

Spirituality and Science: the case of spiritual values in forest management

PAP Thought for Food Tryptich on Spirituality and Science

12 March 2019

Cathrien de Pater, MSc, MA



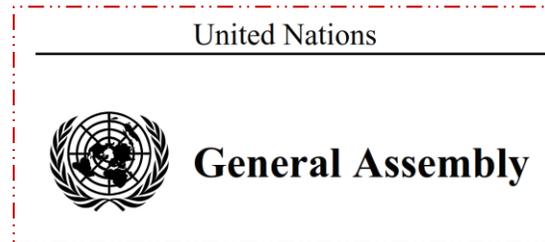
This session

1. What is spirituality and how to study it (in relation to nature)?
 - Why important?
 - How to conceptualise spirituality?
 - How to study spirituality?
2. How to experience spirituality?

Why is it important to study Spirituality and Nature?

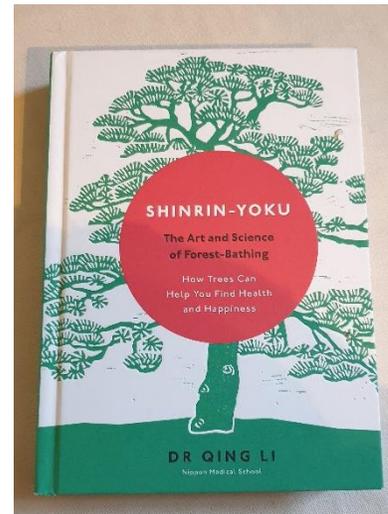
- Academic debates
- Lynn White 1968: the religious roots of environmental destruction
 - Does spirituality contribute to or hinder sustainable forest management & conservation?
 - Are some spiritualities/religions 'greener' than others?
*Taylor et al. 2016: no, except perhaps:
Indigenous spiritualities
'New nature spiritualities'*

Spiritual (cultural) values in global fora on forest management



Spiritual values & forests in NL

- Over 31% of the Dutch population 'spiritual' (Bernts & Berghuis 2016).
- Spiritual experience often in nature → environmentally friendly behavior
- Increasing 'demand' to forest managing organisations → Some response at policy levels



Soul and Business

SBB business plan 2015-2020:

“protect,
experience,
utilize”



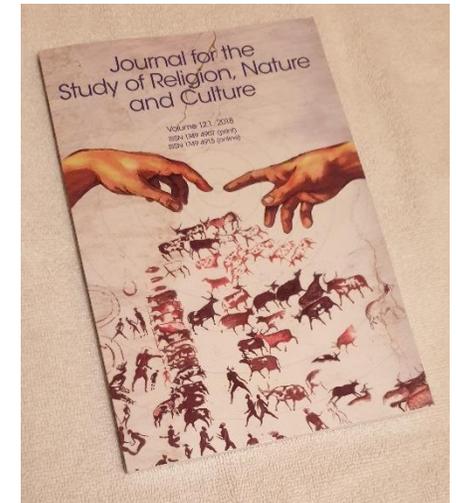
What is Spirituality?

Conceptualisation: No commonly accepted definition

- In different academic domains – humanities, social sciences, philosophy
→ International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture (ISSRNC)

■ Delineation:

- Spirituality and Spiritual Values
- Spirituality and Religion
- Spiritual Values and Cultural Values

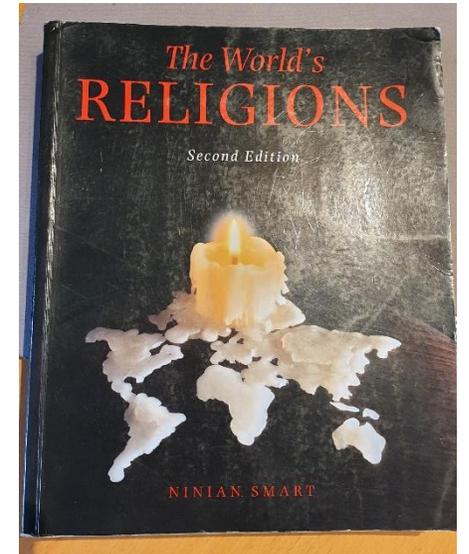


How to study spirituality?



- 'Family resemblance approach' (Taylor 2016):
 - No sharp distinction between 'spiritual' and 'religious'
 - No preference of one spiritual tradition above another
 - Focuses on explanatory power

→ **Dimensions of spirituality** (Ninian Smart 2002)



Ninian Smart's Dimensions of Religion (Spirituality)



1. Emotional and experiential



4. Doctrinary and philosophical



2. Practical or ritual



5. Ethical and legal



3. Narrative or mythical



6. Social and institutional



7. Material

Dimensions of Spirituality and Forests/Nature



**1. Experiential -
aesthetical**



**2. Experiential
- relational**



**3. Experiential
- restorative**



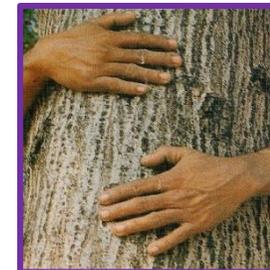
**4. Experiential - 'life
force' (energy)**



**5. Practical
or ritual**



**6. Narrative or
mythical**



**7. Philosophical-
ethical**



**(8. Social and
institutional)**

(9. Material)

Dimensions of Spirituality

	<u>Ninian Smart (2002)</u>	This study
1.	Emotional and experiential	1. Experiential - Restorative
		2. Experiential – Aesthetic
		3. Experiential – Relational
		4. Experiential - Life Force/Vital Energy
2.	Practical or ritual	5. Practical or ritual
3.	Narrative or mythical	6. Narrative or mythical
4	Doctrinary and philosophical	7. Philosophical & ethical
5	Ethical and legal	
6	Social and institutional	-
7	Material and economic	-

Spiritual Values

- Not separated, may flow into each other
- Expressed and related to forests and forest management in a wide range of concepts and terms.
- These terms can be found:
 - in the texts of forest management **plans**.
 - By interviewing forest management **practitioners** (formal & non-formal)
 - By studying **cases** in-depths

Considerations

- Language: scarce & inadequate
- Multiple Ontologies: how to deal with them?
- Emic and etic
- Secret and shared knowledge

- Work in progress!

Aikido: a 'spiritual' Martial Art?

- Art: to connect 'inside' – 'outside'; body-mind
→ effective, non-destructive defense
- Practice:
 1. Centeredness
 2. Connection by relaxation



Work in progress...

Thank You!

Catharina.depater@wur.nl

