

RELIGION AND NATURE

(Graduate Seminar), FALL 2023

SECTION, TIME, CLASSROOM

REL 6107: Mondays 3:00-6:00 p.m.; Keen-Flint Hall 111: [FLI0111](#)

INSTRUCTOR

Professor Bron Taylor (Ph.D.)

Email: bron@ufl.edu

Office: Anderson 121; telephone: my mobile # will be provided in class

Office hours: 12:30 -2:30 p.m. ~ by appointment

(zoom meetings available other times)

DESCRIPTION (from UF Catalogue)

Religious dimensions of relationships between what humans call “nature” and “culture.”

Purpose and Objectives

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

Although 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 historical and 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.

This course will draw on diverse sources. It provides introductions to a variety of theoretical approaches, and background articles on a wide range of nature-related religious phenomena, in readings from The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature

(2005). Books and articles will provide an opportunity for in-depth exposure to some of the approaches discussed in the materials introduced in the encyclopedia. It is expected that guest scholars will serve as resource people during the course.

This course is a seminar, which means it will involve active participation and discussion by all participants as we explore its central questions and themes. This syllabus is tentative. I may revise it during the course and if I do, I will provide and announce the updated version.

To facilitate communication, students must provide a valid email address and download messages at least every 48 hours, so as to not miss important announcements or requests for help from other seminar participants.

This syllabus provides the seminar outline, assignments, and information about evaluation. In it I also provide extended introductions and resources to explore further, beyond what is possible in this course, the conundrums and themes we begin to explore.

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. I will provide details about the research paper separately from this syllabus.

Course Outline in Five Modules

The course will unfold through five modules

1) Nature as the Habitat of Religion and Culture

- Evolutionary and Cognitive theories about the roots of religious perceptions and practices.
- 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” Discourse

- Cosmology, ecology, evolution, ethology, and the emergence of scientific nature spiritualities
- Reactionary responses to scientific worldviews and spiritualities

- 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
- 5) **Religion, Nature, and the Future of Religion and Nature**
 - Scientific research on religion and environmental behavior.
 - Contemporary Construction of Nature Religions and Pagan Spiritualities
 - Secularization Theories and 'Spiritualities of Connection' to Nature
 - Religion’s role in the environmental & social collapse and/or in the quest for sustainable lifeways and livelihoods

READINGS

Note: most of the required books are available inexpensively from online and other used booksellers. Wherever available, required book readings will also be available on reserve at the library. Additional articles will be available online via links found in the course schedule.

Required Texts

- Glacken, Clarence. *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought*. University of California Press, 1967.
- Norenzayan, Ara. *Big Gods: How Religion Transformed Cooperation and Conflict*. Princeton University Press, 2013.
- Rappaport, Roy A. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Shepard, Paul. *Coming Home to the Pleistocene*. Island Press, 1998.
- Taylor, Bron. *Dark Green Religion: Nature Spirituality and the Planetary Future*. University of California Press, 2010. (Assigned chapters available for free on reserve at UF Library and from the instructor.)
- Keltner, Dacher. *Awe: The new science of everyday wonder and how it can transform your life* (Penguin Press, 2023).
- Wilson, David Sloan. *Darwin's Cathedral: Evolution, Religion, and the Nature of Society*. University of Chicago Press, 2003. (Assigned chapters available for free on reserve at UF Library and from the instructor.)
- Worster, Donald. *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas*. (Cambridge University Press, 1993) (second edition).

Recommended Text

- Bellah, Robert N. *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age*. Harvard University Press, 2011.

REQUIREMENTS

Course Assignments

- Consistent, quality preparation for class by reading, taking notes, and completing weekly assignments (20% of course grade).
- Preparation and presentation of the designated “Special Assignment” reading (5%).
- Two take-home essay exams (25% each).
- Final research paper or review essay (as negotiated with instructor) (25%).

Weekly Reading Assignments

One of the most important skills for a scholar to master is the ability to understand the most important aspects of scholarly writing and to communicate effectively the key points to readers and students. I have structured this course to enhance your skills in these ways.

Nearly every week you will be asked to write an approximately one-thousand-word review of that week’s main reading or readings. Submit these analyses in single spaced word or rich text documents, and email them to my university email address by the times indicated in the course schedule.

As you read, these are the questions you should be sure you can answer before moving from section to section and author to author:

- What are the main questions the author is trying to answer?
- What are author’s main arguments in this regard?
- What sorts of evidence does the author muster in advancing this perspective?
- Who (individuals, groups, schools of thought) are the main proponents of views the author is defending or contesting? In other words, who are his or her intellectual allies and adversaries? (In this course, more specifically: What are the main approaches to understanding the relationships between religion and nature that the author is explicitly or implicitly promoting or criticizing?)
- What are the chief objections that these others would raise about the author’s argument and evidence?
- What do the people on the various sides of these arguments think is at stake? Put simply, why does it matter, if it does, and if it does not, why do they think it does?

Students typically have opinions about the course readings. When it comes to your weekly, written work, however, I am not very interested in them, especially if expressing them distracts you from lucid and fair-minded exposition in response to the preceding questions. My strong advice is to refrain from expressing your own views when working up those assignments, and if you cannot do so, first make sure you've done justice the above-mentioned questions.

The premium in this class will be to understand the arguments in the readings, the fault-lines between them, and what the authors think is at stake in the debates.

There will be ample time for us to express our own views in class, possibly as well in your final research paper, and when asked for them during the essay exams.

Discussion in class will be, first and foremost, a process of wrestling with the six questions stated above. Come well prepared to do so. Bring your reading notes and summaries.

Writing Quality

It is not possible to separate the quality of one's thinking from the quality of one's writing. Evaluation of written work will reflect this, therefore, all students should review and consult regularly the course's [writing well](#) primer.

"Special Assignment" Readings & Exams

Every student will read at least one extra book that is important to the questions engaged in this class, and carefully present to the class what they learned in it, both orally and in writing. Students will negotiate with the instructor and jointly select the books and time for their presentations. Students may do more than one of these presentations for extra credit.

Research Paper

You will write a research paper (or in some, negotiated cases, a review essay). Through this research you will identify and analyze one or more scholarly approaches to understand the relationships among what people variously construe as "religion," "culture", and "nature." Given the extensive reading list of the course itself, the expectation is not that you will write a long paper, but rather, that you will select an area you are interested in and read as deeply into it as time allows, writing a 5,000-10,000 word paper in which you explain the approach(es) explored and whether and why you find it/them compelling. This project will typically not be the area you envision as the subject matter for your thesis or dissertation. I seek with this course to help you broaden your areas of competence and expertise.

During one of the final class sessions, you will make a 15-20 minute presentation based on your research paper and then must be prepared to answer questions afterward.

EVALUATION

Points Possible for Required Assignments

This chart shows the points it is possible to earn for each assignment:

Assignment	Points per Assignment	Total Possible Points
Weekly Assignments & Participation	(Collected 12 times, mathematically adjusted from 10 points each to 80 possible points total)	80
Special Assignment Reading & Presentation	20 points	20
Take-home Essay Exams (two)	100 points each	200
Final Research Paper or Review Essay	100 points	100
	Total Points / Course =	400

Course instructor reserves the right to lower or raise course grades based on classroom contributions or upon absences. Instructor also reserves the right to change course requirements. For further information see [UF's grade and grading policies](#).

Communication, Canvas, and Help Desk.

Students should contact their instructor through the Canvas email link. For technical assistance, including with Canvas, contact the [UF helpdesk](#), or with your UF ID handy, call the Helpdesk's staff at (352) 392-4357.

Attendance, late or Missing Assignments, and Makeup Exams

Students who do not turn in study guides or reading analyses on the days they are due will not receive points. The total number of points *possible* for the review essay will be reduced by 20% for each day it is late.

Apart from certain exceptions, which are explained in [UF's Attendance Policies](#), students are expected to attend every scheduled class period.

Except in the case of a documented emergency, students must inform the instructor of their impending absence before the class they will miss. In most cases, written work must still be turned in according to the class schedule. If an authorized absence prevents a student from taking an exam, they will be able to make up the exam during finals week. The format will typically change in such a case.

Returned Assignments

Assignments are typically returned to students within one week of their due date.

Disability Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers who wish to learn about and possibly request special accommodations should begin by contacting the [Disability Resource Center](#). Students should discuss such needs within the first two weeks of the semester, and share any letter requesting accommodations, with Professor Taylor.

Academic Dishonesty

Students engaged in any form of academic dishonesty, as defined under the “Academic Misconduct” section of the [Student Honor Code](#), will be subject to other disciplinary measures. *Students should know what constitutes plagiarism and avoid inadvertent forms of it that can occur, as for example, by cutting and pasting quotations from various digital texts and failing to put them in quotation marks with appropriate crediting of the source. ChatGPT and other AI technologies may not be used for any work in this class. There are ways to determine whether they have been and if it is determined they have been used, the student will fail the class.*

Course Evaluation

Students and instructors all have much to learn and room for improvement. Your feedback is critical to course quality. Students will be notified when the window for providing feedback on the course opens, and will be able to do so under the GatorEvals link in the Canvas course menu or [here](#). After the end of the semester students can also review a [Summary of Student Evaluations](#).

