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religious congregations, evangelical women's groups and gay and lesbian organizations.

Finally, the Con-spirando collective is committed to networking both locally and at a regional/international level with other like-minded organizations, groups and movements who share our vision.

Mary Judith Ress

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Swimme, Brian. *Canticle to the Cosmos*. Video Series.

See also: Berry, Thomas; Christianity (7d) - Feminist Theology; Ecofeminism (various); Gebara, Ivone; Spretnak, Charlene; Swimme, Brian.

Coronado, Rodney - See Rodney Coronado and the Animal Liberation Front (adjacent to Radical Environmentalism).

Corrington, Robert S. (1950-)

Robert S. Corrington, a professor at Drew University in New Jersey, has developed an influential philosophical and religious theory of nature which he calls "ecstatic naturalism." In developing his theory, he claims that nature has no opposite and is all that is. Therefore, for ecstatic naturalism, there can be no God different from or outside nature.

Ecstatic naturalism follows two pragmatic principles. First, everything in the world is seen to be in a complex relationship to something else in the world, but nothing is totally related to everything. These diverse relations form "complexes." The second rule advocates "ontological parity" and claims that every complex is ontologically as real as any other. The principle of ontological parity is used to refute any worldview which seeks to classify some structures as not real or less true, and honor others as better, more real or true. Thus classical theism, with its belief in an omnipotent and omnipresent God that utterly surpasses the creatures in oneness, truth, and goodness can neither be in accordance with the rule against total access to complexes nor ontological parity.

Ecstatic naturalism views nature as having two dimensions: "nature naturing" and "nature natured" (Averroes, Spinoza, Buchler). Unlike most other naturalist philosophies, ecstatic naturalism is committed to thinking about the sacred in nature. Nature naturing represents the vastness of nature which gives birth to nature natured (i.e., the multiple orders and complexes of the world). Nature naturing is not only the origin of everything else, but a destination as well, a "not-yet" (Heidegger). The ontological difference between the two dimensions of nature is, for ecstatic naturalism, held open by an abyss, which a person must confront in order to gain meaning of the world. Melancholy and ecstasy are the two fundamental attunements of ecstatic naturalism, melancholy giving a human self-understanding of the depth and immensurability of nature naturing, often experienced as the longing for a lost origin, or the maternal (Kristeva); ecstasy being radically open to the future. This tense space between the nevermore and the not-yet is the field of world semiosis, where humans gain understanding both of nature and of how they are shaped by nature.

Corrington has advocated a decentered, divine spirit or spirits in his writings, where the sacred in nature is seen as one of the products of nature naturing, which encounters the human in numerous and numinous ways. His recent moves have been into dialogue with Hegel and the esoteric traditions. Ecstatic naturalism has become more pantheistic, not only viewing some aspects of nature natured as sacred, but also encompassing nature naturing as well. One of the capacities of nature is seen to be an "infinitizing" process, capable of opening up new sacred dimensions for experiencing selves.

Sigridur Gudmarsdottir

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See also: Nature Religion; Pantheism; Spinoza, Baruch; Unitarianism.

SP Cosmology

Cosmology is the object of research by anthropology and physics. Astrophysics studies the evolution of the universe, while anthropology analyzes the cosmologies of all the world's cultures as socio-cultural constructions. In

teric and mystical developments of the Kabbalah, mainstream Judaism itself, without the possibility of reincarnation or an Elysium-type otherworld, all entered on the tribal survival of the Jewish ethnos rather than on any kind of personal immortality. As has historically continued to move away from its origins toward a centering on its god as a fraternal being, its pagan retention of accepting the god as a cherished and acceptably pleasurable tangible object nudges Judaism toward the most schizophrenic of positions, even if it escapes the radical ethical rift between good and evil that unbalance its Christian and sister or daughter religions.

