

**Religious Studies 481**  
**RELIGION AND NATURE**

**Joseph Adler**

O'Connor 204  
adlerj@kenyon.edu  
427-5290

**Fall 2010**

T-Th 2:40-4:00  
Ascension 120

Office hours: MWF 3-4, TTh 1-2  
and by appointment

- [Links](#)
- [Bibliography](#)
- [Paper Format Guide](#)
- [Paper Criteria](#)

This seminar will examine various religious perspectives on the meaning and value of the natural world and the relationship of human beings to nature. The focus will be on environmental ethics in comparative perspective. We will look at all the major religious traditions, plus such contemporary movements as ecofeminism and deep ecology, to see what conceptual resources they can offer to a contemporary understanding of a healthy relationship with the natural world.

**READING**

Available in Bookstore:

Richard C. Foltz, ed., *Worldviews, Religion, and the Environment: A Global Anthology*  
Bron Taylor, *Dark Green Religion: Nature Spirituality and the Planetary Future*

On Course Reserve:

*The HarperCollins Study Bible*

Roger S. Gottlieb, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology*

J. Baird Callicott, *Earth's Insights: A Survey of Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback*

J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames, eds., *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought*

David Landis Barnhill and Roger S. Gottlieb, *Deep Ecology and World Religions*

David E. Cooper and Joy A. Palmer, eds., *Spirit of the Environment: Religion, Value, and Environmental Concern*

In Library Reference section:

Bron R. Taylor, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*

Lindsay Jones, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

Jonathan Z. Smith, ed., *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion*

Journal (in library Periodicals section):

*Worldviews: Environment, Culture, Religion* (some issues online)

Religion and Ecology book series (on library shelves):

Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryūken Williams, eds., *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds* (1997)

Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Berthrong, eds., *Confucianism and Ecology: The Interrelation of Heaven, Earth, and Humans* (1998)

Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, eds., *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-being of Earth and Humans* (2000)

- Christopher Key Chapple and Mary Evelyn Tucker, eds., *Hinduism and Ecology: The Intersection of Earth, Sky, and Water* (2000)
- N. J. Girardot, James Miller, and Liu Xiaogan, eds., *Daoism and Ecology: Ways Within a Cosmic Landscape* (2001)
- John A. Grim, ed., *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community* (2001)
- Christopher Key Chapple, ed., *Jainism and Ecology: Nonviolence in the Web of Life* (2002)
- Hava Tirosh-Samuelson, ed., *Judaism and Ecology: Created World and Revealed Word* (2002)
- Richard C. Foltz, Frederick M. Denny and Azizan Baharuddin, eds., *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust* (2003)

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

1. *Participation* ( $\frac{1}{3}$  of grade). The seminar format requires regular attendance, completion of reading assignments, and active participation in discussion by all members. Necessary absences must be cleared in advance with the instructor; unexcused absences will result in a grade penalty.
2. *Written / oral reports* ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ): Two 3-5 page critical responses to specific readings, with short oral presentations in seminar: weeks 3-12. The oral portion will count  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the grade. Papers, which must follow the [Paper Format Guide](#), will be due the Friday following Tuesday oral presentations and Monday following Thursday presentations.
3. *Research paper* ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ): A 10-15 page paper (plus bibliography) on any relevant topic, using at least two additional books or articles beyond course readings. Follow the [Paper Format Guide](#) on the course website. The topic and preliminary bibliography must be discussed with me by Thursday, **November 18**. The paper will be due Thursday, **December 16**.



"Solitary Temple Amid Clearing Peaks" (detail),  
by Li Cheng (China, 10<sup>th</sup> century)

