

## COSMOLOGICAL THEORIES

- 13) See "P. H."—*The Welshmer Story*, by Francis M. Arant. Standard, Cincinnati, 1958.
- 14) G. T. W. Patrick, *op. cit.*, p. 144.
- 15) G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*, pp. 21-25. Doubleday Image Book, 1955.
- 16) Quoted by Douglas Dewar, *The Transformist Illusion*, p. 125. DeHoff, Murfreesboro, Tenn., 1957.
- 17) George Gaylord Simpson, *The Meaning of Evolution*, p. 143. Mentor Book Edition.
- 18) Sir Arthur Eddington, *Science and the Unseen World*, p. 82. Macmillan, 1930.
- 19) *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, 1:274.
- 20) Quoted by A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, One Volume Edition, p. 36. Judson Press, Philadelphia, 1907.
- 21) Strong, *ibid.*, p. 473.
- 22) Alfred Russel Wallace, *Darwinism*, pp. 445-478. Quoted by Strong, *ibid.*, p. 473.
- 23) See Strong, *ibid.*, pp. 465-466.
- 24) *Murphy on Genesis*, p. 84. Estes and Lariat, Boston, 1873.
- 25) Thomas Whitelaw, *Pulpit Commentary: Genesis*, p. 41. Funk and Wagnalls, New York.
- 26) Marcus Dods, *The Expositor's Bible: Genesis*, p. 10. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1895.

## ADDENDA: COSMOLOGICAL THEORIES

(Theories of the Origin and Organization of the Cosmos)

EMANATIONISM: Unity is prior to plurality. Creation is conceived as a process of the "watering down" of perfection, as, for example, light, in moving away from its source and thus becoming diffused, is finally lost in darkness. Darkness is non-being, and non-being is usually identified with gross matter. The most thoroughgoing emanation cults were those of the Gnostics and especially that of Plotinus, which is known as Neoplatonism.

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PLOTINUS (A.D. 205-270).

(The Egyptian Neoplatonist, who derived his system largely from his teacher, Ammonius Saccas. His writings were published by Porphyry in six books, each consisting of nine sections, hence entitled the *Enneads*.) Origen and Augustine both were greatly influenced by Neoplatonism. The following should be read downward:

### The One

Nous	one: world unity, prior to the possibility of plurality many: "ideas" or "forms" of all possible existents: (1) universals, (2) particulars
Soul	one: world soul, undivided many: individual souls, (1) unconscious, (2) conscious of ideas
Body	one: world body, as a whole many: particular bodies (1) as wholes, (2) decomposed

### The Void

Gross matter: non-being

Gnosticism, in its various cults, postulated a series of emanations from the Absolute Being or Unity in the forms of psychic intermediaries, known as *aeons*. According to this early Christian heresy, Christ Himself was just such an emanation or aeon. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that the Deists of a later age were prone to regard the "laws of nature" as emanations, hence as having a kind of independent existence.

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### PHILOSOPHICAL HINDUISM

(or Hindu Mysticism. Very old, as set forth in the *Upanishads*)

Again, read downward:

Brahman (perfect unity)

Atman (unity that pervades plurality)

Souls (plurality that is really unity)

Illusion (*Maya*) Bodies (plurality that is mistaken for reality)

Castes (levels of social classes)

Animals (levels of animal life)

Plants (levels of plant life)

Matter (levels of decomposition)

It will be noted that emanationist systems all tend toward pantheism, the doctrine that identifies God with what we commonly call His Creation. The fallacies of pantheism are clearly pointed out in the following terse statements by C. H. Toy, *Introduction to the History of Religions*, p. 476: "Pantheism has never commended itself to the masses of men . . . The demand for a deity with whom one may enter into personal relations—the simple concept of a God who dwells apart satisfies the religious instincts of the majority of men. The ethical questions arising from pantheism seem to them perplexing: how can man be morally responsible when it is the deity who thinks and acts in him? and how can he have any sense

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of loyalty to a deity whom he cannot distinguish from himself? . . . Man demands a method of worship, and pantheism does not permit organized worship." Moreover, pantheism, by distributing the Divine essence through all cosmic existents, inanimate or animate, amoral or moral, makes God to be the author of evil as well as of good; to this fact the only alternative would be *that evil is illusion*, and this is the corner in which Absolutists are uniformly forced to take refuge. May I remind the student that an illusion is necessarily an illusion of something: an illusion of nothing or nothingness is inconceivable.

## PLATO'S COSMOLOGY

(Plato lived 427-347 B.C. See his "likely story" of the Creation, in the *Timaeus*.)

Being: The Forms (Ideas): The Form of the Good.

Unity

Forms of all classes of existents

The Demiurgos (Craftsman, Architect)

The World: World-Soul

Becoming: Rational Souls

Irrational Souls

Inanimate Bodies

Non-being: Indeterminate matter

Plato can hardly be classified as an emanationist: in fact it is difficult to put his cosmology in any definite category. In the *Timaeus*, he pictures the Creation as having been actualized by the Demiurgos (Master Craftsman, Great Architect,) as the World-Soul, according to the archetypal Forms, out of what he calls the Receptacle. This last term

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seems to have been the word he used to designate the Void (empty space). It will be recalled that the Greek word *chaos* denoted, not disorder, but empty space; hence this was the Greek term generally used for non-being which was conceived to be what we call "matter." (Cf. Plotinus, above). The Forms, in Plato's thought, were the Principles of classification, *e.g.*, the "mustardness" of a mustard seed, the "horseness" of a horse; that is, that which specifies the individuals of each particular kind of things. Had he put these Forms in the Mind of "The Divine"—The Form of the Good, that is, Unity—his system would have to be regarded as theistic; however, there seems to be no evidence in his writings that he took this step; he apparently gave the Forms an eternally separate existence in themselves. Hence, we must conclude that on the whole Plato favored a view of the Deity as immanent, and that his system was weighted in the direction of a "higher pantheism." This is evident from the fact that the World-Soul (as the "Prime Mover") is presented as spreading out throughout the cosmos and as directing its processes and changes from within. As a matter of fact, Plato obviously belonged to the Greek philosophical tradition (Aristotelianism alone excepted) in which the Divine Principle ("God") is conceived pantheistically as That Which Is, in striking contrast to the Hebrew voluntarism in which God is revealed as He Who Is (Exo. 3:14), in a word, as pure personality.

## ARISTOTLE'S HIERARCHY OF BEING

God

(defined as Pure Thought Thinking Itself: cf. John 4:24)

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rational psyche ("soul")

(physiochemical processes, cellular processes, sensitivity, locomotion, *plus* reason)

animal psyche

(physiochemical processes and cellular processes *plus* sensitivity and locomotion)

vegetative psyche

(physiochemical processes, *plus* the cellular processes)

matter-in-motion

(or in modern terms, the physiochemical processes of the inanimate world)

Aristotle, in his *De Anima* ("On the Soul"), pictures the totality of being as a hierarchy, that is, as organized on different levels in an ascending scale of complexity of powers, in which each higher order subsumes the powers of those below it. Analysis of the nature of "movement" (change) convinced Aristotle that in order to account for the complex of contingent causes-and-effects which is the cosmos, there must be a First Cause, a First or Prime Mover, who is self-existent (*sui generis*), that is, non-contingent and without beginning or end, the only alternative being that somewhere, at some time, nothing must have originated the first something—a notion utterly absurd, of course; or, as someone has put it, the "first mover" must himself be unmoved, except from within, and different from the "first moved." This Prime Mover, otherwise described as Pure Thought Thinking Itself, is Aristotle's God, who is presented as affecting the universe without being a part of it. Hence, it will be seen that Aristotle's

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God is transcendent, and that his system more nearly approximates theism than that of any other Greek philosopher. (Aristotle lived 384-322 B.C., and was a student at Plato's school, the Academy, for some twenty years.)

Why does our world exist instead of any other kind of world? asked the German philosopher, Leibniz (1646-1716). Simply because (Leibniz concluded) God has chosen, not to create any kind of world at random, but to create the best of all possible worlds, that is, the best He found it possible to create for achieving His ends, the actualization of the greatest possible good and the least possible evil. (Evil, Leibniz held, is of three kinds, namely, physical evil (suffering), moral evil (sin), and metaphysical evil: this he defined in terms of the necessary imperfection of finite beings.) Therefore, because our world is the handiwork of this Perfect Being (The Absolute Monad), it must be the actualization of the fulness of created being. In such a world (reasoning *a priori*, of course), all possible beings must be actualized, all possible levels (grades) filled therein: there must be *unbroken continuity in the form of progressive gradation of organisms* from the very lowest living being up to the very highest, God Himself. Thus arose the doctrine of the Great Chain of Being, a doctrine which flourished in early modern times, and which, obviously, is largely in accord with present-day evolutionism. (For a thoroughgoing presentation of this view, see the excellent book by Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being*, published by the Harvard University Press, 1950. The concept is also clearly set forth in the poem by Alexander Pope, "An Essay on Man.")

