

discussions about, for instance, wine cask and shipbuilding construction (the latter which subsequently devolves into a discussion of early U.S. naval battle strategy). But others captivate, like the sections that consider balanocultural practices and, especially, henge formation patterns. Logan's argument that henge patterns, such as those found at Stonehenge and Seahenge, may have found inspiration in an oak's rays and rings and as such are "monuments about the mind" is absolutely fascinating (p. 105).

Logan laments modern use of the tree, saying that today mass production has separated us from truly appreciating oaks anymore—that we have lost our roots. "Human beings show restraint when they value, worship, and respect what they encounter. Value comes from understanding, and understanding from intimacy" (p. 256). This understanding seems "mostly gone now. Oak is for truck floors and middle-market cabinets" (p. 257). Perhaps that's why he has chosen to describe so thickly the oak's transformation into lumber and other materials.

Logan marvels about oaks, and his admiration is appealing. Their prolific distribution and survival strategies are impressive in the annals of botany. They "specialize ... in not specializing," unlike champion trees like redwood, which need specific environments in which to thrive (p. 17). Their relentless flexibility has made the oak "the primary, the titular tree of the forest" (p. 21), especially since it is the only one that includes both deciduous and evergreen species. "The first durable material in the West that could be transformed" (p. 119) by humans, the oak is both figuratively and literally a magical, pliable tree. "No tree has been more useful to human beings" (p. 21), a claim Logan amply and enthusiastically justifies.

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**Infinite Nature.** By Bruce R. Hull. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006. xiii + 258 pp. Figures, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth \$25.00.

Bruce Hull's *Infinite Nature* sets out to accomplish two goals. First, Hull attempts to make sense of his own realization that there are "many natures"; that his previous assumptions about the singularity of nature were naive, inaccurate, and even problematic; and that this presents a challenge when it comes to more normative dimensions of environmental ethical problem solving. The bulk of the book is dedicated to this task, and Hull successfully reaches his first goal. He traces through the many natures—ecological nature from climax community to disturbance, spiritual nature from something to be conquered and dominated to something to be revered, healthy nature as measure of land health to the place for the salving of human psychological

dysfunction, and beyond—and both historically and conceptually demonstrates the many meanings of nature.

The bulk of the book includes chapters that illustrate the various conceptualizations of nature that exist in the public mind. These chapters are nicely done. Many environmental scholars, activists, or generally concerned citizens would be well served by reading and remembering Hull's accounting of the various—and sometimes contradictory— notions of nature that we employ.

Hull convincingly displays the pluralism in nature and warns us away from nature "fundamentalism." However, once pluralism is grasped Hull wisely recognizes a dilemma: the dilemma of pluralism. If there are indeed many legitimate natures, then how do we prioritize or decide which nature it is that we want? How do we condemn some natures, embrace others, and sort through the many competing visions? How do we avoid both a dogmatic and mistaken nature "fundamentalism" without falling in to an equally fallacious and sloppy sort of "flabby nature pluralism." Hull is wise to glimpse, and desire to avoid, this dilemma.

Hull's second goal is much more difficult, but inevitably results from accomplishing the first goal. Now that we have multiple and incommensurable "natures"—each with competing cosmological and ethical implications—which are correct and which are incorrect? In his introduction Hull promises to not "uncritically accept all natures and intentionally single out some construals to dismiss as myth and misperception." Hull does not, however, accomplish this goal; nor does he successfully avoid the dilemma of pluralism. Instead, while Hull points out that "pluralizing nature legitimizes many voices by opening the decision space," he fails to convince the reader why or how some of these voices might or should be dismissed and others accepted. Arguably, many of the problems and competing notions of nature he points out are a result of, or at least evidence of, current and past pluralism. Hence it is unclear how further "pluralizing" nature would help. In the end, Hull does not provide the necessary conceptual anchor to solve the problem of a "flabby pluralism." Although, as Hull concludes, "[m]any natures exist, many more are possible, and many of these natures can have a nurturing, creative role for humans," many more have exactly the opposite result, and Hull does not provide a way to distinguish the former from the latter. In all fairness, Hull's failure here is not uncommon. Many forms of pluralism fail in exactly the same way.

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