

THE *BINITY*: RIELO'S METAPHYSICAL CONTRIBUTION TO TWO THEISTIC PROPOSALS VIS À VIS MEYER'S GOD HYPOTHESIS IN RESPONSE TO THE SCIENTISTIC VIEW OF COSMOGENESIS

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In 1927 Belgian Catholic priest Georges Lemaître famously proposed that the universe is, far from the Newtonian static model, *expanding*, which was confirmed in 1929 by Edwin Hubble's observations of spectral redshifts of the galaxies.¹ In 1931, Lemaître further proposed the "hypothèse de l'atome primitive," arguing that the genesis of the universe and its expansion can be traced back to an inconceivably-dense primaeval atom, the "cosmic egg," whose explosion, later termed the Big Bang, is the starting point from which the entirety of the universe sprang: space/time, matter/energy, laws of nature, gravity. Yet, although a beginning for the universe is generally accepted by the scientific community, notwithstanding its theistic overtones, some philosophers of science believe they can account for cosmogenesis, including biogenesis, within the context of a reductionist scientific naturalism. To the contrary, this paper will, first, review Stephen Meyer's three lines of scientific evidence for theism; second, this paper will critically examine two proposals for the theistic God of creation: the Thomistically-conceived God as *divine simplicity* proposed by Robert Barron, and the Biblical *Trinity* of William Lane Craig, and then analyze these in terms of Rielo's critique of the so-called principle of identity; and third, in the light of the foregoing critique, we will introduce Rielo's *Binity* as furnishing a relational absolute capable of serving as agent of creation, both inert and living. A concluding section will argue against the scientistic bias framing educational curricula at the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels that indoctrinate students in view of an atheistic worldview that disparages the role of metaphysics in furnishing a comprehensive perspective when dealing with the question of cosmogenesis and biogenesis.

¹ Evidence for the Big Bang and its concomitant expanding universe, in addition to the spectral redshifts of the galaxies, stems from the radiation afterglow, a remnant of the initial heat from the Big Bang, and the great galaxy seeds in the radiation afterglow.

Meyer's Three Lines of Scientific Evidence for Theism

In his latest book, *The Return of the God Hypothesis: Three Scientific Discoveries Revealing the Mind Behind the Universe*,² Meyer, in view of the universe's genesis, considers, following the general pattern of abductive inference,³ three lines of scientific evidence in favor of theism to explain the causal agency responsible for such a beginning, viz.: (1) evidence for the creation of the universe, (2) for the fine-tuning of the universe for life, and (3) for the creation of the genetic code in the cells of all life. This goes against the orthodox scientific view articulated by, say, Stephen Hawking in his posthumous work, *Brief Answers to the Great Questions*,⁴ where he quite candidly shares a widespread anti-metaphysical bias: "The big question in cosmology in the early 1960s was did the universe have a beginning? Many scientists were instinctively opposed to the idea, because they felt that a point of creation would be a place where science broke down. One would have to appeal to religion and the hand of God to determine how the universe would start off."⁵ This is to say, "One would have to invoke an outside agency, which for convenience one can call God, to determine how the universe began."⁶ Meyer argues the evidence for a theistic view by critically considering the competing hypotheses for the Big Bang singularity that took place some 13.9 billion years ago, viz.: naturalism (materialism), pantheism, deism and theism.

Regarding naturalism, for Meyer, puts it this way: it "fails to explain the origin of the universe because it denies the existence of any entity external to nature, but theism postulates the existence of precisely such a transcendent entity as a cause. Thus, insofar as God, as conceived by theists, transcends space and time, matter and energy and insofar as the causal explanation of the universe itself requires the existence of some entity separate from the universe to 'do the causing' the God hypothesis provides a better, more causally adequate explanation than naturalism for the evidence of a beginning to the universe."⁷ Indeed the view that the universe can create itself from nothing, as naturalism holds, amounts to a flagrant violation of the principle of sufficient reason, better the Kalam argument, for to say that the Big Bang singularity, the birth of the universe—can, at the same time, be its own reason for existence—is to contend that it existed absurdly prior to its existence in order to create itself, violating the dictum: *ex nihilo, nihil fit*. It should be added that what does not have a beginning does not need a cause to explain its existence; this

² Published by Harper 21 (2021); henceforth: *God Hypothesis*.

³ Abduction is defined as a syllogism in which the major premise is evident but the minor premise and therefore the conclusion only probable. This form of reasoning forms a conclusion from the information or evidence that is known leading to the best explanation.

⁴ Published in New York by Bantam Books (2018); henceforth: *Brief Answers*.

⁵ *Brief Answers*, p. 22.

⁶ *Brief Answers*, p. 43.

⁷ *God Hypothesis*, p. 301.

exception is solely applicable to God, that bringing all things into existence, itself cannot be caused, for a caused cause can involve one in the absurdity of positing an infinite regression of caused causes. For those who countering that a belief cannot be justified by a never-ending chain of justified belief and, instead, favor in current epistemology the view of Ininitism, that argues for the viability of infinite regress arguments, there are viable responses to this rather extravagant proposal.⁸

Regarding pantheism, Meyer dismisses it on two counts. First, it fails to serve as the agency for the origin of the universe because, like naturalism, the “god of pantheism exists within, and is coextensive with, the physical universe.”⁹ Since such a god does not exist independently of the physical universe, it cannot serve as the agent of creation; second, because “the god of pantheism is not a personal agent, let alone one possessing libertarian freedom, a pantheistic notion of god does not help to resolve the explanatory dilemma posed by the abrupt change of state at the beginning of the universe.”¹⁰ Both naturalism and pantheism fail to provide causally adequate explanations because they deny the existence of an intelligent agent existing before or independently of the universe that can account for the fine tuning or the origin of the universe.¹¹

Of the remaining candidates, deism and theism, though both acknowledge the existence of an intelligent agent existing prior to the beginning of the universe, Meyer holds that theism provides a better explanatory system than deism in view of three key facts about biological and cosmological origins: “(1) the material universe had a beginning; (2) the material universe has been finely tuned for life from the beginning; and (3) large discontinuous increases in functionally specified information have entered the biosphere since the beginning.”¹² Regarding (3), for Meyer, given the facts of molecular biology, the axioms of information theory, the laws of thermodynamics, the high-energy state of the early universe, the reality of unpredictable quantum fluctuations, and what we know about the time that elapsed between the origin of the universe and the first life on earth, “explanations of the origin of life that deny the need for new information after the beginning of the universe clearly lack scientific plausibility.”¹³ Further, given that for deism there is no possibility post-creation that God could have infused such needed knowledge, deism cannot explain the origin of the first life.¹⁴ For Meyer, whereas deism can explain the first two of those facts, theism covers all three.

⁸ See Jason A Dewitt, "Arguments Against Peter Klein's Ininitism" (2017).
https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_chanhonoproj/2007.

⁹ *God Hypothesis*, p. 307.

¹⁰ *God Hypothesis*, p. 307.

¹¹ *God Hypothesis*, p. 332.

¹² *God Hypothesis*, p. 351.

¹³ *God Hypothesis*, p. 351.

¹⁴ *God Hypothesis*, p. 351.

Now, regarding the evidence for the fine-tuning of the universe for life, scientists concur that the physical parameters of the universe are exquisitely set for life. These constants include energy constants (e.g., gravitational attraction, weak force and strong force coupling), gravity constantly the same, individuating constants such as the rest mass of a proton and an electron or the unit charge of a proton or an electron, the many stars, rate of expansion, actual material density. To illustrate such an exacting constant consider the force of gravity: If it was in any way weaker, there would be no molecules for all would separate apart after the Big Bang. Yet, if the force of gravity were marginally stronger then all would be conflated such that life would have been rendered impossible. Such constants provide, for Meyer, the ground for arguing that the creator of the universe is also its designer. Yet to skirt this argument pointing to a designer, the so-called multiverse is invoked, arguing for the existence of other universes in an attempt to discredit the uniqueness of this one. Still the multiverse is a construction of the mind for which there is no evidence: It is unobservable, non-falsifiable, no predictions can be based on a multiverse, amounting to a veritable violation of Ockham's principle of parsimony. Indeed, for Meyer, this is an example of what he calls "exotic naturalism," that posits "other unknown realms ... to explain naturalistically otherwise inexplicable phenomena of *this* universe, such as its beginning and fine tuning."¹⁵

Finally, as evidence for the existence of a theistic God, Meyer points to the genetic code that, found in all life forms since the emergence of life 3.5 billion years ago, contains specific information for the composition of proteins necessary for life. For Meyer it is foolhardy to hold that the complexity involved in the structure of a single cell could have arisen stochastically from some primordial soup, nor is it serious to hold the panspermia hypothesis whereby aliens brought the first cell to the earth.¹⁶ For Meyer the "signature" of the creator is revealed in the DNA code, the program that specifies the molecular machinery necessary for life. He states,

Yet the specific sequencing of the nucleotide bases in DNA and RNA constitutes precisely the feature of the cell that origin-of-life biologists need to explain. If lawlike processes of chemical attraction do not determine the

¹⁵ *God Hypothesis*, p. 325 (italics mine). Moreover, no intelligent being within the cosmos after the Big Bang could be responsible for the fine tuning in the universe, for no such being could have set the initial conditions of the universe upon which its later evolution and existence would depend (*God Hypothesis*, p. 318).

¹⁶ Meyer also rules out the preposterous notion of panspermia, that the first cell was somehow brought to the earth by aliens from distant galaxies proposed by those wishing at all costs to avoid the God hypothesis. What, may it be asked, about the origins of the aliens themselves. Meyer writes, "the panspermia hypothesis does not explain either the ultimate origin of life in the universe or the fine tuning of the universe—to say nothing of the origin of the universe itself. Instead, if intelligent design best explains the fine tuning of the universe, then the kind of intelligence necessary to explain the fine tuning of the universe must in some way preexist or exist independently of the material universe. Indeed, any designing intelligence responsible for the cosmological fine tuning must have had the capability of setting the parameters and initial conditions from the beginning (*God Hypothesis*, p. 318).

specific sequencing of nucleotide bases, then biochemists cannot reasonably invoke such “self-organizational” processes as the explanation for the origin of that information contained in the nucleotide base sequences. (It turns out that the information stored in RNA and proteins also defies explanation by self-organizing forces of chemical attraction).¹⁷

For Meyer, “chemical evolutionary models fail to account for the origin of the information necessary to produce the first cell, but also because we know—based upon our uniform and repeated experience—that intelligent agents, and no other kind of cause, can and do generate specified digital information—the kind of information present in the biomacromolecules necessary for life.”¹⁸ This position is in line with the notion of irreducible complexity put forth by Michael Behe, who claims that some biochemical structures are too complex to be explained by known evolutionary mechanisms and are therefore probably the result of intelligent design. Behe in his latest book contends that “the science of Darwin’s day had no understanding of the molecular foundation of life. Only now, only within the past twenty years has science advanced sufficiently to examine life in the molecular detail necessary to rigorously test Darwin’s ideas.”¹⁹ Accordingly, it was no longer feasible to conclude that mutations alone can account for the vast differences existing between species; indeed, if the universe is 13.8 billion years, there is not enough years for random mutations to account for the formidable diversity of life on earth.²⁰

Finally, for Meyer, the theistic God of cosmogenesis and biogenesis is a free personal agent, who, “with such freedom of will, can initiate a new chain of cause and effect without being compelled by any prior material conditions. Since minds

¹⁷ *God Hypothesis*, p. 343.

