

S.T.D. Dissertation Abstract

Title: The Problematic Theological Extrinsicism Inherent in Modern Cosmology

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Despite its self-proclaimed neutrality regarding metaphysics and theology, modern science is full of metaphysical and theological presuppositions. These can be summarized as a mechanistic understanding of nature and a theological extrinsicism—which reduces God to an object and creation to a worldly mechanism. These presuppositions are deficient and untenable, and they remain unconscious for the most part in the dialogue between science and theology. This dissertation intends to uncover and criticize the incoherent theological extrinsicism inherent in a concrete branch of modern science, which is modern cosmology.

In the first chapter, I demonstrate that theological extrinsicism is inherent in modern science in general. Because science, metaphysics, and theology are intrinsically related, the affirmation of the neutrality of science does not dispense science from having metaphysical and theological presuppositions. The declaration of scientific neutrality implies a mechanical understanding of nature and an extrinsic idea of God.

In order to uncover and criticize the extrinsicism present in modern cosmology, it is necessary to provide a coherent and unreduced image of God and nature, to give a better understanding of how God interacts with the world. This can be accomplished through a convincing doctrine of creation, for the doctrine of creation is both a doctrine of God and a conception of the world. In the second chapter, I lay out this convincing doctrine of creation, *creatio ex nihilo*, in its twofold sense, theological and metaphysical.

In the third chapter, I criticize the extrinsicist theology inherent in modern cosmology. This theological extrinsicism is present in those atheistic cosmologists who attempt to deny the existence of God, arguing that what was formerly assigned to divine action—because of scientific ignorance—can be now explained solely in scientific terms. The extrinsic understanding of God is also present in those scientists and theologians who try to demonstrate the existence of God in a scientific way—using cosmology. In my task of criticizing the theological extrinsicism of modern cosmology, I will treat two main cosmological issues: the beginning of the universe and the finely tuned universe.