

Religion & Nature

Dr. Bron Taylor; Religion 6167, Spring 2006

Core Seminar, Graduate Program in Religion and Nature, The University of Florida

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Religion & Nature

Syllabus

Note: During the spring of 2006 this course will be enriched by the 6-9 April Conference of the Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture. Students will be expected to attend and present a research paper at this conference. The class session that would normally be held on 10 April 2006 is cancelled. There will also be presentations by candidates for the religion and nature position in the department of religion, which students will be expected to attend and comment upon. Details appear below or will be added in due course.

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Purpose and Objectives

This course explores theoretical approaches and understandings regarding the complex relationships between ecosystems, religions and cultures. It will prepare religion graduate students to make informed decisions regarding the unique contributions they might make to the nascent and emerging “religion and nature” or “religion and ecology” field. It will enable other graduate students to appreciate the extent to which the “religion” variable is involved in shaping nature-related attitudes and behaviors, and to integrate the study of religion into their own chosen fields, whether these are more theoretically or practically inclined.

While the course will examine religious environmental ethics through a variety of critical lenses and such subjects will certainly be discussed regularly, the coursework and focus of classroom discussions will primarily be scientific rather than normative: the effort will be to understand what has been and is going on in the realm of religions and nature, and how perceptions of nature and religion interactions are understood and contested by scholars, rather than upon what we think ought to occur. Ethics is the focus of another of the core, Religion and Nature seminars, as well as of a variety of electives offered.

The course will draw on a number of sources. Introductions to a variety of theoretical approaches, and background articles on a wide range of nature-related religious phenomena, will be provided in readings from *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature* (2005). Books and articles works by key figures will provide an opportunity for in-depth exposure to some of the approaches discussed in the materials introduced in the encyclopedia. Guest scholars will serve as resource people during the course.

The course shall be conducted in collaboration with its participants and will be in a seminar format. This syllabus is, therefore, tentative. It may be revised during the course and updated at the course website. The online version will be the one governing the course, including its schedule, readings, and requirements. It should be consulted weekly. To further facilitate communication, students must provide a valid email address and download messages every 48 hours or so during the semester, so as to not miss important announcements or requests for help from other course participants.

This syllabus provides the usual course outline, assignments, and grading information, as well as extended introductions and resources to explore further, beyond what is possible in this course, its major conundrums and themes. By doing, it also provides a starting point for a variety of research projects pertinent to this course and the study of religion, nature, and culture more generally. This syllabus is subject to modification as we, working together, discover additional or superior resources to consider. Course assignments will include intensive reading and the preparation of critical analyses of them prior to class, written responses to periodically-given, take-home essay questions, and a major research paper (or in some, negotiated cases, through a take-home final exam). Details will appear in subsequent versions of this syllabus.

Required Texts

- Burkert, Walter. *Creation of the Sacred: Tracks of Biology in Early Religions*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1996.
- Berkes, Fikret. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management*. Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis, 1999.
- Glacken, Clarence. *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.
- Rappaport, Roy A. *Ecology, Meaning and Religion*. Richmond, California: North Atlantic, 1979.
- Worster, Donald. *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
- Shepard, Paul. *Coming Home to the Pleistocene*. San Francisco: Island Press, 1998.

Course Outline in Five Modules

- 1) Nature as the Habitat of Religion and Culture
 - Biology and the Roots of Religion & Ecological Approaches to the Study of Religion
 - Primate Spirituality, Paleolithic Religions, and the “Worship of Nature”
- 2) World Environmental History & Religion
 - Agriculture and The Birth of the Gods
 - Occidental History, Religions, and Nature
 - Asian Civilizations, Religions, and Nature
- 3) Scientific Paradigms and the Transformation of “Religion and Nature” Discourses
- 4) “Religion and Nature” in twentieth century scholarship (from *the Sacred and the Profane* to “Ecological Anthropology” and “Religion and Ecology”)
 - Mircea Eliade, cultural geography, and theories of ‘sacred space’
 - Religions as adaptive and maladaptive ecological strategies.
 - Environmental Concern, Religious Studies, the “Religion and Ecology” field, and debates about the environmental tendencies of religious types.
 - Religion’s role in the environmental & social collapse; environmental reform?
- 5) Religion, Nature, and the Future of Religion and Nature
 - Social Scientific Perspectives on Environmentalism, Nature, and Religion, from Quantitative Data to Colin Campbell’s “Cultic Milieu” Theory.
 - Green Nazis and the Shadow Side of Nature Religions.
 - Contemporary Construction of Nature Religions and Pagan Spiritualities
 - Secularization Theories and ‘Spiritualities of Connection’ to Nature.