¹⁸ *God Hypothesis*, pp. 346-47.

¹⁹ Michael J. Behe, *Darwin Devolves: The New Science About DNA That Challenges Evolution* (Harper, 2019), p. 256. In this latest book, Behe examines critically various mechanisms thought to enhance the chances for Darwin’s theory to be plausible, including: master genes, inclusive inheritance, niche construction, developmental plasticity. Yet, none of these mechanisms explain the sophisticated machinery of life nor the purposeful arrangement of parts (p. 137).

²⁰ Meyer contends that during the Cambrian explosion, about 541 million years ago, a large number of species sprang without a trace—without a fossil record—of earlier incarnations. “Although the Cambrian explosion of animals is especially striking, it is far from the only “explosion” of new living forms. The first winged insects, birds, flowering plants, mammals, and many other groups also appear abruptly in the fossil record, with no apparent connection to putative ancestors in the lower, older layers of fossil-bearing sedimentary rock. Evolutionary theorist Eugene Koonin describes this as a “biological big bang” pattern. As he notes, “Major transitions in biological evolution show the same pattern of sudden emergence of diverse forms at a new level of complexity. The relationships between major groups . . . do not seem to fit the pattern that, following Darwin’s original proposal, remains the dominant description of biological evolution” (Koonin, “The Biological Big Bang Model for the Major Transitions in Evolution”). In the *Origin of Species*, Darwin depicted the history of life as a gradually unfolding, branching tree, with the trunk representing the first one-celled organisms and the branches representing all the species that evolved from these first forms. In this view, novel animal and plant species arose from a series of simpler precursors and intermediate forms over vast stretches of geologic time. Darwin argued vigorously for this view. At the same time, he acknowledged that the sudden appearance of many major groups of organisms in the fossil record did not fit easily into his picture of gradual evolutionary change” (*God Hypothesis*, pp. 230-31).

with free agency can initiate new chains of cause and effect without being compelled, the action of a free agent eliminates the need for an infinite regress of prior material states—and thus an infinite universe at odds with empirical observations.”²¹ In proposing his God hypothesis, the reasoning he employs follows Peircean abduction with no attempt to prove or *demonstrate* the existence of a theistic God but instead to render his existence *most plausible* in the light of the existing evidence: “In other words, even if we can’t prove God’s existence with absolute certainty, we may have better reasons for affirming a theistic view of the ‘nature of nature’ and the ‘prime reality’ than for affirming other metaphysical systems of thought.”²² This said, although Meyer does not take into consideration chaos theory, such indeterminism in nature may be read in a manner amenable to divine action in the world wherein chaotic dynamics and complexity theory provide a window, an aperture, an ontological opening, in the physical order for divine activity.²³

A Rielian Reading of two Contemporary Proposals for the Theistic God of Creation

If one were to articulate the theistic God of creation, the question arises as to which conception of God would one proffer. In 2018 Bishop Robert Barron and Dr. William Lane Craig met in order to debate their respective views on such a God.²⁴ Barron argued for the philosophical God of Thomistic metaphysics in which God’s supreme attribute is divine simplicity, the most controversial of the divine attributes, while Craig understands God scripturally, as Blessed Trinity. A Rielian reading of both proposals takes issue with Barron’s conception of God for it expresses an identity-laden view of the Absolute, while Craig promotes a God that is without the rational support of a properly metaphysical warrant.

Barron’s Thomistic Metaphysical Divine Simplicity

In the case of Barron, he explains God in terms of his principal attribute, viz., divine simplicity, and this in line with the well-known Thomistic understanding, signifying that God transcends every form of composition or complexity, such that God is without parts, division, differentiation, for every composite being is made up of act and potency, proper of limited existents. Accordingly, God cannot be

²¹ *God Hypothesis*, p. 303.

²² *God Hypothesis*, p. 286.

²³ J. Polkinghorne, *Science and Creation: The Search for Understanding*, (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1989).

²⁴ Robert Barron vs. William L. Craig: A Symposium on Divine Simplicity on March 8, 2018; henceforth: Barron-Craig Debate. See the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzhK2FrBDPM>.

construed as being composed of matter (potency) and form (act) composition, substance (potency) and accidents (act) composition, and existence (act) and essence (potency) composition, given that all of these refer to partite entities composed of the interplay of potency and actuality, where potency immediately conjures limitation and malleability. Moreover, according to Aquinas, in finite beings, there is a real distinction between the fact that a thing exists (its *esse*, the act of to be) and what a thing is (its *essentia*), for the existence-essence composite discloses that a potential essence, say, a rock, Peter or Mary, or an angel constituting its own species, actually exists in view of the act of *esse* or existence. Divine simplicity rules out all such composition in God, who alone is bereft of any distinctions whatsoever.²⁵

Hence, in the case of God there is no limiting principle, for God's essence is synonymous with pure, unadulterated existence itself. God's essence is identical with His infinite act of to be, that is, God is *ipsum esse subsistens*, the subsistent existence itself. Aquinas' understanding of divine simplicity underscores the identity of essence and existence; moreover, his unicity renders impossible God's being multiplied into any number of infinities. Indeed with no principle of essence or potential existence of the infinite act of to be, one can assert God's immutability or reject any possibility of change, while setting aside the limitations of space and time proper to material beings that gives rise to God's endless duration or his eternity.

