

6-2023

Cláudio Carvalhaes. How Do We Become Green People and Earth's Communities? Inventory, Metamorphoses, and Emergenc(i)es

Ruy O. Costa

Latino and Global Ministries Program Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.usfca.edu/jhlt>

Recommended Citation

Costa, Ruy O. "Cláudio Carvalhaes. How Do We Become Green People and Earth's Communities? Inventory, Metamorphoses, and Emergenc(i)es," *Journal of Hispanic / Latino Theology*. Vol. 25 : No. 1 , Article 13. (2023) :120-121

Available at: <https://repository.usfca.edu/jhlt/vol25/iss1/13>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Hispanic / Latino Theology by an authorized editor of USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. For more information, please contact repository@usfca.edu.

Cláudio Carvalhaes. *How Do We Become Green People and Earth's Communities? Inventory, Metamorphoses, and Emergenc(i)es*. York, PA: The Barber's Son Press, 2022.

Cláudio Carvalhaes graciously attributes to Leonardo Boff the paradigm shift in theology that invites us to “think with the earth” in Boff’s book *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor* (1997). Yet Carvalhaes’s work is not only a new way of thinking, a new scientific paradigm shift as defined by Thomas Kuhn, but also an invitation to a new way of being with the earth, in communion with the earth. Cláudio Carvalhaes is deeply in love with squirrels, possums, trees, and waters. He stops his car when in the middle of a trip he finds a small animal killed on the road and performs a burial ritual for the victim. One cannot do that and remain oblivious to the cry of the earth. As a professor of liturgy at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Cláudio Carvalhaes knows that our thinking is shaped not only by our social location but also by what we do. Rituals matter. And Cláudio Carvalhaes’s thinking has been shaped not only by leading thinkers like Leonardo Boff, but also by the rituals that he carries in his own body. Like a shaman with a PhD, Cláudio Carvalhaes exudes an intense connection with the pulsating life force of the earth. And because nature groans and wails for its liberation from the devastation inflicted on it by the Anthropocene, Cláudio Carvalhaes’s text is a call to repentance, to conversion, and to a new way of being in community with all creation.

The core of this book is a collection of lectures Carvalhaes presented at The Students’ Lectures on Missions at Princeton Theological Seminary in 2021. The three lectures address the history of the social imaginary that has lent legitimation to the Anthropocene, a call to repentance, and a look at what signs of hope and possibilities are emerging. The author begins with an “Inventory,” a notion borrowed from Palestinian intellectual Edward Said, as a

hermeneutic of the historical paths that have taken us to the present crisis. This is a painful look at the historical processes that have resulted in our false consciousness as rulers of nature. Then, in “Metamorphoses,” Carvalhaes engages botanist Emanuele Coccia’s notion of shape-shifting and our need for transformation in order to re-orient our lives to the challenges facing the earth. In the final lecture, “Emergenc(i)es,” the author points to the crisis that demands our attention immediately (emergencies) as well as to signs of hope in new practices of restoration of the earth and of our own humanity (emergences).

The book includes a new chapter, “How to Become Green People and Earth Communities,” where a theology of the earth, informed by classical sources such as the *Westminster Catechism*, is translated into concrete liturgical (and) earth caring practices. Cláudio Carvalhaes’s new way of doing theology engages ancient theological language, such as language on salvation, transformation, and eschatology, with leading-edge constructs from the sciences of religion, what Leonardo Boff might call a *pericoretica*, i.e., an ethics that seeks dialogue from all directions at all times.

The book is also artfully illustrated by Marc H. Ellis and Kimberly Rodriguez and includes a must-read note on “Method and Technique” from Christopher D. Rodkey of the Barber’s Son Press, a provoking Foreword by Karema Gore, Founder and Director of the Center for Earth and Ethics at Union Theological Seminary, and an Afterword by Fafetai Aiava, Senior Lecturer and Head of Theology and Ethics at the Pacific College in Fiji.

This book is highly needed. Highly recommended.

Ruy O. Costa

Latino and Global Ministries Program

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary