable knowledge that is not dependent on cultural constraints and subjective preferences (even if one can ask whether this is entirely possible) and on the other hand there is the religious quest, which concerns meaning and orientation in our lives but is a quest that is to a larger extent dependent on cultural constraints and subjective existence. The question then is, how to relate these different quests, how to relate science and religion? One obstacle to find a satisfying answer is that there are different agendas at play creating different models for how to best understand this relationship. Drees is not satisfied with the situation and suggest another agenda having as aim to find an adequate solution for how to distinguish *religion and science* from *superstition and pseudoscience*. According to him there are three major domains of inquiry in need of attention: (1) How to explain mystery in a world made

intelligible by science; (2) What is the place of morality in a world of facts; (3) Where/how to find meaning and identity in a world of matter. We would like to add yet another question, (4) Where is hope in a world of conflicts? The contributors of this volume touch on these questions in different ways. They base their reflections on different works by Willem Drees.

Contributions are gathered together under four headings, which are framed as questions exploring different domains of enquiry that relate to Drees' work. To begin with, several authors offer us reflections which broadly address the question: 'How might we explain mystery in a world made intelligible by science?'

Lluís Oviedo asks the question whether theology has become more science-like in its efforts to understand, and contribute to, the advances of the sciences in explaining the world. From his many years of experience as a theologian working within the field of science, theology, and religion, he wonders whether theology is losing its identity, even its soul. To him, this is a real risk for theology, for four reasons. First, there has been an internal secularization within the discipline, which Oviedo believes is expanding over the years. Second, he fears there to be a methodological confusion affecting the theological identity and mission: that is to say, theology is becoming more science-like in its method. Third, there has been a rise of naturalistic explanations over time that may jeopardise theological ones, trivialising the mysteries of faith. Last, Oviedo fears that the sciences increasingly dictate the agenda of theology. However, according to Oviedo, there remain possibilities for theology to advance and avoid stagnation. One such possibility derives from Willem Drees' *What are the humanities for?*, because Drees' thinking highlights the role of the humanities in pointing out the importance of *meaning* for us, others, and the world. This is something the natural sciences cannot provide. Hence, and following Drees, having an explanatory model that includes both the natural sciences and the humanities, including theology, provide a more holistic view of the world and its inhabitants. However, Oviedo takes this line of thinking a step further. According to him, since theology studies human traits such as coping, wellbeing, and flourishing, theology find itself on the same level as the natural sciences, at least at the same level as the health sciences, and hence theology may become a scientific endeavour in its own right.

Niels Henrik Gregersen takes resonance as a potential source of religious experience and theological reflection. He believes that a move from the physics of resonance to the human experience of resonance with nature is in line with Willem Drees' approach to the interaction of science and theology. His reason for choosing resonance is because 'resonance experiences' consistently intersect the human and non-human world: in other words, resonance overlaps both scientific and theological understanding of these worlds. For example, science may explain the structure of, say, a butterfly or a flower, but it is humans who encounter their beauty or their smell. These experiences, he continues, invite religious reflections and interpretations of the world. These experiences are a source of wonder and meaning, in contrast to the view that nature is mute, indifferent, or even hostile to human concerns. Why is this so? Gregersen provides ten reasons. (1) Humans are immersed in sound; sounds present themselves prior to our awareness. (2) Human beings are resonant

beings; they are sonar creatures. (3) Resonance is a physical phenomenon, which is always inter-connected. (4) Human being is a microcosm that is not situated in the world but is woven into it. (5) Resonance is already in the world, whether we are currently resonating with it or resisting its influence. (6) Related to the latter, there is not only resonance but also dissonance. There are not only life-giving resonances and tensions, but also life-denying discrepancies between us and the world. (7) Gregersen deals also with resonance and the ethical danger of autosuggestion. Indeed, the ethical danger of self-reinforcing resonance is always present in all layers of society. (8) Resonance is important for making the world a home, because of the human capacity to transform objective structures into motivations for human behaviour. (9) Gregersen provides some examples of how resonance theory has implications for Christian theology. A religious attitude can be prompted by resonance experiences which means that there is something natural about religious interpretation of reality. (10) There is resonance and there is also a deep resonance of the whole of reality. God may be encountered in that deep resonance.

