

BOOK SYMPOSIUM REVIEW ESSAY

THEOLOGY, SCIENCE AND AN ALTERNATIVE MODERNITY

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John Milbank's *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (second edition, 2006) established a new theological attitude to interdisciplinary engagement. Rather than approaching social theory on supposed neutral terrain, or terrain established by the contestable historical and metaphysical framework of the social sciences, Milbank offered a theology of social theory and a provocative reading of its secularist outlook not as the absence of theology, but as pseudo-theology—essentially, a Christian heresy. Milbank's work was mistakenly read as theologically imperialist, anti-modern, and nostalgic for a supposed medieval Christian utopia. It is, in fact, an argument for an alternative modernity which denies the legitimacy of an autonomous secular realm and seeks a social order suffused with a Christian metaphysics of primordial peace rather than primitive violence. It is a call for the discipline of theology not to be positioned by secular reason and the metaphysics of modernity, but to turn from its false humility and take a properly theological approach to its engagement with the sciences of the Enlightenment. For Milbank, secular modernity never finally and fully arrives; the faint echoes of the pre-modern Christian consensus and the seeds of an authentic theological social vision can still be discerned in high Anglican theology, the *ressourcement* tradition of twentieth-century Catholic theology, strands of British and German romanticism, and the Platonically inspired philosophies of the renaissance.

Paul Tyson's *A Christian Theology of Science* belongs broadly to the theological sensibility established by Milbank. It is an attempt to move beyond the dialogue of 'science and religion' that emerged as a distinct field of study in the 1960s. Tyson charts a path for theology's critical engagement with the natural sciences beyond the dialogic science and religion towards a theology of science. For Tyson, the dialogue of 'science and religion' too often takes place against the background of a contestable metaphysics assumed or reinforced by the natural sciences yet inimical to Christian theology. He reveals the complex relationship between religion and the natural sciences, moving beyond the simplistic

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'harmony', 'non-overlapping', and 'conflict' views of their mutual engagement. Tyson demands an epistemology that is far richer than the reductive and naïve empiricism that he claims dominates the natural sciences, one that allows for knowledge that is natural and revealed. He demands a metaphysics beyond the materialist naturalism assumed by the natural sciences that is not only theologically coherent in being attentive to transcendence and the contingency of the world, but also suggests a more comprehensive science that does justice to our basic grasp of the beauty, purpose, and value of nature. Although attentive to the history of the rise of natural science, it is striking how little Tyson has to say about science itself throughout this book—its varied methods, objects of study, priorities, commitments, and possibilities. This is more a theology of modern philosophy. The strategy is to strike at the philosophical foundations of modern science which are the basis for today's scientific culture and scientistic ideologies.

Tyson begins his exploration with basic definitions of theology and science. Theology is 'reasoning about God as underpinned by the most foundational belief commitments of the Christian faith.'¹ The emphasis lies more on the 'foundational belief commitments' than the nature of reasoning about God, namely the creedal contents of Christianity. For Tyson, those creedal claims are summarised in five distinctive Christological truth claims concerning the incarnation, virgin birth, the historical crucifixion, the bodily resurrection, and the ascension. Whilst the aim is presumably to focus on what is distinctively *Christian* in Christian theology—namely, Christ—it is perhaps surprising that Tyson does not discuss in detail (here or elsewhere) those aspects of Christian theology and the catholic creeds that most readily pertain to an engagement with the natural sciences, namely the doctrines of God, creation, and providence. More on this below. He notes that four of these five Christological claims are miraculous or metaphysical, where 'metaphysics' refers to 'transcendent realities that are the grounds of observable physical nature, rather than truths discoverable "within" nature.'² The Christological claims are revealed truths and, whilst they cannot be the product of natural reasoning, they may be partially mediated by such reasoning. With this opening definition of Christian theology, Tyson draws a line in the sand: any natural science that precludes these doctrinal claims (for example, by claiming that matter is the limit of reality) is contestable on philosophical grounds and unacceptable to Christian theology.

