

The Forum on Religion and Ecology Newsletter
8.8 (August 2014)

Contents:

- 1. Editorial, by Elizabeth McAnally**
 - 2. New Publications**
 - 3. *Journey of the Universe* Events**
 - 4. Events**
 - 5. Ecoresilience Leadership Certificate Program**
 - 6. Creation Time 2014 Worship Material**
 - 7. Job Announcements**
 - 8. Graduate Programs**
 - 9. *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology***
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1. Editorial, by Elizabeth McAnally

Greetings,

Welcome to the August issue of the newsletter for the Forum on Religion and Ecology. We have much to share with you this month with regards to developments in the field of Religion and Ecology, including publications, conferences, events, job announcements, and more.

The *Journey of the Universe* film continues to move out into the world. It is available on Netflix, and since it went up in December, it has been rated by over 52,000 people. For more about the *Journey* project, visit: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/>

Please note that the University of Chicago Divinity School is hiring a tenure-track Assistant Professor in Environmental Ethics. The review of candidates begins on September 1st. For the job description, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/l3thr6b>

We are delighted to let you know about a new book by Kathleen Duffy, SSJ on *Teilhard's Mysticism: Seeing the Inner Face of Evolution* (Orbis Books, 2014). For more about the book, see below or visit: <http://www.orbisbooks.com/teilhards-mysticism.html>

We hope this newsletter supports your own work and helps you further your own engagements with the field of Religion and Ecology.

Warm wishes,
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2. New Publications

Religion and Ecological Sustainability in China
Edited by James Miller, Dan Smyer Yu, and Peter van der Veer
New York: Routledge, 2014
<http://routledge-ny.com/books/details/9780415855150/>

This book sheds light on the social imagination of nature and environment in contemporary China. It demonstrates how the urgent debate on how to create an ecologically sustainable future for the world's most populous country is shaped by its complex engagement with religious traditions, competing visions of modernity and globalization, and by engagement with minority nationalities who live in areas of outstanding natural beauty on China's physical and social margins. The book develops a comprehensive understanding of contemporary China that goes beyond the tradition/modernity dichotomy, and illuminates the diversity of narratives and worldviews that inform contemporary Chinese understandings of and engagements with nature and environment.

Background regarding the birth of this volume by Dan Smyer Yu:

This multidisciplinary volume has a "Tucker and Grim character." The story of it began with Chen Xia, a friend of Mary Evelyn and John, and a senior researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. In 2009, when Chen Xia was teaching a course at a U.S. study abroad center in Beijing directed by Dan Smyer Yu, she introduced Dan to the works of Mary Evelyn and John and connected Dan with them. Dan soon began to seek funding for a religion and ecology conference in China. Finally in 2011 Dan successfully received funding from the School of Ethnology & Sociology at Minzu University of China and Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity. Yang Shengmin, the former Dean of the ethnology school at Minzu and Peter van der Veer, Director of the Max Planck Institute, were instrumental in making this international collaborative project possible. Throughout the preparation of the conference and the envisioned volume, Dan, as the principal organizer, sought advice from Mary Evelyn and John. Both of them generously shared their wisdom and experience, and also recommended James Miller of Queen's University as a co-editor of the volume. With their advice and encouragement, the conference organizers and volume editors decided to expand the study of religion and ecology further into other disciplines of social sciences and humanities, especially anthropology, ethnology and sociology. This trans-disciplinary expansion is particularly needed in the context of China as environmental issues are mostly tackled among scholars of natural and

social sciences with a clear applied orientation. The conference took place in Beijing in March 2012. The "Tucker and Grim influence" is shown in these aspects of the volume: an urgent sense of ecological crisis worldwide; advocating critical understandings of progress and development; exploring diverse modes of environmental sustainability from different religious traditions including those from smaller scale, indigenous societies; the effort to recover the feelings of affection and bonding with the Earth from "the feeling of alienation" resulting from our exploitative relationship with the natural environment; and advancing the study of religion and ecology as "an inter-religious project."

Read a review of this book by Gene Anderson on Amazon.com:

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/news/item/review-of-religion-and-ecological-sustainability-in-china/>

Read a related post by James Miller on his Sustainable China blog:

“Why China Will Solve the World’s Environmental Problems”

<http://www.sustainablechina.info/2014/05/12/why-china-will-solve-the-worlds/>

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Sacred Mountains: How the Revival of Daoism is Turning China’s Ecological Crisis Around

By Allerd Stikker

Bene Factum Publishing, 2014

<http://new.bene-factum.co.uk/product/sacred-mountains/>

Allerd Stikker witnessed and actively participated in the Daoist resurgence, together with the Alliance of Religions and Conservation. Strikker shares his fascination for Daoism, and explains how nature conservation is deeply rooted in its philosophy and practice. He tells the story of his cooperation with ARC in assisting Daoist masters to build the first Daoist Ecology Temple in China, and how this ecology movement has spread throughout China in recent years. He shares his joy when the Chinese government picked up on this success and officially declared that Daoism should be restored as the heart of Chinese culture, in order to overcome the ecological and societal problems that China is facing—thereby putting Daoism officially back on the map.