The sorely problematic issue arises when attempting to reconcile this notion of the divine nature as utterly simple, bereft of any distinctions or differentiations whatever, and this in wholly and absolute terms, with that of the Blessed Trinity, that God is One and Three Persons, the God of Christianity. How can the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity be reconciled with the notion of the divine nature that is inimical to distinctions? What does it mean to say that the persons of the Trinity are understood as *subsisting relations* of the divine nature? In theology the relation of divine paternity constitutes the distinct First Person of the Trinity, the relation of the divine filiation constitutes the distinct Second Person, and the relation of the divine procession constitutes the distinct Third Person, with each, albeit, identical at the same time with the one divine essence or nature. For sure, when we speak of God's acts of generation and spiration, one must not conceive of these as in any way really distinct from the divine essence or nature itself.

William Lane Craig's Biblical Blessed Trinity

Craig contends that the doctrine of divine simplicity is a notion of God that is hopelessly abstract and distorted, that draws on pagan philosophical sources, having nothing to do with the living and personal God of the Bible. Instead, Craig argues that there is no need to understand the doctrine of divine simplicity in terms of the

²⁵ ST, 1, q3.

Thomistic real distinction between essence and existence, that should be understood as merely conceptual. To safeguard the doctrine of divine simplicity, Craig maintains that it is enough if: “We reject constituent ontologies; we should not think of things as metaphysically composed in any way. In this sense everything is simple... God is not composed of separable parts. That suffices for a Biblical and philosophically intelligible doctrine of divine simplicity..... The IV Lateran Council affirms God to be absolutely simple, and the I Vatican Council, but neither Council cashes out these expressions in Thomistic terms.”²⁶

In another text, Craig amplifies the sense in which Thomas’ doctrine of divine simplicity is in conflict with the Biblical notion of the Blessed Trinity. He states,

“Intuitively, it seems obvious that a being which is absolutely without composition and transcends all distinctions cannot have real relations subsisting within it, much less be three distinct persons. More specifically, Aquinas’ contention that each of the three persons has the same divine essence entails, given divine simplicity, that each person just is that essence. But if two things are identical with some third thing, they are identical with each other. Therefore, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit cannot be distinct persons or relations.”²⁷

For Craig, indeed, the issue is with how a “person” can be equated with a relation: “Relations do not cause things, know truths, or love people in the way the Bible says God does. Moreover, to think that the intentional objects of God’s knowing Himself and loving Himself constitute in any sense really distinct persons is wholly implausible. Even if God the Father were a person, and not a mere relation, there is no reason, even in Aquinas’ own metaphysical system, why the Father as understood and loved by Himself would be different persons. The distinction involved here is merely that between oneself as subject (“I”) and as object (“me”). There is no more reason to think that the individual designated by “I”, “me”, and “myself” constitute a plurality of persons in God’s case than in any human being’s case.”²⁸ For Craig, this, at the end, would be a conception of the Trinity that would emerge as a form of modalism.

Rielo’s Critique of the Pseudo-Principle of Identity Affecting Metaphysical Conceptions of the Absolute

²⁶ Barron-Craig Debate.

²⁷ William Lane Craig, “A Formulation and Defense of the Doctrine of the Trinity,” in *Reasonable Faith with William Lane Craig*; henceforth: *Defense of the Doctrine of the Trinity*. See <https://www.reasonablefaith.org/writings/scholarly-writings/christian-doctrines/a-formulation-and-defense-of-the-doctrine-of-the-trinity/>.

²⁸ *Defense of the Doctrine of the Trinity*.

Though Craig is quite content with the Biblical understanding of the Blessed Trinity, he does acknowledge that the doctrine of the Trinity belongs to revealed theology rather than to natural theology, and then he asks “if there are any positive arguments which might be offered on behalf of the plausibility of that doctrine.”²⁹ Riello supplies the arguments in favor of the Trinity by first showing how the properly metaphysical conception of God is—not an identity-laden one—but of a *Binity*, not composed, but *constituted by two personal beings*. For Riello, whereas it is commonplace to derive the Thomistic teaching on divine simplicity in terms of the metaphysics of Plato, Neo-Platonism, Augustine and Aristotle, there is a failure to see Parmenides as the underlying culprit. For Parmenides *being as “indivisible”* excludes any possible composition or difference or distinction or relation within ultimate reality because it cannot be but “all alike,” for any differentiation introduced in being would involve contradiction, i.e., the affirmation that something other than a constitutively, homogenous and continuous, self-same identity exists. If, for example, Parmenides’ being, *in and as*, being is identified with the absolute, then the cosmos and all it includes must be conceived as having no existential integrity, that is, an utterly monolithic and singular being with no intrinsic nor extrinsic relational propensity whatsoever. The form of the predication “being is being” or “being is uncreated” or “the uncreated is being,” etc., are but various forms of the identity-laden tautology “A is A,” and “A is B,” “B is A,” hence “A=B,” where one avoids a non-axiomatic *definiens* susceptible to infinite regress by defining an unknown *definiendum* “being” by a reasoned *definiens* “indivisible” and, say, “immutable,” that are, nonetheless, susceptible to the charge of circularity and the *petitio principii*. Indeed all that is reducible to “A is A” are expressions of—what Riello terms—the pseudoprinciple of identity that confer a tautological stranglehold to whatever it is applied.

