

# Message from the Editor

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Previous issues of the Cairo Journal of Theology have been organized around a single theme: the translation of the Bible into Arabic, the five *solas* of the Reformation, and other matters. The first three of the articles in this issue, broadly conceived, are concerned with the nature of human beings as seen in the book of Genesis and through the lenses of the modern fields of science, postmodern philosophy, and politics. The fourth article concerns Syraic Christianity.

The first article, written by myself, is a reflection piece inspired by the fiftieth anniversary of the Moon landing. I was only twelve years old at time, but I remember watching the television with my family as Neil Armstrong stepped out onto the lunar surface. A tremendous milestone in human history, the moment was breathtaking and unforgettable. It has been interpreted in many ways: an accomplishment inspired by the Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, an engineering feat made possible by the V-2 rocket program of the Nazis during World War II, the fulfillment of a millennia-old human dream to reach the Moon and then beyond. These various slants are true as far as they go, but what concerns me here is what the accomplishments and insights of modern science have to say to people of faith. My reflection begins with the Moon landing but soon moves on to other scientific insights having to do with the modern understanding of cosmology and human evolution. For Christians these new scientific paradigms have been highly contested because they have often been seen as a threat to the paradigm of Christian faith. My reflection presents one way that many faithful Christians have come to merge science and religion into a single harmonious paradigm.

Dr. Maher Samuel, who wrote the second article for this issue, is a professional psychiatrist, public speaker, apologist, lecturer, and author of eight books. He is also the founder of Credologos ministry, the representative ministry of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM) in the Middle East. As an Arabic-speaking apologist, his primary mission is to train Middle Eastern Christian leaders in apologetics and spiritual formation in order to equip them to share Christ in with non-Christian communities. Maher has taught numerous weekend and summer schools courses in Egypt and Lebanon, is a frequent guest on television programs, and regularly speaks at Christian Arabic conferences all over the world. Maher's article, which was first delivered as a talk on November 20, 2018, at ETSC Scholars' Seminar series, is concerned with how to present the gospel to the postmodern generation.

The third article, a book review of Jeremy L Sabella's *An American Conscience: The Reinhold Niebuhr Story*, fits nicely with the broad theme of this issue in that it concerns a theologian who was interested in how the fundamental nature of human beings as presented in the Scriptures should inform our understanding of politics. Niebuhr, who lived through two world wars and the Cold

War, famously wrote, "Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary."

The fourth article, admittedly, does not mesh with the theme of this issue but is intended as the first of three installments by Dr. Heleen Murre-van den Berg, who visited ETSC, January 16-19, 2019, to present a series of lectures on the history of early Syraic Christianity. A professor of Eastern Christianity at Raboud University, Nigmegen, Holland, Dr. Murre-van den Berg has given other lectures at ETSC and has also written for this journal before. Her lectures, which were given in English and with translation, were of such interest in the seminary that we decided to publish them in this journal. This issue contains about a third of her presentation, and subsequent issues will include the remainder. I transcribed the lectures from video recordings and edited them lightly for purposes of clarity. After reviewing my manuscript and performing some editing of her own, Dr. Murre-van den Berg she returned the text to me for publication. We hope that readers will enjoy the conversational style of her delivery.