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Health & Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department*: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

Academic Resources

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- *Library Support*: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

- *Teaching Center*: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- *Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- *Student Complaints On-Campus*: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)
- *On-Line Students Complaints*: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)

SCHEDULE

Note: With few exceptions readings and your analysis of them are to be completed by 11:49 p.m. on the Saturday before the class date week under which they are listed. Any exceptions appear in the following weekly schedule.

(Week 1 ~ Introduction to the Course) 28 August 2023 Religion & Nature in an Evolutionary Context

Module I: Nature as the Habitat of Religion & Culture

- “Religion and Nature” as a field
- 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 by introducing the “Religion and Nature” field.

This module continues by introducing evolutionary/ecological approaches to the complex relationships between *Homo sapiens* and their habitats. This module, although brief, is critically important, for we will return to such themes during a number of the subsequent modules.

Assignment

Before our first meeting, read and review the course syllabus and be prepared to come to class with any questions you may have about the course. Also read the two articles listed under ‘readings.’ In all subsequent weeks, students must read and be ready to discuss all of the reading assignments in class.

Readings

- Bron Taylor, "[Introduction](#)," *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature* (ERN). This provides a broad overview of the religion and nature field. Recommended also: the [Project History](#), and [Readers Guide](#)
- Bron Taylor, [Exploring Religion, Nature and Culture: Introducing the Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture](#), JSRNC 1.1 (2007): 5-14.
- Keltner, Awe, chapter 12, "Eight Wonders of Life", 3-28.

(Week2) 4 September

(no class meeting this week due to Labor Day; but assignments are still due)

Religion & Nature in an Evolutionary Context

Assignment

- 1) By 11:59 p.m., 5 September, email your first assignment, analyzing the course readings so far, focusing especially on Norenzayan's *Big Gods*. I will return them to you as soon as possible afterward. At our next meeting on 11 September, be ready to discuss all the readings from this and the next week, *in depth*.

Note: you have two more days to do this assignment than usual because of labor day, and also because the readings are longer this week than next week. After this, weekly assignments will regularly be due by midnight on Saturdays.

Initial readings

- Raymond Williams, "[Ideas of Nature](#)" in *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (London: Verso, 1980).
- Larry Sullivan, "[Worship of Nature](#)" from in the *Encyclopedia of Religion* (2nd ed., 2005)

Required Core Reading (core readings are the course's major books not the supplementary, shorter, articles, that extend student's range and complement the core readings).

- Norenzayan, *Big Gods*, Princeton University Press, chapters 1-9.

Background and Comparative Reading (bold are the most important)

- From the *ERN*: [Animism](#); [Animism: A Contemporary Perspective](#); [Anthropologists](#); [Goodall, Jane](#); [Primate Spirituality](#).

Special Assignment Reading (possibilities)

- Schaefer, Donovan. *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power*. Duke University Press, 2011
- Turner, Jonathan H., Alexandra Maryanski, Anders Klostergaard Petersen, and Armin W. Geertz. *The Emergence and Evolution of Religion by Means of Natural Selection*. New York: Routledge, 2018.

(Week 3) 11 September Religion & Evolution (part II)

Assignment

- 1) By 11:59 p.m., 9 September, send your analysis of this week's readings, focusing especially on Keltner's *Awe*, and considering continuities and discontinuities you see between it and Norenzayan's *Big Gods*.
- 2) Be prepared to present ideas for special readings assignments.

Background and Comparative Readings

- From the *ERN*: Hunting and the Origins of Religion; Magic; [Paleolithic Religions and Paleolithic Art](#); "Rock Art"; Wonder toward Nature.

Required Core Reading

- Keltner, *Awe*, chapters 1, 2, 6, 9, 10, & 11 (3-28; 29-42; 117-141; 193-250). Skim the other chapters to understand their foci.

Recommended Reading (significant extra credit for those who read and report on it)

- Robert Bellah, *Religion in Human Evolution*, Preface, and 1-264, 265-606.
- **IMPORTANT: SEE ALSO** Reading Guide to Bellah Book

Special Assignment Reading

- Frazer, Sir James George. *The Golden Bough: A History of Myth and Religion*. Chancellor Press, 1994.

Web Resources

- [Pascal Boyer's website](#) (great to peruse)

(Week 4) 18 September (Religion as Evolutionary Adaptation?)