Since Parmenides this view of an identity absolute appears again in Plato’s *Summum Bonum*, an alleged reality constituted in self-identity, that is nonetheless paradoxically in relation to the archetypical *Forms* and these to their finite material *instantiations*. In Neo-Platonism, Plotinus exploits this Platonic triad with a notion of a *One* that is wholly in self-identity, utterly removed from all difference and distinction, from which nonetheless, paradoxically, *Nous* and *World Soul* emanate. Though Aristotle’s *Unmoved Mover* complies fully with the Parmenidean notion of being, allegedly existing in and for itself, yet he nonetheless further speaks of its paradoxical relation with *finite natural being* via final causality. Aquinas elevates his *ipsum esse subsistens* to absolute, a purported reality in a state of utter self-identity from which paradoxically the Divine Persons are enigmatically related as *subsistent relations*. Craig’s position on this view, again, is instructive: “Aquinas’ contention

²⁹ Defense of the Doctrine of the Trinity.

that each of the three persons has the same divine essence entails, given divine simplicity, that each person just is that essence. But if two things are identical with some third thing, they are identical with each other. Therefore, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit cannot be distinct persons or relations.”³⁰

Riello’s Metaphysical Conception of God as Binity and its Contribution to Cosmogogenesis

In the light of the foregoing, if the conception of God as expressed in the notion of Thomistic divine simplicity is enigmatic vis à vis the Trinity, is there a way of expressing metaphysically the Triune God in a manner that upholds the Trinity as constituted by different persons that are nonetheless complementary, capable of serving as the agent of creation. Indeed, we will endeavor to show that Riello’s conception of the metaphysical absolute as *Binity* is most suited to serve as creator and designer God, as the metaphysical confirmation of Meyer’s God hypothesis, of the cosmos or of all that is.

Riello’s Metaphysical Genetic Conception of God as Binity

Riello rejects the tautological character of the pseudoprinciple of identity which renders metaphysical and ontological relation impossible. He, instead, proposes the *genetic conception of the principle of relation* or the *genetic principle*.³¹ In this respect, Riello rejects the formulation of God or the Absolute as “Absolute Being,” which is the elevation to absolute of a single term, *being*, in self-identity, and, instead, proposes the expression “Absolute Subject,” which is constituted, on the intellectual level, by at the very least two terms or beings, the Binity,³² at the dianoetic level of reason proper of metaphysics (and of three terms or beings, the *Trinity*, at the hypernoetic level of infused faith proper of revealed theology), and not less than two because one would incur, in this case, in a single relationless alleged reality in utter self-identity, such as the traditional view of divine simplicity, wholly bereft of intrinsic relation and hence of extrinsic relation, another example of the application of the pseudoprinciple of identity.³³ For Riello, the paradigm of all reality is *being* +, being and its more, for there is no such a thing as a being in a being but a being in another being, in terms of its +. Moreover, the two beings—[B₁] in a state of

³⁰ Defense of the Doctrine of the Trinity.

³¹ Fernando. Riello, “*Concepción genética del principio de relación*,” III Congreso Mundial de Filosofía Cristiana (Quito, July 9-14, 1989).

³² Marie Lise Gazarian, *Fernando Riello: Dialogue with Three Voices*, trans. by David G. Murray (Madrid: Editorial Fernando Riello, 2000), p. 133; henceforth: *Dialogue*.

³³ See Riello, *Dialogue*, pp. 132ff. Cf. José M. López Sevillano, Introduction, in Fernando Riello, *The Genetic Model in My Thought*, trans. by David G. Murray (Madrid: Editorial Fernando Riello, 2004), p. 29.

immanent complementarity with [B₂]—must be *personal* beings, that is, [P₁] in a state of immanent complementarity with [P₂], because the person, for Rielo, is the maximum expression of being, meaning that they are omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent,... Metaphysically, the two personal beings, the Binity,³⁴ constitute, in turn, the *unum geneticum* versus the identity-laden *unum simpliciter* of traditional metaphysics. Please note that, for Rielo, while a third divine person is confirmed in Christ's revelation (Jn 15:26), the Holy Spirit represents a transrational surplus that is not accessible without the gift of faith, although Rielo contends that there is, nonetheless, rationally speaking, an *intellectual index* in favor of the existence of [P₃] in the light of the functions it fulfills.³⁵ ***For Rielo the emphasis must be placed on the personal beings themselves constituting the sole Absolute, for they and only they constitute their sole existence, essence, nature, infinitude, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, truth, goodness, beauty, unity, perfection, processions, properties, and these in a binitarian way, such that the divine essence is not divine essence insofar as it is divine essence but divine binitarian essence, binitarian nature, binitarian omniscience...*** The divine persons themselves constitute their essence as they are not derived magically from some sort of magma, the absurdity of a fourth identity-laden, impenetrable, monolith, *ipsum esse subsistens*, to which the divine persons must somehow be paradoxically annexed or appended or connected or related. Indeed, the IV Lateran Council declares that it is solely the divine persons themselves and these alone that constitute the divinity.³⁶

From what has been said, then, the divine simplicity, at the dianoetic level, is binitarian (at the hypernoetic level trinitarian). The divine simplicity is indeed far from all physical compositivity and all psychological complexity. The divine simplicity is not multiple but plural (from *plus-pluris* = more, “+”). The plural is +:

³⁴ Rielo, *Dialogue*, p. 133.

³⁵ The functions that the third person fulfills, according to Rielo, are to serve (a) as replica of the active *ingenitude* of [P₁] which does not pass to [P₂] because, in this case, [P₂] would also be unbegotten, rupturing in this manner the identity of “unbegottenness is unbegottenness”; and (b) as replica of the active *ingerant* of [P₂] which does not pass to [P₁] because, in this inverse case, [P₁] would also be begotten, rupturing in this manner the identity “begottenness is begottenness.” See Fernando Rielo, “Hacia una nueva concepción metafísica del ser” in *¿Existe una filosofía española?* (Seville: Editorial Fernando Rielo, 1988), p. 123; henceforth: *Hacia una nueva concepción*. According to Rielo the distinction between genetic metaphysics and theology follows: “Metaphysics studies—*sub ratione absolutitatis*—the genetic conception of the principle of relation constituted, on an intellectual level, by two personal beings in immanent intrinsic complementarity, [P₁ complementary to P₂], and, on a revealed level, by three personal beings in immanent intrinsic complementarity, [P₁ complementary to P₂ complementary to P₃]. Theology, in turn, studies the same genetic conception of the principle of relation *sub ratione divinitatis*. [...] The object of ontology or mystical theology is, in turn, the human being defined by the divine constitutive presence who is a mystical or ontological deity of the divine or metaphysical deity” (Rielo, *Dialogue*, p. 135).

