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# Christianity and Evolution

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### *Summary*

According to one's own self-explanation, evolutionary ethics is a biological theory, derived from theory of evolution, whose task is a scientific explanation of the genesis of morality phenomenon. While philosophical ethics tries, on the basis of practical mind, to institute the validity of morality as of what needs to be, evolutionary ethics, as radical naturalistic theory, deals with the issue of what on the empirical level of actual behaviour is. Here we are trying to critically discuss the basic presumptions and deficiencies of evolutionary ethics and to point at unavoidable contents of any sensible ethical theory.

Ludovico Galleni, *Relations between evolutionary paradigm  
and christian faith following Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's  
fundamental teaching* ..... 37-59

### *Summary*

In the introductory part of this article the author establishes three well known crises (Galileo, Darwin, Freud) that call into question the medieval synthesis and man's privileged place in it. The author stands for a new synthesis of an evolutionary-dynamic picture of the world and Christian faith which starts not from Adam but from Abraham. The proposed synthesis is outlined in three subsequent paragraphs. First, a brief historical account of the affirmation of evolutionary thought

is presented, as well as its challenge to the up-to-then natural theology and subsequent theological perception of evolution as a problem. The second part explains the basic structure of biological evolution. At it, the author points at the evolutionary co-playing between definiteness and indefiniteness which gives theology a view of the fact that evolution significantly communicates with the universe as a space that is able to accept a free creature. Thus, from a problem, evolution has become an authentic resource of theology, the author concludes. The last part of the text presents the foundation of that conclusion. There, with the assistance of Teilhard de Chardin's theological model as well as with the assistance of the biblical category of the Abrahamic Covenant, the author shows that, as opposed to the ideologized reductionism of modern synthesis, evolutionary facts can help theology to deepen and specify, in the light of evolutionary paradigm, the meaning of the basic categories of Christian faith, like: God's plan of creation and salvation, freedom, eschatology, original sin, eschatological ethics.

Josip Balabanić, *Can a christian be a sincere believer in theory of evolution. Diference between faith and believing* ..... 61-89

*Summary*

The first part deals with the thesis that Christians do not believe in the same at all the times, but their faith, i.e. Christian religion, changes depending on the progress in science. In fact, the increase of scientific progress would lead to the decrease or reduction of the content of faith in the matters referring to nature and man, and they are the points of interest of both science and religion. This is supported by the proofs from the past of Christianity when it was believed that all stated in the Bible was God's word and it was defended on the basis of some words in the Bible, as for example in the case of Galileo, geocentricism or recently, with the coming of Charles Darwin (1859), the unchangeability of living world (fixism), yet today Christians no longer believe in geocentricism, nor most of them in fixism. Consequently, science would be undermining faith

and in near future there will be only a few fundamental tenets left of Christian faith and, in fact, there will be little or no difference between theists and atheists. It even goes the length of claiming that there is such incompatibility between some contents of faith and what is fundamentally believed that a scientist believer cannot sincerely believe in, for example, both God the Creator and scientific theory of evolution (Darwinism). The article warns that there is difference between faith, in terms of Christian religion, which always has the same deposit of fundamental religious truths (i.e. the same faith), and beliefs about nature and man related to fundamental truths, mainly as their theological interpretations. This leads to the conclusion that Christians always keep alive the same faith, but the way how they do that changes, and that at different times there are differences in the individuals or groups' content of faith, but at it the Spirit of Jesus is continually leading the groups of faithful to deeper understanding of what God has revealed (Jn 16, 13). Therefore, there is no reduction of faith, but the way of expressing faith or believing can change. Thus, Darwinism has called into question some old beliefs: in specific creation, in permanence of living world (fixism), in essential immutability of species (essentialism), in absolute separateness of human being from the rest of living world (strict or absolute anthropocentrism). In contrast to the thesis that one cannot be a sincere Christian and evolutionist at the same time, the article presents the data on a great number of theistic Christian evolutionists, since the moment that Charles Darwin published his main work (1859) up to now, in Great Britain and elsewhere in Europe, and of course in Croatia too. This makes us conclude that due to the influence of scientific discoveries there is no reduction of faith but only the change of the way of professing the same faith, even when expressing belief in God the Creator, and that it is possible to be both a Darwinist and Christian believer. Even more, Darwinism is *signum temporis* not only for today's theology of creation, but also for theology of incarnation and for soteriology.

Dieter Hattrup, *Evolution begründet Freiheit oder wie Darwin zum Kirchenvater wird* ..... 91-103

*Zusammenfassung*

Darwin ist nicht in klassischer Weise ein Kirchenvater, weil der Begriff, 'Kirchenvater' für die Alte Kirche reserviert ist und Darwin persönliche Schwierigkeiten mit dem Glauben hatte. Auch müssen wir seine Evolutionslehre erst aus dem 19. Jahrhundert ins 21. Jahrhundert transportieren. Doch dann können wir tiefer erkennen: Gott erweist sich durch die Evolutionslehre als freier Schöpfer in der Natur, indem er selbst freie Geschöpfe schafft, die seine Freiheit erkennen. Insofern verdanken wir Darwin eine neue Erkenntnis Gottes.