## SEMINAR SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
1 Aug 26-Sep 2	<b>Introduction</b>	Foltz: Preface (pp. xiii-xv), Introduction, ch. 1 (9-19, 30-37), pp. 431-433 Taylor, <i>Dark Green Religion</i> , pp. 1-12
	<b>Modernity</b>	Foltz: ch. 2 (38-49, 58-75), 561-568, 576-582 Tu Wei-ming, "Beyond the Enlightenment Mentality" (from Tucker and Grim, <i>Worldviews and Ecology</i> ) <b>[Moodle]</b>
2 Sep 7	<b>Tribal cultures</b>	Foltz: ch.3 (start p. 77)
Sep 9	<b>Emerging Religions</b>	Foltz: ch. 11
3 Sep 14-16	<b>Judaism</b>	Bible passages <b>[online]</b> : Genesis 1:1-4:16; 6:1-9:17 Leviticus 19:23-25, 22:28, 25:1-17 Deuteronomy 20:19-20, 22:6-7, 25:4 Isaiah 6:1-3, 24:1-13 Psalms 8, 65, 89:6-13, 93, 104, 145:9-16, 147:7-9 Proverbs 12:10 Job 38-41 Foltz: ch. 8 (279-296, 306-317) Eric Katz, "Faith, God, and Nature: Judaism and Deep Ecology" (from Barnhill and Gottlieb, <i>Deep Ecology and World Religions</i> ) <b>[Moodle]</b>
4 Sep 21-23	<b>Christianity</b>	Bible passages <b>[online]</b> : Matthew 6:25-33, Romans 8:18-25 Francis of Assisi, " <b>Canticle of the Creatures</b> " Foltz: ch. 9 (318-342, 349-356), pp. 500-514, 582-590
5 Sep 28-30	<b>Christianity</b>	Hessel and Ruether, <i>Christianity and Ecology</i> , Introduction, pp. 3-27, 127-134, 497-511 <b>[Moodle]</b>
6 Oct 5	<b>Islam</b>	Foltz: ch. 10
<b>&lt;&lt; October Break &gt;&gt;</b>		
7 Oct 12	<b>South Asia</b>	Foltz: ch. 4 (pp. 112-143), pp. 413-420
Oct 14	<b>Buddhism</b>	Adler, Introduction to Buddhism (handout) Batchelor, "Even the Stones Smile" (handout)

- 8 Oct 19-21 **Buddhism** Brian Edward Brown, "Buddhism in Ecological Perspective," in *The Pacific World*, no. 6 (1990) [Moodle]  
Foltz: ch. 5
- 9 Oct 26 **Buddhism** Francis Cook, "The Jewel Net of Indra," in Callicott and Ames, *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought* [Moodle]  
Graham Parkes, "Voices of Mountains, Trees, and Rivers: Kūkai, Dōgen, and a Deeper Ecology," in Tucker and Williams, *Buddhism and Ecology* [Moodle]
- Oct 28 Dōgen, "Mountains and Waters Sūtra," trans. Carl Bielefeldt [online]  
Gary Snyder, "Blue Mountains Constantly Walking," in Snyder, *The Practice of the Wild* [Moodle]  
William R. LaFleur, "Saigyō and the Buddhist Value of Nature," in Callicott and Ames, *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought* [Moodle]
- 10 Nov 2-4 **China** Foltz: ch. 6 (208-223, 236-244)  
Joseph Adler, "Response and Responsibility: Chou Tun-i and Neo-Confucian Resources for Environmental Ethics," in Tucker and Berthrong, *Confucianism and Ecology* [Moodle]
- 11 Nov 9-11 **Japan** Foltz: ch. 7
- 12 Nov 16 **Ecocentrism** Foltz: ch. 12 (429-431, 434-455)  
Stone [Moodle], *Should Trees Have Standing?*

You must discuss your term paper topic with me by Thursday before class.

- Nov 18 **Ecofeminism** Foltz: ch. 13 (456-480)  
J. Baird Callicott, "Gaia Redux," from Callicott, *Earth's Insights* (handout)  
Thomas Berry, "The Gaia Hypothesis: Its Religious Implications," from Berry, *The Sacred Universe* (handout)

<< Thanksgiving Vacation >>

13 Nov 30-Dec 2	<b>Dark Green Religion</b>	Taylor, chs. 2-5
14 Dec 7-9	<b>Dark Green Religion</b>	Taylor, chs. 6-9

**Term papers due Thursday Dec. 16  
(4:30 pm in my office,  
properly formatted and stapled)**



Summer Mountains After Rain,  
by Gao Kegong (13<sup>th</sup> century)