Modern science, by contrast, is physico-mathematical, experimental, natural knowledge. It is 'knowledge of the natural world that is derived from at least these three foundational philosophical and methodologically applied commitments: empiricism, rationalism, and physical reductionism.'³ In describing these commitments as philosophical as well as methodological, Tyson seems to reject the common claim that science is only methodologically naturalist and makes no metaphysical claims concerning the nature and limits of reality. Following his line of thought, the distinction between methodological and ontological naturalism might seem simple and naïve. Methodological naturalism goes hand-in-hand with ontological naturalism with respect to the modern natural sciences because their naturalistic methodology already contains metaphysical commitments about what there is to be seen in nature that are in turn reinforced by what a certain methodology discovers or fails to discover. One might point to the following example: the process of abstraction of parts from wholes in the scientific analysis of an

¹ Paul Tyson, *A Christian Theology of Science: Reimagining a Theological Vision of Natural Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2022), p. 11.

² *Ibid.*, 12.

³ *Ibid.*, 15.

organism, and the tendency to reduce biology to chemistry, reinforces the view that wholes are subsequent to the assemblage of parts. It betrays a nominalistic and mechanistic view of nature in which the parts of an organism are extrinsically rather than intrinsically related to each other and leads to the disappearance of the organism as biology's principal object of study in favour of the organism's chemical processes.⁴ As the organism recedes from view, so too the sciences lose the organism as the locus of self-concern, meaning, value, and goal-orientation. Indeed, this is perhaps Tyson's most consistent lament throughout this book: whilst the natural sciences are stunningly successful in manipulating nature and controlling its functions, they miss the most treasured aspects of nature that we grasp at a level deeper than surface observation and mere materiality, namely the intrinsic meaning, purpose, beauty and value of nature and life.⁵ It is not that the natural sciences lay these issues to one side to be gathered up by other discourses. The ideological power of the sciences as what Tyson calls a 'first truth discourse' means that, particularly at the scientific extreme, they counter-intuitively deny that nature has an intrinsic purpose or meaning, and therefore an intrinsic value beyond our manipulation and use of natural resources to our own culturally imagined ends.

In making these claims, Tyson gives an account of the demise of theology as a 'first truth discourse' and its replacement by the natural sciences. This was a long process begun in the seventeenth century but not fully realised until the late nineteenth. It involved the transition from what Tyson refers to as 'theocentric ontological foundationalism' (labelled TOF) to 'skeptical egocentric epistemological foundationalism' (labelled EEF). In the former, God is the source of being and the measure of truth. Ontology and epistemology remain entwined. Whilst sensory perception can be trusted as a gift of divine grace, it is not indubitable and cannot be the sole ground of any exploration of truth. By contrast, 'EEF is about humanly taken knowledge rather than divinely received revelation.'⁶ The human observer is the measure of truth, and truth is reduced to the functions or uses of things. The world simply is as it appears to us to be through empirical or rationalist exploration: 'the basic idea of egocentric epistemological foundationalism is that by rational or perception-based modes ... the knowing subject (the ego) comes to find an indubitable foundation for knowledge, and on that foundation a philosophically true understanding of the world can be built.'⁷ Alas, the foundations so established prove to be very shallow indeed. Modern empiricism, according to Tyson, is not primarily propelled by trust that the deliverances of the senses are a reliable index to truth that can be brought into ever greater focus. Rather, it is driven by the suspicion that our knowledge, based entirely on our senses, is faulty and never definitively verifiable because, metaphysics having been discounted as hopelessly speculative, we have no accompanying framework or independent access to the world by which to judge the deliverances of our senses. So EEF gives up on ontological truth claims concerning what things are and restricts itself to the knowledge of functions or uses: 'Modern empiricism replaces truth with use as the only valid grounds of viable sensory knowledge. This move carries with it a tacitly instrumental normativity and functionally materialist metaphysics.'⁸ In our

⁴ See especially Michael Hanby, *No God, No Science? Theology, Biology, Cosmology* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), chapter 6. See also Carmody Grey, *Theology, Science and Life* (London: T&T Clark, 2023).

