

SCIENTIFIC AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF

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SCIENTIFIC AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF

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PREFACE

The papers contained in this volume were given at the International Conference on Scientific and Religious Belief which was held at the Institut für Wissenschaftstheorie of the International Research Center Salzburg in August 1991. The conference was understood as a research conference dealing with an area which is not yet investigated sufficiently: Aspects of interrelation between scientific and religious belief.

The conference started with papers on important features of belief in general and on distinctive properties between belief, knowledge and acceptance. In the paper of Keith Lehrer they are analyzed comparatively and are also considered in respect to religious belief (faith). The paper of Franz von Kutschera takes up other important features of beliefs in general to be applicable to both, scientific and religious belief: reasons (explanations for beliefs which consist essentially in other beliefs again and which allow that the agent had alternatives) and causes (chance events or actions).

Gerhard Schurz's special topics on non-monotonic reasoning deals with the question how our beliefs change, when our information changes, especially when the respective information is increased or completely new information is added. Is belief value-free? Is value-ladenness an essential and intrinsic characteristic of belief? This question is dealt with in the paper by Elena Klevakina-Uljanov and applies to both scientific and religious belief.

The paper of Paul Weingartner tries to give an analysis of similarities and differences of scientific and religious belief. The analysis shows that this field of comparison is full of further interesting details with lots of new problems and questions not taken up frequently in recent literature. Joseph Maria Bochefski's paper deals with the important question of rational reasons and justification for religious hypotheses. One subquestion here is in what sense "religious experience" – if it exists – can be accepted as a justifying reason. This question is then continued in a detailed way by John Hick whose paper deals explicitly with the different features and aspects of religious experience not only in Christianity but also in the other great religions of mankind.

Paul Weingartner

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go first to the participants for their kind cooperation and willingness to correct also the prepared extracts of the discussions. All their contributions are original except the one of Elena Klevakina-Uljanov which is an improved reprint from the volume *Advances in Scientific Philosophy*, edited by Gerhard Schurz and Georg J. W. Dorn. I take the opportunity to thank the publisher Editions Rodopi and Mr. Fred van der Zee for the kind permission.

Special thanks go to Elena Klevakina-Uljanov and Gerhard Schurz for their preparation of a part of the discussions.

Many thanks I want to say to the two secretaries: The difficult task of retying the discussions from the tape was done by Sigrid Hinterstoisser and the final editorial corrections and the preparation of the camera-ready manuscript were realized by Gabriele Köbrunner-Krisch.

Last but not least I want to thank the International Research Center Salzburg for the financial support without which the conference could not have been organized.

Salzburg, July 1993

Paul Weingartner