Hubert Meisinger urges that poetry and art may play an important role in the dialogue between the natural sciences and theology. The arts stimulate people's imagination and fantasy beyond the pure cognitive, and thereby enable a deeper access to faith. However, Meisinger also asks: Do we need images and narratives? Referring to Willem Drees' evolutionary meta-story, Meisinger argues that we do indeed need images and narratives, because people use them to express what moves them deeply. However, a meta or creation story should be based on our current knowledge. The metaphors and images used in it should therefore be based on that knowledge. Meisinger presents four of Drees' poems (or acts). The first of these concerns the horizon of not-knowing, which relates to how Drees thinks around the act of creation. The second explores integrity and dependence, in terms of how Drees thinks about the universe and human being in it. The third looks at culture and religion: Drees sees Jesus as the carpenter rather than the Christ. The fourth looks at criticism and responsibility, which Drees sees as the path to freedom through thought and compassion. Meisinger goes on to compare Drees' poetry with that of Arnold Benz.

Marcel Sarot focuses on Willem Drees' book *Een beetje geloven* (*To believe a little bit*). This concerns liberal Christianity, which Sarot appreciates not least for its openness compared to orthodox theology – an openness that includes openness to science. Liberal theology is truth-driven, and looks at everything with a critical eye, even its own tradition. In liberal theology, *how* to believe is more important than *what* to believe. Even though Drees argues that the difference between liberal and orthodox theology is not one between believing less or more, according to Sarot he makes this very mistake in the sense that some passages of the Bible mean more to him than other biblical stories. Consequently, Sarot says, this suggests that liberal theology does in fact believe *less*. Nevertheless, Sarot follows Drees thinking that one should interpret articles of faith not as factual, but as an approximation of a 'style of faith.' He adopts his *theory of speech acts* to the doctrine of the Ascension of Christ. He then presents four interpretations of this doctrine and asks how these could relate to Drees' style of faith. The analysis of the doctrine (and others) in

terms of speech acts shows that it is possible to distinguish multiple layers in the doctrines we confess. He concludes that Drees is correct in that the *all-or-nothing approach* to Christianity should be rejected; and he adds that this should also count for individual doctrines.

Michael Heller revises a paper on contingency which he and Willem Drees had in mind to publish years ago. The question they were investigating was, ‘Is the world contingent in some reasonable sense?’ The background of this question is how to understand the *world*. They speculate that if one thinks in terms of a single universe, the universe (world) is contingent (it cannot be explained), but if one thinks in terms of a multiverse (world), the multiverse (world) is non-contingent (it does not need any explanation). Heller suggests that what provokes theology seems to be thinking in terms of multiverse(s). A standard challenge to securing an ultimate understanding of both universe and multiverse goes back to Leibniz who asks, Why is there something rather than nothing? Why does something modelled by equations and demonstrated by experiments exist? Is it contingent or not? From the perspective of theology, the question is: How does the hypothetical existence of the multiverse fit into God’s plan for creation?

Arthur Petersen focuses on the topic which is perhaps most associated with Willem Drees, the varieties of naturalism. It is well-known that Drees’ preferred naturalism is one that is science-inspired. Petersen goes back to some of Drees’ earlier works, mapping them onto an overview of the varieties of naturalism (including his own preferred form, which is transcendental naturalism). Drees makes a distinction between science-inspired naturalism, philosophical naturalism, and religious naturalism. In Petersen’s view, Drees’ science-inspired naturalism is compatible with his transcendental naturalism because, he says, both views take seriously the natural sciences, in which supernatural causes have no place. Nevertheless, Petersen argues, all sciences (*Wissenschaften*) involve faith; hence, even though science is taken seriously, metaphysical commitments are made as well. Drees’ and Petersen’s naturalisms are also compatible when it comes to values. However, Petersen claims that values should be considered as ideal objects, and hence a naturalistic defence of values is only possible from a transcendental philosophical perspective. According to Drees, values are expressed by human judgements, which have their roots in human biological nature; and they therefore belong to the sphere of facts, even if we cannot reach certainty about them. Also, Drees’ ideas on naturalism and religion differ from those of Owen Flanagan in the sense Drees argues that both naturalistic theism and theistic naturalism are attractive possible views that are consistent with science-inspired naturalism. In short, science must be taken seriously, philosophy should as much as possible refrain from metaphysics, and religion must take metaphysics on faith without resorting to supernaturalism.

