

CALL FOR PAPERS

Youth, Faith and Environmental Consciousness: A Case for Sustainable Development

Section Editors: Jacques Beukes, Juliane Stork & Ignatius Swart

Background

This South African/German partnership aims to investigate the connection of faith and environmental consciousness in connection to youth. Our focus is on Africa and Europe through a collaboration of excellent scholars from different scientific fields who want to participate in this project. This invitation serves as a twofold call for papers, namely 1) for a Special Collection publication in the Scopus and ISI indexed open access journal *HTS Theological Studies*, and 2) an AOSIS Book Publication on the theme, “Youth, Faith and Environmental Consciousness: A Case for Sustainable Development”.

Climate change and environmental destruction are among the most threatening challenges to humanity and sustainable development globally. Building a multilevel environmental consciousness that combines the factors of affective and cognitive environmental knowledge with environmental action poses a promising approach to address ecological challenges on an individual level. This might eventually also lead to influencing policy-making processes on local, national, regional and global levels.

The threefold concern with the nexus between youth, faith and environmental consciousness has been under-researched in the fields of practical theology and religious studies. This call for articles wants to encourage researchers to address this research gap and contribute to exploring the threefold nexus. Furthermore, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary dialogue is needed at the intersection of theology, faith, religious studies, development studies, social sciences, humanities, ecology, youth and the natural sciences. Young people today find themselves right in the centre of debates about ecological (in)justice, environmental consciousness among the different generations, and

climate change discourses and practices. This is evident as worldwide movements such as Extinction Rebellion or the Fridays for Future initiative that was initiated by Greta Thunberg for instance illustrate. How youths are engaged with these discourses, how they shape environmental consciousness but also how their environmental consciousness is affected by different factors and especially the role and the contribution of faith within this context will be the focus of this research project.

HTS Theological Studies promotes multidisciplinary, religious, interreligious and biblical aspects of studies in the international theological arena. The Special Collection that will be published in 2021 on “Youth, Faith and Environmental Consciousness” will have a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary focus that will include religious and interreligious discourses and biblical aspects.

How are youths from various faith communities and religious groups involved in the discourse of environmental issues? How environmentally conscious are they and how was this environmental consciousness formed? To what extent does their faith influence their environmental consciousness? How are their voices being included in decision-making processes on local, national or global levels? What impact does the current COVID-19 pandemic have on this theme? Further research questions this project wants to investigate are: How prominent are climate change and environmental (in)justice on the agenda of the youth, especially in the African and European regions? Furthermore, since young people prior to voting age have little political influence, what ways do youth groups find to influence the political process? Overall, how does the rise of youth activism address the issue of climate change and action?

Invitation

This invitation is directed to scholars fitting the aforementioned profile and who can contribute to the demarcated focus of the envisaged HTS Special Collection and book publications.

The book project will be a follow-up of the HTS Special Collection and proposed workshops in Pretoria and Berlin at the end of 2021 and in 2022 (depending on the Covid-19 situation) are envisioned. These workshops will seek to provide a space for critical reflection on the identified issues from a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. It is anticipated that participants in the workshop will offer scholarly reflections on issues related to the broader theme of “Youth, Faith and Environmental Consciousness: A Case for Sustainable Development” with the aim to produce new contributions in the form of a chapter to the book publication. Further information on this part of the project will be shared at a later stage.

Abstracts for the HTS Special Collection

Please send an abstract of no more than 250 words to Jacques Beukes jacques.beukes@up.ac.za or Juliane Stork juliane.stork@hu-berlin.de by the **21st of September 2020**. Abstracts should provide a title, a brief description of the proposed paper, and any unique or important insights and contribution to this research theme. Notifications of acceptance will be sent by the 1st of October 2020. Once your paper is accepted, we request the full paper by the 25th of January 2021.

Twofold Call: Special Collection / Book / Both

Prospective contributors have the opportunity to partake in either the HTS Special Collection publication or the AOSIS book publication, or both. We kindly ask that you inform us of your intention to participate via email by the 17th of August 2020 by indicating whether you would like to participate in only one or both parts of this research project, bearing in mind that the deadline for abstract submissions for the HTS Special Collection is 21 September 2020.

Target dates / deadlines for the HTS Special Collection

1. Confirmation of participation to the editors by Monday 17 August 2020.
2. Final submission of provisional article titles and abstracts to editors by Monday, 21 September 2020.
3. Feedback regarding the acceptance of the abstract by Thursday, 1 October 2020.
4. Final submission of draft articles to the editors by Monday, 25 January 2021.
5. Final online submission of articles on the HTS system for peer review by Thursday, 1 April 2021.

Guidelines for authors

- The Harvard reference style is used for HTS articles. This can include the use of footnotes as long as references in the footnotes are consistent with the Harvard style.
 - Prospective authors contributing to the Special Collection could visit the HTS website to familiarise themselves with the style and format for articles. At www.hts.org.za.
 - The recommended length for articles is between 5 000 – 7 000 words
 - It should be noted that every author / authors' institution will be responsible for his/her own page fees as this is an Open Access journal. Please visit <https://hts.org.za/index.php/hts/pages/view/publication-fees> for further information.
- Please do contact the editors if you require clarification.

Short biographies of editors

Jacques Beukes is currently a senior lecturer in practical theology at the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Theology and Religion. He specialises in the fields of youth and children's ministry, diaconal studies, theology and development, congregational studies and community development and has published various articles, book chapters and a book in these areas of study.

jacques.beukes@up.ac.za

Juliane Stork is a theologian and John S. Mbiti Research Fellow at the Research Programme for Religious Communities and Sustainable Development at Humboldt-University Berlin where she is also teaching in the Faculty of Theology. Her field of interest

is rooted in intercultural theology, African Initiated Christianity and contextual ecologies.

juliane.stork@hu-berlin.de

Ignatius Swart is professor in the Department of Religion and Theology at the University of the Western Cape. He was co-leader of the international, interdisciplinary “Youth at the Margins” (YOMA) research project (2013-2016) focusing on the role of FBOs in the lives of socially marginalised young people. Outcomes of Swart’s own output from the project include an edited collection in *HTS Theological Studies* (2018), an article in *Journal of Youth Studies* (2019), and an anthology accepted for publication by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

igswart@uwc.ac.za