Course Assignments*

1. Consistent, quality preparation for class by reading, taking notes, and completing weekly assignments (15% of course grade). Includes occasional prepared summary analyses of key readings, turned in as indicated.
2. Preparation and presentation to the designated “Special Assignment” reading (5%)
3. Two take-home essay exams (25% each)
4. Final research paper (30%) including presentation at the inaugural conference for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture.

Module I: Nature as the Habitat of Religion and Culture

- Biology and the Roots of Religion; and Ecological Approaches to the Study of Religion
- Primate Spirituality, Paleolithic Religions, and the “Worship of Nature”

Introduction: We begin this course, and the religion and nature program, with a module introducing evolutionary/ecological approaches to the complex relationships between Homo sapiens and their habitats. This module will be short, introducing the overall approach, which will, in turn, undergird much of the subsequent readings and discussion.

9 & 16 January ~ Religion and Nature in Evolutionary/Ecological Context

(Note: Classes will meet both the 9th and 16th, despite MLK Holiday on 16th. You will have another class off later in the semester as compensation)

Assignments

- 1) By midnight 15 January send by mail attachment a 500-750 word analysis of the argument in Burkert, relating it to the encyclopedia entries you have read.

Readings:

Begin with two encyclopedia entries which introduce into the religion and nature field: [Introduction to the Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature](#), and “[Ecology and Nature Religions](#)” from the *Encyclopedia of Religion* (second edition). Continue with:

Background and Comparative Readings: Animism; Anthropologists; Goodall, Jane; **Hunting and the Origins of Religion; Magic;** Paleolithic Religions and Paleolithic Art Primate Spirituality; “Rock Art”; Wonder toward Nature. “[Worship of Nature](#)” (Larry Sullivan in the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 2005)

Required Core Readings: Burkert, *Creation of the Sacred: Tracks of Biology in Early Religions* (entire book).

Special Assignment Readings: Frazer, Sir James George. *The Golden Bough: A History of Myth and Religion*. London: Chancellor Press, 1994. [Presenter: Dr. Taylor] _____ . *The Worship of Nature*. London: MacMillan, 1926. [Presenter: Dr. Taylor]

Web Resources

[Pascal Boyer’s website](#) and expanding cognitive science website, “[Experimental Studies of Supernatural and Religious Concepts](#)”

Module I: Further and Future Reading ~ Evolution and Religion (focus on origins and the emergence of the scholarly discussion)

- Atran, Scott. *In Gods We Trust: The Evolutionary Landscape of Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Bloch, Maurice. *Prey Into Hunter: The Politics of Religious Experience*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Boyer, Pascal. *The Naturalness of Religious Ideas: A Cognitive Theory of Religion*. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1994.
- Boyer, Pascal. *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought*. New York: Basic, 2002.
- Burhenn, Herbert. "Ecological Approaches to the Study of Religion." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 9, no. 2 (1997): 111-26.
- Burkert, Walter. *Creation of the Sacred: Tracks of Biology in Early Religions*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1996.
- Cauvin, Jacques. *The Birth of the Gods and the Origins of Agriculture*. Translated by Trevor Watkins. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Frazer, Sir James George. *The Golden Bough: A History of Myth and Religion*. London: Chancellor Press, 1994.
- _____. *The Worship of Nature*. London: MacMillan, 1926.
- Guthrie, Stewart. *Faces in the Clouds: A New Theory of Religion*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Hultkrantz, Ake. "Ecology of Religion: Its Scope and Methodology." In *Science of Religion Studies in Methodology*, ed. Lauri Honko, 221-36. Berlin: Mouton, 1979.
- Kellert, Stephen R. and Edward O. Wilson, eds. *The Biophilia Hypothesis*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1993.
- Olson, Carl. "Chapter 3: The Quest for the Origins of Religion." In *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion*, ed. Carl Olson, 49-99. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2003.
- _____. Chapter 9: "Ecological/Biological Approaches." In *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion*, ed. Carl Olson, 439-75. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2003.
- Wilson, David Sloan. *Darwin's Cathedral: Evolution, Religion, and the Nature of Society*. Chicago & London: Chicago University Press, 2002.
- Wilson, Edward Osborne. *Biophilia*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984.
- _____. *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Module II: World Environmental History & Religion

- **Occidental History, Religions, and Nature**
- **Asian Civilizations, Religions, and Nature**

Introduction: We have thus far seen some ways in which an evolutionary approach can be deployed to wonder about the origins of religion and to consider the importance of nature as the habitat in which humans wonder about, make sense of, and cope with, their wide, wild world. An examination with ecological lenses of the emergence and evolution of "occidental" and "oriental" civilizations, suggests that, as religions emerged, split, fought, lived, died, splintered, and fused, nature was more than a physical resource for the combatants; nature was a wellspring for reflection, a ubiquitous symbolic resource, the very humus out of which religious life emerged and grew. This did not lead, however, to an ethical valuing of nature. Indeed, a case can be made that while religions were inevitably and inexorably rooted in nature, the more "civilized" they became, the less intrinsically valuable nature became. Instead, the world became a place of religious trial in a broad narrative in which the climax of the story was, in one way or another, divine rescue from this world.

