

Theology Meets Philosophy of Science

Guest editors:

Meghan D. Page, Loyola University Maryland, US
Ignacio Silva, Universidad Austral, Argentina

Religious Studies in collaboration with the SET Foundations Project calls for papers that integrate practice-based philosophy of science with topics in philosophy of religion and theology. The best submitted paper, as judged by a committee, will receive a prize of \$5,000. That paper, along with others selected, will be published in a special issue of *Religious Studies*.

Although both practice-based philosophy of science and philosophy of religion and theology explore topics such as causation, explanation, laws of nature, natural kinds, representation, models, and evidence, there is a significant lack of constructive dialogue between them. However, we believe that deeper theological and philosophical interaction with practice-based philosophy of science is likely to produce novel approaches to the big questions in theology and philosophy of religion.

This new approach encourages scholars to explore general questions regarding the aims and methods of scientific practice rather than emphasize specific scientific theories or theses. We are particularly interested in work by philosophers of religion and theologians that engages with recent literature in practice-based philosophy of science, exemplified by questions such as: How do scientific explanations work? How do scientists use models? How do causal concepts vary across different domains of scientific inquiry? What are scientific “laws” and do all scientific theories employ them? How do we determine what counts as “good” science? We take this approach to be distinct from theory-based philosophy of science, which focuses on the metaphysical implications of particular scientific theories.

We do not intend to privilege any style or tradition of theology or philosophy. We hope scholars from across the globe will integrate philosophy of science into their preferred theological or philosophical approach. We view this engagement as one aspect of a rich and complex theological methodology, to be appropriately paired with historical, social, and textual analysis. We invite philosophers of religion and theologians to submit papers that engage with this approach.

Examples of possible paper topics include:

- What counts as evidence for claims in theology and philosophy of religion?
- How do we understand the content and meaning of theological or religious terms? Do we gather our understanding of these terms from experience?
- What role do models play in theology? Is doctrine best thought of as a kind of model? Or is it something else?
- Can experience confirm or undermine theological claims?
- Are there multiple, distinctive strands of evidence used in theology? What are they?
- Can scientific evidence be used as support for theological views?
- Are theological explanations causal or non-causal? (Or is some particular theological explanation causal or non-causal?)
- Do multilevel explanations (which integrate more than one scientific theory) offer a path for integrating multiple levels of explanation in theology (e.g. reconciling human and divine action)?
- Are theological models like scientific models? Can scientific models offer a template for new models in theology?

Deadline for submissions: April 1, 2023

Full papers should be submitted via the ***Religious Studies* Portal** (a special section has been established for papers for this issue). Visit the ***Religious Studies*** homepage for a description of the journal and instructions to authors. More at setfoundations.com.