



TEILHARD PERSPECTIVE

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President's Corner John Grim, December 2014

“Living Cosmology: Christian Responses to *Journey of the Universe*”

On November 7-9, 2014 the Forum on Religion and Ecology organized a conference titled “Living Cosmology: Christian Responses to *Journey of the Universe*” at Yale Divinity School. The intention was to explore ways in which Christian theologians, eco-feminists, ethicists, lawyers, and ministers responded to the evolutionary story of science, and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Thomas Berry’s birth. Both Berry and Teilhard are significant inspirations for *Journey of the Universe*.

Scholars from across North America gathered to discuss the impact of this new story of evolution and its implications for the flourishing of the Earth community. You can see the program and bios of participants at: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/living-cosmology-conference/>

There is also an article published in the

National Catholic Reporter featuring the conference at: <http://ncronline.org/blogs/grace-margins/yale-conference-continues-journey-universe>. This article describes the richness of panel presentations and discussions during the conference. We hope to have a video available of the conference as well.

The 100th anniversary of Thomas Berry’s birth provided the occasion to honor Gus Speth with the Thomas Berry Award. Speth was the former



Image courtesy of Matthew Riley

Dean at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies as well as one of the founders of the National Resources Defense Council and former administrator of the United Nations Development Programme. We were pleased that several members of the Berry family attended the award

and the conference, namely, Ann Berry Somers from North Carolina, Terry Kelleher from Connecticut, and Irene Berry from upstate New York.

What I want to communicate here are some reflections about the *Journey of the Universe* project and the perspective developed by one presenter,

John Haught. In short, I want to show how Journey is directly related to the thought of both Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and Thomas Berry. **This reflection offers an occasion for preparing for the Teilhard Association Annual Meeting on May 16, 2015 at Union Theological Seminary in New York. John Haught will be the featured speaker there for the 60th anniversary of Teilhard's death. His talk is titled, "Teilhard, Religion and Big History: A Look Inside."**

First, a word about the project that provided a focus of the conference. *Journey of the Universe* includes a film that presents a moving narrative of cosmic evolution, a lyrical book that deepens our understanding of this process, and a series of related interviews, or "Conversations," with scientists, historians, and environmentalists. This project integrates astronomy, geology and biology with history, philosophy, literature, and religion. Through this perspective the hope is to awaken wonder and awe for the complexity of cosmic processes that would enhance our ecological commitment to transforming actions for the flourishing of the Earth community.

As a film, book, and interview series, *Journey of the Universe*, brings a variety of sources for thinking about the relationships of evolutionary history to our current environmental dilemmas. As a wider project, and as a call for this conference, it acknowledges that there are necessarily many pathways of interpretation. There is no one telling of the unfolding universe. Rather, the *Journey of the Universe* project is a narration with multiple voices evoking wonder and awe for the complexity of evolutionary processes. Journey does not try to be exhaustive in its telling nor is it simply presenting ever-burgeoning data about the universe.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's *Human Phenomenon* was a major influence in creating the *Journey of the Universe*. To be able to narrate in a film the evolutionary story that Teilhard first articulated was a key motivation of its creators, Brian Thomas Swimme, Mary Evelyn Tucker, and John Grim. Another central influence was the work of Thomas Berry, who called for an integrating narrative in his

1978 essay, "The New Story." There he observed that:

Even with advanced science and technology, with superb techniques in manufacturing and commerce, in communications and computation, our secular society remains without satisfactory meaning or capacity to restrain the violence of its own members. Our miracle machines serve ephemeral purposes.

So we begin to talk about values. Where can we begin? My suggestion is that we begin where everything begins in human affairs, with the basic story, the account of how things came to be at all, how they came to be as they are, and how the future of the human can be given some satisfactory direction. We need a story that will educate humans, heal them, guide them.

From Berry's perspective, story is embedded in the formation of all existence. Reality unfolds in evolutionary time, and infolds upon itself in increasing complexity. The stories of the universe converge, then, in increasing complexity and the emergence of consciousness. Thomas Berry, following Teilhard, saw human consciousness as arising from the mainstream of evolutionary unfolding. If consciousness appears in life forms today, different forms of consciousness are in the evolutionary process from the beginning. These early forms of consciousness are not our human form of consciousness, but the ordering and patterning of existence throughout the quantum level and beyond into visible matter. Thus consciousness becomes particularized, or infolded, in the patterning of the many different forms of existence. In some instances as material patterning infolds, new properties emerge that mark divergence from what had come before. This sense of self-organizing, unfolding, and emerging constitutes a universe story long before the human voice formed to tell its own versions.

A central point regarding the Journey project is that it underscores human relationships with the

unfolding universe that promote life's flourishing. The micro-macrocosmic relationships that the human has established in so many cultural expressions illustrate again and again that our most immediate experience of the cosmos is in the Earth community.

Different Ways of Knowing the Universe

Individuals and human communities have told a story of reality based on their clearest understanding and available knowledge. These different ways of knowing are acknowledged in the *Journey of the Universe* by including not just science, but religions and philosophy, dreams and sense knowledge, namely, the varied senses that cultures have honored as insightful, such as a sense of wonder, a sense of beauty, as well as the knowings transmitted through our five bodily senses.

In the *Journey of the Universe* scientific knowledge, then, is nested within different ways of knowing. Two additional points can be emphasized; first, the *Journey of the Universe* is not privileging natural sciences as exclusive or higher ways of knowing, and second, this integrative knowing orients humans towards affective engagement with current environmental issues.