January 23 ~ Ancient Occidental Civilizations

Assignment

1) Be prepared to discuss all readings to date.

Background and Comparative Readings: Burhenn, Herbert. "Ecological Approaches to the Study of Religion." *Method and theory in the study of religion* 9, no. 2 (1997): 111-26; *From the Encyclopedia: *Ecology and Religion; Creation Myths of the Ancient World; Creation Stories in the Hebrew Bible; Delphic Oracle; Domestication; Egypt–ancient; Egypt–pre-Islamic; Greco-Roman World; Greece–Classical; Greek Paganism; Mesopotamia–Ancient; Ovid’s Metamorphoses; Roman Britain; Roman Natural Religion; Roman Religion and Empire.*

Required Core Readings: Glacken, Clarence. *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967. Part I, "The Ancient World" (1-168).

Special Assignment Reading: (Suggestions from Evolution references, above):
[Presenter: Luke Johnston on Atran]

January 30 ~ Occidental Religions through the Middle Ages

Assignments:

1) Be prepared to discuss all readings to date.

Background and Comparative Readings: *From the ERN, essential readings in bold.* Eden and other Gardens; **Eden’s Ecology**; Hebrew Bible; Jewish Intertestamental Literature; ***Judaism**; Christianity (1) – Introduction *through* Christianity (6b2)– Greek Orthodoxy; ***Book of Nature**; ***Natural Law and Natural Rights**; **Islam**; Muhammad; The Qur’an; Gardens in Islam.

Required Core Readings: Glacken, Clarence. *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967. Part II, "The Christian Middle Ages" 171-351.

Special Assignment Reading: David Sloan Wilson or Pascal Boyer (Suggestions from Evolution references, above): [Presenter TBA]

Further and Future Reading:

Foltz, Richard C., Frederick M. Denny and Azizan Baharuddin, eds. *Islam and ecology: a bestowed trust*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003.
Hessel, Dieter T. and Rosemary Reuther. *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
Tirosch-Samuels, Hava, ed. *Judaism and Ecology: Created World and Revealed World*. Religions of the World and Ecology. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002.

February 6 ~ Religions Originating in Asia

Assignments:

1. Complete previous Module II readings and those listed immediately below.
2. **Take Home Exam's distributed; due midnight, eastern time, 20 February, to professor Taylor, at this email address: bronaway@yahoo.com**

Required Core Readings: All readings from the ERN, essential readings in bold. *India and South Asia*: **India; Hinduism, Jainism**; Ahimsa; Bhagavadgita; Dharma–Hindu; Jataka Tales; Prakriti; Tantra; Yoga and Ecology; (*Buddhism, originating and spreading from India*): **Buddhism; Buddhism–East Asia; Buddhism–Tibetan; Zen Buddhism; Japanese Religions**; Buddhahood of Grasses and Trees; Indra's Net; (*Chinese Religions*): **Chinese Traditional Concepts of Nature; Confucianism; Daoism**; Creatures' Release in Chinese Buddhism; Martial Arts.

Special Assignment Reading: TBA

Further and Future Reading:

Bernard, Rosemarie. *Shinto*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Chapple, Christopher Key, ed. *Jainism and Ecology*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002.

Chapple, Christopher Key and Mary Evelyn Tucker. *Hinduism and Ecology: The Intersection of Earth, Sky, and Water*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Girardot, N. J., James Miller and Xiaogan Liu. *Daoism and Ecology: Ways within a Cosmic Landscape*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Tucker, Mary Evelyn and Duncan Ryuken Williams, eds. *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997.

February 13 Emerging Civilizations, take-home exam week, and Jewish Tu B'Shvat (festival of the trees) holiday

Fyi: Arthur Waskow & Naomi Hymen and Ari Elon (eds). *Trees, Earth, and Torah: A Tu B'Shvat Anthology* (Jewish Publication Society of America, 1999)

Last week to identify research projects ~ contact and consult with instructor.

Assignments:

- Read ahead into module III if possible.