Other authors’ contributions might be considered broadly to address the question, ‘What is the place of morality in the world of facts?’

Christopher Southgate focuses on the most important issue currently under discussion, namely climate change: his contribution is titled, ‘Creation beyond nothing and now: eschatological reflections in the climate emergency.’ He considers three *beyonds* that can be shown to be unhelpful as a response to the climate

emergency. Southgate understands the *eschaton* as the final consummation of all things. The relevance of this to the work of Willem Drees derives from a chapter in Drees' first book *Beyond the Big Bang*, in which Drees talks about eschatology. Southgate aims to explore whether this chapter can provide some general insights into the current eschatological crisis, which has deepened in the 30 years since the book was published. His question is whether different eschatologies have the potential to mobilise God's people towards action to sustain the flourishing of creation – the question being *whether*, not *how*. The word *beyond* is taken from Drees' first book as is the promise of a road of freedom to consider Christian eschatology in an era of climate emergency. Southgate considers three 'beyonds': first, 'beyond as sudden destruction', which is used to resist measures to be taken to limit anthropogenic damage to the climate: second, 'beyond as up', which is related to the first 'beyond' in the sense that the damage only affects the non-faithful, the faithful being snatched up out of this doomed world (the principal point of 'beyond as up' is that hope lies in the afterlife rather than in the life here and now); and third, 'beyond time', which concerns almost all predictions made by cosmological physics (namely that the universe as we know it is ultimately doomed to some kind of futile end, in which civilisation, life and information has disappeared). Southgate argues that a more synoptic approach of 'beyond' would necessitate our contemplation of every event in the present through three lenses, these being a protological, a Christological, and an eschatological lens. The protological lens views creation's witness to God's faithfulness. The Christological lens shows that suffering can be understood as drawing the Christian into a new depth of identification with the Passion, i.e., into a deeper relationship with Christ. Through the eschatological lens one observes the world to be constantly moving towards a meeting with God in the everlasting realm. This third lens, Southgate argues, is in line with Drees' idea of an eschatology as the theological counterpart to axiology.

Antje Jackelén's contribution 'Naturalism and Spirituality', also concerns the concept of sustainability, a term she wishes to expand to include not only economic, ecological, and social sustainability but also spiritual sustainability. This fourth dimension, she argues, contributes in several ways to every individual's identity, habit, mood, method, content, and attitude. To illustrate her point she draws on the Biblical story of the Canaanite women. As a naturalistic starting point, she refers to Willem Drees' argument that 'we are physics, chemistry, and biology at work.' However, Drees' naturalistic view of human being is by no means a degradation of human being to merely being part the natural world: on the contrary, he wants us to become aware of the rich possibilities of nature. Jackelén notes that, nevertheless, perhaps the most common view of the world today is to see it as divided into spirit and idea, on the one hand, and matter and body, on the other. This brings her to a discussion of the concept of sustainability. The problem, she believes, is that this term is too much related to the concept of continuity. To her, it should be related rather to terms like discontinuity and disruption, to resilience and conversion. This calls for an extension of the concept of sustainability. In other words, sustainability also needs a spiritual element, because only then can it represent the whole of our existence. It is here that her example of the Canaanite woman comes in: she