Journey of the Universe presents a critique of the dominant reductionism of materialist science that has implications for our valuing of the beauty and complexity of nature. *Journey of the Universe* draws on Rachel Carson's sense of wonder in the world, with Gregory Bateson's positing of an ecology of mind, and with Thomas Berry's sense of reality as a communion of subjects. Mind, or consciousness, sets a portal for entering into a discussion of the sciences in the *Journey of the Universe* project. In the following remarks I have drawn on John Haught's talk presented at the "Living Cosmology" conference—both literally and in a paraphrased form—to focus on this question of mind in relation to matter.

Mind and Matter

During the 19th and 20th centuries materialism—the belief that lifeless and mindless "matter"

is the ultimate origin and destiny of all being—became a dominant metaphysical context for the life sciences. From this context, however, purely materialist metaphysics cannot make sense of mind in particular and its larger relation to the universe. One recent publication has reactivated a critique of this dominant scientific metaphysic of materialism, namely, Thomas Nagel's *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature Is Almost Certainly False*.

Haught notes that Nagel, like Teilhard, draws on the standard scientific narrative of mind's evolution. But both of them are concerned whether the materialist metaphysics in which that narrative is presented can make the story of mind's emergence intelligible. Teilhard and Nagel argue convincingly that it cannot. Nagel provides no coherent alternative, but Teilhard and *Journey of the Universe*, following Thomas Berry, attempt to do just that.

Haught writes:

The challenge is to consider and understand how the union of science and materialism came to such an intellectual dead-end. In his telling, Nagel agrees that evolutionary science is illuminating, but evolutionary naturalism—the marriage of materialist belief to evolutionary biology—is misbegotten.

Evolutionary naturalism's reduction of life to material ping-pong over long periods of time becomes especially conspicuous in its failure to account for human consciousness. According to some evolutionary thinkers, mind is so seamlessly woven into the fundamental physical features of the unfolding universe that, whatever else it may be, the cosmic journey is at the very least mind-making. Some scientists have even conjectured that the cosmos is oriented towards an anthropic project.

Materialists, of course, disagree. Mindless, purposeless, objective matter is the ground and final destiny of all being,

they insist. Thus, the emergence of consciousness in natural history can be nothing more than a fluke. Mind's relatively recent arrival has done nothing to disturb the fundamental mindlessness, and hence pointlessness, of the universe." (John Haught, "Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Nagel, and the Cosmic Journey," from the *Living Cosmology: Christian Responses to Journey of the Universe conference*)

For thinkers such as Teilhard de Chardin, Rachel Carson, Gregory Bateson, Thomas Berry, and Thomas Nagel, to overlook the extraordinary character of the human mind while trying to comprehend the universe seems shortsighted. This human mind is particularly marked by its wondering and thought so passionately told in stories. The narrative weave of mind and cosmos cannot be so easily jettisoned without risk of losing one's grip on the nature of reality.

As Haught observes, two problems immediately surface if we consider mind and nature as inseparable. The first returns to materialism and hangs on the question: how could life and consciousness arise historically from mindless cosmic stuff. The second is how to account for a religious perspective especially if the universe turns out to be a mind-making, and hence a purposive, goal-oriented enterprise.

The emergence of mind can be seen as a momentous revelation of what nature must be. Indeed, this calls for a new worldview, which recognizes that mind emerges in an integrated manner within the story of an unfolding universe. This is the position of *Journey of the Universe*, which draws on Teilhard's intuition that there is interiority in matter from which humans and human consciousness blossoms forth.

Moreover, *Journey* builds on Thomas Berry's principles of differentiation, subjectivity, and communion. These principles suggest that there is spectacular variety in nature and in the whole evolutionary process. There is interiority or spirit in matter and thus communion or resonance with all

things. These are the principles that are present in *Journey* and invite us into a renewing environmental sensibility.

How can we destroy nature if it has subjectivity? How can we not be in communion with Earth and its value rich processes? If we understand the evolutionary story as one in which we participate we can bring forth a vibrant Earth community. That is the hope of *Journey of the Universe*, one that certainly is aligned with Teilhard's vision as well.

Introductory Remarks for the "Living Cosmology" Conference (Thomas Berry Centenary)

*By Robert Ellsberg, Publisher Orbis Books
November 7, 2014*

I am grateful for the opportunity to welcome you to this conference as the publisher of Orbis Books and editor of our Modern Spiritual Masters Series—a series of over fifty volumes which highlight the wisdom of many of the great spiritual teachers of the past century, from John Muir and Teilhard de Chardin, to Gandhi, Thomas Merton, Abraham Heschel, and Thich Nhat Hanh.

The most recent publication in the series is "*Thomas Berry: Selected Writings on the Earth Community*," beautifully edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. I had proposed this project soon after Thomas's death, which occurred just prior to publication of what became one of his final books: *The Christian Future and the Fate of Earth*. But it is most appropriate that this anthology should appear now, in time to mark the centenary of his birth—and seemingly timed for the commencement of this conference. Like many of the great spiritual masters, Berry did not speak just to his own time. Like his mentor Teilhard, he was a great peerer into the future, to unseen worlds and possibilities, including the fate of our planet and the human species, which will depend, in part, on whether we rise to the spiritual challenges and undertake the Great Work that confronts us.

As was the case with Teilhard, Berry's prescience about our current plight and our possible futures

was rooted in his deep gaze into the past—in the immensely distant origins of the universe, in the emergence of human beings, in the lost memories of our original connection to the earth, but also to the wholistic perspective of world religions, and the wisdom of indigenous peoples who were able to recognize their own spiritual masters among the trees, the rivers, the meadows and forests, and the creatures who inhabit them.