Special Assignment Reading: Suggestions: Eisenberg or Lansing (below) or Robert Pogue Harrison, *Forests: The Shadow of Civilization*, University of Chicago Press, 1992. [Presenter: TBA]

Module II: Further and Future Reading ~ focus on emerging civilizations

Carrasco, David, ed. *The Imagination of Matter: Religion and Ecology in Mesoamerican Traditions*. Oxford: BAR International Series, 1989.

Eisenberg, Evan. *The Ecology of Eden*. New York: Random House, 1998.

Harris, Marvin. "The Myth of the Sacred Cow." In *Man, Culture, and Animals*, eds. Anthony Leeds and Andrew P. Vaya, 217-28. Washington, DC: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1965.

_____. *Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches: The Riddles of Culture*. New York: Random House, 1974.

- _____. *Cannibals and Kings: The Origins of Cultures*. New York: Random House, 1977.
- _____. "The Cultural Ecology of India's Sacred Cattle." *Current Anthropology* 7 (1966): 51-66.
- Lansing, J. Stephen. *Priests and Programmers: Technologies of Power in the Engineered Landscape of Bali*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Lansing, J. Stephen and James N. Kremer. "A Socioecological Analysis of Balinese Water Temples." In *The Cultural Dimension of Development: Indigenous Knowledge Systems*, eds. D. M. Warren, L. Jan Slikkerveer and David Brokensha, 258-68. London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1995.
- Lodrick, Deryck O. *Sacred Cows, Sacred Places: Origins and Survivals of Animal Homes in India*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1981.
- Oelschlaeger, Max. *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.
- Simoons, Frederick J. "Questions in the Sacred Cow Controversy." *Current Anthropology* 20 (1979): 467-93.

Module III: Scientific Paradigms and the Transformation of “Religion and Nature” Discourses

Introduction: The advent of natural science through a monkeywrench into the mainstreams of religious perception and identity by, as much as anything else, challenging human understanding of nature itself. The scientific worldview, where it took root, eroded earlier religious understandings and certainties, transforming both religions themselves, and kindling an entire, new, discussion of the relationships between nature and religion. Broadly understood, the encounter between “Religion and Science” has had far reaching impacts that have only just begun, and whose impacts are only in their infancy. Among the most dramatic results is the grafting of scientific understandings onto already existing religious forms, and the invention of entirely new religious forms based on these new understandings.

This and the subsequent two modules explore the cultural earthquake brought on by the transformation of scientific paradigms, and wrestles with questions regarding the possible long-term impacts, including environmental impacts, of these developments.

February 20 ~ No Class ~ President’s Day ~ Research Week

Take Home Exam’s must be emailed by midnight, eastern time, 20 February, to professor Taylor, at this email address: bronaway@yahoo.com

February 27 ~ Science, Religion, and “Paradigm Shifts”

Assignments:

1) Be prepared to discuss module III readings, through Glacken, assigned below.

Background and Comparative Readings: *From the ERN: Philosophy of Nature; Western Esotericism; (physics):* Bateson, Gregory; Berman, Morris; Bohm, David; Burroughs, John; Capra, Fritjof; **Chaos; Complexity Theory; Darwin, Charles;** Einstein, Albert; Linnaeus, Carl; Pauli, Wolfgang; Peat, F. David; Prigogine, Ilya; Sagan, Carl; Sheldrake, Rupert (*biosphere and ecosystem science*): **Darwin, Charles; Haeckel,**

Ernst; Holism; Leopold, Aldo; Carson, Rachael; Gaia; Gaian Pilgrimage;
Ouspensky, Pyotr Demianovich; Pantheism; Panentheism; Smuts, Jan Christiaan;
Thoreau, Henry David; **Wilson, Edward O. (reactionary responses): Creationism and
Creation Science; Wise Use Movements.**

Required Core Readings:

Glacken, Clarence. *Traces on the Rhodian Shore*, part III “Early Modern Times” (read carefully: 355-497, then read quickly and/or peruse the rest of the volume to discern its main argument).

Worster, Donald. *Nature’s Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press (second edition, 1994). Read the entire book, but especially carefully Parts I, and III - VI.

Special Assignment Reading: (Suggestions): [Reyda Taylor presentation: Gunderson, Lance H. and C. S. Holling. *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Systems of Humans and Nature.*] Other possibilities: James Gleick, *Chaos: Making a New Science* (NY: Penguin, 1987); Bramwell, Anna. *Ecology in the 20th Century: A History*; Midgley, Mary. *Evolution as a Religion*.

