

[Conference webpage]

The European Forum for the Study of Religion and the Environment

is pleased to announce its

seventh international conference

Friday May 12 to Sunday May 14, 2023

Universität Potsdam

Potsdam, Germany

MYTH, RITUAL AND PRACTICE FOR THE AGE OF ECOLOGICAL CATASTROPHE



Fabrice Monteiro, a garbage spirit, from his series, The Prophecy (2017)

Further details and a call for papers to come soon

Conference Chair: Jonathan Schorsch jschorsch@uni-potsdam.de



Meryl McMaster, *Sentience*

CONFERENCE THEME

This conference will explore the many questions that arise from the apparent continuing philosophical-scientific indigestibility of mythology, ritual and practice. What does or would gaia-logical mythology, ritual or practice look like? Are they, could they be more pedagogically effective with non-experts than analysis and

critique? Is the solution to ecological alienation the same as the age-old solutions to spiritual alienation? Is ecological alienation parallel to the emic/etic divide in ethnography? Is “practice” the way “in”? Is “belief”? Does gaiaism demand rituals and practices? Are contemporary scholarly analyses (Haraway, Latour, Stengers, Mary-Jane Rubenstein’s pantheologies, Sloterdijk, etc.) today’s form of ecological myth? Is myth, with its associations with the archaic (despite the work of Cassirer, Barthes and others), a fitting genre for today? (Many traditional myths are hardly gaian.) Must gaian myth, rituals or practices be atheological (i.e., is theology, as some argue, inherently not deep-ecological)? Does subtractive theology (à la Badiou) better lend itself to legitimate gaian mythology? Do ecotheologies written out of specific continuing pre-modern cultural-religious traditions that are not entirely or comfortably gaian satisfactorily bridge the spaces between emic and etic genres/approaches and satisfy calls for new gaia-ologies? Is there a meaningful difference between the myths of “major religions” and “indigenous” cultures? How do or might “old” and “new” cultural material relate to one another? Must scholars-scientists, environmentalists or artists use only material from “their own” heritages in producing gaia-ologies? Are there bases for and modes of considering or evaluating the skill or usefulness of gaia-ologies, gaian myths, rituals or practices? How have religious or spiritual environmentalists created gaian myths, rituals or practices? How might they? What artists, artistic works or modalities or works of popular culture stand as noteworthy examples?