His thought is not easily pigeon-holed, because he drew eclectically on so many sources: science, religion, philosophy, anthropology, history, and literature. With all these tools he was able to read the universe and our place within it as a great epic story. Though his work transcended his own Christian roots, he believed that Christians had an enormous responsibility, since, as he noted, “the present disruption of all the basic life systems of Earth” had come about “within a culture that emerged from a biblical-Christian matrix.” The future of Christianity, he believed, was intimately connected with the fate of the Earth; it depended on Christians developing the spiritual resources to recover our sense of connection to the Earth community, and on making peace with the planet on which our own survival depends. He could not say whether such a spiritual revolution was likely. But he lived in hope.

I am immensely grateful to Mary Evelyn and John for their masterful editing of this volume, which will surely become an essential introduction to Thomas Berry’s vision and a spiritual classic in its own right. It is a brilliant guide to Berry’s work. But even more, it is a guide for our own work as we contribute our as-yet unwritten chapter to the unfolding story of the universe.

I thank you for this opportunity to greet you today and to be part of such an exciting and important gathering.

Journey of the Universe UK Tour Summer 2014

On a beautiful summer evening on the 5th July, in 2014, in the Rectory Garden of St Agnes Church, Reddish, outside Manchester, President John Grim asked Clive, Helena, and Jane to write personal accounts of the UK Journey of the Universe tour he

was currently undertaking with Mary Evelyn Tucker associated with our communities for the Teilhard de Chardin Association Newsletter. Our three pieces reflect and honour this journey.

Sharing the Journey of the Universe in the Heart of London

By Jane Riddiford

Not for profit organisation Global Generation (www.globalgeneration.org.uk) is based in ‘The Kings Cross Skip Garden’. It is an educational garden made out of a series of dumpsters, in what was an old bus car park in the middle of one of



the most extensive urban development sites in Europe. Amidst the sound of cranes

and concrete and the rise of glass and steel buildings, we have been teaching children and young people the Universe story and so it was an honour to host Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim for three days over the summer.

Along with learning eco-enterprise skills, young people at Global Generation learn to think about who they are and what they are a part of in new and fresh ways. For the last three summers, inspired by the teachings of Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Berry and the book, *Journey of the Universe* by Mary Evelyn Tucker and Brian Thomas Swimme, we have run a Big Bang Summer school. We take young people aged 11 to 16 on an experiential journey of our shared 14 Billion year history. We support them to become Big Bang Ambassadors, so they can find their own ways to express what we consider to be a contemporary and generative origin story. See www.universestory.org.uk for an archive of videos and writing about the work.

Most of the schools in Kings Cross have at least 40 languages spoken and now big business is moving in to the area. The story of the Universe provides an overarching context to bring together young people and many of our Kings Cross collaborators including scientists, artists and construction workers. This year thanks to Mary Evelyn and John it was an

opportunity to take the story out to an even wider audience. The Guardian Newspaper generously provided a venue in their Kings Cross Offices for



us to show the film to 90 people, followed by a question and answer session with Mary Evelyn and John. After watching the

film, Professor of Physics from Imperial College, John Halliwell said:

“Science provides the very long sequence of logical connections which string together the events into what we call the history of the universe. But science has become so good at this that it has vastly outstripped our ability to truly grasp what all this means in human terms.”

At Global Generation we are particularly interested in what this 14-billion-year story has to offer us in terms of a narrative for social and environmental change. We had a chance to explore this question with Mary Evelyn and John at a Saturday morning workshop in the Skip Garden attended by Global Generation staff, friends and volunteers including ten of our young Big Bang Ambassadors. This is what they had to say about their experience:

“It was really exciting to discuss the questions brought up by the film and it was inspiring that so many different people were engaged in it all.”

Liz—16 years

“After the film I left feeling so alive; it reminded me about the big picture. I really feel that we are so lucky to be here in such an amazingly connected world, that we should make the most of it.”

Jaal—16 years

“Today I realised that we need to be the ultimate sustainer of life, protecting and benefitting our world. To step back into the cycle of life, learn how

to become a part of that system, gain back our inner consciousness, discover our instinct”

Nene—15 years

“Mary Evelyn and John made an almost inexplicable impact on me, but not in a way that was ‘doing unto me’, but enabling me to remind myself of who I am and what is out there Love. Hope, Humanity”

Rachel Solomon, Global Generation Youth Manager

Thanks to the inspiration over the summer new opportunities are opening to take the work further. Global Generation recently ran a Universe Story day for 300 new teacher trainees at London University’s, Institute of Education. We hope they will in turn share the power of this story with children in schools all over London.

Jane Riddiford,

Global Generation Executive Director

October 2014

Greater Manchester Summer 2014: The Journey of the Universe Comes Home to Radical Community

Coming Home to Community

The Rev. Clive Larsen

St Agnes Church is a Church in and of evolution, embracing the what is not yet. We straddle three Metropolitan Boroughs of Tameside Stockport and Manchester, placing us very firmly on the edge. The North of the area retains its original terraced housing; an overspill from the industrial revolution and development of the cotton industry. Four of the original cotton mills remain only one and a half miles to the south of the Church.

The Tapestry 1

“The Tapestry” is the name St Agnes Church has given to the community arm of the Church, where

1 See <http://northreddish.org.uk/elevate-the-tapestry>

we weave together new insights in order to create something altogether new. Following my personal awakening to the truth of evolution, one of our first invitees was Matthew Fox (Original Blessing) who filled the Church with wailing and celebration for all of Creation.

More recently, Sr. Ilia Delio gave a two day workshop on Science and Spirituality, followed hot on her heels by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim presenting the Journey of the Universe. The film was shown in the main body of the Church, fifty people attended, shared amazing home cooked food and personal story of their journey, further saturating the entire fabric of the whole structure of the church building. Local parishioners mingled with visitors from Wales, Lancaster and London.

