

In this number

RISTO SAARINEN

Hate Speech as a Theological Issue

The article first discusses contemporary Finnish and European legislation regarding hate speech in religious matters. Some classical viewpoints (Decalogue, Aristotelian ethics) are added, and variants of reprehensible (though not necessarily criminal) religious hate speech are defined. The resulting scale is employed in an analysis of recent Finnish religious newspapers and pamphlets. Some religious pamphlets are found to contain reprehensible hate speech. As university theologians are not infrequently the target of religious hate speech in Finland, the article calls for academic awareness regarding this issue.

SAILA POULTER, ARI SUTINEN &
ARTO KALLIONIEMI

Religious Education in Public Schools: Pedagogical Transaction as a Philosophical Starting Point

This article comprises three parts. We first outline the background of research on Finnish religious education and describe the societal change that has set new challenges for education concerning religion. We then describe the philosophy of modern pedagogy and present the idea of pedagogical transaction as a means of education in democracy. Thirdly, we analyse the concept of public space and

religion as a part of public, democratic debate in society. In conclusion, we elaborate religious education as a place for pupils to understand religion from their unique context-bound perspectives. We argue that religious education based on the idea of pedagogical transaction has an elemental role in fostering societal cohesion and educating individual citizens in shared communication.

LAURI KEMPPAINEN

Godless Leviathan or a Guardian Liberty? Theological Perspectives on Political Liberalism

I argue that there are two fundamentally different theological approaches to political liberalism. On the one hand, many theologians see liberalism as a rival to Christian orthodoxy and a product of nominalism, individualistic voluntarism, secularism and nihilism. In this view, liberalism is the outcome of the regrettable failures of scholastic thinking. On the other hand, theological defenders of liberalism see it as a pragmatic political arrangement meant to uphold justice, instead of a comprehensive doctrine comparable to a religious conviction or a worldview. However, both sides are united in claiming that liberalism marginalises religion. For this reason, even theological champions of liberalism are highly critical of Rawlsian 'public reason liberalism' and argue for religious liberty from a communitarian perspective.

MARKKU RUOTSILA

A Forgotten Dimension of Finnish Neo-Pietism: Finns in David Hedegård's Evangelical Networks

The Swedish vice president of the International Council of Christian Churches, David Hedegård, was central to the global networking of conservative Finnish Lutherans after the Second World War. This article examines his role in drawing these Finns, especially those who came from what are known as the Fifth Revival and Evangelical Movements, into his Scandinavian Evangelical Council and into the global fundamentalist movement of which it was part. Further assesses the impact that this development had, in the mid-1940s through the early 1970s, on the evolving doctrinal and evangelistic emphases of the Finnish revivalists involved.

PAUL LINJAMAA

The Sabbath as Cosmos and Contemplation: Astrological and Numerological Influences

This article highlights some less-known features of the Sabbath during Antiquity: the Sabbath's numerological, astrological and contemplative associations. A historical survey is offered where these aspects are presented as firmly rooted in the Sabbath's 'symbolic universe' among Jews, Christians and gentiles alike during Antiquity. The second part of the article exemplifies the importance of being aware of these perspectives of the Sabbath by analysing the presentation of the Sabbath in five texts from the Nag Hammadi library.

PEKKA METSO

Archbishop Paul's Eucharistic Thought and Practice

Liturgical reform is seen as one of the main accomplishments of Archbishop Paul of the Finnish Orthodox Church (1960–1987). In this article, his Eucharistic thought is examined in the context

of the communion practices of the Orthodox Church. In the mid-1960s, Paul began to emphasise the importance of frequent communion. The view was based on his understanding of the liturgy as a jointly celebrated act of the whole congregation. Beginning in 1970, Paul introduced revised practices: communion was dissociated from obligatory confession, people were encouraged to receive the sacrament every Sunday, and the secret prayers of the liturgy were now read out loud. His reforms have proven to be of lasting value in the Finnish Orthodox Church.

MIKAEL STENMARK

Tage Kurtén on Religious Truth and Trust in God

Tage Kurtén has argued that the way in which many theologians and philosophers typically approach religious belief is misguided and deeply problematic. These thinkers model religious belief too much on scientific belief formation and evaluation, and consequently treat belief in God in a sceptical way – as a kind of tentative hypothesis. Kurtén, on the other hand, maintains that we should see belief in God as we see the relationship of trust between a husband and a wife who truly love each other. For this reason, we need a paradigm shift in theology and the philosophy of religion. I agree with many of the things that Kurtén says, but I still think that in a number of places his arguments are not convincing. I therefore suggest that the conclusions we draw should be somewhat different. What he particularly fails to take into account is that rational belief, including belief in God, is person-relative.

Translation: Jaakko Mäntyjärvi