Nikola Bižaca, *Magisterium and evolution. Model of hermeneutics of continuity in discontinuity* ..... 105-135

*Summary*

The purpose of this article is to offer a fundamental outline of a hermeneutic pattern by means of which it would be possible to adequately interpret the major changes and moves in the attitudes of the Catholic Magisterium as against evolutionary interpretation of human origin. Therefore, the first part briefly reconstructs the fundamental stages of almost 150-year-long and often very tense history of the relations between the Magisterium and evolutionary paradigm. Special attention is paid to John Paul II and Benedict XVI's views on evolution. At it, undoubted changes in the attitudes of the Magisterium are indicated. The second part focuses on the institution of the mentioned hermeneutic criterion. It is based on the distinction between the revealed truth about creation and the theological model by which that truth has been repeatedly said within a particular natural-scientific picture of the world, a particular time, so that it can be comprehensible and existentially important to the people of that time. The new theological model in theology of creation in principle expresses the change of natural-scientific picture of the world, but it also shows the

efforts to deepen the earlier theological insights encouraged by the demands for a new picture of the world. To illustrate that criterion, the author has made use of the Pope Benedict XVI's programmatical speech addressed to the Roman Curia on 25th December 2005 and his "hermeneutics of reform" which Pope generally directly applies to truly innovative II Vatican texts on religious freedom. The article points out that the "hermeneutics of reform", emphasizing continuity in discontinuity, seems to be convenient not only for describing the Council's reform, but also for describing the changes of the Magisterium's attitudes regarding the evolutionary paradigm. In this latter context that hermeneutics manifests itself as a continuity of truth about creation in discontinuity of theological models.

Tonči Matulić, *Relation between evolution and ethics - theological search of limits* .....137-160

#### *Summary*

In this contribution the author treats the subject of relation between evolution and ethics. In the last hundred and fifty years, more precisely since the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), this relation has been developing, in higher or lower scientific intensity, in the light of biologization of ethics or naturalization of morality. In order to make the Croatian theological community better acquainted with the origin and development of this issue, in the first part of the contribution the author reconstructs the historical prospects of biologization of morality, but unpretentious to completeness and exhaustiveness. In the second part he gives a closer critical look at socio-biological theses of biologization of morality. Socio-biology is a scientific neologism which at the same time indicates the reawakening of biologization of ethics in the last quarter of XX century up to now. In the third part the author defines, principally and provisionally, the heart of the problem in the relation between evolution and ethics, which consists of understanding the metaphysical structure of human nature. Against the background of that crucial idea, in

the last, fourth, part of the contribution, the author critically and in more details analyzes the conditions and possibilities of evolutionary understanding of the origin and nature of ethical phenomenon.

Jadranka Garmaz, Mathias Scharer,  
*Creation and/or Evolution – Challenges  
to Raising in Faith* ..... 161-190

*Summary*

The article is dealing with the subject of creation, i.e. of evolution, in the context of religious teaching and catechesis. The authors present the issues in three parts. The first part starts with the opening debate and points at the problem issues of the relation of religious teaching to the idea of creation, i.e. of evolution, as well as of studying/teaching about creation/evolution considering the demands of developmental psychology and catechetical didactics. The second part contextualizes the issue of creation/evolution in different concepts of religious teaching. The third part broadens the debate from the first part and on the one hand it offers an insight into developmental-psychological premises of studying/teaching on the subject of creation/evolution, and on the other hand it gives an insight into the implementation of this subject in Croatian religious teaching programmes.

Ivan Tadić, *Development of thought about  
the universe and its origin* ..... 191-230

*Summary*

The author starts from the presentation of ancient thought about the beginning and development of the world from Thales to Plato. Then he presents the development of the perception of the world and briefly puts forward the thoughts of:

Anaximander, Philolaus, Plato, Eudoxus, Callippus, Aristotle, Ptolemy, Aristarchus of Samos, Copernicus, Brahe, Galileo and Newton. In the last part some theories about the origin and development of the universe are presented: Lemaitre's Theory, Gamow's Theory, the Steady State Theory, the Perpetual Universe Repetition Theory, the Big Bang Theory, the Inflation Theory and Hawkins' Theory. In the conclusive part the author claims that all presented indicates that we still do not have a final and absolutely natural scientific interpretation of the origin and development of the universe and that the talk about the universe up to Copernicus, and partly after him too, in some aspects, was more the talk about our ignorance than about the universe. Neither have natural sciences offered a final answer to the question put by the first philosophers.

The author concludes that the question about the universe is not only a natural scientific question, since the universe cannot be the answer to itself, and, therefore, man is directed to philosophy and to theology the foothold of which is the Answer that had offered itself even before the question was put.