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Environmental Philosophy in Asian Traditions of Thought

Edited by J. Baird Callicott and James McRae

SUNY Press, 2014

<http://www.sunypress.edu/p-5880-environmental-philosophy-in-asi.aspx>

Environmental Philosophy in Asian Traditions of Thought provides a welcome sequel to the foundational volume in Asian environmental ethics *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought*. That volume, edited by J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames and published in 1989, inaugurated comparative environmental ethics, adding Asian thought on the natural world to the developing field of environmental philosophy. This new book, edited by Callicott and James McRae, includes some of the best articles in environmental philosophy from the perspective of Asian

thought written more recently, some of which appear in print for the first time.

Leading scholars draw from the Indian, Chinese, and Japanese traditions of thought to provide a normative ethical framework that can address the environmental challenges being faced in the twenty-first century. Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, and Daoist approaches are considered along with those of Zen, Japanese Confucianism, and the contemporary philosophy of the Kyoto School. An investigation of environmental philosophy in these Asian traditions not only challenges Western assumptions, but also provides an understanding of Asian philosophy, religion, and culture that informs contemporary environmental law and policy.

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Environmental and Climate Change in South and Southeast Asia: How are Local Cultures Coping?

Edited by Barbara Schuler

Brill, 2014

<http://www.brill.com/products/book/environmental-and-climate-change-south-and-southeast-asia>

Based on pioneering research, this volume on South and Southeast Asia offers a cultural studies' perspective on the vast and largely uncharted domain of how local cultures are coping with climate changes and environmental crises. The primary focus is on three countries that have high emission rates: India, Indonesia, and Thailand. Whereas the dominant discourse on climate largely reflects the view of Western cultures, this volume adds indigenous views and practices that provide insight into Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic responses. Making use of textual materials, fieldwork, and analyses, it highlights the close links between climate solutions, forms of knowledge, and the various socio-cultural and political practices and agencies within societies. The volume demonstrates that climate is global and plural.

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The Earth Charter, Ecological Integrity and Social Movements

Edited by Laura Westra and Mirian Vilela

Routledge, 2014

<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9781138016927/>

The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental ethical principles for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society, with ecological integrity as a major theme. This book provides a series of analyses of ecological integrity as it relates to the Earth Charter, social movements and international law for human rights. It is shown how the Earth Charter project began as a United Nations initiative, but it was carried forward and completed by a global civil society initiative.

The drafting of the Earth Charter involved the most inclusive and participatory process of its time ever associated with the creation of an international declaration. This process is the primary source of its legitimacy as a guiding ethical framework. The Earth Charter was finalized and then launched in 2000 and its legitimacy has been further enhanced by its endorsement by over 6,500

organizations, including many governments and international organizations. In the light of this legitimacy, an increasing number of international lawyers recognize that the Earth Charter is acquiring the status of a soft law document.

The book also shows the strong connection between ecological integrity and social justice, particularly in the defense of indigenous people, and includes contributions from both the North and the global South, specifically from Central and South America.

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Teilhard's Mysticism: Seeing the Inner Face of Evolution

By Kathleen Duffy, SSJ

Orbis Books, 2014

<http://www.orbisbooks.com/teilhards-mysticism.html>

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), a French Jesuit priest and scientist, charted a new path in reconciling Christian theology with evolutionary science. Here, a theologian-scientist examines Teilhard's mysticism, showing how science can illuminate the mystical path, while also demonstrating the compatibility between Teilhard's thought and current frontiers in scientific exploration.

"As a physicist, Duffy brings the reader into an understanding of the universe that activated Teilhard's scientific vision. She has given us a wonderful book of contemplative inquiry."

--John Grim

"Readers will find in this jewel of a book a rich and reliable guide to the Teilhardian vision . . ."

--John Haught

"A marvelous book that catches the fire and radiance of what Teilhard saw and experienced throughout his life. I cannot recommend it too highly."

--Ursula King

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Ecology and Religion

By John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker

Island Press, 2014

<http://islandpress.org/ip/books/book/islandpress/E/bo8053388.html>

(For a 20% discount, use the code 4ECOREL)

From the Psalms in the Bible to the sacred rivers in Hinduism, the natural world has been integral to the world's religions. John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker contend that today's growing environmental challenges make the relationship ever more vital.

This primer explores the history of religious traditions and the environment, illustrating how religious teachings and practices both promoted and at times subverted sustainability.