Module III: Further and Future Reading ~ Scientific Paradigms, Religion, and Nature

- Bateson, Gregory. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. New York: Ballantine, 1972.
Berman, Morris. *The Reenchantment of the World*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981.
Berry, Thomas. *The Dream of the Earth*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1988.
Bramwell, Anna. *Ecology in the 20th Century: A History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989.
Capra, Fritjof. *The Tao of Physics*. third ed. Boston: 1975; reprint, Boston: Shambhala, 1991.
_____. *The Turning Point: Science, Society, and the Rising Culture*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982.
Fortey, Richard. *Life: A Natural History of the First Four Billion Years of Life on Earth*. New York: Knopf, 1998.
Gleick, James. *Chaos: Making a New Science*. New York: Penguin, 1987.
Golley, Frank Benjamin. *A History of the Ecosystem Concept in Ecology*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1993.
Gunderson, Lance H. and C. S. Holling. *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Systems of Humans and Nature*. Covelo, CA: Island Press, 2002.
Heisenberg, Werner. *Physics and Philosophy*. New York: Harper and Row, 1962.
Lovelock, James. *Gaia: A New Look At Life on Earth*. revised ed. Oxford: 1979; reprint, Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
Macy, Joanna. *World As Lover, World As Self*. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 1991.
Midgley, Mary. *Evolution as a Religion*. London: Routledge (1985, revised with new introduction, 2002).
McGrath, Alister E. *Science and Religion: An Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999.
Odum, Howard T. *Environment, Power, and Society*. New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1971.
Primavesi, Anne. *Gaia's Gift*. London & New York: Routledge, 2003.
Real, L. A. and J. H. Brown, eds. *Foundations of Ecology*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press.
Sagan, Carl. *Carl Sagan’s the Cosmic Connection*. second ed. 1974; reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
Swimme, Brian and Thomas Berry. *The Universe Story: From the Primordial Flaring Forth to the Ecozoic Era: A Celebration of the Unfolding of the Cosmos*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1992.

Module IV: “Religion and Nature” in twentieth-century scholarship (from the Sacred and the Profane and “Ecological Anthropology” to “Religion and Ecology”)

- **Religions as adaptive and maladaptive ecological strategies (with special reference to the indigenous societies and “traditional ecological knowledge.”**

- Mircea Eliade, cultural geography, and theories of ‘sacred space’
- Environmental Concern, Religious Studies, the “Religion and Ecology” field, and debates about the environmental tendencies of the “world religions” of the east and west.
- Religion’s role in the environmental & social collapse; and environmental reform?

Introduction: not only were there upheavals in science during the 20th century, anthropology and religious studies went through their own dramatic transformations. Among the most significant that were directly nature-relevant were analyses of the importance of human perceptions of sacred space, and the role of such perceptions in religious and environmental practices. In the latter part of the 20th century, some anthropologists and religious studies scholars began not only to analyze the relationships between religions, cultures, and environments, but they began to, in some cases explicitly, in others implicitly, promote what they had come to believe were environmentally beneficent forms of religion. This module explores these developments, correlating them with the changing scientific paradigms encountered in the previous one, which sets the stage for asking in the next module about the future of nature-related religion and its likely impacts on nonhuman nature.

March 6 ~ Religion, Ritual and Ecological Adaptation

Assignments:

1. Be prepared to discuss the final part of Glacken and all of Worster.
2. Read the following:

Background and Comparative Readings: ***Ecological Anthropology; *Ecology and Religion; Ethnobotany; Evolutionary Biology, Religion, and Stewardship;** Harris, Marvin; Rappaport, Roy; A Religio-Ecological Perspective on Religion and Nature; Sky.

Required Core Reading: Rappaport, Roy A. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (chs 1-6, pp. 1-215)

Special Assignment Readings: (Suggestion): Ellen Messer and Michael Lambek. *Ecology and the Sacred: Engaging the Anthropology of Roy A. Rappaport*. University of Michigan Press, 2001 [Presenters TBA]; Jared Diamond’s *Collapse*, esp, prologue, ch 6-9, and part IV [Dr. Taylor Presentation]

March 13 ~ No Class ~ Spring Break ~ Complete Draft of Research Papers.

March 20 ~ Indigenous Peoples and “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”

Assignments:

1. Bring copies of an outline of your proposed research paper to class and be prepared to discuss it.
2. Be prepared to discuss Rappaport’s book and the following readings, up to Berkes.

Background and Comparative Readings: **Mother Earth; Native American Languages;** Noble Savage (various); * **Traditional Ecological Knowledge;** Traditional

Environmental Knowledge among Aboriginal Peoples in Canada.

Required Core Readings:

Rappaport, Roy A. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (chs 7-14, pp. 216-461).

Special Assignment Reading: (Suggestion): David Abram. *The Spell of the Sensuous* [Presenter: TBA].