Saturday was enlivened with presentations from Mary Evelyn and John interspersed with extracts from the Conversations. We drilled deeper in smaller groups and people had the opportunities to break open further their ideas formed from deep time.

Also part of the event was Books in a suitcase, a community book stall organised by my co-creator of the event Helena, with books from Mary Evelyn and John, ecological and cosmological titles and from the community publishing cooperative Vala. We sold many books, testimony to the activity and atmosphere created at the event.

Coming Home to Our Radical North West History

Dr. Helena Mary Kettleborough

For Teilhard Association President, John Grim, this was his first visit to Manchester. For both Mary Evelyn and John a “must do” was a visit to

2 <http://www.valapublishers.coop/home>. GreenSpirit is a national charity whose work includes spreading the ideas of Teilhard de Chardin and Thomas Berry and gave an initial small grant to start the book stall: <http://www.greenspirit.org.uk/>

the People’s History Museum . Mary Evelyn and John commented in their opening remarks how the People’s History Museum reminded them of how much the rights we take for granted have been fought for step by step, day by day, year by year.

In introducing the Journey of the Universe events, we framed them within this history explaining that before St Agnes was built, in 1844, only eleven miles away, the Rochdale pioneers started the co-operative movement, which has now grown worldwide into a billion co-operators. At the same time as St Agnes was established around a hundred years ago, the Pankhurst’s lived at Nelson Street in Central Manchester and campaigned for the vote for women. In more recent times, in the 1970s and 1980s, Asian young people demanded an end to racism and for equality as part of a radical youth movement. Only this year, a plaque was unveiled commemorating a very early meeting for LGBT equality in 1964, in the offices of the Diocese of Manchester.

And now in the 2000s, at the Tapestry we joined with this radical history, seeking to become part of the Universe history and pledging our solidarity not just to each other, but to the fellow beings we share planet Earth with and to Gaia herself.

Weaving together a way a new chapter in our radical history (Clive and Helena)

The visit of Mary Evelyn and John is a catalyst.

For Clive it led to an opportunity to join with hundreds of scholars and religious practitioners at the Yale conference on “Living Cosmology: Christian Responses to Journey of the Universe” on the 100th anniversary of Thomas Berry’s

3 <http://www.phm.org.uk>

4 See the following websites:
<http://www.rochdalepioneersmuseum.coop/>;
<http://ardwickheritagetrail.co.uk/pankhurst-centre/>
<http://www.palgrave.com/page/detail/black-star-anandi-ramamurthy/?K=9780745333496> <http://www.manchester.anglican.org/news/1594/equality-plaque-at-church-house>

birthday and bring the ideas and learning back to Manchester. As a result, St. Agnes Church extended an invitation to the Greater Manchester GreenSpirit Group to make its home at the Tapestry .

The Conversations are being shown at the Manchester Universities Anglican Chaplaincy by the Rev. Terry Biddington who attended the event and is also participating in the Yale conference.

At a local community level, Helena worked with the organisers for the film the Journey of the Universe to begin the Rusholme Festival of Ideas in central Manchester in November 2014, opened by Sir Gerald Kaufman MP, one of the longest serving MPs in the House of Commons in England.

Finally, we hope to entice Mary Evelyn and John back to Manchester—perhaps to do a pilgrimage together, to run a community workshop or participate in a Culture Festival.

We know that we are weaving together a new chapter in the radical history of the North West and we thank Mary Evelyn and John for getting on the train at London’s Euston Station to inspire us in the North of England.

*The Rev. Clive Larsen
and Dr. Helena Mary Kettleborough
Stockport and Manchester, October 2014*

Living Life as Inquiry: A Journey of 1,000 Miles Begins With the First Step

By Helena Mary Kettleborough

I have been on a personal 30-year journey of discovery and understanding leading up to and including my PhD studies, submitted to Lancaster

5 Events are listed at: <http://northreddish.org.uk/greenspirit>

6 Rusholme is a local government ward south of Manchester city centre of 15,000 people with a diverse and mixed community.

University Management School late last year and accepted in July as the St Agnes Journey of the Universe event was taking place.

“Living life as inquiry” as an emerging practice for a journey into the Dream of the Earth

As a local government Neighbourhood Manager from the early 1990s to 2011, I was inspired by the Journey of the Universe as a powerful alternative to a sense of powerlessness at the challenges facing humanity globally and locally. Building on the Masters I undertook at Bath University in 2000/



*One of my early cuttings:
“Last chance to save great apes from extinction,”
The Guardian Newspaper, May 21st, 2001*

2002 I found that seeing humanity as part of meaningful universe and gaining spiritual and physic energy from this was not an easy journey to undertake. Through my studies, first person action inquiry emerged as a creative means of learning, reflection and growth on this journey into a wider paradigm, from community to cosmos and back again. I have used first person methods of living life as inquiry (Marshall, 1999) both in my personal life, in my practice and in my research.

Using writing as inquiry, I probed my conduct in exploring wider or holistic, Gaian or

7 See Chapter 1, Marshall, J. et al (2011) Leadership for Sustainability: an Action Research Approach, London: Greenleaf.

8 Marshall, J. (1999) ‘Living Life as Inquiry’, Systematic Practice and Action Research 12:2:433-39.

cosmological paradigms, drawing on the Dream of the Earth (Berry, 1988). I reflected on Thomas Berry's meaning that "the greater curvature of the universe and of planet earth must govern the curvature of our own being" (ibid: xv). I sought to understand how I placed my family within the curvature of the planet. In the words of my daughter Nora: "Often around my friends I would refer to my mum as 'wacky', it was the excuse I would use to explain away the washing up of tin foil, the spiders who were as welcome in our kitchen as any guests and the barnacles who were our cousins" (Kettleborough, H. and N., 2013:157).

