

Teilhard 2000: The Vision of a Cosmic Genesis at the Millennium

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Pierre Teilhard de Chardin achieved his prescient vision of a spiritually oriented evolution, a cosmic synthesis of science and religion, in the first half of this century. As it draws to a close marking the turn of a millennium, it is an appropriate time to revisit the state of this project.

To set the scene, one might speak in terms of paradigms, a reigning worldview that subsumes everything in its premise. In the 20th century, the vested assumption has been of a sterile cosmos, a material mechanism fundamentally indifferent to life. It is evolutionary but without direction or soul. This gloom is touted in a recent book, *The End of Science* by John Horgan, which claims science is in its twilight since all the particles, genes and galaxies, all the origins and fates, are found without any signs of a design.¹ We are left with a postmodern “ironic science” of untestable Borgesian speculation. An initial observation is that since everyone Horgan interviews or cites, except for Lynn Margulis, is a man, it seems a narrow “left brain” surmise unable to imagine connections between the reductionist fragments.

Teilhard’s legacy has been to represent the holistic alternative: “I shall try to show how it is possible if we look at things from a sufficiently elevated position, to see the confusions of detail in which we think we are lost, merge into one vast organic, guided, operation, in which each of us has a place.”² From this vantage, Teilhard could perceive a progressive genesis developing by nested spheres of organic complexity. A companion axis of consciousness brings forth the personalization of the earth in its noospheric human phase. Humankind is to be known as an exemplary phenomenon of a greater creation, however vicarious, thus gaining a sense of hope and purpose.

In an earlier Teilhard Study, circa 1980, I tried to show how scientists and authors were beginning to glimpse and verify this scenario.³ Now, almost two decades later, the evidence appears sufficiently strong, if gathered altogether, to presage a new paradigm, a Copernican revolution on a cosmic scale, that could fulfill Teilhard’s mission. To address Horgan’s establishment realistically, these reasons must be clearly stated and supported, which is our aim here. In this regard, each section will come with an expanded bibliography.