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### EMERGENTISM

(This is the view that unity is in the process of emerging out of plurality. The process is, and probably will always be, an unfinished process. The following tables are to be read upward.)

	God	
Mind	Mind	Society
	Life	Mind
Life	Matter	Life
Matter	Space-Time	Matter

C. Lloyd Morgan, Samuel Alexander, Roy Wood Sellars, in his book, *Emergent Evolution, and Deity*, 1920. in his book, *Time* in his book, *Evolutionary Naturalism*, 1922.

*Emergentism* (discussed on preceding pages), though at times paying lip service to a "God," is strictly pantheistic in character. In all cases, it rejects the theistic doctrine of God's transcendence. It ignores uniformly the necessity of Efficient Causality in all cosmic processes.



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I have presented the foregoing concepts (and diagrams) for the purpose of demonstrating the futility of all efforts to obtain complete knowledge of the origin and organization of the cosmos through unaided human reason. The ultimate mysteries are inscrutable. These various philosophical theories surely prove this to be true; that is, they prove the inherent incapacity of the human mind to explain (as Chesterton has put it) how nothing could turn into something or how something could turn into something else. How refreshing to turn away from the best that human wisdom can afford us, and to accept by faith the Biblical teaching, on these subjects! (Cf. Job 11:7; Isa. 55:6-11; 1 Cor. 1:18-25, 3:18-20; Rom. 11:33-36; Heb. 11:3).

The following tables will serve to point up the correspondences between the empirical (commonsense) and the Biblical accounts of the origin and organization of the created world:

self-consciousness (the person)	God (Pure Spirit: John 4:24)
* consciousness (the brute)	Angels (ethereal beings, "ministering spirits": Heb. 1:14)
life (the cell)	Souls (Gen. 2:7)
energy-matter (non-living)	Bodies Matter

The EMPIRICAL ACCOUNT of the Dimensions of Being, based on observation and experience.

(Read upward)

The BIBLICAL ACCOUNT of Being.

(Read upward)

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Day 7—rest

Day 6—man and woman, *bara*, v. 28; Gen. 2:7  
land animals

Day 5—water and air species,  
*bara*, v. 21

Day 4—chronology (measurement  
of time)

GOD

Day 3—plants,  
lands and seas

Day 2—atmosphere (“expanse”)

Day 1—energy, light, matter:  
*bara*, v. 1

### THE HEBREW COSMOGONY (Gen. 1:1–2:3) (read upward)

Some hold that God, the Eternal Spirit, created without the use of pre-existing materials, inserting new increments of power into the Creative Process at successively higher levels. Some hold that God put into Prime (First) Matter all potentialities (Forms) later actualized by His Efficient Causality.

N.B.—For the diagrams presented above as illustrative of the Emanation and Emergent-Evolution theories of the origin and organization of the cosmos, I am indebted to Dr. Archie J. Bahm, Professor of Philosophy, University of New Mexico. These diagrams appear in his well-known book, *Philosophy: An Introduction*, published by Wiley and Sons, 1953. It is by his permission that I reproduce them here, and for this privilege I am deeply grateful.—C.C.C.

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Dr. A. H. Strong, in his *Systematic Theology*, suggests that the content of the Biblical teaching falls under the category of what is philosophically designated Ethical Monism.

It is my conviction, however, that Dr. Bahm, in the work cited above, presents a philosophical view which approximates rather closely the essence of the Genesis Cosmogony. Dr. Bahm has named his theory Organicism. Should the student wish to pursue the subject further, he can do so by familiarizing himself with the argument presented in Chapter 20 of Bahm's book.

The late Martin Buber, the Jewish theistic existentialist, in his book entitled *The Eclipse of God* develops the thesis that whereas philosophy holds fast to an image of God, or even to a faith in God, religion holds fast to God Himself. This is a true contrast.

I must confess that I find philosophical theory and terminology, aside from suggesting clues now and then to the understanding of certain matters of Christian doctrine, to have little in common with Biblical revelation as a whole.

Now may I close this volume with a personal confession, namely: I could never substitute for faith in the Biblical Heavenly Father who has revealed Himself to us in His Son Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1-4, 11:6; John 15:1), any coldly intellectual philosophical theory of the origin and nature of the Mystery of Being. I recall here the striking forcefulness of the questions which Zophar the Naamathite addressed to Job in olden times: "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" (Job 11:7). There is but one answer to these questions—an

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unequivocal negative. Or, as the Apostle Paul puts it: "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (1 Cor. 3:19). Again: "For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). Through the foolishness of the preaching of what? The preaching of "Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:23-24).