Assignments

- 1) By 11:59 p.m. 16 September, send your reading analyses, summarizing the key arguments and approaches found in Norenzayan and Wilson. The articles by Bulbulia and Burhenn should help orient you to these theorists
- 2) In class this week be especially well prepared to discuss the books by Norenzayan and DS Wilson.
- 3) Be prepared to present ideas for special readings assignments in class (or otherwise this week)

Background and Comparative Readings

- Joseph Bulbulia, "[The cognitive and evolutionary psychology of religion](#)" *Biology and Philosophy* 19: 655-86, 2004.
- Burhenn, Herbert. "Ecological Approaches to the Study of Religion." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 9, no. 2 (1997): 111-26 (optional reading, handout or emailed document).

Required Core Reading

- Bron Taylor, "[Ecology and Nature Religions](#)" from the *Encyclopedia of Religion* (2nd ed., 2005)
- David Sloan Wilson's *Darwin's Cathedral*. Harvard Univ. Press, 2002

Special Assignment Reading

- Boyer's *Religion Explained*, Basic, 2002

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*. Oxford University Press, 2002
- Bloch, Maurice. *Prey Into Hunter: The Politics of Religious Experience*. Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Boyer, Pascal. *The Naturalness of Religious Ideas: A Cognitive Theory of Religion*. 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*. Harvard University Press, 1996.
- Cauvin, Jacques. *The Birth of the Gods and the Origins of Agriculture*. Translated by Trevor Watkins. Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Dennett, Daniel C. *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon*. Viking, 2006.
- Frazer, Sir James George. *The Golden Bough: A History of Myth and Religion*. Chancellor Press, 1994.
- _____. *The Worship of Nature*. MacMillan, 1926.
- Glacken, Clarence, with editors S. Ravi Rajan, Adam Romero and Michael Watts, (2017). *Genealogies of environmentalism: the lost works of Clarence Glacken*. Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press.
- Gottschall, Jonathan. 2012. *The storytelling animal: how stories make us human*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Guthrie, Stewart. *Faces in the Clouds: A New Theory of Religion*. 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*. Press, 1993.
- Lewis-Williams, David. *Conceiving God: the cognitive origin and evolution of religion*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2010.
- Luhrmann, Tanya M. *How God Becomes Real : Kindling the Presence of Invisible Others*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2020.
- Norenzayan, Ara. *Big Gods: How Religion Transformed Cooperation and Conflict*. Princeton University Press, 2013.
- 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. Wadsworth, 2003.
- _____. Chapter 9: "Ecological/Biological Approaches." In *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion*, ed. Carl Olson, 439-75. Wadsworth, 2003.
- Taves, Ann. *Religious experience reconsidered: a building-block approach to the study of religion and other special things*. Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Turner, Jonathan H., Alexandra Maryanski, Anders Klostergaard Petersen, and Armin W. Geertz. *The Emergence and Evolution of Religion by Means of Natural Selection*. New York: Routledge, 2018.
- Wathey, John C. 2016. *The illusion of God's presence: the biological origins of spiritual longing*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

- Wilson, David Sloan. *Darwin's Cathedral: Evolution, Religion, and the Nature of Society*. Chicago & London: Chicago University Press, 2002.
- Wilson, Edward Osborne. *Biophilia*. Harvard University Press, 1984.
- _____. *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*. Harvard University Press, 2000.

Module II: Occidental History, Religion, & Nature

Introduction: We have thus far seen some ways in which scholars deploy evolutionary lenses to theorize 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.

(Week 5) 25 September Ancient Occidental Religions

Assignment

1) By 11:59 p.m. 23 September send by mail your analysis of Glacken’s treatment of the ‘The Ancient World,’ while noting continuities and discontinuities with any previous readings you notice.

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-main entries; ***Book of Nature**; ***Natural Law and Natural Rights**; Islam; Muhammad; The Qur’an; Gardens in Islam.

Required Core Reading

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

Further and Future Reading

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

(Week 6) 2 October

Occidental Religions through the Middle Ages

Assignment

1) By 11:59 p.m. 30 September, send your analysis of the Glacken's treatment of the Christian Middle Ages (noting continuities and discontinuities with other pertinent readings about the period).

Required Core Reading

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

Special Assignment Reading

- Glacken, C., et al., eds. (2017). *Genealogies of environmentalism: the lost works of Clarence Glacken*. Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press.

Further and Future Reading

- Bernard, Rosemarie. *Shinto*. Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Chapple, Christopher Key, ed. *Jainism and Ecology*. Harvard University Press, 2002.
- Chapple, Christopher Key and Mary Evelyn Tucker. *Hinduism and Ecology: The Intersection of Earth, Sky, and Water*. Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Girardot, N. J., James Miller and Xiaogan Liu. *Daoism and Ecology: Ways within a Cosmic Landscape*. Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Tucker, Mary Evelyn and Duncan Ryuken Williams, eds. *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*. Harvard University Press, 1997.

