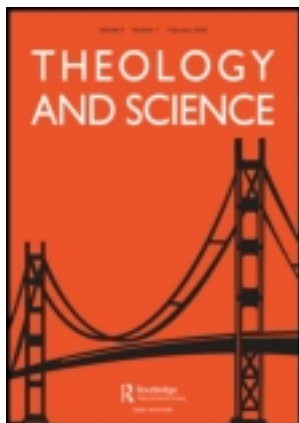


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A Response to Russell's Response

GENNARO AULETTA, IVAN COLAGÈ and LLUC TORCAL

Russell's response to our review of his *Time in Eternity* (TIE) honors us significantly, and confirms the truth-searching spirit of the author's endeavor. As a brief and hopefully thought-provoking response, we would like to comment on just one important point of Russell's response.

We focused our review on the issue of the continuity/discontinuity between the present Creation and the New Creation as far as their temporal structures are concerned. Russell precisely picks up the dichotomy we proposed:

There are two options here: (1) If we want to view the non-Hausdorff nature of time in the New Creation as an element of discontinuity between Creation (the present world) and New Creation, then time now would be Hausdorff. (2) If we want to view the non-Hausdorff nature of time in the New Creation as an element of continuity between Creation and New Creation, then time now would also be non-Hausdorff.

Then, he observes:

They [i.e. we] prefer option (1) because in their view option (2) runs up against my claim that our view of nature in the past and present must be informed by natural science and thus must be compatible with the assumption of methodological naturalism that underlies natural science. The implication they draw is that the presence of an eschatological non-Hausdorff time in the present, apparently Hausdorff, time would be incompatible with methodological naturalism.

Now, our point was not directly against "the presence of an eschatological non-Hausdorff time in the present"; our concern was about the idea of attributing *tout court* a non-Hausdorff (although hidden) structure to the time in the present Creation as a consequence of Russell's interesting idea that the New Creation has a non-Hausdorff but *temporal* character. The basis of our concern is twofold: (1) the great part of contemporary treatment of time in physics and cosmology assumes (with considerable—although clearly not absolute—success) that our universe's time is Hausdorff; (2) a non-Hausdorff conception of time in the present universe could prompt a revival of the "block-universe view"—although Russell is right in clarifying that this could be a non-necessary implication of a Hausdorff-like view of the universe's temporal structure, as this will depend on the detailed physics that such an assumption would bring with it.

With this in mind, however, it must be acknowledged that Russell's preference for option (2) stems from his creative mutual interaction (CMI) as a basic methodology in science and theology, and specifically from the idea that theological tenets may play a heuristic and prospective role in determining the paths of future scientific research. This is testified by the last pages of TIE, where Russell envisages possible research paths in physics and cosmology, addressing the time structure of the present universe, that would be sustained by the theological idea of a New Creation with a non-Hausdorff temporal structure back-affecting the present Creation *exactly in its temporal structure*. When (or if) such research paths will be successful and will bring to new physical results, our concerns about the methodological naturalism in option (2) will (or would) likely turn out to be much weaker if not essentially inadequate.

Crucial fundamental questions such as these are unlikely to be closed up at present and without further professional cross-disciplinary efforts. Thus, we would like to thank Bob Russell for his response, as it has given us the occasion to sharpen our point and to stress further the potential and prospective fruitfulness of TIE. We warmly wish that the discussions on the key points, hypotheses and suggestions raised by Russell's last book will continue and that such a debate will offer further stimuli in the striving for truth.

Biographical Notes

Gennaro Auletta is researcher at the University of Cassino, Aggregate Professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University, former Scientific Director of the STOQ Project, Fellow of the St Edmund's College of the University of Cambridge and associated of the von Hugel Institute of the University of Cambridge. Director of 5 research projects. Author and editor of 16 books. Author of more than 70 papers. Areas of interest: Metaphysics, Philosophy of Nature, Logic, Foundations and Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics, Quantum Information, System Biology, Cognitive Biology, Top-Down Causation in Biology and Neurosciences, Mathematical Definition of Complexity.

Ivan Colagè is invited professor at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical University Antonianum, Rome, where it actually also leads an interdisciplinary research project funded by the John Templeton Foundation.

Lluc Torcal has recently defended his PhD dissertation at the Pontifical Gregorian University on the ontology of quantum mechanics. He is Prior of the Monastery of St. Mary of Poblet, Catalonia, Spain.