⁵ For example, see Tyson, *A Christian Theology of Science*, 17, 41–43, 171, 177–82.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 44.

intellectual history, this leads in two directions. First, the pragmatic replacement of truth with use reduces knowledge to power. Secondly, an irrealist rejection of truth itself becomes a central aspect of postmodern philosophy which is better understood not as a turn from the modern, but as the inevitable outcome of modernity's failed search for epistemological foundations within natural knowledge. According to Tyson, it is only scientists' naïve empiricism that leads them away from anti-realist or irrealist understandings of knowledge. We still believe that science delivers truth, but that account of truth is so emaciated and functional that it proves unable to provide a normative ontology of nature that might resist the will-to-power inherent in modern technological capitalism.⁹

Tyson's account of intellectual history and the philosophical foundations of the modern empirical sciences is breathless, bold, and unapologetically belligerent. He hurls the labels 'rationalist', 'nominalist', and 'physically reductive' at modern philosophy and, by association, the natural sciences which naively assume and propagate this approach to knowledge and truth. Against this stance, he asserts the miracle of the incarnation of the *Logos* of God, the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and the establishment of the church by the sending of the Holy Spirit, none of which is intelligible to egocentric, sceptical modern empiricism.¹⁰ In pitching such radically different approaches to knowledge and truth against each other in this blunt way, is there a danger of repeating the conflict thesis that so dogged the mutual engagement of theology and science in the early and mid-twentieth century? Is this not simply to set one foundationalism against another with little sense of how to mediate or decide between them, beyond one being pejoratively labelled 'egocentric'? It might unwittingly suggest dualisms of reason and revelation, and grace and nature, particularly without a thoroughgoing account of the analogical nature of being. A potential misstep might be the identification of theology with Christological dogma that, in its radical claims and miraculous character, and without significant metaphysical mediation, is already beyond the reach of natural philosophy or natural science, whether it be Aristotelian, Newtonian, Darwinian, or quantum mechanical. To begin by establishing those dogmatic claims as the truth against which natural science must be measured—do the natural sciences allow such claims or not?—seems hasty and not the most promising starting point for a theology of science that seeks to be more than polemical. Of course, any replete doctrine of creation will be Christological, but one might better begin a theology of science with the doctrine of creation as a mode of fundamental theology and metaphysics that delivers an account of what creation *is* with respect to its origin and purpose. The metaphysical account of creation *ex nihilo* is not open to empirical scientific scrutiny, but it can frame an account of the nature of the cosmos and establish the very possibility and limits of scientific enquiry. Its scriptural and metaphysical premises will give an account of the radical asymmetry between God and creatures and the necessary participation of created being in being itself. In turn, this provides a sense of the form and metaphysical commitments required of a science of nature that is adequate to the depth and mystery of its object of study. To be clear about the doctrine of God and the doctrine of creation, with an attendant account of the nature of divine action and the metaphysics of causation, may allow more coherent and intelligible accounts of our basic intuitions concerning

⁹ Ibid., 47.

¹⁰ Ibid., 48–49.

nature—such as purpose, value, and meaning—that can enlarge and frame the kinds of questions and observations open to the re-imagined natural sciences. Those accounts will not occlude notions of divine providence nor render God a manufacturer of the universe or a scientifically dispensable cause-amongst-causes within the natural order, as happened during the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century.

At the heart of *A Christian Theology of Science*, Tyson adopts a different and suggestive approach to the question of theology's engagement with science—the recovery of a Christian theological epistemology. Whilst this is Platonically inspired and resists the separation of ontology and epistemology, the focus is primarily on knowledge and understanding (rather than the nature of being) in theology and the sciences. Tyson offers a reading of Plato's divided line in which the lowest, most immediate, and most practically reliable form of knowledge is *eikasia* or perception. He labels this *Knowledge I*. It is connected to the lowest and most immediate form of intellectual knowledge, *dianoia* or mathematics, which is the realm of abstract calculative reason and labelled *Knowledge II*. Together, these two forms of knowledge constitute 'empirico-calculative awareness'.¹¹ The lower form of understanding, falling between *Knowledge I* and *Knowledge II*, is *pistis* or belief, and labelled *Understanding I*. This is connected to the highest form of understanding, *noesis* or wisdom, belonging to the realm of intellection, which is labelled *Understanding II*. Here we find partial and direct knowledge of eternal forms, including Beauty, Truth, Justice, and Goodness. Beyond all forms of knowledge and understanding is the divine source of illumination. Tyson's claim is that the two key sources or methods for modern science, the empirical and rational, or *Knowledge I* and *Knowledge II*, are not necessarily empiricist and rationalist in the modern, ideological sense. He states: 'That is, empiricism and rationalism actually belong to the domain of understanding (interpretation, meaning, and belief) rather than to the domain of knowledge.'¹² What really matters is not the empirical and rational approach to nature *per se*, but the culturally and linguistically-inflected *interpretation* of the deliverances of the senses and abstract reasoning which is the domain of understanding (not knowledge) within which we make sense of nature. Through a process Tyson labels 'Ockham's pincer', the categories of empiricism (*Knowledge I*) and rationalism (*Knowledge II*) crush 'the domain of cultural belief between them and remove qualitative and transcendently referenced human meaning from existence.'¹³ In other words, science claims that the deliverances of the senses and abstract reason are purely objective and sufficient unto themselves; it neglects or rejects the wisdom and transcendent illumination necessary for the proper understanding and interpretation of nature.