³⁶ IV Lateran Council, 2: “We, however, with the approval of this sacred and universal council, believe and confess ... that there exists a certain supreme reality, incomprehensible and ineffable, which truly is the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit, the three persons together and each one of them separately. Therefore in God there is only a Trinity, not a quaternity, since each of the three persons is that reality — that is to say substance, essence or divine nature—which alone is the principle of all things, besides which no other principle can be found.” See <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/councils/ecum12-2.htm#1>

the + of the Father is the Son; the + of the Father and the Son is the Holy Spirit. This is to say, for Rielo, that the two divine persons constitute ONE sole Absolute Subject in a “*state of immanent, intrinsic complementarity*,” without thereby incurring in the paradox of the double absolute. To understand this, it is necessary to review the meaning of the expression, “in a state of immanent, intrinsic complementarity.” The term “immanent” indicates that it is not possible for one person [P₁] to transcend the other [P₂] or vice versa, for in this case subordinationism would be introduced into the Absolute Subject. The term “intrinsic” underscores the fact that the relation between the two persons is a constitutive or essential one such that one term cannot be but in constitutive relation to the other nor can the other be but in constitutive relation to the first term such that the two personal beings are *entirely open* one to the other to such a degree that [P₁] *is entirely in* [P₂] and [P₂] *is entirely in* [P₁].³⁷ Hence each person constituting the Binity possesses the other personal being such that one person cannot be conceived as, say, one half of the absolute, for each person possesses the other person intrinsically, i.e., both persons mutually indwell in each other. The genetic principle accordingly eradicates any conception of identity as a metaphysical principle, for there is no such a thing as a self-same “being in being,” i.e., a being *per se*, being *simpliciter*, a *solus ipse*, a monological absolute in constitutive relation to itself. Much to the contrary, all absolute reality or relative reality is *constituted by relation*. Finally, the term “complementarity” underscores that the two personal beings, [P₁] and [P₂], while being really distinct, nonetheless are constitutively and essentially necessary one to the other, constituting, in turn, the absolute unity of one *single* Absolute Subject with its *sole* absolute act.³⁸ Rielo’s genetic metaphysics, hence, does not provide a generic notion of the Absolute in terms of the identity of a unipersonalist monotheism, that is without possible existential integrity, but a Binitarian conception, constituted by two personal beings, the genuinely universal conception of the Divinity, that is oriented towards a Trinitarian conception.³⁹

Further, the two personal beings cannot be conceived either as absolutely *different* for, in this case, the two persons would be in a state of hopeless contradiction, nor can they be understood as absolutely the *same* for, in this case, identity is introduced. Rielo argues that the only possible way to conceive the personal beings constituting the Absolute as both *different yet the same* is to conceive the first personal being [P₁], as the origin or progenitor, who engenders or transmits as *agent action* the whole of his genetic patrimony to [P₂], who receives as

³⁷ José M. López Sevillano, “Introducción,” in Fernando Rielo Pardal, *Mis meditaciones desde el modelo genético* (Madrid: Editorial Fernando Rielo, 2001), p. 18.

³⁸ This term has nothing to do with Neils Bohr’s use of the term ‘complementarity’ to mean jointly necessary but mutually exclusive conditions.

³⁹ See Fernando Rielo, “Hacia una nueva concepción,” p. 123.

receptive action the agent action of [P₁]. In this case [P₁] and [P₂] are the same in that they possess the same genetic patrimony, yet they are different insofar as the two personal beings have different metaphysical roles: [P₁] serves as agent action or progenitor of [P₂], while [P₂] serves as receptive action or replica of [P₁]. Hence [P₂], in being constitutively formed by the genetic patrimony conferred upon him by [P₁], is defined by [P₁] as replica; yet, [P₁] in being actively received by [P₂] is defined by [P₂] as progenitor for, in receiving the genetic patrimony conferred by [P₁], [P₂] renders [P₁]'s act of engendering efficacious, such that [P₁] and [P₂] are mutually “subject” to each other. Hence, the two persons constitute sole *Absolute Subject* without circularity or question begging, mutually defining each other as *definiens* and being defined by each other as *definiendum*. It is to be noted that [P₂] does not receive its existence from [P₁], for in this case [P₂] would be created; both [P₁] and [P₂] have their own existence as divine persons.

Although for Rielo the question of who may be [P₂] cannot be resolved on an intellectual level alone, he maintains that Christ himself declares quite explicitly in his revelation that the Father and he constitute the *unum geneticum*: “*Ego et Pater unum sumus*” (“I and the Father are one”) (Jn 10:30). The metaphysical One is not constituted by an identity-term—being, the good, substance, *esse*,...—but rather by a *relation* constituted by two, metaphysically, personal beings (theologically, three divine persons). In speaking as a divine person, he further states: “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life” (Jn 14:6). Indeed, some of his religious contemporaries “tried all the more to kill him, because... he called God his own Father, making himself *equal* to God” (Jn 5:18, italics mine). Christ, further, eradicates the identity of being *simpliciter* by stating that the two personal divine persons *indwell* each other: “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.... Do you not believe that *I am in the Father* and the *Father is in me*?” (Jn 14:9ff, italics mine). This indwelling presence of one being *in* another is such that both relational persons are *in* a state of intrinsic aperture one to the other, defining each other mutually. In this way, Christ’s formulation of the Absolute is not in any way self-certifying, and hence not susceptible to the charge of the *petitio principii*. According then to Rielo, it is Jesus Christ who alone and solely is the metaphysician par excellence of history, the one who, rupturing identity-conceptions of the absolute, informs humanity of the true divinity as constituted metaphysically by a Binity (theologically by a Trinity).