Beyond family, we lived in community and I inquired into growing community activity with neighbours inspired by the Dream of the Earth: "We've had street parties, closing the road and putting tables down the middle. Last year was in the rain. There we were, stranding in the street, eating pakoras, with the rain streaming down. Only in England we say as we tucked into soggy cake. We meet for Big Tidy ups and finish with tea and refreshments, growing our community with care. As Thomas Berry says, everything in universe is connected to everything else. By acting in community, we start to build ourselves back not the fabric of the universe" (ibid:150).

And from family and community I aimed to "live life as inquiry" in my professional management work. Beginning with my children for a Millennium scrap book, I identified this 15 year old practice of collecting cuttings of biodiversity loss as an inquiry in its own right, enabling me as an individual to make an embodied response to what humanity is doing to the planet and learning to listen 'with the ear of the heart' (De Vaal, 1997). This became the

bedrock for my management, a practice labelled "Gaia's Graveyards," from my partner Phil Barton's observations.

For example, in personally reflecting on my management of a number of business units for social justice in communities, including community development and neighbourhood warden teams, I engaged colleagues and clients in 'thinking outside the box' including imagining ecologically sustainable futures (Kettleborough, 2011:93). I analysed my journals seeking patterns and through cycles of inquiry, drew out the importance of spirituality to my management practice inspired by the Dream of the Earth. In the final cycle of research for the PhD I examined what we can learn from living in an ancient and beautiful cosmos, using the words of astronauts and cosmonauts as my first person researchers. Using this knowledge and based on practice, emergence and research, I suggested "bridges" of practice, learning values and wider paradigms to underlie action into the future. As a Neighbourhood Manager, I sought to make these ideas practical, envisioning a conceptual framework, embedded within holistic management learning guidelines.

"As the journey neared its end I...would look at the Earth as it would be gliding underneath me and think, how everlasting all this is. After I am gone, and my children and my grandchildren, our Earth will still be gliding through the eternity of space in its measured, unhurried way" (Vladimir Solovyow, USSR comonaut, Kelley, 1988).

I am sharing my ideas through writing and engaging in community projects. If you are interested, please contact:
helenakettleborough2@gmail.com

9 Kettleborough, H. and Kettleborough,N. (2011) 'Discovering that We Live In an Ancient and Beautiful Universe', in P. Reason and M. Newman, Stories of the Great Turning, Bristol: Vala.

10 De Vaal, E. (1997) Living with Contradiction, An Introduction to Benedictine Spirituality, Norwich:Canterbury Press.

11 In Marshall, J. et al (2011).

12 Kelley, J. (1988) The Home Planet, Reading, Mass: Addison Wesley Publishing.

Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion

November 2014

The Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) and the Society for Biblical Literature (SBL) was held in San Diego, CA on November 21-25. Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim have shared their reflections on this meeting. For more about the AAR, visit: <http://www.aarweb.org/>

The Forum on Religion and Ecology (<http://fore.research.yale.edu>) was founded by Mary Evelyn and John in 1998 at a conference at the United Nations after the ten conferences on world religions and ecology were completed at Harvard in 1996-1998. At that time there was neither an academic field nor an engaged force of religion and ecology. The remarkable growth of the field of religion and ecology in the last 15 years was evident at the recent meeting in Southern California.

Nearly 10,000 scholars gathered there from across North America and many other parts of the world. A major focus of the conference was on climate change and the environment. Indeed, more than one third of the panels addressed these issues. Plenary sessions included talks from scientists, such as the head of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Rajendra Pachauri, and activists such as the founder of 350.org, Bill McKibben.

The final plenary session, attended by some 4,000 people, was an interview that Mary Evelyn and Steve Kepnes conducted with former President Jimmy Carter. This focused on both the degradation of the environment as well as violence against women (the subject of his latest book). It was a powerful session with an elder statesman who preserved more land than any other president, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

The President of AAR, Laurie Zoloth, was a driving force behind deciding that the theme of the conference would be climate change and inviting the plenary speakers. Many other professors contributed as well with papers and panels to make this conference a watershed moment for religion and ecology. The Forum on Religion and Ecology hosted

a lunch for nearly 100 professors, graduate students, and guests. This was a joyous occasion when the dedicated efforts for the future flourishing of the planet were recognized as each participant shared their current work.

“Teilhard and the Future of Humanity” Beijing, China

*Report by Alex Wang
Courtesy of Marie-Anne Roger,
Worldwide Teilhard*

The Forum “Teilhard and the Future of Humanity” was held successfully with the participation of a hundred



people, Sunday, Oct. 19, 2014 in Beijing.

This event was co-organized by Beijing Languages and Cultures University (BLCU) and the Association of Friends of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin as part of events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between France and China. The Forum received the support of the French Institute and The Beijing Center for Chinese Studies.

The documentary film “Teilhard in China” produced by Professor Vermander was screened and received a very warm welcome. Have also been enthusiastic the interventions of Professors Huang Huiwen (Teilhard and Chinese Geology), Wang Haiyan (The thought of Teilhard: upward and forward), Thierry Meynard (Teilhard’s thought and contemporary Chinese culture) and Li Tianguang (Teilhard and China). The story of the “encounter with Teilhard in Shara Ousso Gol” lyrically told by Mongolian writer Yang Dorje and the demonstration about the “noospheric” evolution of the Internet, made by Mr. Liu, the

creator of XLab in China, have attracted the attention of the public as well.

