

News and Notices

SCIENCE-SPIRITUALITY

Templeton Prize

The winner of the 2001 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion is **The Revd Canon Dr Arthur Peacocke of Oxford University**. As a physical biochemist specialising in biological macromolecules, Dr Peacocke pioneered early research into the structure of DNA, showing that the chains in the molecule are not branched but form a double helix. In 1971, the one-time agnostic became an Anglican priest. The only Oxford University Theology faculty member to hold both a Doctor of Science and a Doctor of Divinity degree, Dr Peacocke is a strong proponent of "critical realism," holding that both science and theology aim to depict reality and must be subject to scrutiny, while recognising their creative interaction. Created by global investor and philanthropist Sir John Templeton in 1972, each year the Templeton Prize acknowledges a living person who has shown extraordinary originality in advancing humanity's understanding of God and the role of spirituality in people's lives. Sir John has sought to honour progress in religion just as the Nobel Prizes recognise advances in economics, medicine, and chemistry. Currently valued at £700,000 sterling, the Prize represents the world's largest annual monetary award given to an individual and is always set at a level that exceeds that of the Nobels.

Dr Peacocke joins an illustrious group of professional scientists who have won the Templeton Prize: last year's winner, Freeman Dyson, a physicist whose futuristic views have consistently called for the reconciliation of technology and social justice; physicist and theologian Ian Barbour in 1999; astrophysicist Paul Davies in 1995; physicist Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker in 1989; and Benedictine monk and professor of astrophysics Stanley Jaki in 1987. Among the best known nonscientist recipients are the Revd Dr Billy Graham in 1982; Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in 1983; Lord Jakobovits, former Chief Rabbi of Great Britain and the Commonwealth in 1991; and Watergate figure Charles Colson in 1993, who won for his work in founding Prison Fellowship. Mother Teresa, the first Templeton Prize winner, received her award in 1973-six years before she won the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Temple of Understanding

The purpose of this organisation is the worldwide promotion of interfaith dialogue and education, to achieve understanding and harmony among the people of the world's religions and beyond. Supported by representatives of all the main faiths it can be accessed through a mailing list which may be joined by writing to The Temple of Understanding, 750 5th Avenue, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10019, USA

De Numine

This is the title of the newsletter of the Alister Hardy Society. Its latest issue (No.30, February 2001) contains articles of direct interest to members of the Network, concerning for instance spirituality and dreams, along with reports from a conference on 'Psychosis and Spirituality' and from one on more purely Christian themes. To join or subscribe members could contact the Alister Hardy Society, 42 High Street, Watlington, Oxon, OX49 5PY.

MEDICINE-HEALTH

Healing Minds

A very thorough report from the Mental Health Foundation on current research, policy and practice concerning the use of complementary and alternative therapies for a wide range of

mental health problems. This a preliminary announcement prior to a full review appearing in the next issue. Among its recommendations are that some of the more well-researched therapies should be made available on the NHS, that national organisations should look into ways of incorporating complementary therapies into the NHS, that planners of mental health initiatives should consider adopting the principles of holism as standards of good practice and that more research on PNI could help ground complementary therapies in a common scientific framework. Details: Mental Health Foundation, 20-21 Cornwall Terrace, London NW1 4QL. Tel: 0207 535 7400, Web: www.mentalhealth.org.uk

GENERAL

News from the State of the World Forum

The State of the World Forum will be putting most of its energy over the next two years into its Commission on Globalisation, but has other strategic initiatives running concurrently, one of which is the Whole Child Initiative, run by Claire Ryle Garrison. It has launched a project to identify, chronicle and share the most effective best practices world wide which improve the well-being of children and their families. It was convened in 1995 by Dr. Jane Goodall and is partnered with the International Child Resource Institute. One of the outcomes will be a book called 'The Heart of Programs Helping Children Thrive' and the project will be represented in a number of international conferences. The web site, due in early May, is www.whole-child.org

Death of Johan Quanjer of New Humanity

Many readers will be familiar with New Humanity and its publisher Johan Quanjer, who has died aged 66. Johan invented the term pneumatocracy to denote the rule of the spirit in politics, and developed the idea over 25 years, even standing for the European Parliament in 1993. A familiar figure at the Mystics and Scientists conferences - this was the first year he missed - Johan was a visionary who described himself as a 'cosmic bushwhacker'. I owe him a personal debt for publishing my first articles in his journal 20 years ago and encouraging me to lecture - we did a number of events together in the early 80s.

IONS on the move

The Institute of Noetic Sciences has moved to a new address in California: 101 South San Antonio Road, Petaluma, CA 94952 9524, USA. Website: www.noetic.org IONS has also established an online newsletter to receive which you should e-mail iconnectsub@noetic.org with 'Subscribe'in the subject box.

Zero Pollution Car

Bernhard Harrer put me onto this site at www.zeropollution.com - The first vehicles will be available soon in 3 forms - car, van and taxi. They run on compressed air and have a top speed of 60 mph and a range of 120 miles in urban cycle. Nor are they expensive at FF72,000 (about £7,000). The inventor is Frenchman Guy Negre, who uses high pressure (300 bar) compressed air to store the energy needed to run the engine. A compressor driven by an electric motor recharges the compressed air tanks. The MDI engine is a radically new internal combustion engine: while the conventional engine uses a single cylinder for compression, combustion and expansion, the new engine has a three-chamber system, with one cylinder for compression, a small one for combustion and a much larger one for expansion. A version of the same MDI engine can, in addition to air, also function with the use of traditional fuel at very low levels of consumption. The commercial strategy will encourage local production factories producing 2000-4000 vehicles a year.

Public Library of Science

publiclibraryofscience.org was established to organise support within the scientific community for online public libraries of science, providing unrestricted free access to the archival record of scientific research. Scientists can express their support for this effort by signing an open letter. Some six thousand scientists from 95 countries have already signed. Support will help the organisers to persuade publishers of scientific journals to commit to giving their archival material to the public domain for distribution through online public libraries. If you would like to sign the open letter please visit <http://www.publiclibraryofscience.org/plosLetter.htm>

Tapes - The Feather in your Heart

Subtitled 'Tales of Wonder from India and the Sufi Mystics of Old Persia and read by Andrew Harvey, these two tapes include a reading of Member Anne Baring's adaptation of the Conference of the Birds (The Birds Who Flew Beyond Time), which makes electrifying listening. For details see www.windhorse.com or write to Sounds True, PO Box 8010, Dept WH, Boulder, CO80306-8010, USA.

Emerging Renaissance

Dr Romeo di Benedetto has written to *Network* inviting members to contribute to his programme at El Paso Community College. The 'Emerging Renaissance' course, subtitled 'An Odyssey of the Spirit', involves both local television broadcasts and monthly speaker session before a live audience. Members are invited to offer relevant talks about their fields of expertise and interest by writing to him at the Department of Sociology, El Paso Community College, PO Box 20500, El Paso, TX 79998, USA. Email: romeo@epcc.edu

Spiritual Books

Hundreds of spiritual books are available for lending by post free of charge. Stamps to cover postage (packaging free) are the only cost. For details please write, enclosing 2 x 2nd class stamps, to The Postal Lending Library, 17a Limekiln Lane, Bridlington, East Yorkshire, YO15 2LX.

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