

Selected aspects of Nicholas of Cusa's cosmology and anthropology

This thesis targets selected topics of theology of creation and of man, that is, theological cosmology and anthropology in the work of a Renaissance philosopher, theologian, mathematician and scientist Nicholas of Cusa. I shall first introduce Cusanus' curriculum vitae, it's historical context and basic characteristics of theological anthropology in the work of Cusanus. After this, I shall present in greater detail selected topics of his mathematical theology, including historical context of this specific discourse on God, world and man using language of mathematics. This includes mathematical description of both created world and of theological reality, e.g. God's transcendence and immanence, the place of man in the universe, or the role of universe which has a mediating role between God and man in the works of Cusanus.

Mathematical language used by Cusanus is part of a wide stream of Neoplatonist philosophical and theological tradition. Cusanus is inspired not only by pre-Christian philosophical traditions (Pythagorean school, Plotinus' concept of One), but also by Greek patristic writers like Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Confessor, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. In his concept of "great conjecture" Cusanus presents a model of theological cosmology, in symmetrically juxtaposed two pyramids whose apices face each other: pyramid of unity and of otherness.

In his elaboration of theosis as a final destination of human beings, which ends in infinity, Cusanus accents intellectual salvation by truth and knowledge, that is, illumination of human mind as a summit of a human being, Cusanus – much more than his Western contemporaries – sees the concept of theosis, inspired by Eastern Christian sources, not as an opposite of soteriology, but as it's expansion and its complement.