¹¹ I confess that I am not sure what to make of the claim that 'A jumping spider, with its truly tiny brain, performs astonishing calculations as it jumps from one moving blade of grass onto another moving blade of grass. Low intellection (logical and calculative reason) as a form of divine illumination is by no means a human-only category of knowledge.' Tyson, *A Christian Theology of Science*, 114. It is not that creatures such as spiders engage in calculative reason, which is complex and deliberative. Rather, following the nineteenth-century French spiritualist Félix Ravaisson, we can see they exhibit habitual action. This is rational but non-deliberative. The distinction is important and strikingly demonstrates that creaturely habitual action more closely resembles divine intellect because neither deliberates. See Félix Ravaisson, *Of Habit*, trans. Clare Carlisle and Mark Sinclair (London: Continuum, 2008) and Simon Oliver, 'Consciousness, Intention and Final Causation' in *After Science and Religion: Fresh Perspectives from Philosophy and Theology*, edited by Peter Harrison and John Milbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 219–31.

¹² *Ibid.*, 119.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 127.

Tyson diagnoses the problem of Christian theology's place, or lack thereof, within the modern conception of knowledge and understanding that dominates philosophy and the natural sciences. He offers a Platonic critique of modern knowledge and the absence of any sense of illumination, revelation, or transcendent address that might form or even redeem the sinful and fallen human intellectual enterprise. Without an understanding of the transcendent and illuminative source of knowledge, or a sense of knowledge as graced, we are left merely with cultures of power and manipulation over nature and one another. He desires the return of Christian theological epistemology as the first truth discourse and proposes the recovery of an integrative zone for natural philosophy and Christian theology where 'knowledge and meaning are integrated not only theoretically but also existentially, communally, morally, and spiritually.'¹⁴ This is a grand and inspiring vision in the context of a pugnacious and courageous rejoinder to modern scientism, but it is not clear how it might be realised except in the minds of the already convinced.

By arguing for the reliance of philosophy and science on a transcendent source of being and truth, and through a commitment to Christian Platonism and the revealed truths of Christian theology, Tyson offers a radical critique of modern science that makes clear the challenge of genuine interdisciplinary engagement. Without a more detailed ontology or doctrine of creation—some prior sense of how creation is related to God—his focus on Christian theological epistemology might leave the various categories of knowledge and understanding too extrinsically related with more than a whiff of modern views of revelation. I therefore offer the following very brief hints as a development of his emphasis on theological epistemology in the direction of a participatory metaphysics.

As Tyson argues, modern science is often deeply emmeshed, whether deliberately or unwittingly, in a technocratic culture which seeks the control and manipulation of nature. When combined with the voracious consumerism of industrial capitalism the results are evident in the environmental crisis, as Tyson makes clear in his Epilogue. The desire to challenge nature—technologically to produce the unnatural as that which nature resists or abhors—is present at the foundations of modern experimental science. The commissioning of the air-pump or pneumatic-engine by Robert Boyle in 1659 has become a particular emblem in the history of science denoting the scientific and technological desire to control nature.¹⁵ Boyle's air-pump produces what nature abhors, namely a vacuum. In his famous experiments to evacuate a glass chamber containing a candle or a bird, the pneumatic engine is used to extinguish light and life.¹⁶ As Tyson argues, at the root of this culture is a philosophy of nature which denies an intrinsic teleological structure to the world, even to the extreme of denying human consciousness as intentional or even real. If nature has no intrinsic ends, it can be manipulated to any end. Whilst not denying these reductive and materialist commitments of much contemporary science, particularly amongst the evangelical proponents of scientism, the very *possibility* of science and the intelligibility of nature to human consciousness remain philosophically and theologically significant.