managed to change Jesus' mind, thereby shaping the basis of Christian ethics. By insisting and arguing, the Canaanite woman made Jesus rethink, think afresh: he is there not only for his own people, but for all people. Jackelén shows the relationship between the story of the Canaanite woman and our current concerns. To her, the idea of 'glocal' action – action which is global and local, local and global, at the same time – has its roots there. The Canaanite woman changed the whole discourse: Jackelén's question now is, Can the ongoing science-and-religion dialogue also change the discourse? Can it prevail, resulting in an understanding of sustainability as having four dimensions – ecological, economic, social, and spiritual – thereby adapting it to make it a more holistic endeavour? Jackelén concludes with some reflections on the spirit of hope, which she prefers over optimism because hope can and intends to do more than just balance pessimism with optimism. Hope is also about meaning-making. (Here, her contribution also relates to the fourth question below, 'Where is hope in a world of conflicts?')

Alfred Kracher's essay, 'The Demon and the MarsRover', is a study of curiosity. Curiosity has a deep evolutionary history, and has both positive and negative aspects. Hence, under the heading 'the good, the bad and the ugly of curiosity' Kracher asks how we might separate these traits, and what a theory of curiosity thus generated might look like. As a natural phenomenon, curiosity needs to be considered from different perspectives. According to Kracher, Drees' work on naturalism provides an appropriate framework to start such an investigation, and he therefore utilises it to this end. That curiosity is a social phenomenon does not mean that it is a social construct, free from humans' biological nature and human needs. Kracher further connects curiosity to two concepts: concern, which requires the theory of mind, and inventiveness, which needs a driving force. He applies a putative alien *curiosimeter* to identify what is good and what is bad curiosity. Augustine saw curiosity as similar to pride and lust: as a temptation, and hence as something bad. It was morbid and obsessive, the opposite to creative and inventive scientific curiosity. During the scholastic period, curiosity became triumphant. From having been a sinful distraction, curiosity became a tool of exploration. In other words, from being solely an individual mental process, curiosity became an extended social phenomenon: curiosity became good. However, the contexts of concepts tend to change. Explorers returned home with *foreign or exotic* items, which were dubbed curiosities. These became of particular interest for collectors, leading in turn to different museums (private as public) all over the world. However, in the late 20th century the notion of curiosity changed again. Curiosity was regarded as morally good regarding sciences and cultures, but bad in relation to 'forbidden' knowledge, forbidden knowledge being related to prevailing sciences and cultures. Hence, concerning the geography of curiosity what is before us is not a path, but a diverse landscape. To tackle this diversity, a moral compass is needed: Kracher concludes, 'Given the challenges of our current situation, we need curiosity; given curiosity's unavoidable ambiguity, we need the moral compass'.

The contributions of other authors can be related to a third question: 'How can we find meaning in the world of facts?'

Dirk Evers leads us through the history of apologetics and worldviews in Germany since the 19th century. With this contribution Evers urges that the non-ideological apologetic discourse between academic theology, religion, and sciences, can explain why all the Protestant theological schools of Germany, for different reasons, remain sceptical about participating in dialogues between science and religion. He outlines the development of the apologetic question in Germany since the early 19th century, showing how the debates were shaped by the concept of worldviews (*Weltanschauung*), generating a struggle between competing comprehensive worldviews. Evers refers to Drees' understanding of apologetics as an endeavour which fuels debates about religions and science in a quest to justify a particular belief or practice to others, and particularly to outsiders. Evers adds that there can also be apologetics for scientific views or reality, aiming at the establishment of certain interpretive authority within the realm of public opinion, where religion or science feel the need to justify certain beliefs and practices. The aims of his contribution are, first to sketch the development of apologetics and its transformation into worldviews in German protestant theology since the early 19th century, second to try to show how the separation between science and religion as opposed cultural forces was embedded in debates about the foundations of society, politics, reality, and morality (worldviews), third to show how academic theologians suspended themselves from such discourse, and fourth to indicate how these debates resulted in political struggles concerning worldviews. Evers starts with apologetics as a theological discipline, presenting some of the rationale behind enlightenment criticisms of religion, which led to a debate between faith and reason. These debates circled around two main issues: first, reasonable natural knowledge of God, and second, the inspiration of the scriptures. Evers then charts the road from apologetics toward worldviews, leading to a discussion of the reactions of academic theology to such worldviews. With the advances of the sciences a plurality of competing worldviews emerged due to changes in society, not least the emergence of new social movements, and there was a need for apologetics to be improved. This ultimately led to the influence of national socialism upon worldviews. Evers' final section describes the existence of worldviews and apologetics after WWII.