(Week 7) 9 October

Emerging Civilizations

Assignment

- 1) Study to synthesize and master the previous readings, identifying the main approaches, arguments, fault lines, and relevance to contemporary religion and nature entanglements and controversies. Be prepared with notes to this effect to enhance your ability to discuss your views in class. Send these notes to Professor Taylor no later than 11:59 p.m. on 3 October. They need not be long to be excellent. This exercise should well prepare you for the take home exam.
- 2) Be prepared to discuss and schedule your special reading assignment and your research paper topic.
- 3) Read ahead into Module III if possible. Note: No additional readings assigned during take home week.
- 4) **The take home exam will be distributed on 4 October.**

Required Core Reading

- 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).

Special Assignment Reading

- Eisenberg or Lansing (below)
- Robert Pogue Harrison, *Forests: The Shadow of Civilization*, University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Module II: Further and Future Reading

Evolution and Religion (focus on origins and the emergence of the scholarly discussion)

- Carrasco, David, ed. *The Imagination of Matter: Religion and Ecology in Mesoamerican Traditions*. BAR International Series, 1989.
- Eisenberg, Evan. *The Ecology of Eden*. 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. American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1965.

- _____. *Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches: The Riddles of Culture*. Random House, 1974.
- _____. *Cannibals and Kings: The Origins of Cultures*. 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 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. Intermediate Technology Publications, 1995.
- Lodrick, Deryck O. *Sacred Cows, Sacred Places: Origins and Survivals of Animal Homes in India*. University of California Press, 1981.
- Oelschlaeger, Max. *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*. Yale University Press, 1991.
- Simoons, Frederick J. "Questions in the Sacred Cow Controversy." *Current Anthropology* 20 (1979): 467-93.

Module III: Scientific Paradigms & the Transformation of "Religion and Nature" Discourses

Introduction: The advent of natural science through a monkey wrench 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.

(Week 8) 16 October
Science, Religion, & "Paradigm Shifts"

Assignment

- 1) **The Take Home Exam is due before class 16 October**
- 2) Be prepared to discuss all readings to date and your take home exam.
- 3) Be prepared to explain the assigned readings, below, as well as how you synthesized what you have learned so far when writing up your mid-term exam.

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**; Einstein, Albert; Linnaeus, Carl; Pauli, Wolfgang; Peat, F. David; Prigogine, Ilya; 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 Reading

- Worster, Donald. *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas*. Cambridge University Press. Read the entire book, but especially carefully Parts I, and III - VI. If you have the first edition, borrow the second edition and read part VI (pp. 340-433), which is an expansion of the Epilogue in the first edition.

Special Assignment Reading

- Wulf, Andrea (2015). *The invention of nature: Alexander von Humboldt's new world*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf
- Gunderson, Lance and C. S. Holling. *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Systems of Humans and Nature*
- James Gleick, *Chaos: Making a New Science*. Penguin, 1987

Module III: Further and Future Reading

Scientific Paradigms, Religion, and Nature

- Bateson, Gregory. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. Ballantine, 1972.
- Berman, Morris. *The Reenchantment of the World*. Cornell University Press, 1981.
- Berry, Thomas. *The Dream of the Earth*. Sierra Club Books, 1988.
- Bramwell, Anna. *Ecology in the 20th Century: A History*. Yale University Press, 1989.

- Capra, Fritjof. *The Tao of Physics*. third ed. Boston: 1975; reprint, Shambhala, 1991.
- Capra, Fritjof. *The Turning Point: Science, Society, and the Rising Culture*. Simon and Schuster, 1982.
- Fortey, Richard. *Life: A Natural History of the First Four Billion Years of Life on Earth*. Knopf, 1998.
- Gleick, James. *Chaos: Making a New Science*. Penguin, 1987.
- Golley, Frank Benjamin. *A History of the Ecosystem Concept in Ecology*. Yale University Press, 1993
- Gunderson, Lance H. and C. S. Holling. *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Systems of Humans and Nature*. Island Press, 2002.
- Heisenberg, Werner. *Physics and Philosophy*. Harper and Row, 1962.
- Lovelock, James. *Gaia: A New Look At Life on Earth*. revised ed. Oxford: 1979; reprint, Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Macy, Joanna. *World As Lover, World As Self*. 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*. Blackwell, 1999.
- Odum, Howard T. *Environment, Power, and Society*. Wiley-Interscience, 1971.
- Primavesi, Anne. *Gaia's Gift*, 2003.
- Real, L. A. and J. H. Brown, eds. *Foundations of Ecology*. University of Chicago Press.
- Ruse, Michael. *Darwinism as Religion: What Literature Tells Us About Evolution*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Sagan, Carl. *Carl Sagan's the Cosmic Connection*. second ed. Cambridge University Press, 2000 [1974].
- 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*. Harper Collins, 1992.
- Wulf, Andrea (2015). *The invention of nature: Alexander von Humboldt's new world*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf.