Contrasting religious ideal-type to both the archaic and dharmic as well as secular (atheist, and/or mechanical) constructs is, of course, the *vis-à-vis* the supernatural (whether god, gods, the goddess or even goddess), there are both secular pagans and paganists. There are also dharmic pagans – especially those who fuse pagan and Buddhist spirituality in practice, while most of vernacular Hinduism is in fact in contrast to its “official” theological Gnostic or Vedantic Brahmanism. And of course, there are archaic pagans or pagan possibilities and/or practices (e.g. theophagy, veneration of saints, reverence in an acrolith, worship of Asherah, etc.). But in using any pantheistic understanding of nature as divine or sacred, we are by default virtually on paganism – whether that pantheism includes natural (pagan paganism) or denies it (secular pantheism). The distinction between the two lies with the position entertaining the supernatural as a transcendental reality that perhaps operates chiefly through synchronicity, if not traditional magic as other words, the supernatural refers to the dimension of autonomous, non-empirical dynamics, though one that is considered to be a telluric or cosmic site. The more secular pagan position tends to follow the path and understand the divine totality, that is, the divine, in terms of purely causal relationships, approaches the sacred more as a value than as a site.

Spinoza's philosophy combines immanentism and mysticism, and it ultimately represents a methodologically inspired modification of Plotinus. Its pantheism is an endless series of mechanical diffusion and emanation (*natura naturans*) and emanation (*natura naturata*) is an endless series of mechanical diffusion and emanation. More organic forms of pantheism are to be found in the metaphysics of naturalism. Like pantheism, naturalism holds that all experience of temporal and spatial reality occurs within and as a part of nature. The supernatural are avoided. In other words, the sacred is nature, and the ultimate is to be found within the network of nature and not outside it. To the degree Spinoza's substance (*natura naturans*) is to be under-

stood as god, he advocates what could be classified as a spiritual or idealistic form of naturalism. His nature is akin to either spirit or mental categories. Materialistic naturalism, in contrast, centers on matter or the matter/energy continuum as the metaphysical fundament. Along with these traditional schools of naturalism, there are also neutral and dynamic understandings – the former sees reality as static entity and relation; the later, as process and energy that are neither mental nor physical. As proponents of descriptive or neutral naturalism, John Dewey (1859–1952), George Santayana (1863–1952) and Justus Buchler (1914–1991) relate the source of potentiality to the material substrate in its very beingness. Numinosity becomes purely a derivative of human projection, and nature is reduced to a series of causal sequences. Its essential humanism in which religious goals derive from social action latently assumes an extra-natural vantage from which to make its judgments on the limits of nature's transformative possibilities and any denial of the unlimited potencies that can emerge from nature's hidden depths.

A more contemporary understanding of naturalism and interpretation of the potencies of *natura naturans* and emerging and emerged orders of *natura naturata* understanding are provided by Robert Corrington. Positing that there can be nothing beyond or outside nature, Corrington argues that notions of an extra-natural, omnipotent, omnipresent, self-conscious creator and sustainer are examples of anthropomorphic projection and hubris. He calls for a categorical foundational analysis to replace traditional theological romanticism and wish fulfillment. From his perspective, the *natura naturans* or what he calls “nature naturing” is the unconscious of nature – one that relates to the orders of the world and universe of astrophysics in the same way that the human unconscious relates to personal consciousness. A fold of nature is an intensified product of nature naturing and not a conscious or superhuman agent of awareness and purpose. Corrington stresses the basic divide that exists between the two halves of an all-encompassing nature that is impossible to define. He is particularly critical of the “militantly self-defensive Western monotheisms” (Corrington 1997: 18) in which a posited linear and self-centered god is thought to bring its own other into existence out of nonexistence and then exercise absolute dominion over it. A creator god has no genuine other. Instead, for Corrington, the sacred is simply nature's most important manifestation, the dimensions of which need to be understood post-anthropomorphically if theology is not to be merely a gender, race or class autobiography. There is “nothing whatsoever outside of nature. The sacred is in and of nature and cannot outstrip nature” [Corrington 1997: 10]. Nevertheless, despite human projections that exteriorize elements of the personal and collective unconscious, Corrington's pantheism or what he terms “ecstatic naturalism” recognizes the

sacred in the numinous folds of semiotic plenitude that emerge or are ejected from *natura naturans*. Like humanism, Corrington's naturalism rejects any notion of supernaturalism, but unlike humanism, it will not deny but instead affirms "the utter supremacy of the transfiguring potencies of nature" (Corrington 1997: 53). His lexicon is comfortable with such terms as "numinous," "manic," "sacred," "divine," "extra-human," "epiphany" and "transpersonal"; it rejects "magical," "supernatural," "talismanic," "holy" and even "spiritual." Nevertheless, for Corrington, there is the erotic and transordinal spirit – a generic spirit that belongs to nature and not to Christianity. This spirit is "self-othering in the sense that no sign or interpretant can ever envelop it" (Corrington 1997: 161), but it is not a consciousness because it has no center of intentionality. It is always subaltern to nature and located within nature natured. While nature in both its dimensions contains every conceivable type of infinite, spirit for Corrington expresses only one main kind of the non-finite.

