
Editorial Introduction

This first issue of 2011 showcases our continued commitment to interdisciplinary inquiry. We begin with an article entitled 'Exploring Religion, Nature, and Culture (Continued)', which returns to the theme of the inaugural conference of the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture (the scholarly society affiliated with this journal). Composed by some of the individuals involved with the development of these different initiatives, the article provides an update on our growing field, the society, and this journal. It begins with a description of the society's fourth international conference, this time in Perth, Australia, and then provides a brief history of the development of the society and this journal, which we expect will be of interest to those who have only recently become aware of them.

Following this brief historical update we offer four featured articles, beginning with 'Clarifying the Spiritual Value of Forests and their Role in Sustainable Forest Management', by William A. Clark. After extensively surveying the relevant literature, Clark finds that there remains a general awareness of the spiritual value of forests among commentators, but that this awareness lacks the clarity needed to fully integrate knowledge of these values into forest management. To remedy this problem, Clark proposes a new categorization of spiritual values related to sustainable forest management.

Next comes a closely related article by Shonil A. Bhagwat, Alison A. Ormsby, and Claudia Rutte entitled 'The Role of Religion in Linking Conservation and Development: Challenges and Opportunities'. In this article, the authors explore the complex relationships between global conservation organizations and faith groups. While the potential for conflict persists between secular and religious organizations, the authors conclude that coalitions between organizations can nonetheless help promote global environmental conservation. They offer several concrete suggestions for just how these secular and religious organizations might overcome their most significant barriers to cooperation and work together more effectively.

Continuing with the theme of religion and conservation, Michael DeLashmutt analyses the specific example of the conservation initiatives of the Church of England. In 'Church and Climate Change: An Examination of the Attitudes and Practices of Cornish Anglican Churches Regarding the Environment', DeLashmutt empirically compares institutional conservation policies of the Anglican Church with the perceptions of church members. He finds that official policies have generally failed to impact successfully on churchgoers at the local level and suggests that new methods of communication should be employed by the church to educate congregants fully on environmental issues.

Our final article by Jane Weiss, "'In the Mills, We Are Not So Far from God and Nature": Industrialization and Spirituality in Nineteenth-Century New England', shifts gears slightly. Based on the writings of nineteenth-century 'mill girls' from Lowell, Massachusetts, Weiss explains how developers intentionally incorporated means for spiritual connection to the natural world into their industrial plans. Weiss concludes that this historical case provides 'a paradigm for recuperative development in the twenty-first century'.

Finally, six book reviews round out this issue. Brett Walker reviews Joachim Radkau's investigation of global pre-industrial environmental history. Next, Walter van Beek examines the recent edited volume by Michael Sheridan and Celia Nyamweru on African sacred groves, and Kim Smith reviews Ian Finseth's recent *Shades of Green: Visions of Nature in the Literature of American Slavery, 1770–1860*. Next follows Arran Stibbe's review of Mary Pettenger's *The Social Construction of Climate Change*, an edited volume bringing together political scientists and anthropologists to critically examine climate change discourse, and Carl Olson's review of *Buddhism and Postmodern Imaginings in Thailand*. We conclude the issue with a review of Sallie McFague's *A New Climate for Theology*. Alastair McIntosh examines this most recent offering from the groundbreaking theologian. We have always worked to provide excellent reviews of important new works related to the religion/nature/culture nexus and plan soon to expand into reviews of cultural productions relevant to the journal's themes, including theatrical and documentary film, and other artistic forms.

The editors are grateful for the earnest effort and curious spirit that scholars bring to their submissions to this journal and to their ongoing interactions with the society. This timely research continues to manifest in the wide-ranging inquiries we publish and the scholarly coalitions we form. It is our hope that the *JSRNC* will continue to be the premier venue for inquiries into the complex relationships between human beings and the various cultures and ecological niches they inhabit. In this new

decade of the new millennium, we look forward to the flourishing of scholarship about and popular appreciation of the role of nature in the ways in which humans imagine and embody their religious perceptions and commitments.

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