Module IV: "Religion and Nature" in twentieth-century scholarship (from the Sacred & the Profane & "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: There were not only upheavals in the natural sciences during the 20th century, cultural 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.

(Week 9) 23 October Religion, Ritual and Ecological Adaptation

Assignment

- 1) By 11:59 p.m. 21 October, present an analysis highlighting especially the book by Donald Worster (who overlapped a bit but mostly picked up where Glacken left off). Although you have started reading Rappaport and about environmental anthropology, plan on focusing on that material next week.
- 2) Be prepared to summarize up front in class the readings from the ERN and Rappaport's reading, thus far.

Background and Comparative Readings

From the *ERN*:

- *[Ecology and Religion](#); *Ecological Anthropology; 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. 1-5, pp. 1-168)

Special Assignment Reading

- Jared Diamond's *Collapse*, esp, prologue, ch 6-9, and part IV.

(Week 10) 30 October

Indigenous Peoples & "Traditional Ecological Knowledge"

Assignment

- 1) By 11:59 p.m. 28 October, submit your reading analysis, focusing on Rappaport and the various readings about environmental anthropology and traditional ecological knowledge.
- 2) Be prepared to discuss Rappaport's book and the following readings.

Background and Comparative Readings

From the *ERN*:

- **Mother Earth; Native American Languages**; Noble Savage (various); ***Traditional Ecological Knowledge**; Traditional Environmental Knowledge among Aboriginal Peoples in Canada

Required Core Reading

- Rappaport, Roy A. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (chs 6-9, pp. 169-312).

Special Assignment Reading

- Berkes, Fikret. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management*. Taylor and Francis, 1999 [or 2nd or 3rd edition]. Pages 1-55 are especially important.

(Week 11) 6 November

"Sacred Ecology" and Sacred Geography

Assignment

- 1) By 11:59 p.m. 4 November, send in your reading analysis, providing a pithy summary of Rappaport's views and agenda, while noting the fault lines between the idea of American Indians as "First Ecologists" and other, relevant, ERN entries you have read.

Background and Comparative Readings

- From the *ERN*: **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 Reading

- Rappaport, Roy A. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (chs 10-14, pp. 313-461).

Recommended Readings

- John Sears, *Sacred Places*, re. nature appreciation and pilgrimage, first 1/2 19th century, pp. 1-71
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature" and other selections.
- Henry David Thoreau, Selections from Bron Taylor's Thoreau Collection (Dr. Taylor will provide this via email).
- Nash, Wilderness ..., "Preserve the Wilderness" and "Wilderness Preserved," pp. 96-121, chs. 6 & 7 (read quickly).

Special Assignment Reading

- Nelson, Melissa. K. and Dan. Shilling (eds). *Traditional Ecological Knowledge*. Cambridge University Press, 2019.

Further Reading

- Bender, Barbara and Margot Winer, eds. *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place.*, 2001.
- Carmichael, David L., Jane Hubert, Brian Reeves and Audhild Schanche. *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*. Routledge, 1994.
- Chidester, David and David Linenthal, eds. *American Sacred Space*. Indiana University Press, 1995.
- Gregory, Derek. *Geographical Imaginations*. Blackwell, 1994.
- Hirsh, Eric and Michael O'Hanlon. *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space*. Clarendon Press, 1995.
- Ivakhiv, Adrian. *Claiming Sacred Ground: Pilgrims and Politics at Glastonbury and Sedona*. 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). Harvard University Press, 2000.

- Lane, Beldon. *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*. Paulist, 1988.
- Nelson, Melissa. K. and Dan. Shilling (eds). *Traditional Ecological Knowledge*. Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Schultes, R. E. and S. Reis. *Ethnobotany: Evolution of a Discipline*. 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*. Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Shepard, Paul. *Man in the Landscape: A Historic View of the Esthetics of Nature*. second ed. 1967; reprint, 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*. Blackwell, 1980.
- _____. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. University of Minnesota Press, 1977.
- _____. *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*. 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 University Press, 1975.

(Week 12) 13 November

"Sacred Space" Theories, and Environmental Conservation (Recognizing / Constructing / Contesting Natural Places as Sacred Spaces)

Assignment

1) By 11:59 p.m. 11 November, send your reading analysis. This week do this in two parts:

(a) discuss the fault lines between Eliade and his progeny, religion scholars interested in promoting green religion and their critics.

(b) Summarize the fault lines between Chidester and Linenthal in their Introduction to American Sacred Space and other theorists on sacred space, including Eliade and those discussed by Anttonen.

