

Book Reviews

as factual the six-day timeline outlined in Genesis 1 and goes to considerable detail in describing some of the busier days. There is acceptance of the idea that there was no death in the original creation and that means that some of the original animals had to go through considerable change in order to start eating meat. There is in some, though not total, sense that whether animals (including humans) are herbivores or carnivores is simply a matter of choice. The topic in which this book most resembles the literature of young-earth creationism is in its consideration of the Genesis flood. There is considerable discussion (including tables) about how the ark could accommodate all of the necessary animals (pp. 93–96).

I will move toward closing this review with a sentence from the book which, frankly, stopped me in my tracks: “After having tried sex with all animals, Adam finally found his partner and extinguished his sexual urge” (p. 41). Hausoul goes on to suggest that the originators of that idea may have been referring to “intellectual or spiritual sex” (p. 41), as if that provides clarity about the idea or why it is a necessary addition to the book.

Overall, my conclusion about the book is that it edges very close to being an agenda that is searching for a theology. The theological discussion is quite deep but it is hard to avoid the notion that many theological points are driven to agree with preconceived conclusions about animals and the products they produce. Assessing this notion is not aided by the fact that almost all of the contemporary observations about animals are made as declarations without support from pertinent literature. This is, by far, my most significant criticism, especially for a book that is obviously presented as a scholarly contribution. Nonetheless, a reader with an interest in a theology of animals could benefit considerably from an examination of the sources discussed in the book.

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EVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE

THE HOURS OF THE UNIVERSE: Reflections on God, Science, and the Human Journey by Ilia Delio. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2021. 242 pages, index. Paperback; \$25.00. ISBN: 9781626984035.

In this exquisitely constructed book, Delio reveals the current state of her reflections on the central concern of her life and work: the relationship of God, humanity, and the universe in the context of the

evolutionary process. Her unscripted career leading to this publication, narrated in her memoir *Birth of a Dancing Star: My Journey from Cradle Catholic to Cyborg Christian*, has exhibited the same sort of development and diversity that she finds woven into the fabric of the universe. A Franciscan sister who began her religious life as a cloistered member of the Carmelite order, Delio earned doctorates in pharmacology and historical theology and has taught at Trinity College, Washington Theological Union, Georgetown University, and Villanova University. Today, she is an award-winning author, best known for her Center for Christogenesis, which seeks to promote dialogue between faith and reason and stimulate a Christian spirituality fully infused with evolutionary consciousness.

Communicating the urgent need and prospects for that kind of spirituality is the burden of this, Delio’s twentieth, book. A theology whose starting point is not evolution and the story of the universe, she insists, is a “useless fabrication” (p. xvi). Her work is rich in scriptural references, but the call to restore the book of nature to its primacy as the true first testament in Christianity’s sacred canon is one of her signature themes. Though she displays no interest in apologetics or polemics, her basic assumption is the distinctively Catholic principle of the revelatory character of creation, a conviction at odds with the Protestant Reformers’ suspicion of natural theology. A robust sacramental imagination permeates the entire book and provides its organizational design. Portraying the universe as the “new monastery” (p. xvii), Delio orders her reflections according to the liturgy of the hours that has structured daily prayer in Christian monastic communities for centuries: Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline. Delio clusters her chapters—along with prologues of original poetry—around these times of contemplation and guides the reader through the prayers of one rotation of the earth and toward what she calls a new synthesis of faith and science.

