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Religion and Ecology WORKSHOP

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Typology:

mapping “religion and ecology”

- Depends on the answer to the questions: What is “religion”? What is “ecology”?
- Literature: nexus of many disciplines and approaches
- Intersection with other discourse/ activism
 - Religious movement
 - Environmental movement

*What research has been done so far?
a first try at grouping topics of research:*

- A. Exploration of religious teachings in responding to environmental issues
- B. Religious organization's involvement in environmental activism
- C. Indigenous religions and conservation
- D. New religions/spirituality:
- E. Researching new nature
- F. Ecology as a common concern

A. Exploration of religious teachings in responding to environmental issues

- *Question: what do religions say about ...*
- Critique of modernity
- New theologies (of water, land, forest, lake, etc); "Green hermeneutics"
- Ethics and law
 - *Fiqh* on water, environment, wildlife
 - "Eco-jihad"
 - New *Resolusi Jihad* (FNKSDA)
 - Jihad Konstitusi (Muhammadiyah; constitutional reviews of laws on water, and oil and gas))

B. Religious organization's involvement in environmental activism

- *Question: how can religion contribute to overcoming environmental problems*
- Focus on conservation
 - Garbage bank/ *shodaqoh*
 - River cleaning
- Focus on social justice issues
 - Hindu organization in Benoa Bay reclamation
 - FNKSDA
 - “Jihad Konstitusi”
- Education:
 - Eco-pesantren, Sekolah Sungai
 - Campaign: e.g. *Laudato Si'*; Islamic Declaration of Climate Change, etc.

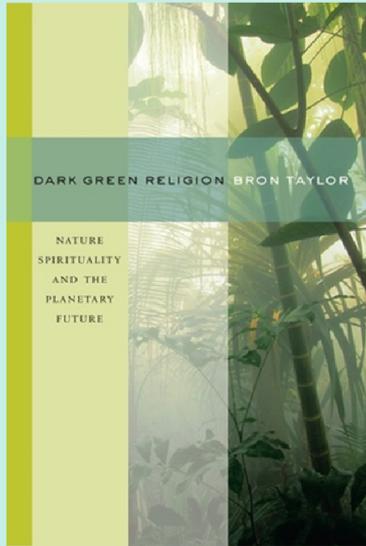
C. Indigenous religions and conservation

Premise: indigenous religions/communities as protectors of forest, land, sea, river; but also as victims of environmental exploitation

- Indigenous cosmology; animism; and (self-) critique of modernity
- Indigenous practices
 - Are they more eco-friendly than world religions?
 - Is there indeed a positive correlation between animism and conservation?

(Cf. *Journal for The Study of Religion, Nature And Culture* (2008) on indigenous nature-based religions (Animism) and Conservation → relations with world religions.

D. New religions/spirituality: “Dark green religion”

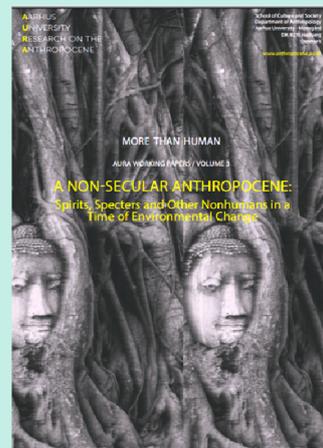


- “... religion that considers nature to be sacred, imbued with intrinsic value, and worthy of reverent care”; appreciation of nature’s sacred or spiritual dimension in diverse human activities

E. Researching new nature:

Aura (Aarhus Research on the Anthropocene)

- Anthropological and multi-disciplinary research on the “new world” (Anna Tsing, et.al.)



The “new nature”:

not a “pure nature”, separate from culture, but inseparable from human impacts on it

→ a new ontology,
new anthropology,
studying things
(hybrids)

→ a new politics
(Latour, Tsing)



F. Ecology as a common concern

- Interfaith dialogues (in many forms) centered on addressing the environmental problems as a common problem, crossing religious boundaries:
 - Interfaith Rainforest Initiative (world and indigenous religions)
 - Siaga Bumi

Academic disciplines/ approaches

- Environmental anthropology:
 - importance of cultural diversity and local knowledge as a resource for sustainable living (Reuter)
 - Articulation of local knowledge system (adaptation and mitigation)
- Political Ecology: environmental issues as political phenomena (political, economic and social)
- Religious studies (theological, hermeneutic, empirical)
- Other, interdisciplinary space: [eg. Ecofeminism: nexus between environmentalism, feminism, and religion]

- Since its inception, “religion and ecology” has been an academic enterprise but inseparable from activism
- In the end, the goal is to overcome environmental crisis, achieving sustainability