Background and Comparative Readings

- From the *ERN*: Earth Mysteries; Eliade, Mircea; *[Religious Studies and Environmental Concern](#) (and adjacent entry): **Critical Perspectives on “Religions of the World and Ecology”**; Religious Environmentalist Paradigm.

Required Core Reading

- Ingold, Tim. *The Perception of the Environment: Essays in Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*. London: Routledge, 2000; Peruse: [Introduction & Chapter 1](#); [Chapter 2](#); [Chapter 4](#); and read carefully [Chapter 8](#), [Chapter 21](#).
- David Chidester and Edward Linenthal, “[Introduction](#)” 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 Readings (two options)

- Animism & Conservation, special issue, *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 1/4 (December 2007)
- Krech, Shepard (3rd). *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*. Norton, 1999

Recommended Readings

- 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*

Further and Future Readings ~ Evolution and Religion (focus on indigenous societies and traditional ecological knowledge")

- Anderson, Eugene N. *Ecologies of the Heart: Emotion, Belief, and the Environment*. Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Berkes, Fikret. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management*. Taylor and Francis, 1999.
- Berkes, Fikret, Johan Colding and Carl Folke. *Navigating Social-Ecological Systems: Building Resilience for Complexity and Change*. Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Berkes, Fikret and Carl Folke. *Linking Social and Ecological Systems*. 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. Clarendon Press, 1995
- _____. *Prey Into Hunter*. Cambridge University Press, 1992.

- Carrasco, David, ed. *The Imagination of Matter: Religion and Ecology in Mesoamerican Traditions*. 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*. 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. American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1965.
- _____. *Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches: The Riddles of Culture*. Random House, 1974.
- _____. *Cannibals and Kings: The Origins of Cultures*. 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*. John Hopkins University Press, 1994.
- Ingold, Tim. *The Perception of the Environment: Essays in Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*. 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 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. 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*. University of California Press, 1981.
- Messer, Ellen and Michael Lambek. *Ecology and the Sacred: Engaging the Anthropology of Roy A. Rappaport*. University of Michigan Press, 2001.
- Moran, Emilio, ed. *The Ecosystem Approach in Anthropology*. University of Michigan Press, 1990.
- Nelson, Melissa K., and Dan Shilling, eds. 2018. *Traditional ecological knowledge*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Oelschlaeger, Max. *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*. Yale University Press, 1991.
- Rappaport, Roy A. *Ecology, Meaning and Religion*. North Atlantic, 1979.
- _____. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Simoons, Frederick J. "Questions in the Sacred Cow Controversy." *Current Anthropology* 20 (1979): 467-93.

Module V: Religion, Nature, & the Future of Religion & 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.

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 that would lead human cultures toward environmentally sustainable lifeways. 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 mainstreams in the future of religion, or rather, dry up quickly leaving most of humanity, if they are religious at all, devotees of today's predominant religions. 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.

(Week 13) 20 November
Social Science, Religion and Nature (and considering
Nature Religions and their "Shadow Side")

Assignment

- 1) By 11:59 p.m. 18 November, send your reading analysis focusing on the readings in two parts:
 - Paul Shepard's book
 - The historical background and main findings of the Greening of Religion Hypothesis articles.

Background and Comparative Readings

- From the *ERN*: **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; Wicca**; Unitarianism.

Required Core Reading

- Bron Taylor, [The Greening of Religion Hypothesis \(Part One\): From Lynn White, Jr. and claims that religions can promote environmentally destructive attitudes and behaviors to assertions they are becoming environmentally friendly](#), *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, 10 (3) 2016.
- Bron Taylor, Gretel Van Wieren & Bernard Zaleha, [The Greening of Religion Hypothesis \(Part Two\): Assessing the Data from Lynn White, Jr. to Pope Francis](#), *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, 10 (3) 2016.
- Shepard, Paul, *Coming Home to the Pleistocene*, read 1, skim 2-5; read 6, skim 7, and read 8, 9

Recommended Readings

- Tuan, Yi Fu. "Discrepancies between environmental attitude and behavior: examples from Europe and China" from the *Canadian Geographer* 12(3): 176-91, 1968.
- David Haberman (ed.) *Understanding Climate Change through Religious Lifeworlds*. Indiana University Press, 2021.
- Veldman, Robin Globus. *The Gospel of Climate Skepticism: Why Evangelical Christians Oppose Action on Climate Change*. University of California Press, 2019.
- Veldman, Robin Globus, Andrew Szasz, and Randolph Haluza-Delay (eds.) *How the World's Religions Are Responding to Climate Change*. Routledge, 2014.