Genetic Conception of What is not the Absolute Subject

With the articulation of Rielo’s robust binitarian Absolute, it should be underscored that the Binity with its absolute act renders eternally impossible, *a priori*, absolute nothingness by being eternally present in the void and subjecting what is not the absolute subject to itself. It is Rielo who historically furnishes the

first metaphysical absolute capable of serving as the agent of creation. For Riello, if the Absolute were not persons in relation, nothing would exist because an absolute that is absolutely in lack of internal relation would lack extrinsic relation outside of itself to create. The lack of relation is the essence of absolute nothingness. Given that the Binity, as non-identitatical, is *intrinsically, ad intra*, constitutively open and relational, it is relational *extrinsically, ad extra*, in the realm “outside” of the Absolute Subject, i.e., in the “void” of being. To deny the existence of the realm that is not the Absolute Subject or outside the Absolute, i.e., the realm of the void of being, the “locus” for creation, would be tantamount to saying that if anything did exist, such as the world, it would have to be identified with the Absolute itself, thereby leading to the absurdity of pantheism. This said, within a genetic conception of the Absolute Subject, the rift then between the absolute and the relative, between the infinite and the finite that could not be overcome within conceptions that apply the so-called principle of identity where the absolute as an identity could be in no relation with that which is relative, as takes place in the irresolvable dichotomies such as the spirit-matter dichotomy. Neither the Absolute nor the realm *ad extra* to the Absolute is understood as closed identities; rather the Absolute Subject with its *ad extra* presence renders the void eternally *open* to the Absolute and to its creative influence. Just as there is absolutely no truth to an identity-ridden absolute, so in the realm outside of the absolute, the same Absolute Subject eternally, with its *ad extra* presence, eradicates any possibility of the self-same identity of the “void of being is void of being” by eternally being present in that realm. The *void* imbued with the *ad extra* presence of the Absolute Subject is called the *phenos*, which is subabsolute, subinfinite, subeternal, spaceless, changeless, indeed the “locus” for a free creation,⁴⁰ *ex geneticae possibilitate*.⁴¹ Creation is accordingly not *ex nihilo* for this is derived from an identity-conception of what is not the absolute, a void in a void in utter self-identity; rather, for Riello, the Absolute eternally has been present in the void, rupturing any possibility of the identity of a void in a void, subjecting the void to itself, and therein determining what can be created within the genetic possibility of this realm, the *phenos*, or the void indwelt by the divine presence of the Absolute Subject.

Indeed, for Riello, Lemaitre’s “primeaval atom” is the *phenos*, the void of being that has been indwelt eternally by the Binity, not accessible by the instruments of experimental science.⁴² The Binity has been present in the midst of the “void,” sweeping it as genetic wave and imprinting its presence as genetic ray, thereby measuring the void, mathematizing it, objectifying it, codifying it, designing it in all

⁴⁰ See Riello, *Dialogue*, p. 159.

⁴¹ From José María López Sevillano’s “Creación y evolución desde el pensamiento de F. Riello” (Paper presented at the UTPL, Rome, April 28, 2021); henceforth, “Creación y evolución.”

⁴² López Sevillano, *Creación y evolución*.

of its possibilities, and thereby establishing the conditions for creation from the genetic possibility therein, *ex genetica possibilitate*, for a free creation of the world with its beings and things in virtue of the omniscience and omnipotence of the same Binity. The essence of this “genetic possibility” is the *matemata*, i.e., the intelligent design of all the possibilities without incurring in the paradox of the double absolute of infinite possibilities.⁴³ Moreover Rielo rejects the false dichotomy between creationism and evolutionism, and instead speaks of a creation open to evolution and an evolution open to creation. This is to say that the history of the universe is evolution in creation and creation in evolution in a manner consistent with Meyer’s theistic God of cosmogenesis and biogenesis, i.e., a free personal agent, who, “with such freedom of will, can initiate a new chain of cause and effect without being compelled by any prior material conditions.”⁴⁴

Moreover, Rielo distinguishes between three forms of creation and in each case we have *being* (either a created inert thing or a living being, whether impersonal or personal) and its *more*: the *ad extra* presence of the Absolute Subject as creational and concreational principle that maintains the entities in existence.⁴⁵ Since all created reality is composed of the created element, **being**, and the uncreated presence of the Absolute Subject, the **more**, it is possible to see how creation and evolution is integrally present in the various orders of creation. (1) First the Big Bang of matter, the creation of vestigial **things** composed of material components and the phenomenological character of the physical, chemical... laws that structure inanimate things, from elementary particles to pre-cellular macromolecules, such as carbon, nucleic acids, proteins, fluids, lipids,..., as constituted by their **more** or the *actio in distans*, that is the creative action of the Binity. (2) Second, the **Big Bang of life or of impersonal living beings** that involves the formation of unicellular and pluricellular organisms that continue to evolve until they reach the compositivity of organisms ever more complex with tissue, organisms and functions ever more specialized, constituted extrinsically by the *divine reverberative presence* of the Binity. (3) Finally, the creation of **living personal beings**, where the creation and evolution of matter and life reaches such a degree of structural complexity that it is rendered capable of receiving the creation of an empowered consciousness (spirit), volitive and free (subject to development and maturity in biological time), constituted intrinsically by their **more**, the *divine constitutive presence* of the Binity.⁴⁶

⁴³ López Sevillano, Creación y evolución.