March 27 ~ “Sacred Ecology” and Sacred Geography

Assignments:

1. Complete following readings and be prepared to collaboratively summarize and discuss the following readings:

Background and Comparative Readings: **American Indians as "First Ecologists";**

Nobel Savage; Sacred Geography in Native North America; **Sacred Mountains;** Sacred Groves in Africa; Sacred Sites in England; **Sacred Space/Place;** Savages.

Required Core Readings on Sacred Ecology (complete):

Berkes, Fikret. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management*. Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis, 1999, read I, pp. 1-55 (especially well), then more rapidly, parts II & III, pp. 59-183.

Special Assignment Reading. (Suggestion): Krech, Shepard (3rd). *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*. New York: Norton, 1999 [Presenter: TBA]

Further and Future Reading:

Bender, Barbara and Margot Winier, eds. *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place*. Oxford & New York: Berg, 2001.

Carmichael, David L., Jane Hubert, Brian Reeves and Audhild Schanche. *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*. Londond & New York: Routledge, 1994.

Chidester, David and David Linenthal, eds. *American Sacred Space*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1995.

Gregory, Derek. *Geographical Imaginations*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1994.

Hirsh, Eric and Michael O'Hanlon. *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Clarendon Press, 1995.

Ivakhiv, Adrian. *Claiming Sacred Ground: Pilgrims and Politics at Glastonbury and Sedona*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2001.

Jones, Lindsay. *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture: Experience, Interpretation, Comparison -- Monumental Occasions: Reflections on the Eventfulness of Religious Architecture (V. 1 of 2)*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Lane, Beldon. *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*. New York: Paulist, 1988.

Schultes, R. E. and S. Reis. *Ethnobotany: Evolution of a Discipline*. Portland, Oregon: Timber Press, 1995.

Schultes, R. E. "Reasons for Ethnobotanical Conservation." In *Traditional Ecological Knowledge: A Collection of Essays*, ed. R. E. Johannes. Geneva: International Union for the Conservation of Nature, 1989.

Sears, John. *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Shepard, Paul. *Man in the Landscape: A Historic View of the Esthetics of Nature*. second ed. 1967; reprint, College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1991.

Tuan, Yi-Fu. "Discrepancies Between Environmental Attitude and Behaviour: Examples From Europe and China." *The Canadian Geographer* 12 (1968): 176-91.

_____. *Landscapes of Fear*. Oxford, England: Blackwell, 1980.

_____. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977.

_____. *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974.

Turner, Victor. "Pilgrimages as Social Processes," 166-230, in *Dramas, fields, and metaphors: symbolic*

action in human society (Cornell University Press, 1974).
Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1975.

April 3 ~ “Religious Studies”, “Sacred Space” Theories, and Environmental Conservation (Recognizing/Constructing/Contesting Natural Places as Sacred Spaces)

Background and Comparative Readings: Earth Mysteries; **Eliade, Mircea**; ***Religious Studies and Environmental Concern** (and adjacent entry): Critical Perspectives on “Religions of the World and Ecology”; **Religious Environmentalist Paradigm**; Wilson, Edward O.

Required Core Readings:

[*Handouts*]: David Chidester and Edward Linenthal, “Introduction” and Bron Taylor, “Resacralizing Earth: Pagan Environmentalism and the Restoration of Turtle Island” in *American Sacred Space* (ed. Chidester & Linenthal); Veikko Anttonen, “Sacred” in W. Braun and R. T. McCutcheon, eds., *Guide to the Study of Religion*.

Special Assignment Reading possibilities: Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*; J. Z. Smith, *To Take Place*. Lane, Beldon. *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*; Ingold, Tim. *The Perception of the Environment: Essays in Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Further and Future Reading ~ Evolution and Religion (focus on indigenous societies and “traditional ecological knowledge”)

- Anderson, Eugene N. *Ecologies of the Heart: Emotion, Belief, and the Environment*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Berkes, Fikret. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management*. Philadelphia, PA: Taylor and Francis, 1999.
- Berkes, Fikret, Johan Colding and Carl Folke. *Navigating Social-Ecological Systems: Building Resilience for Complexity and Change*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Berkes, Fikret and Carl Folke. *Linking Social and Ecological Systems*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Bloch, Maurice. "People Into Places: Zafimaniry Concepts of Clarity." In *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space*, eds. Eric Hirsh and Michael O'Hanlon, 63-77. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- _____. *Prey Into Hunter: The Politics of Religious Experience*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Carrasco, David, ed. *The Imagination of Matter: Religion and Ecology in Mesoamerican Traditions*. Oxford: BAR International Series, 1989.
- Eisenberg, Evan. *The Ecology of Eden*. New York: Random House, 1998.
- Grim, John A. *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Harris, Marvin. "The Myth of the Sacred Cow." In *Man, Culture, and Animals*, eds. Anthony Leeds and Andrew P. Vaya, 217-28. Washington, DC: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1965.
- _____. *Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches: The Riddles of Culture*. New York: Random House, 1974.
- _____. *Cannibals and Kings: The Origins of Cultures*. New York: Random House, 1977.
- _____. "The Cultural Ecology of India's Sacred Cattle." *Current Anthropology* 7 (1966): 51-66.
- Hughes, J. Donald. *Pan's Travail: Environmental Problems of the Ancient Greeks and Romans*. Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.
- Ingold, Tim. *The Perception of the Environment: Essays in Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*. London: Routledge, 2000.