Marcus Düwell's contribution places the humanities in a hermeneutic-anthropological perspective, in order to understand the distinctive role which the humanities might play. He refers to the research project 'What can the Humanities Contribute to our Practical Self Understanding', conducted by himself and Willem Drees in 2011-2016. An important outcome of this project was Drees' book *What are the humanities for?* Düwell reflects on this project in three steps. First, he sketches the task of the humanities as being primarily a hermeneutic endeavour and suggests that philosophical anthropology is the foundation for the possibility of the humanities. Second, he explains why such a hermeneutic approach does not exclude, but rather entails, normative and universalistic commitments. Third, he provides a short outline indicating why he thinks that such a perspective is of high societal importance. He starts with some history on the foundation of the Humanities in philosophical anthropology, referring to the work of three German scholars, Helmuth Plessner, Max Scheler and Arnold Gehlen. Although these three scholars

had different views on how philosophical anthropology should be understood, their approaches to it were all attempts to develop an understanding of the human being in reaction to forms of biological reductionism, in particular those engendered by Darwin's Theory of Evolution. Their aim was to get access to the human being as it is manifested in human life experiences. This implies the need for a hermeneutic approach. Düwell continues with a presentation of hermeneutic views on knowledge and normativity, before turning to the societal importance of the humanities: studies undertaken in the humanities are strongly related to those aspects of life where meaning and interpretation is created. (Düwell's contribution also relates question 'How to find meaning and identity in a world of matter?')

Knut-Willey Sæther explores interdisciplinarity in the humanities, and the role played by the philosophy of religion. Willem Drees addresses the question of interdisciplinarity in his book *What are the humanities for?»: Sæther's contribution aims to shed a light on the blurry landscape of interdisciplinarity, with a focus on the humanities. Because Drees problematises the role of philosophy, theology, and philosophy of religion in the humanities, Sæther explores one possible trajectory of the role of philosophy of religion, as offering an in-between in interdisciplinary discourse. The questions he addresses are: What do we mean by interdisciplinary research? How can philosophy of religion be identified as mediating for interdisciplinarity? In other words, What is the meaning of philosophy of religion for interdisciplinary research and discourse? Norwegian universities have established interdisciplinarity, which addresses the role of the humanities, as a main strategy for doing research. However, one obstacle is that research within the humanities is done on an individual basis, whilst within the sciences it is generally done on a collective basis. Sæther therefore considers the difference between multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary research. The first implies actual collaboration in terms of action and integration. The goal of multidisciplinary research is to integrate insights from two or more disciplines, which for the humanities means bringing in deeper insights of the world. Transdisciplinary research implies incorporating concepts and knowledge from both academia and from society in general. Sæther maintains that both strategies have the potential to develop new disciplines. But there is also a third strategy, namely cross-disciplinarity. This implies working individually yet in a cross-disciplinary way. Returning to philosophy of religion, Sæther points out an important difference between the way in which Drees considers the discipline and how it is comprehended in the Scandinavian countries. To Drees, philosophy of religion is a mediator between empirical and historically-oriented research. Typically understood in the Scandinavian countries, philosophy of religion finds itself in the borderland between philosophy, theology, and religious studies. Its role and meaning therefore involves being a constructive 'disturbing' conversation partner. From his exploration of different types of interdisciplinarity, Sæther concludes that the philosophy of religion might play a role in the interstices of disciplines as well as transcending disciplinary boundaries.*

The fourth question addressed by our contributors is: Where is hope in a world of conflicts? Whilst hope is addressed by several contributors, some have hope as their specific focus.