Throughout the day, participants from different background have hotly debated the various topics covered, under the animation of Alex Wang, member of the Association of Friends of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin in France.

The Forum concluded with the decision to continue efforts to raise awareness in China about Teilhard's thinking, including organizing the next forum in 2015 in Shara Ousso Gol on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the death of the admired thinker.

New Production of The De Chardin Project by Theatre Passe Muraille

Theatre Passe Muraille in Toronto has put on a new production of The De Chardin Project by Adam Seybold, a Dora Award winner for Outstanding New Play in the Independent Theatre category. The new production was directed by Alan Dilworth and was shown at the TPM Mainspace from November 20 to December 14, 2014.

The De Chardin Project is about Jesuit priest, scientist and philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955). De Chardin, suffering a cerebral hemorrhage finds himself beyond the phenomenal world in an encounter with an enigmatic guide who leads him on the ultimate adventure: the excavation of himself.

Notable Books and Articles

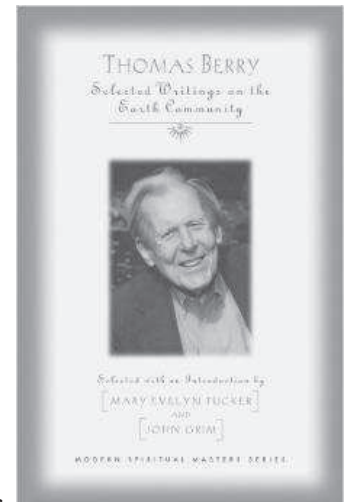
Tucker, Mary Evelyn and John Grim eds. *Thomas Berry: Selected Writings on the Earth Community*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014.
<http://www.orbisbooks.com/thomas-berry.html>

Published for the centenary of his birth. Thomas Berry (1914-2009), was a priest, a "geologist," and a historian of religions. He was an early and significant voice awakening religious sensibilities to the environmental crisis. He is particularly well-known for articulating a "universe

story" that explores the world-changing implications of the contemporary science. Berry pointed the way to an ecological spirituality attuned to our place in nature and giving rise to an ethic of responsibility and care for the Earth.

From the publisher:

This November marked the centenary of the birth of Thomas Berry (1914-2009), one of the great prophets and spiritual masters of our time. A priest, a historian of religions and what he liked to call a "geologist," Berry was an early and significant voice awakening religious sensibilities to the environmental crisis. He is particularly well-known for his writing about the "universe story"—an awareness of the immensity of the cosmos and its implications for human understanding of our relationship to Earth.



So, we are delighted to publish Thomas Berry: Selected Writings on the Earth Community in our Modern Spiritual Masters Series. Editors Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim were students of Berry and have devoted themselves to his legacy. Along with their expert selection of Berry's writings, they provide a cogent introduction to his life and work, noting, "One of Berry's central convictions was that as we began to see the universe as an unfolding symphony and Earth as a living planet, we would be able to find our role as participants in these dynamic processes. . . Thus, learning to work with nature's creativity would become our 'Great Work' in the newly emerging ecological age that Berry called the Ecozoic era."

Endorsements:

"Nowhere else do we have the full scope of Thomas Berry's writing. Consequently nowhere else do we have the full range of his prophetic

insight. That would be contribution enough. But Tucker and Grim have also given us an essay on Berry's life and the influences for his creative thought, as well as his call and challenge. Of special import, for him and for us, is his passion for religion and what it contributes to reinventing the human for a new age of Earth-human relations. Put this book in your library and absorb it, page by page and piece by piece."

~ Larry Rasmussen, *Reinhold Niebuhr Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics, Union Theological Seminary, New York City, Author of Earth Honoring Faith*

"This is the essential collection of Thomas Berry. It organizes key passages from his major works into the pattern of his life's work and makes available many lesser-known essays that fill out that pattern with the complexity of his thought. Introduced with an elegant biography written by his extraordinary students, there is no better way into this genre-defying figure."

~ Willis Jenkins, *University of Virginia, Author of The Future of Ethics*

"Thomas Berry offers big picture thinking, big-hearted love, and big screen imagination both scientific and religious about how the cosmos can thrive. It requires human beings to get their story straight so as to take up our task of becoming 'a more benign mode of presence.' New readers and longtime students of Berry alike will find this volume a portable summary of his best work."

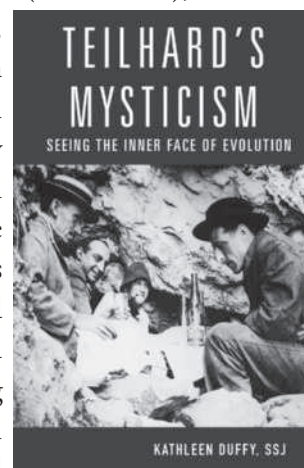
~ Mary Hunt, *Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER)*

"These days, ongoing conflicts of humans and nations seem as inevitable as they are disturbing. Yet, another way seems possible when we consider Thomas Berry's historical and spiritual approach to the earth community's 'new story.' This is a story of grace, return, intercommunion, awakening and interconnections. Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, in this important selection of collected writings, invite us to consider our contributions to a functional cosmology that is capable of nurturing, revising and sustaining our spiritual intuitions and our beloved earth community."