- Krech, Shepard (3rd). *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*. New York: Norton, 1999.
- Lansing, J. Stephen. *Priests and Programmers: Technologies of Power in the Engineered Landscape of Bali*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Lansing, J. Stephen and James N. Kremer. "A Socioecological Analysis of Balinese Water Temples." In *The Cultural Dimension of Development: Indigenous Knowledge Systems*, eds. D. M. Warren, L. Jan Slikkerveer and David Brokensha, 258-68. London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1995.
- Lawson, E. Thomas and Robert M. McCauley. *Rethinking religion: connecting cognition and culture*. Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Lodrick, Deryck O. *Sacred Cows, Sacred Places: Origins and Survivals of Animal Homes in India*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1981.
- Messer, Ellen and Michael Lambek. *Ecology and the Sacred: Engaging the Anthropology of Roy A. Rappaport*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001.
- Moran, Emilio, ed. *The Ecosystem Approach in Anthropology*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1990.
- Oelschlaeger, Max. *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.
- Rappaport, Roy A. *Ecology, Meaning and Religion*. Richmond, California: North Atlantic, 1979.
- _____. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Simoons, Frederick J. "Questions in the Sacred Cow Controversy." *Current Anthropology* 20 (1979): 467-93.

Module V: Religion, Nature, and the Future of Religion and Nature

1. Social Scientific Perspectives on Environmentalism, Nature, and Religion, from Quantitative Data to Colin Campbell's "Cultic Milieu" Theory.
2. Green Nazis and the Shadow Side of Nature Religions.
3. Contemporary Construction of Nature Religions and Pagan Spiritualities
4. Secularization Theories and 'Spiritualities of Connection' to Nature.

Introduction: Clearly, during the second half of the 20th century some lay observers and scholarly analysts were hoping for, and in some cases romantically expecting, a revitalization or invention of religious forms and practices that would lead human cultures toward environmentally sustainable lifeways and livelihoods. During the same period, more cautious voices arose questioning whether religion could evolve into an environmentally progressive social force, or even wondering whether religion is an important variable in culture-nature interactions. Other voices expressed alarm at the apparent growth of nature-related spiritualities, noting that such religion has sometimes been closely connected to pernicious political ideologies such as Nazism. Still others wondered whether secularization, fueled by the slow if steady advance of scientific understandings of the universe, would erode religious belief altogether, and thus the influence of nature-related religion. And yet others asserted that the future of religion, if there is to be any millennia from now, would and must be fused to such scientific understandings. All of this raises anew questions about the future of religion.

There is already some evidence of scientific understandings of the universe being consecrated in contemporary religion. In some cases sacralized scientific narratives are grafted onto pre-existing religious forms while in other cases they are emerging and evolving with little explicit reference to previous forms. The question with which we leave this course is whether such forms of "religion" or "spirituality" are likely to be main streams in the future of religion, or rather, small this tributaries from the mainstreams, which then dry up quickly. The answer to that question is one

that may well preoccupy much future scholarship inquiring into the nature of the relationships between human cultures, religions, and environments. The answer may also play a role in whether and to what extent humans continue to simplify and degrade the earth's living systems.

April 6-9: Attend and present at the Society for the Study of Religion and Nature Conference at UF, details forthcoming.

April 10 ~ No Class ~ recovery from conference. Turn in conference paper for grading, or on 17 April, after final editing.

April 17 Social Science, Religion and Nature . . . A “Shadow Side” of Nature Religion? . . . & Constructive Nature Religions.

Assignments:

Keep up on readings and continue to prepare final essay exam.

Background and Comparative Readings: ATWA, Corrington, Robert; *Elves and Land Spirits in Pagan Norse Religion*; *Fascism; Heathenry (Ásatrú); Odinism; Paganism; Neo-paganism and Ethnic Nationalism in Eastern Europe; Protestant Ethic; Savitri, Devi; *Social Science on Religion and Nature; *White, Lynn–Thesis of; Wicca; Unitarianism.

