

Towards a Scientific Phenomenology

The primary and major theme on which Teilhard deliberated was the universe. What has it to teach us about its intrinsic structure and development? What too are man's place and man's task in this strange and marvelous world? ...through empirical observation and experiment...a phenomenology of the cosmic... observable phenomenon in its totality... the whole is more than the sum of its parts. A true science of totality holds a kind of middle position between various natural sciences on the one hand and philosophy proper on the other. Endeavour, through the use of scientific expertise, to give as complete as possible expression to the world in its totality and inner orientation. In its broadest and most general sense the term "phenomenology" signifies a descriptive study of a whole set of phenomena...of consciousness and on the life of the mind...with Teilhard, it is a matter of "the totality of cosmic phenomenon" Quite logically, therefore, a study will stress the links connecting him with the rest of the cosmos; but in so doing it will of course not lose sight of the quality of originality in man...his exclusive privilege is in his power of conscious reflection... Once we recognize this diversity, this gradation, is an animal psychism, it becomes clear that viewed in its psychic aspect the animal kingdom forms in itself an ascending system," a kind of fan-like structure in which the higher terms on each oervure are recognized each time by a greater range of choice and depending on a better defined centre of co-ordination and consciousness"... The being who is the object of his own reflection, in consequence of that doubling back upon himself, becomes in a flash able to raise himself into a new sphere. In reality another world is born. – self consciousness and freedom emerge...a part of the stuff of the universe, by virtue of an inner dynamic (called by Teilhard "radial energy") collects and concentrates itself, as it were, to an ever greater degree of intensity...involution and interiorization. In this way organized entities emerge, held together by their own energy and each of them forming a self-contained, equilibrial system...which are a product of involution; for running parallel to that there is a second distinguishing feature of evolution...reaching its point of climax in man.

~ An Introduction to Teilhard De Jhardin ~N.M. Wildiers