The ultimate understanding of pantheism and the relation between the divine and nature rests not only in its distinction from theism but also from the theological framework of pantheism and the process theologies of Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) and Charles Hartshorne (1897–2000). Spinoza's monism is usually accepted as the classical form of pantheism: a totally deterministic reality and a god bound by actuality. Pantheism attempts to reassert the godhead as the totality of both actual and potential being. But unlike the "god is all" stance of pantheism, pantheism ("all in god") is closer to the theopantic position of "god is all." In other words, this view asserts that all things are within the being of god, but god is not subsumed or "exhausted" by all things and is additionally something other than the world or cosmos itself. The chief difficulty with the pantheism god is that it appears to be a reversion to theism's timeless and impassible god that simply adopts much of the language of pantheism – especially in its process theology position that sees god as "embracing" the world and lovingly seeking to lure all things toward their maximum aesthetic satisfaction. This notion of god "luring," the idea of god as the ideal which draws things (back) to himself/itself, that is, god as the last cause or goal, was first presented by Aristotle and reintroduced into contemporary thought by Whitehead. But what Whitehead has done is to reject Spinoza's notion of substance and replace it with process (a series of events in space and time). But unlike Spinoza's god who is bounded by actuality, Whitehead accepts that actual occasions provide the fundamental constituents of reality but that the universe at any moment consists of an infinite number of actual occasions. Each occasion is a result of all those that have preceded it but also is something new. For Whitehead, the radically new always exists. Since present newness allows for unpredictability, there is always an open future – bypassing or avoiding Spinoza's

deterministic universe. His god is not omnipotent or omniscient in knowing the future but only in knowing all that there is to know. But inasmuch as Whitehead's world is process, it is holistic and organic. And this world/god is, according to Hartshorne, infinitely self-surpassable.

Another thinker within the school of process naturalism is Robert Neville. Like Averroes, he continues the argument of *creatio ex nihilo*, and like Spinoza, he understands the created world as fully determined. But unlike most of the earlier process naturalists, he dismisses the tendency to overly romanticize the human traits within certain orders of nature to the detriment of others. Nevertheless, he is persuaded to affirm the strong link of an independent god to the bound totality of the created world. Unlike the process theologians who privilege creativity itself and have no need for a creator god, Neville sees god and creation unfolding together in the act of world creation – an act in which god overcomes its own transcendence and becomes immanent in the created order as a governing central logos. In traditional process naturalism, the created world (*natura naturata*) becomes part of the divine augmentation process. For Neville's process theology, the world is dependent on god's absolute infinite sovereignty, and this god must become in some sense finite if it is to be involved in the world it has created. On the other hand, in Corrington's ecstatic naturalism, once the *natura naturata* has been ejected or spawned from the unconscious of nature, it is an autonomous fondling with "no direct link to the inaugurating and unruly ground" (Corrington 1997: 119). In place of determination and obligation, there is total independence and availability and, as such, the possibility of perennial renewal.

To summarize, the pantheism of process naturalism wishes to place the divine beyond nature as much as within it. In contrast, the pantheism of ecstatic naturalism asserts simply that there is nothing outside nature/the world/the cosmos. While most naturalisms eschew the notion of a supernatural, they may still hold to an understanding of an immanent preternatural. The opposite of naturalism is not supernaturalism but rather anti-naturalism or idealism. However, unlike Corrington's ecstatic naturalism that simply dismisses the magical, in a dynamic pantheistic naturalism, there is the possibility that the supernatural/preternatural might arise as various aporias that open up *within* the natural. To whatever extent the numinous exists or comes to exist within a pantheistic understanding, it is an emergent from nature rather than some antecedent or *a priori* teleological factor. While pantheism *à la* Spinoza may be mechanical, naturalistic understandings of pantheism hold the world or cosmos to be organic, interconnected, in some way monistic and most likely enchanted.

Michael York