~ Barbara A. Holmes, *President, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, Author of Race and the Cosmos*

Duffy, Kathleen. *Teilhard's Mysticism: Seeing the Inner Face of Evolution*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), a French Jesuit priest and scientist, charted a new path in reconciling Christian theology with evolutionary science. Though church officials in his lifetime rejected his work, his posthumously published writings have illuminated many of the most pressing issues of our time. In particular, he articulated a new mystical vision, in tune with the findings of science and our expanding knowledge of the universe. This book examines Teilhard's mysticism showing how science can help to illuminate the mystical path, while also demonstrating the compatibility between Teilhard's thought and current frontiers in scientific exploration.



Endorsements:

"A marvelous book, a real gem that catches the fire and radiance of what Teilhard saw and experienced throughout his life. Beautifully written and easy to follow, it conveys much of the audacity, originality, and powerful attraction of Teilhard's new mysticism steeped in a synthesis of faith and science that many are longing for today. I cannot recommend it too highly."
—Ursula King, *University of Bristol*

"Readers will find in this jewel of a book a rich and reliable guide to the Teilhardian vision that many of us have found to be both religiously healing and intellectually satisfying in the age of

science. Teilhard would take great delight in the pages you are about to read.”

—John Haught, *Georgetown University*

“This is probably the best book on Teilhard de Chardin available today. For those seeking to know Teilhard’s thought in its many radiant directions, this book is truly ‘the essential Teilhard.’”

—Ilia Delio, *OSF, Georgetown University*

“As a physicist, Duffy brings the reader into an understanding of the universe that activated Teilhard’s scientific vision. She has given us a wonderful book of contemplative inquiry.”

—John Grim, *President American Teilhard Association*

Kathleen Duffy, SSJ is a Sister of St. Joseph who has a PhD in molecular physics from Drexel University. A professor of physics at Chestnut Hill College, she is the editor of *Rediscovering Teilhard’s Fire* (Philadelphia: St. Joseph’s University Press, 2010).

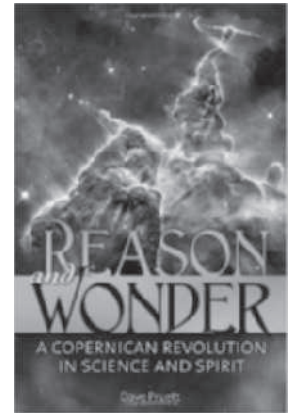
Pruett, Dave. *Reason and Wonder: A Copernican Revolution in Science and Spirituality*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2012.

Review by Charles Finn

Dave Pruet’s *Reason and Wonder: A Copernican Revolution in Science and Spirituality* (Praeger, 2012, 399 pages) takes readers on a hugely informative and satisfying intellectual and spiritual journey. That its dedication is to two men of spirit, a Native American “wisdom-keeper” and a Quaker mystic, marks it from the outset as not your ordinary book about scientific revolutions. This from the book confirms it: “For all their study, erudition, and knowledge, neither scientists nor ecclesiastics are best endowed to articulate wisdom. Such things are best left to prophets, poets, mystics, and minstrels, those capable of seeing with new eyes, hearing with new ears, and feeling with new hearts.” (333)

Think of its author as less former NASA researcher, professor of mathematics, seeker of wisdom, and gifted writer (he is all of these) than storyteller. *Reason and Wonder* is the story of how we have been coming to understand man’s place in the universe through three great revolutions

across the past four and a half centuries. The first, inaugurated by Copernicus, redefined the spatial place of the human in the cosmos. The second, inaugurated by Darwin, redefined the biological place of the human in the unfolding epic of evolution.



Both of these scientific revolutions—which had

seemed to diminish humankind’s significance in the grand scheme of things—set the stage for the third stupendous revolution, inaugurated by discoveries in quantum physics, that is redefining of the spiritual place of the human in the great cosmic venture.

These are the bare bones. What gives life and drama to this immensely enriching story is the reliving of seminal events in Western intellectual and scientific history that have brought us to the dawn of a new awakening to what amounts to a re-enchantment with the cosmos. Dave Pruet’s deft interweaving of great ideas (including complexities of mathematics and physics brought down from the clouds) and living personalities makes these revolutions come alive. Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Darwin, Einstein, Schrodinger, Chardin—these are but a few of the rare individuals who stand like mileposts, luminaries made brighter by the magnifying lens of Reason and Wonder.

Students of Teilhard will take particular pleasure in the chapter entitled “A World Aflame” which takes the reader through The Problem of Consciousness, A God of Iron, The Within and the Without, Cosmogogenesis, and The Alpha and the Omega.

The following paragraphs will reveal the author’s manner of elucidating the key concept of cosmogenesis:

“The major innovation of *The Phenomenon of Man* is the outline of a generalized theory of evolution—evolution with a big ‘E’—for which

Teilhard coined the term cosmogenesis. The term evokes a restless cosmos, ever creative and continually unfolding. When was the moment of creation? Now. How different is the cosmos of Teilhard, recreated at each instant, from that of Aristotle, perfected by the creator for all eternity!

“How could a man of such faith arrive at so bold a view of evolution? Keenly aware of twentieth-century developments in cosmology, among them that the universe is expanding from Lemaitre’s ‘primeval atom,’ Teilhard grasped that evolution applies not only to biological processes but also to the universe as a whole. The Copernican revolution and its aftershocks in modern cosmology had freed us from the Aristotelian misperception that the physical universe is immutable. Similarly, Darwinism liberated us from the misapprehension that biology is static. Teilhard saw a trend: the nature of nature is to change.

“Most significantly, however, Teilhard’s deep spirituality allowed him to intuit that the cosmic evolutionary processes are not directionless but converge to create beings of greater biological complexity and concomitantly higher consciousness, through a process he termed complexification (or complexity-consciousness). And by following the arc of complexification into the future, Teilhard envisioned the Omega Point on the far horizon of evolution, that point toward which all creation advances, however haltingly.” (317)

Reason and Wonder is the fascinating story of how revolutions in physics, biology and quantum mechanics have spawned a revolution in spirit. Readers will cheer to have validated their intuition that, deep down, there cannot be a fundamental dichotomy between science and religion, between matter and spirit, that the intellectual voyage and the spiritual voyage are the same voyage!

