

INTENTIONALLY TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

Creation

The dynamics of an evolving world

- Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955)

Ecology movement

- Debates under Hitler between natural theology and revealed theology
- Barmen Theological Declaration of 1934
 - Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Friedrich Gogarten, Paul Althaus

Process Metaphysics

- Arising from A. N. Whitehead (set forth in Hayes, 51-53)
 - The world is in the process of becoming
 - God is the source of possibility
 - God is drawing creation from the future, towards its development

Creation from the Future

- Jürgen Moltmann (b. 1926)
 - *God in Creation* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985), from *Gott in der Schöpfung: Ökologische Schöpfungslehre* (Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1985)
 - *Theology of Hope*
 - *The Crucified God*
 - *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*
- Preliminaries
 - In the 1930s, the issue was knowledge of God, in the 1980s, it was knowledge of creation (*God in Creation*, xiii)
 - The doctrine of creation is a pneumatology of God in creation (xiv)
 - Creation is completed by the indwelling of God, not an external fashioning
 - The Shekinah makes the whole of creation the house of God (xv)
 - As God was made more transcendent and absolute in Christian theology, humans were seen the same way in relation to creation (1)
- Sin and Progress
 - Creation reaches its final state only in the future
 - There was no original perfection
 - The fall is a metaphorical way of affirming the goodness of creation and accounting for the contingency of imperfection
- Self-Transcending System
 - "It would seem that the universe contains within itself the trend towards the universal symbiosis of all systems of life and matter, by virtue of the 'sympathy of all things' for one another" (205).
 - The world self-transcends by virtue of its anticipation of higher levels of organization.
 - This higher level is the operation of God; the world exists in God and comes to be by the power of the Spirit of God (206).
- God within the Dynamics of Creation but not one with them
 - Chance and evolution are expressions of how God operates (207).
 - God creates by leading creation to develop:
 - "If God made creation to be the kingdom of his glory, then it was he who gave it movement and set it in motion, at the same time leading it in an irreversible direction. He accompanies it in this movement by opening up new possibilities, and entices it in this direction through the fellowship of his creative Spirit." (207)
 - Self-causing and God-causing are two different sides of the same movement.
 - The completion of creation was promised, not given, at the beginning.

- God and Creation
 - Creatio originalis
 - Creatio continua
 - Creatio nova
- God and secondary causes
 - "God acts in and through the activity of his creatures; God acts with and out of the activity of his creatures; created beings act out of the divine potencies and into a divine environment; the activity of created beings is made possible by the divine patience; the presence of God in the world is the space free for the liberty of created beings; and so on." (211)

MYSTICAL THEORIES: ALTERNATIVE COSMOLOGIES

Creation Centered Spirituality

- Matthew Fox
- Goodness of the forces of the universe
- Original blessing rather than original sin
- Evolution is an expression on the level of natural forces of the love expressed in Christ
- The Lord of Creation is the Cosmic Christ
- Joy, playfulness, and companionship is the meaning of the world
- God is in and embraces creation
- See Matthew Fox, *Original Blessing*, and other works

Neopaganism

- New Age Options
- Syncretistic spirituality
- View of all things as divine
- The world as divine, the world embraced by spirit
- Goddess
- Revival of nature rituals
- Magic and spirituality
- See Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance*, and other works

Rethinking God

Reimagining Science

- Energy of creation is the realization of consciousness
- Human emotions and longing are in continuity with more simple forms of life
- Soul evolves
- Ethics evolves
- The image of God or presence of God is realized on different levels
- See Brian Swimme, *The Universe is a Green Dragon*, and other books

Scholarly pantheism and panentheism

- Critique and rejection of patriarchal divine transcendence
- Fatherhood of God seen as contributing to the mere instrumentalization of matter
- New relationships between God and world
- Mother God
- See Sallie McFague, *The Body of God* and other works