

A decisive advance in understanding the origin of the cosmos was the consideration of being *qua* being and the concern of metaphysics with the most basic question of the first or transcendent origin of participated being. In order to develop and evolve, the world must first *be*, and thus have come from nothing into being. It must be created, in other words, by the first Being who is such by essence.

To state that the foundation of the cosmos and its developments is the provident wisdom of the Creator is not to say that creation has only to do with the beginning of the history of the world and of life. It implies, rather, that the Creator founds these developments and supports them, underpins them and sustains them continuously. Thomas Aquinas taught that the notion of creation must transcend the horizontal origin of the unfolding of events, which is history, and consequently all our purely naturalistic ways of thinking and speaking about the evolution of the world. Thomas observed that creation is neither a movement nor a mutation. It is instead the foundational and continuing relationship that links the creature to the Creator, for he is the cause of every being and all becoming (cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 45, a. 3).

Benedict XVI, *Address to the Members of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences*, Friday, 31 October 2008.

FRONT COVER:  
*Earth and Stars*,  
matte painting by Lorenzo Rumori

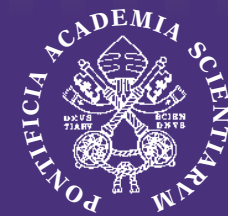


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**Scientific Insights into the Evolution  
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# Scientific Insights into the Evolution of the Universe and of Life



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