Eaton, Heather, ed. *The Intellectual Journey of Thomas Berry: Imagining the Earth Community*. Lexington Books, 2014.

Update:

Paperback available January 2015

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Publisher’s description:

Thomas Berry had a gentle yet mesmerizing and luminescent presence that was evident to anyone who spent time with him. His intellectual scope and erudite manner were compelling, and the breadth, depth, clarity, and elegance of his vision was breathtaking. Berry was an intellectual giant and cultural visionary of extraordinary stature.

Thomas Berry’s vast knowledge of history, religions, and cultural histories is a unique blend revealing a genuine, original thinker. The ecological crisis, in all its manifestations, came to dominate Berry’s concerns. He perceived that the greatest need was to offer the possibility of a viable future for an Earth community. Many know of his proposal for a functional cosmology, the need for a new story, and a vital Earth sensitive spirituality. Few know of his rich and varied intellectual journey. *The Intellectual Journey of Thomas Berry: Imagining the Earth Community* is about the roots and insights hidden within his ecological, spiritual proposal. These essays, written by experts on Thomas Berry’s work, probe into, and reveal distinct themes that permeate his work, in gratitude for his contribution to the Earth. Contributions by: Brian Thomas Swimme, Mary Evelyn Tucker, John Grim, Christopher Key Chapple, Dennis O’Hara, Cristina Vanin, Anne Marie Dalton, Brian Brown, Paul Waldau, and Stephen Dunn.

Please join us for the Annual Meeting of the



American Teilhard Association

Saturday May 16, 2015

Lunch: 12:00 p.m.; Talk: 1:45 p.m.

In the refectory at

Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway at 121st St., New York, NY

John Haught will be speaking on:

“Teilhard, Religion, and Big History: A Look Inside”

Running silently through the heart of matter from the earliest moments of the cosmic story, a vein of “subjectivity” has been in great measure inaccessible to objectifying science. So hidden is the interior dimension of the cosmos from public examination that scientists and philosophers with materialist leanings sometimes claim that it has no real existence at all. Leaving subjectivity out of their representations of the cosmos, however, they fail to tell us the whole story. They even leave out the most important part of it. So if the new exponents of “Big History” are serious about bringing deep coherence to their accounts of the cosmos and human existence they need to make room for a wider empiricism and a more comprehensive kind of understanding than the sciences have collectively provided. They need to develop a method of inquiry that connects the inner drama tightly to the outer narrative. What, then, do the emergence of intellectual, moral and (especially) religious subjectivity teach us about the universe? With the help of Teilhard (and several other major thinkers) this lecture will outline ways in which our telling the cosmic story can be enriched by a closer “look inside.”

*John F. Haught is Distinguished Research Professor, Georgetown University, Washington DC. He was formerly Professor in the Department of Theology at Georgetown University (1970-2005) and Chair (1990-95). His area of specialization is systematic theology, with a particular interest in issues pertaining to science, cosmology, evolution, ecology, and religion. Among his numerous books the most recent are: *Resting on the Future: Catholic Theology for an Unfinished Universe* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2015 forthcoming) and *Science and Faith: A New Introduction* (New York: Paulist Press, 2012), translated into Chinese and Lithuanian. Haught has also authored numerous articles and reviews. He lectures internationally on many issues related to science and religion.*

For more information and to register, go to:
<http://teilharddechardin.org/index.php/event>

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American Teilhard Association, Thomas Berry, and Journey of the Universe Websites

At the new ATA site www.teilharddechardin.org can be found a Biography, List of Writings, Pictures and Quotes, Life Timeline, ATA Events, Teilhard Studies with first page, recent full Teilhard Perspectives, Membership info, Links, and a Brian Thomas Swimme interview on Teilhard.

The Thomas Berry site www.thomasberry.org offers a Biography by Mary Evelyn Tucker, a John Grim essay: "Time, History, Historians in Thomas Berry's Vision," Writings by Thomas Berry, comments on his The Great Work, Films about or inspired by, and a List of Books.

A new site www.journeyoftheuniverse.org introduces this title film, book and educational series by Brian Thomas Swimme, Mary Evelyn Tucker, John Grim, and an advisory board to carry forward in multimedia fashion the inspiration of Pierre Teilhard and Thomas Berry.

Teilhard Perspective

TEILHARD PERSPECTIVE is published by the American Teilhard Association, a non-profit organization whose goals are to explore philosophical, scientific, religious, social and environmental concerns in light of Teilhard's vision and to clarify the role of the human phenomenon in this emerging understanding of the cosmos.

We welcome suggestions of relevant ideas, books, news, events and contributions of articles for this newsletter. The editor is Tara Trapani, Yale University. The *Teilhard Perspective* newsletter along with the biannual *Teilhard Studies* pamphlet and Annual Meeting notices are available through membership. Please contact us at: American Teilhard Association, c/o John Grim, 29 Spoke Drive, Woodbridge, CT 06525. Annual membership is \$35.

The Association President is Dr. John Grim, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Yale University, 195 Prospect Street, New Haven CT 06520. Email john.grim@yale.edu. Vice Presidents are Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker, maryevelyn.tucker@yale.edu, and Dr. Brian Thomas Swimme, California Institute for Integral Studies, 1453 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. For Publications and other information, please email Tara Trapani at: tcmk@aya.yale.edu.