Brad Gregory attacks “metaphysical univocity” in *The Unintended Reformation* (2012):

“According to Aquinas, God in metaphysical terms was, incomprehensibly, *esse*—not a being but the sheer act of to-be, in which all creatures participated insofar as they existed and through which all creation was mysteriously sustained. In Occamist nominalism, by contrast, insofar as God existed, “God” had to denote some *thing*, some discrete, real entity, an *ens*—however much that entity differs from everything else … When combined with an either-or categorical distinction between natural and supernatural plus nominalism’s heuristic principle of parsimony… the intellectual pieces were in place, at least in principle for the domestication of God’s transcendence and the extrusion of his presence from the natural world” (38).

“Modern philosophers since the 17th century have disagreed no less than have theologians about God’s relationship to the natural world, and empirical investigation was obviously not going to discover something that by definition transcended the natural world. Hence metaphysical univocity in combination with Occam’s razor opened a path that would lead through deism to Weberian disenchantment and modern atheism” (41).

“The nature of language itself, including the religious language used by believers to talk about God, veers by default in a univocal and nominalist direction, as if “God” were the name of a thing, an *ens*, an entity within the totality of being. It requires a concerted effort linked to a traditional metaphysics of creation to see that “the king reigns at court and throughout his kingdom” and “God reigns in heaven and throughout his creation” are not the same kind of statement” (55).

Heiko Oberman argues nominalism leads to skepticism (with its reality hunger) and feelings of lonely autonomy thanks in part to “the dome-motif” (68, “Some Notes,” 1960):

*finiti et infiniti nulla proportio*

“The idea of the *potentia absoluta* … is the common denominator of four such diverse characteristics as: 1) the sovereignty of God; 2) the immediacy of God; 3) the moral autonomy and freedom of man; 4) an attitude of skepticism which leans toward secularization” (56).

“This quest for immediacy takes the shape of hunger for reality in respect of the created world: Nominalistic epistemology attacks the wall between perception and reality which seemed to devalue reality as a reflection of the universals. Its empiricism opens a new era of secular knowledge as can be observed in the philosophy of nature of John Buridan and Nicole Oresme” (62).

“The supernatural world, instead of accompanying and nourishing the *viator*, has receded and has become a hemisphere, a dome. This dome shuts out the world of God’s non-realized possibilities and provides room on the inside for man’s own realm …” (63)
"God is so distant that man’s actions cannot be judged according to God’s absolute standards, but only according to the contingent circumstances in which acts take place. In his own realm man is free to choose between good and evil, and under the dome he is alone . . . In his loneliness Nominalistic man is anxious to keep close to the reality of the world around him, an anxiety quite naturally accompanied by a secularization of his interests” (68).

Of "Nominalistic scepticism," Oberman adds, “this is not the tired Hellenistic scepticism but the vital scepticism which we have come to acknowledge as prerequisite for a sound scientific attitude” (69).

In The Legitimacy of the Modern Age (1966), Hans Blumenberg sees nominalism as a destructive force, doing away with the tranquility (ataraxia) prized by the Hellenistic skeptics, and resulting in the need for philosophical “reoccupation.”

"Nominalism is a system meant to make man extremely uneasy about the world—with the intention, of course, of making him seek salvation outside the world, driving him to despair of his this-worldly possibilities and thus to the unconditional capitulation of the act of faith, which, however, he is again not capable of accomplishing by his own power. After the classical philosophy of the Greeks, the postulate of ataraxia was still possible, whereas after the theological absolutism of the Middle Ages, self-assertion had to be the implication of any philosophical system” (151-2).

"... Leibniz asserts the complete equivalence of the system of absolute will and the system of absolute accident, of voluntarism and atomism ... The nominalistic God is a superfluous God, Who can be replaced by the accident of the divergence of atoms from their parallel paths, and of the resulting vortices that make up the world ... The instructive thing for us is not the antithesis between Leibniz and Clarke, as such, but rather the principle, employed in Leibniz’s analysis, of the equivalence of nominalistic and mechanistic explanations of the world, a principle that gives us the key to the reoccupation that was effected in the replacement of the late-medieval by the early-modern type of explanation of nature” (150).

“The reoccupation that took place between the absolutes will and matter defined the world as that which is precisely not pregiven, as a problem rather than as an established state of affairs. But the question why atomism could have this significance as the successor of voluntarism, but not in its original situation in the ancient world, leads us to a recognition of the irreversibility of this reoccupation: only after nominalism had executed a sufficiently radical destruction of the humanly relevant and dependable cosmos could the mechanistic philosophy of nature be adopted as the tool of self-assertion” (151).

“What mainly occurred in the process that is interpreted as secularization, at least (so far) in all but a few recognizable and specific instances, should be described not as the transposition of authentically theological contents into secularized alienation from their origin but rather as the reoccupation of answer positions that had become vacant and whose corresponding questions could not be eliminated” (65).