¹⁴ Ibid., 172.

¹⁵ Steven Shapin and Simon Shaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011 edition).

¹⁶ This is vividly depicted in Joseph Wright of Derby's painting *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump* (1768), National Gallery, London.

The practice of science not only reveals the striking intelligibility of the natural world which for some betokens a transcendent source, but also prompts an enquiry into the metaphysical conditions that open nature to consciousness and consciousness to nature.

As a contribution to the theology of science, is it possible to give a metaphysical or theological account of the possibility of science in which nature is open to consciousness and consciousness to nature? The scientific enterprise is concerned with the identification of causes within nature, albeit of a very narrow kind when viewed in the context of the history of western philosophy. Despite the positivist character of science and its emphasis on efficient causation, normative claims concerning what is fitting or beautiful arise frequently, albeit in a spontaneous and philosophically unexamined fashion. The attempt to drive teleology and value from explanations of natural phenomena, especially in the biological sciences and even evolutionary theory, have proved futile. It is difficult, for example, to give a plausible and adequate account of the immune system without using purposive language and normative conceptions of health and flourishing. Biology still deals with agency even though the concept is barely intelligible in reductive and materialist science.¹⁷ Whilst the commitment to scientific materialism became more strident through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, particularly amongst certain *philosophers* of science, physicists' convictions concerning what matter *is* have become weaker. Even if matter exhausts reality, matter has become an ever-deeper mystery during the history of modern physics. The question therefore arises, what is the character and structure of intellectual consciousness that gives rise to something like science that claims to see only function and use, yet has proved unable finally to rid itself of metaphysical notions of truth, beauty, or goodness, despite its most valiant efforts and premature announcements of success?

The structure of intentional consciousness was described by Henri de Lubac as an absolute desire for God.¹⁸ This is because the intellect's recognition of causality and intermediate ends, for example, is only possible because of a prior and irreducible orientation to an ultimate finality, namely Truth as such. It is not the case that the conscious human spirit spots instances of beauty, truth or goodness in trees and birds, and subsequently forms a desire and orientation towards Beauty, Truth, and Goodness themselves. It is only because intentional consciousness *is* a prior orientation to the absolute—to what philosophers and theologians refer to as the transcendentals, namely the universal categories that belong to all being—that something like science, even our emaciated science, can begin in the first place. One's ability to see beauty in 3D representations of proteins, for example, and to understand this as an intermediate end—not as the final word on beauty, but a participation in the fulness of beauty which prompts us to seek beauty in other natural

¹⁷ Jessica Riskin, *The Restless Clock: A History of the Centuries-Long Argument over What Makes Living Things Tick* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 6: 'I think that biologists' figures of speech reflect a deeply hidden yet abiding quandary created by the seventeenth-century banishment of agency from nature: do the order and action in the natural world originate inside or outside? Either answer raises big problems. Saying "inside" violates the ban on ascriptions of agency to natural phenomena such as cells or molecules, and so risks sounding mystical and magical. Saying "outside" assumes a supernatural source of nature's order, and so violates another scientific principle, the principle of naturalism.'

¹⁸ Henri de Lubac, *Mémoire sur l'occasion de mes écrits*, edited by Georges Chantraine and Fabienne Clinquart (Oeuvres complètes, 33) (Paris: Cerf, 2001), 188.

phenomena—lies in a prior orientation to Beauty itself.¹⁹ So human conscious intentionality, for de Lubac, simply is the orientation to that which alone is desirable in and of itself—an ultimate final cause and the source of all beauty, truth and goodness. This is how teleology, even the drive and purpose of scientific enquiry, is ultimately intelligible—in terms of an absolute end. In a sense, this is a variation of Plato's *Meno* problematic and the *aporia* of learning. Our striving for knowledge, including the practices of natural science, is prompted by the realisation that there is something we do not know, yet we desire to know. Still, the realisation of our ignorance is already a form of knowledge—knowing that we do not know. How does this arise? It is not that our desire for knowledge is purely elicited through the observation of nature, for we must account for the desire itself and the very impetus of science. This question cannot be answered by returning to empirical or abstract mathematical enquiry, for it is precisely the motivation to these methods and tasks that requires explanation. The enquiry must enter the domains of metaphysics and theology, namely the question of what human intentional consciousness *is* with respect to its origins and purpose, as that which gives rise to science.