Subsequent chapters examine the emergence of religious ecology, as views of nature changed in religious traditions and the ecological sciences. Yet the authors argue that religion and ecology are not the province of institutions or disciplines alone. They describe four fundamental aspects of religious life: orienting, grounding, nurturing, and transforming. Readers then see how these phenomena are experienced in a Native American religion, Orthodox Christianity, Confucianism, and Hinduism.

Ultimately, Grim and Tucker argue that the engagement of religious communities is necessary if humanity is to sustain itself and the planet. Students of environmental ethics, theology and ecology, world religions, and environmental studies will receive a solid grounding in the burgeoning field of religious ecology.

3. *Journey of the Universe* Events

“Teaching and Researching Big History: Big Picture, Big Questions”

August 6-10, 2014

2014 International Big History Association Conference

Dominican University of California
50 Acacia Ave
San Rafael, CA, USA

Journey of the Universe Film Screening: August 8, 2014 at 7pm

<http://ibhanet.org/Default.aspx?pageId=1367098>

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"Integrating Ecology, Justice, and Peace"

October 4, 2014

With John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker

Francis Day at Agape Community
2062 Greenwich Rd.
Ware, MA, USA

For the flyers, visit:

http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/Francis_Day.pdf

http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/Student_Francis_Day_2014.pdf

http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/Youth_Flyer--Saint_Francis_Day.pdf

Contact: peace@agapecommunity.org

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/integrating-ecology-justice-and-peace/>

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“Living Cosmology: Christian Responses to *Journey of the Universe*”

November 7-9, 2014

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Thomas Berry’s birth

Yale Divinity School
409 Prospect St.
New Haven, CT, USA

<http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/living-cosmology-conference/>

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For more events, visit: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/upcoming-events/>

4. Events

“Northeast Eco-Dharma Conference 2014”

Wonderwell Mountain Refuge, Springfield, NH, USA

August 7-11, 2014

<http://wonderwellrefuge.org/events/calendar/eventdetail/363/-/northeast-eco-dharma-conference-2014>

“Uniting for Peace: Building Sustainable Peace Through Universal Values”

25th International Peace Research Association (IPRA) General Conference on the Occasion of 50th Anniversary of IPRA

Istanbul, Turkey

August 10-14 2014

<http://ipra2014.org/>

“The Prophetic Voice: Healing the Earth as a Jewish Spiritual Practice”

With Rabbi Arthur Waskow & Nili Simhai

Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center, Falls Village, CT, USA

August 11-15, 2014

<http://hazon.org/calendar/living-lab-prophetic-voice/>

“India For Animals”

National conference organised by Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisations (FIAPO)

Clarks Amer Hotel, Jaipur, India

September 12-14, 2014

<http://www.fiapo.org/ifa14.php>

“Just & Holy Food”

Conference on the moral and theological imperative for food policy, security, and justice
Co-presented by the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network and the CT Conference of the United Church of Christ

Keynote by Rabbi Andrea Cohen-Keiner

Local, organic, and kosher reception afterward

Common Ground High School, New Haven, CT, USA

September 14, 2014

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/just-holy-food-tickets-12222215977>

<http://irejn.org/please-join-us-for-just-holy-food-on-sept-14/>

“People’s Climate March”

New York City, NY, USA

September 21, 2014

<http://peoplesclimate.org/march/>

“Interfaith Summit on Climate Change”

Hosted by the World Council of Churches (WCC)

New York City, NY, USA

September 21-22, 2014

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-announces-september-interfaith-summit-on-climate-change>

“Spiritual Ecologies and New Cosmologies Convergence”

Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

September 22-25, 2014

<http://holyscapes.wordpress.com/spiritual-ecologies-and-new-cosmologies-convergence/>

“Human-Animal Relationships in Religious Traditions”

Bonn University, Bonn, Germany

September 25-27, 2014

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/3128/discussions/9170/cfp-conference-human-animal-relationships-bonn-germany-sept-25-27>

For more events, visit: <http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/>

5. Ecoresilience Leadership Certificate Program

What lasting, practical, and positive contribution can I make in a time of worldwide environmental upheaval?

Discover your answer in the innovative nine-month Ecoresilience Leadership certificate program, beginning September 19. This program at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco, CA is a collaboration by Public Program & Performances and the Department of East-West Psychology.

Earning your certificate will provide you with the tools and techniques for:

- Guiding groups of people wanting to move beyond fright and helplessness in the face of climate change toward effective personal and collective responses.
- Working as ecoliteracy consultants who can teach the basics of sustainability.
- Convening parallel institution design circles when a community's official institutions prove inadequate, outdated, or overwhelmed.
- Imagining, inspiring, and facilitating "heartsteads": wisdom, support, and problem-solving circles that form to create new knowledge and practice for inventing and linking just and sustainable experiments in ecoresilient community.