Delio’s thirty-two brief chapters, each a free-standing essay, cover a broad spectrum of topics from the cosmic to the autobiographical—from quantum physics, gravitational waves, and artificial intelligence to the Eucharist during the coronavirus pandemic and the death of her beloved cat Mango. Delio addresses a number of social issues such as racism, consumerism, and homophobia and sets the full scope of her reflections against the backdrop of the threat of climate change. Her main objective is the nurturing of a Christianity mature enough to match the

achievements and insights of contemporary science. In this effort, her primary dialogue partners include interfaith scholar Beatrice Bruteau, Passionist priest and self-styled geologist Thomas Berry, Hindu-Catholic mystic Raimon Panikkar, and luminaries from her elected Franciscan tradition such as Saint Francis, Bonaventure, and the contemporary spiritual writer and retreat leader Richard Rohr. Pope Francis's unprecedented encyclical on creation care, *Laudato Si'*, is a constant touchstone for Delio, but pride of place in her personal communion of saints is granted to the Jesuit paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, whose transposition of Catholic Christianity into an evolutionary key animates virtually every page of the book.

Delio's essays orbit this Teilhardian view of things like planets in an intellectual galaxy characterized by both order and chaos. The overall effect is a prophetic warning regarding the irrelevance and near-obsolescence of any Christian system fixated on the categories of Aristotelian or Newtonian world-views. Like her monastic and mendicant forebears, Delio calls for church reform and creative thinking. The dominant mood of the book, though, is a blend of hope and awe, even audacity. Delio's conclusion equates the rise of a "new species with a new God consciousness" (p. 240) with the second coming of Christ.

Delio's engaging book is limited by its scant attention to the menacing side of science and technology, its failure to reckon seriously with the dramatic rise of nonreligion that calls her privileging of Christian myth into question, its overestimation of the general reader's science literacy, and its tendency to align scholarly and homiletic modes of communication too closely and too uncritically. Readers seeking linear arguments for theistic evolution or Christian pantheism will have to look elsewhere. Clergy, advanced students, and believing specialists in theology and the natural sciences will find a provocative and prayerful statement of a unique Christian cosmology that informs and inspires.

Reviewed by Peter A. Huff, Professor of Religious Studies and Director of the Center for Benedictine Values, Benedictine University, Lisle, IL 60532.

Book Reviewers Welcome

If you would be open to being asked to write a book review, please send a brief email that describes your areas of expertise and preferred mailing address to Stephen Contakes at scontakes@westmont.edu.



PSYCHOLOGY

THRIVING WITH STONE AGE MINDS: Evolutionary Psychology, Christian Faith, and the Quest for Human Flourishing by Justin L. Barrett with Pamela Ebstyn King. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021. 160 pages, index. Paperback; \$20.00. ISBN: 9780830852932.

I was looking forward to reviewing this book for several reasons. Firstly, I have been following the work of Justin Barrett for some time. As a clinical psychologist working in academia in the UK, I taught for several years an undergraduate module in psychology of religion in which I dedicated several hours to his work in cognitive science and developmental psychology of religion. Barrett, formerly director of the Thrive Center for Human Development at Fuller Theological Seminary and, prior to that, director of the Centre for Anthropology and Mind at the University of Oxford, has forged an unlikely career for a person of faith in a subdiscipline of psychology popularly considered the sole preserve of skeptics and nonbelievers.

Secondly, if I carry a bugbear about the empirical psychology of religion, it is that at times it tends to avoid application, a sense of the implications of its findings for human living. In this respect, Barrett's collaboration with Pamela Ebstyn King is a welcome addition to this project. Currently based at Fuller Theological Seminary as executive director of the Thrive Center and Professor of Applied and Developmental Science, King adds applied nuance and some succinct epigrams that bring home the implications of evolutionary psychology in everyday life.

Thirdly, it seems very important to me that people of faith generally, and Christians particularly, continue to explore and write about the field of evolutionary psychology, not least because it is often presented as a competing narrative of even nonliteral readings of the Genesis account, in direct opposition to a benevolent creator and a universe that could be considered in any way purposeful. I have lost count of the number of young adults I have encountered who refuse to consider the possibility of there being a creator, or who have lost faith in God, as a result of reading secular or atheistic accounts of human evolution.

Barrett and King have produced a short and well-informed book designed for any interested intelligent reader. No prior knowledge of evolutionary