Within Tyson's epistemological scheme as it is depicted in the Platonic divided line, the transcendentals occupy the field of *Understanding II* which is substantive knowledge. It seems that we need an account of how lower forms of knowledge and understanding—including science itself—require a prior orientation to *Understanding II*, to Beauty, Truth and Goodness themselves. This is where Tyson's bold and courageous assault on science and its philosophical foundations might merit supplementation, through an analogical doctrine of creation or the metaphysics of participation that show the metaphysical relation of lower forms of knowledge and understanding to Tyson's *Understanding II* and ultimately the divine source of all illumination. This might result in a theology of science in the form of an account of the very possibility of science—of nature open to consciousness and consciousness to nature—and suggest alternative views of the purpose of science. It is not so much an integrative zone for science and theology that is required, as an understanding that all knowledge, all conscious spirit, is an absolute desire for Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, rather than (as aspects of contemporary science in the hands of industrial capitalism might have it) an absolute desire for power and manipulation.

The absolute desire for power and manipulation is, as Tyson points out, an aspect of human sin and the Fall, the consequences of which are evident in the violence perpetrated against nature and the environment as well as, in various technological ways, the human person. The myth of the Fall plays a significant role in Tyson's theology of science. It also plays an important role in historical accounts of the rise of modern natural science.²⁰ Early Christian and medieval understandings of the effect of sin on knowledge and understanding focused on the human person and the contemplative life. Whilst man was called to have dominion over creation, that dominion had to begin with the right ordering of human passions. The human person understood as a microcosm of the created order was embedded within, and representative of, the cosmic order. As Peter Harrison remarks:

¹⁹ In an article 'Truth and Beauty in Science', the scientist and science writer Ashutosh Jogalekar cites the theoretical physicist Nima Arkani-Hamed concerning the characteristics of beauty recounted by physicists and mathematicians: concision, universality, timelessness and inevitability. These are strikingly reminiscent of metaphysical transcendental qualities. See <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/the-curious-wavefunction/truth-and-beauty-in-science/> (accessed 28 September 2023).

²⁰ The most notable example is Peter Harrison, *The Fall of Man and the Foundations of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

The goal of the religious life was to restore this lost dominion [over the beasts], but the priority was always the reestablishment of the proper hierarchical relations in the soul. The inner restoration was a necessary precondition for the reassertion of human dominion over things. As Aquinas put it: "Man in a certain sense contains all things; and so according as he is master of what is within himself, in the same way he can have mastership over other things."²¹

In the early modern period, the understanding of the human person as microcosm faded. The emphasis on the reordering of the human person—an intellectual and moral regeneration that would allow right dominion over nature—gave way to a different imaginative framework in which dominion over nature was understood simply and literally as control over, and use of, nature. Harrison quotes the closing lines of Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum* in which he describes a separation of the tasks of religion and faith from arts and sciences.²² The former repair the psychological damage of the Fall and restore mastery over ourselves; the latter are pursued quite separately to ensure power and our literal mastery of nature, now understood as a field of resources for human use rather than a book of signs with divine meaning. Tyson's theology of science is, in a sense, a call to reconnect the task of the restoration of human knowledge and understanding, which is a moral and intellectual task, with the task of right dominion over nature as a way of ordering the science of nature to transcendence—to its metaphysical origin and end—rather than manipulation and power. That task begins in the human person rather than the regularities of nature, in our albeit disordered and sinful conscious intentionality as that which gives rise to human enquiry and the natural sciences. Truthful science which is adequate to the mystery and beauty of its object of study is a product of the conscious human spirit which is an absolute desire for God and a participation in his being and knowledge. So a Christian theology of science begins with science as a *human* enterprise that has, tragically and contrary to the very nature of the human conscious intellect, become in some measure ordered to power and manipulation, but which might be reordered and reimagined in an alternative modernity.

²¹ Peter Harrison, *The Territories of Science and Religion* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 137–38 quoting Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia.96.2.

²² *Ibid.*, 138 quoting Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, II.iii.