⁴⁴ See n. 21 above.

⁴⁵ Here Rielo also seems to be fleshing out a deeper and truer meaning of what is pointed to in forms of Process Creationism.

⁴⁶ It should be noted, moreover, that the expression “Big Bang,” although initially was employed as a derisive term, is malformed because the beginning of creation involves, first, no explosion since this supposes something physical nor, second, any expansion given that this already supposes the reality of space.

Human Persons as Homo Mysticus

A final word on the human being: Whereas the divine persons mutually define each other, for Riello the human person is defined by the divine constitutive presence, *ad extra* aperture, of the Absolute Subject in the created element of the human subject, defining the human person as a *homo mysticus*, as a finite being open to the infinite. Human persons, then, are a reality composed of two elements: one, *created*, referring to a psycho-somaticized spirit (empowered consciousness), and the other, *uncreated*, referring to the divine constitutive presence, that, by conferring upon them its very own hereditary character, make human persons ontological or mystical deities of the metaphysical or divine Divinity.⁴⁷ For sure, the divine constitutive presence in human beings does not mean that they are created in a state of sanctifying grace given that the *constitutive* presence fundamentally constitutes them as finite beings open to the infinite. Human personhood, moreover, is not contingent on whether or not human persons are capable of employing, for instance, their cognitive or volitional faculties given that the touchstone of human personhood derives from the divine constitutive presence regardless of whether one or more faculties are present or not.⁴⁸ For Riello, it is precisely the divine constitutive presence that grounds religions, humanitarian enterprises and all transcendent human acts. When the human being freely resists this formative influence, ideological forms of behavior and assembly emerge that yield personal and social disequilibria.

Concluding Words

After reviewing Meyer's reasoning, that argues in the light of scientific evidence in the areas of cosmology, physics and biology, for the God-hypothesis, a transcendent personal God responsible for the creation of the cosmos and life, as well for the fine tuning of the universe and biosphere, this paper has examined Riello's contribution to cosmogenesis and biogenesis by first providing the metaphysical conception of God or the Absolute as a Binity constituted by two personal beings. This involves articulating Riello's critique of the pseudoprinciple of identity that appears paradigmatically in Parmenides' notion of being as one and generally in the classical metaphysical tradition, including the Thomistic understanding of an identity-laden conception of the divine simplicity, of God, as

⁴⁷ Riello, *Dialogue*, p. 144f.

⁴⁸ Riello states, "It is Christ's merit to have provided this sublime, transcendent, and ontological definition of the human being on corroborating this mystical deity with his words: "You are gods" (Jn 10:34)... If we deny the deitactic, constitutive and sanctifying character of human persons, we amputate not only what is best in them, but also their reason for being and existing: their communion with the Absolute, which determines,..., the essence of their behavior and communication with their fellows" (Riello, "Psychoethical Philosophy" in *Genetic Model*, pp. 148-49).

ipsum esse subsistens. With the Absolute understood as the Binity, this paper further provides Craig Lane with the metaphysical ground for the Trinity in terms of a Binity oriented to a Trinity. Riello's genetic metaphysics further responds to the potential charge of the paradox of the double absolute by showing that the two terms, P_1 and P_2 , constitute the sole and singular Absolute Subject. This, in turn, made it possible to show the relevance of a binitarian absolute that further instantiates Meyer's personal God as consisting in a Binity, that intrinsically relational is also extrinsically relational and can thus be present in and penetrate the void of being eternally rendering, *a priori*, the impossibility of the identity of the void of being, opening this realm to the creative action of the Binity as the origin of the genesis of the cosmos, of the Big Bang singularity. Secondly, Meyer's personal God as responsible for the fine tuning of the universe and the biosphere, including the origin of life, is confirmed in Riello's Binity that, *present* in all the orders of reality, inert things, living impersonal beings and living personal beings, is the beneficent agent responsible for creation in evolution and evolution in creation. Indeed, Riello's Binity specifies the nature of the theistic personal agent proposed by Meyer as consisting not in a single person, which does not exist, but in two personal beings in a state of immanent, intrinsic complementarity, thereby constituting the sole Absolute Subject.

Finally, we conclude with words appealing for an end to the scientific bias on the question of cosmogenesis and biogenesis that extra-scientifically and myopically saturates educational curricula within the context of a purely naturalistic and atheistic perspective that is not warranted by what hard core science knows from a purely experimental viewpoint. This dishonest narrative, that, in order to skirt the God-hypothesis, invents far-fetched canards, like the notion of the multiverse or panspermia, proceeds to the detriment of the integral cognitive and volitional formation of educandi. Although, admittedly former metaphysical proposals of a theistic bent have been wanting in view of their incorporation of the pseudo-principle of identity and their susceptibility to the fallacy of the *petitio principii*, the metaphysics of Fernando Riello, for one, provides the possibility of presenting a metaphysical account of cosmogenesis and biogenesis not affected by the sterility of closed identity-laden proposed absolutes. There is indeed a need to consider children's vital questions, such as "Where do I come from? Where am I going? What is the meaning of my life? within the context of an ample intellectual landscape. To answer these extra-scientific questions, one needs to turn to metaphysics, religion, and the humanities for enlightening vistas. There is a need for scientists closed within the irrational strictures of naturalism to become familiar with the philosophical discipline of metaphysics and its complementary relation to experimental science, especially as exemplified here in the metaphysics of Fernando Riello.