Required Core Readings: From Kaplan and Lööw, eds. *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalization*. (Lanham, Maryland: Altamira, 2002): Bron Taylor's, “Diggers, Wolves, Ents, Elves, and Expanding Universes: Bricolage, Religion and Violence from Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front to the anti-globalization resistance (26-76).

Recommended Reading: Tuan, Yi Fu. “Discrepancies between environmental attitude and behavior: examples from Europe and China” from the *Canadian Geographer* 12(3): 176-91, 1968. Glenda Wall, “Barriers to individual environmental action: the influence of attitudes and social experiences” *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 95(32) [google/online]. Catherine Albanese, *Nature Religion in America*.

Special Assignment and Extra-Credit Reading: (Suggestion): Carolyn Merchant, *Reinventing Eden: The Fate of Nature in Western Culture*. New York & London: Routledge, 2003. Michael York, *Pagan Theology*. Washington Square, New York: New York University Press, 2004

Further Reading ~ Constructive Nature Religion:

Corrington, Robert S. *Nature's Religion*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997. Crosby, Donald A. *A Religion of Nature*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2002. Pike, Sarah. *New Age and Neopagan Religions in America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004. York, Michael. *Pagan Theology*. Washington Square, New York: New York University Press, 2004.

Further Reading ~ Right-Wing Ideology and Religions of Nature:

Bramwell, Anna. *Ecology in the 20th Century: A History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989. _____. *Blood and Soil: Walter Darré and Hitler's Green Party*. Buckinghamshire, UK: Kensal, 1985. Ferry, Luc. *The New Ecological Order*. Paris: 1992; reprint, Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Gardell, Mattias. *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2003.

- Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *Hitler's Priestess: Savitri Devi, the Hindu-Aryan Myth and Neo-Nazism*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.
- Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and Their Influence on Nazi Ideology*. New York: New York University Press, 1994.
- Goodrich-Clarke, Nicholas. *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity*. New York & London: New York University Press, 2002.
- Kaplan, Jeffrey. "Savitri Devi and the National Socialist Religion of Nature." *The Pomegranate*, no. 7 (February 1999): 4-12.
- Zimmerman, Michael E. *Contesting Earth's Future: Radical Ecology and Postmodernity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

April 24 ~ Religion, Nature, and the Future

Assignments: Complete readings, and see below for due dates of written work. In class we will schedule the course presentations.

Background and Comparative Readings: Berry, Thomas; Bioregionalism and the North American Bioregional Congress; **Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites;** ***Christianity (9)—Christianity's Ecological Reformation;** Council of All Beings; **Deep Ecology; Earth Charter;** Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front; ***Epic of Evolution;** Evolutionary Evangelism; Genesis Farm; **Magic;** Radical Environmentalism; Redwood Rabbis; ***Religious Naturalism;** Swimme, Brian.

Required Core Readings: Shepard, Paul, *Coming Home to the Pleistocene*, esp. chs. 1, 6, 8, 9; ["Earth and Nature-Based Spirituality From Deep Ecology to Radical Environmentalism" \(part I\)](#), *Religion* 31(2): 175-193, 2001, and ["Earth and Nature-Based Spirituality From Earth First! and Bioregionalism to Scientific Paganism and the New Age" \(part II\)](#), *Religion*, 31 (3) 225-245, 2001.

Optional Readings: from www.earthcharter.org, www.ethologicaethics.org, and see [The Great Story](#) for the website of 'evolutionary evangelist' Michael Dowd.

Special Assignment Reading: Atlee, Tom. *The Tao of Democracy: Using Co-Intelligence to Create a World That Works for All*. Cranston, RI: The Writer's Collective, 2003.

DVDs: "Celebrating Evolution" & "Evolutionary Christianity" with Michael Dowd and Connie Barlow

Further and Future Reading:

Bruce, Steve, ed. *Religion and Modernization: Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2001.

_____. *God is dead: secularization in the west*. Oxford, England: Blackwell, 2002.

Campbell, Colin. "The Cult, the Cultic Milieu and Secularization." *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain* 5 (1972): 119-36.

Stark, Rodney and William Baines Bainbridge. *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival, and Cult Formation*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1985.

Taylor, Bron. "A Green Future for Religion?" *Futures Journal* 36, no. 9 (2004).

Warner, R. Stephen. "Work in Progress Toward a New Paradigm for the Sociological Study of Religion in the United States." *American journal of sociology* 98 (1993): 1044-93.

Wilson, Bryan. "Secularization: The Inherited Model." In *The Sacred in a Secular Age*, ed. Phillip Hammond, 9-20. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1985.

April 24 (Monday): Take home essay final distributed in class. Due by 4:30 p.m., 1 May, in my religion department office box (hard copy).