Special Assignment Reading

- Carolyn Merchant, *Reinventing Eden: The Fate of Nature in Western Culture*. Routledge, 2003.
- Michael York, *Pagan Theology*. New York University Press, 2004.

Further Reading

- Corrington, Robert S. *Nature's Religion*. Rowman & Littlefield, 1997.
- Crosby, Donald A. *A Religion of Nature*. SUNY Press, 2002
- Pike, Sarah. *New Age and Neopagan Religions in America*. Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Gregory, Derek. *Geographical Imaginations*. Blackwell, 1994.
- York, Michael. *Pagan Theology*. New York University Press, 2004.

Further Reading ~ Right-Wing Ideology and Religions of Nature

- Bramwell, Anna. *Ecology in the 20th Century: A History*. Yale Univ Press, 1989.
- _____. *Blood and Soil: Walter Darré and Hitler's Green Party*. Kensal, 1985.
- Ferry, Luc. *The New Ecological Order*. University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Gardell, Mattias. *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism*. Duke University Press, 2003.
- Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *Hitler's Priestess: Savitri Devi, the Hindu-Aryan Myth and Neo-Nazism*. New York University Press, 1998.
- Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and Their Influence on Nazi Ideology*. New York University Press, 1994.
- Goodrich-Clarke, Nicholas. *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity*. 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*. University of California Press, 1994.

(Week 14) 27 November Religion, Nature, and the Future

Assignment

- 1) By 11:59 p.m. 25 November, send your analysis the argument in B. Taylor's *Dark Green Religion* and in the conclusions of Ara Norenzayan book, identifying other course readings that appear to have affinity with the described phenomena, as well as the religious forms that do not, and be sure to note connections with the views of Paul Shepard.
- 2) Student presentations may begin in class this week and continue next week.

Background and Comparative Readings

- From the *ERN*: [Radical Environmentalism](#); Berry, Thomas; Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites; ***Christianity (9)—Christianity's Ecological**

Reformation; *Epic of Evolution; Evolutionary Evangelism; Religious Naturalism; Natural History as Natural Religion; Restoration Ecology and Ritual; Process Philosophy (and Theology cross-reference); Sagan, Carl; Space Exploration.

Required Core Readings

- Taylor, Bron, *Dark Green Religion*, chs 1-9 (Thoreau Appendix strongly recommended) [ebook is available for free at UF's library.]
- Norenzayan, *Big Gods*, Princeton University Press, chapter 10.

Optional Readings

- from www.earthcharter.org, www.ethologicaethics.org, and see [The Great Story](#) for the website of 'evolutionary evangelist' Michael Dowd.
- Thomas Berry, "[The human presence](#)" pp. 13-23 (ch. 3), "[The new story](#)" pp. 194-215 (ch. 15), in *Dream of the Earth*. (Alternatively, read the selections from *The Great Work*, immediately below.)

Special Assignment Reading

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

DVDs

- '[Journey of the Universe](#)' documentary

Further Reading

- Bruce, Steve, ed. *Religion and Modernization: Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis*. Oxford University Press, 2001.
- _____. *God is dead: secularization in the west*. 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*. Univ. of California Press, 1985.
- 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.

Further Reading ~ Right-Wing Ideology and Religions of Nature

- Bramwell, Anna. *Ecology in the 20th Century: A History*. Yale University Press, 1989.

- _____. *Blood and Soil: Walter Darré and Hitlers Green Party*. Buckinghamshire, Kensal, 1985.
- Ferry, Luc. *The New Ecological Order*. Paris: 1992; reprint, University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Gardell, Mattias. *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism*. University Press, 2003.
- Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *Hitler's Priestess: Savitri Devi, the Hindu-Aryan Myth and Neo-Nazism*. New York University Press, 1998.
- Goodrich-Clarke, Nicholas. *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity*. 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*. University of California Press, 1994.

(Week 15) 4 December [Last day of class]

Student Presentations

Assignment

- 1) By 11:59 p.m. 2 December, send your personal reactions to the class materials and challenges and perspectives (of any length you wish). Do you think religions, of some of them, might contribute in important or even decisive ways toward a sustainability revolution? Do you find inspiration in any of the perspectives, such as the perspective of Keltner in *Awe* or in contrast, Noranzayan's view that traditional religions are not essential for the evolution of prosocial (including proenvironmental) behavior? These are just a couple of prompts: Anything that meets the assignment, i.e., actually provides personal reactions, will get full credit.
- 2) Non-attendance the last day of class without a documented and approved excuse will incur a one grade deduction on research paper and final take home exam.
- 3) **Research Papers are due 3 December at 11:59 p.m.**
- 4) **The take home final essay exam will be distributed on 4 December, in class. It is due by 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, 12 December, and must be submitted by email.**