

*The European Forum for the Study of Religion and Environment* is pleased to announce the fourth international conference from May 22 to May 25, 2013, to be held at the Sigtuna Foundation in Sweden (nearby Stockholm), in association with the *International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature & Culture* and *The Sigtuna Foundation*, entitled:

**NATURE, TECHNOLOGY AND RELIGION – TRANSDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES**

Keynote speakers are:

Bronislaw Szerszynski, Lancaster University, *The Twilight of the Machines*  
Lisa Sideris, Indiana University, *Writing the Poetry of Reality – Science, Religion and Wonder in the Environmental Discourse*  
Zemfira Inogamova, Totnes, Devon, *Religious Beliefs and Practices among Farmers in Amanbau Village, Kyrgyzstan*

Walther Christoph Zimmerli, Brandenburg University of Technology, *Human Responsibility for Extra Human Nature*

Bengt Gustafsson, Uppsala University, *Nature and Human Culture from a Cosmic Perspective*

The capacity to invent, construct and use technical artifacts is an essential skill of human beings. Technology furthermore represents one of the central pillars of modern society and dominates the social sphere. Different – conflictual – understandings of technology and its significance for the modern society are at the heart of modern self-understanding, and these are by no means reconciled with each other. In spite of technology's deep impact on human lifeworlds as well as on different kinds of natural environments, reflections about ethics and the deeper driving forces of technology have so far not been developed in a satisfying way. Additionally, the interaction between religious traditions and the meanings of technology is often poorly developed.

Although technology has not been regarded as a faculty of its own right in the academy, nevertheless from mid-20th century technology has moved closer to science and has rapidly increased not only its own power but also transformed the development of science in general as well as impacting on culture more widely. As developments in technology and science are rooted in the religious Christian history of the West, one needs to investigate deeper the internal normative codes from this long European history as these seem to be active still today in spite of the overall secularization of science.

Ethically regarded, it is probably preferable to regard technology as a highly ambiguous phenomenon which needs to be analyzed and examined in a much deeper way than commonly conducted. While many scholars have explored the interconnection of ethics and religion only a few have investigated how technology, ethics and religion interact.

As modern technology impacts are widely and deeply affecting many different spheres of life, religion and research, it should be a common task to continuously reflect on technology developments critically and constructively for the sake of the

Common Good, including human and non-human life systems. The planned event intends to explore the phenomenon of religion and the spiritual and socio-cultural power of human technical innovation. The conference will offer the beginning of a wider novel discourse about the nature of technology and the technically constructed “second nature” and how both interact with each other. New ethical standards and reflections might result from such a discourse. This discussion also might catalyze new insights about the Sacred at work in human technical creativity.

Questions such as the following indicate clearly the need for deeper reflection on technology, demanding a broader investigation in the environmental humanities and the sciences. The proposed conference will hereby focus on the implicit *religious driving forces of technological practices and discourses about by attention to religious traditions, the diversity of nature and the meanings of technology.*

## **Preliminary programme**

### **22 May**

12.00-13.30 lunch

14.00 Welcome

14.30 Keynote I and discussion

16.00 Coffee

17.00 Papersession I

19.30 Reception

### **23 May**

09.00 Keynote II and discussion

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Papersession II

13.00-14.00 Lunch

14.30 Walk and talk in Sigtuna

17.00 Keynote and discussion

19.00 Dinner

## **24 May**

09.00 Papersession III

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Keynote IV and discussion

13.00-14.00 Lunch

14.30 Papersession IV

16.00 Coffee

17.00 Keynote V and discussion

19.30 Banquet dinner

## **25 May**

09.00 Evaluation, conclusion and discussion

10.00 Coffee

10.30 Next conference. Business meeting.

12.00 Lunch

Registrations for the event are welcome to the Sigtuna foundation.

[http://www.sigtunastiftelsen.se/Kalendarium\\_\\_1053.html/lid//boka/583](http://www.sigtunastiftelsen.se/Kalendarium__1053.html/lid//boka/583)

Registration fee: 400 SEK (46€).

Remaining conference fee (4400SEK/510€), covering single room and all meals to be paid after registration, but no later than April, 29.

### **By train and bus**

SL:s commuter trains depart twice every hour from Stockholm to Märsta, or you can take SJ:s trains from

Stockholm or from Uppsala, to Märsta. In Märsta, outside the train station, you take bus 570 or 575 to Sigtuna. Both buses depart in connection to the arrival of SL:s commuter trains. If you travel from Uppsala railway station you can take bus 181 to Sigtuna, but you will have to change in Vassunda to bus 183.

#### **From Arlanda airport**

From Arlanda airport you can take a taxi to Sigtuna which takes approximately 15 minutes. Ask for Taxi 020:s fixed price from Arlanda to Sigtuna. Or you can take bus 583 to Märsta, where you will change to either bus 570 or 575 to Sigtuna. Another possibility is to take bus 803 from Arlanda directly to Sigtuna.

Welcome to Sigtunastiftelsen!

For further information, please contact:

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<http://www.hf.ntnu.no/relnateur/>  
<http://www.religionandnature.com/society/>  
[http://www.sigtunastiftelsen.se/index\\_hk.asp/id/15](http://www.sigtunastiftelsen.se/index_hk.asp/id/15)

Conference committee:

*Maria Jansdotter Samuelsson*, Karlstad University  
*Sigurd Bergmann*, Norwegian University of Science and Technology  
*Celia Deane-Drummond*, Notre Dame University  
*Forrest Clingerman*, Ohio Northern University  
*Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm*, Uppsala University