Odile Heynders tackles this question by reflecting on the title of Willem Drees' book, *What are the humanities for?* In her opinion, the humanities should not be underestimated, and should certainly not be put aside because of the political, cultural, medical biases of today. The humanities explore, amongst other things, vicissitudes of life. But the humanities can also develop, if not absolute solutions, then at least deeper understandings of what is at stake in these explorations. Heynders' interests lie in the concept of hope, which she explores through two novels about migratory experiences and the hopeful perspectives for the future which these portray; and she relates these perspectives to Ernst Bloch's concepts of hope and the Not-yet. According to Bloch, hope is concrete, not abstract: it is something to be realized in the world. The Not-yet is an open-ended process, latent in all of us. The first novel considered by Heynders is Moshim Hamid's *Exit West*, a postcolonial critique on the Western gaze. It is a story about love, war, and displacement, combining science fiction with realistic descriptions of refugee experiences. The main message of the novel is that there is a way out of a crisis, which is hope. The second novel is Hassan Blasim's *God 99*, a narrative about violence and psychic trauma in the context of Saddam Hussein's regime, the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, and the sectarian hostility that followed. In contrast to Hamid's book, a way out is much less hopeful. With the help of Bloch's writings, and to analyse the concept of hope in the novels, five questions are raised. First, What do migrants on the move experience? Second, What are their motives? Third, What are their prospects? Fourth, What hopes do they cherish? Fifth, Is migration possible without hope for a better future? Heynders' thoughtful analysis ends with her advocating the drawing together of the different types of knowledge (fundamental and experiential) identified by Drees.

Thomas John Hastings' contribution concerns the life of Kagawa Toyohiko (1888-1960), a mayor of Osaka who referred to himself as a 'scientific mystic'. Hastings compares him to Willem Drees, pointing out both similarities and differences. Kagawa became famous for his work with children in Shikawa, and the love for children is one of the similarities between him and Drees. Hastings refers to Drees' joy, anxiety, and guarded hope for the future of his grandchildren. Indeed, in the introduction to *What are the Humanities for?* (p. viii) Drees refers to his grandchildren, 'new human beings who came into the world in the years while I developed this book, reminding me joyfully of the richness of human existence and the legacies we pass on to future humans, as well as, with shared guilt, of the mess we leave to future generations.' While Drees is not specific about what this mess is, Hastings sees a connection to Kagawa in that he had the same sense of anxiety about the future based on the anthropogenic threat to the natural environment. Like Drees, Kagawa was a Christian humanist who pursued a lifelong study of natural science, philosophy, and religion, even though he studied and worked in a very different culture, and within very different historical and intellectual settings. Kagawa called himself a scientific mystic, meaning by this that the more he put himself into scientific studies, the more he felt that he was penetrating deeply into God's world. Once again, Hastings sees a similarity between Kagawa and Drees, even though Drees is not a vitalist or a scientific mystic. However, in his 2009 Witherspoon Lecture, 'Mystery, value, and Meaning: Religious Options that Respect Science', Drees

argues that there is no end to our understanding – rather, there is an openness that might allow one to believe in a Beyond bringing forth this world. The difference between the two writers is that Drees takes a more objective academic stance; however, both Drees and Kagawa urge religious people to take science seriously. Hastings then relates the fascinating life and mission of Kagawa, focussing on Kagawa's struggle for new methods of education, education that included the natural sciences.

Two concluding chapters focus on Willem Drees himself, and on the Dutch context in which his work has been carried out. **Albert de Jong** traces the trajectory of research and teaching in the study of religions, the phenomenology of religion, and the philosophy of religion in Universities in the Netherlands, from the late nineteenth century to the present day. The final chapter of the book gives a brief biography of Willem Drees, and a list of his publications in English, Dutch, German, and other languages. Compiling such a list inevitably has the feel of aiming at a moving target, but we hope that it is as complete as possible at the current date!

Anne Runehov

Michael Fuller

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