Editorial

Both the breadth and persistent foci that mark contemporary Reformed theological scholarship are on display in this newest issue of our journal. The opening article, coauthored by Arnold Huijgen, Koert van Bekkum, and Hans Burger, offers a stocktaking of the fraught interrelation of systematic theology and biblical exegesis—especially in the contemporary European context—before setting out a programmatic vision for a renewed and constructive engagement between these two fields of endeavor aimed at their mutual benefit. Their proposal promises to serve as a touchstone for future debates concerning this fundamental question. A specific example of how biblical exegesis can illuminate systematic theological and ethical themes is given by Raymond R. Hausoul’s article. He examines the meaning of the geographical designation “my holy mountain” of Isaiah 11 and 65 and its implications for an eschatological understanding of “peace among animals.” Kyle McCracken undertakes a close analysis and assessment of the influential, though not uncontroversial, Orthodox sophiology of Sergei Bulgakov before formulating a Reformed response informed by Karl Barth’s account of divine wisdom. Working with a range of untapped sources, Timothy Larsen’s essay sketches an invaluable portrait of the leading Kenyan Presbyterian churchman, ecumenist, and theologian John G. Gatũ, drawing out his importance and legacy for the development and future of the Reformed churches in Africa and beyond. These articles by McCracken and Larsen, each in their own way and taken together, show up the enormous ecumenical scope and geographical and cultural reach of Reformed theology and its practitioners. In this issue’s final article, Nico Vorster examines the concepts of guilt operative in Reformed doctrines of sin. He argues that the concept of actual guilt, which links human agency to human accountability, can purge the doctrine of original sin from harmful and inconsistent guilt concepts without subverting the essence of this doctrine. Readers will also enjoy the nine reviews of recent books in the field of Reformed theology that round out this number.

Philip Ziegler and Pieter Vos