Our curriculum includes

- practicing leadership
- exploring local landscapes
- compiling local sustainable resources
- discussing recent environmental science data
- and much more.

Learn from leaders in the research, practice, and applications of ecoresilience leadership like, Linda Buzzell, Pandora Thomas, Jan Edl Stein, and Phoenix Smith.

Free info sessions August 6 and September 5.

Learn more at:

http://www.ciis.edu/Public_Programs/Certificate_Programs/Ecoresilience_Certificate.html

6. Creation Time 2014 Worship Material

Creation Time 2014 is celebrated September 1st to October 4th. It is a period “dedicated to prayer for the protection of Creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles that reverse our contribution to climate change.” The theme for this year’s Creation Time is “God, Whose Farm is All Creation” to coincide with the UN International year of Family Farming. Resources are now available and can be downloaded at:

<http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/creation-time/>

7. Job Announcements

Environmental Ethics Professor
University of Chicago Divinity School, Chicago, IL, USA

The University of Chicago Divinity School seeks to make an appointment for a new, tenure-track Assistant Professor position in Environmental Ethics.

Review of candidates will commence on September 1, 2014. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/news/item/job-opening-environmental-ethics-professor-at-the-university-of-chicago-div/>

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Assistant Professor in Environmental Humanities
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, USA

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh seeks a tenure-track Assistant Professor in the Environmental Studies Program.

Review of applications begins on October 1, 2014. Position will begin September 1, 2015.

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/news/item/job-opening-assistant-professor-in-environmental-humanities/>

8. Graduate Programs

Joint MA in Religion and Ecology

Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies (FES) and Yale Divinity School (YDS), New Haven, CT, USA

This graduate program is aimed at students who wish to integrate the study of environmental issues and religious communities in their professional careers and for those who wish to study the cultural and ethical dimensions of environmental problems.

Faculty members: Mary Evelyn Tucker, John Grim, and Fred Simmons

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/yale-ma/>

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MA and PhD in Philosophy and Religion, concentration in Philosophy, Cosmology, and Consciousness

California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA, USA

This graduate program is dedicated to re-imagining the human species as a mutually enhancing member of the Earth community.

Faculty members: Brian Thomas Swimme, Elizabeth Allison, Sean Kelly, Richard Tarnas, and Robert McDermott

http://www.ciis.edu/Academics/Graduate_Programs/Philosophy_Cosmology_and_Consciousness.html

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For more educational programs related to religion and ecology, visit:

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/education/resources/links/>

9. *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology*

Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology has as its focus the relationships between religion, culture and ecology world-wide. Articles discuss major world religious traditions, such as Islam, Buddhism or Christianity; the traditions of indigenous peoples; new religious movements; and philosophical belief systems, such as pantheism, nature spiritualities, and other religious and cultural worldviews in relation to the cultural and ecological systems. Focusing on a range of disciplinary areas including Anthropology, Environmental Studies, Geography, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Sociology and Theology, the journal also presents special issues that center around one theme.

For more information, visit: brill.com/wo

For the online edition, visit: <http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com/content/journals/15685357>

Table of Contents for Volume 18 (2014):

- When you have seen the Yellow Mountains (Ole Bruun)
- Environmental Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage (Paul Sarfo-Mensah, Akwasi Owusu-Bi, Samuel Awuah-Nyamekye, Steve Amisah)
- Ecology and Vision (Matthew T. Eggemeier)
- Of Gardens and Prosperity (Paul Walker)
- The Integrative Worldview and its Potential for Sustainable Societies (Annick Hedlund-de Witt)
- Spiritual Roots of the Land (Christopher Golden)
- Co-Creator or Creative Predator? (Daniel P. Scheid)

- Leonardo da Vinci Our Contemporary? (Nina Witoszek)
- “Green” Reproduction, Resource Conservation, and Ecological Responsibility (Cristina Richie)

Reviews:

- Clayton Crockett and Jeffrey W. Robbins. *Religion, Politics, and the Earth: The New Materialism (Radical Theologies)*. (Review by Whitney A. Bauman)
 - George Alfred James. *Ecology is Permanent Economy: The Activism and Environmental Philosophy of Sunderlal Bahuguna*. (Review by Sam Mickey)
 - Eliza F. Kent. *Sacred Groves and Local Gods: Religion and Environmentalism in South India*. (Review by Pankaj Jain)
 - Cynthia Moe-Lobeda. *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation*. (Review by Max Thornton)
 - Roger S. Gottlieb. *Spirituality: What is it and Why it Matters*. (Review by Daniella Vaclavik)
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<http://fore.research.yale.edu/publications/newsletters/>

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