

Congrès 2017 / Congress 2017 – Ryerson University, Toronto

27 mai – 30 mai 2017 / May 27– May 30 2017

Société canadienne pour l'étude de la religion
Canadian Society for the Study of Religion

NOTE: The following meeting rooms have been reserved for each day of the conference as a social space. Feel free to use them at your leisure:

Saturday mai/May 27th – KHE Kerr East 332

Sunday mai/May 28th – PIT Pitman 205

Monday mai/May 29th – PIT Pitman 205

Tuesday mai/May 30th – PIT Pitman 205

Saturday May 27

TIME	EVENT	BUILDING – ROOM #
9am - noon	Executive Meeting	ENG Engineering 358
2pm – 4pm	Annual General Meeting	KHE Kerr East 127
4:30pm – 5:30pm	Insta-networking Session	KHE Kerr East 127
6pm – 7pm	President’s Reception (including announcement of book prizes and essay winners).	PIT Pitman 200 Marion Creery Community Room
7pm – 10pm	Performance Presentation: (see details below)	KHE Kerr East 127

PERFORMANCE PRESENTATION:

Documentary: *In God We Trust*. Director, Astrid Schau-Larsen

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is one of the most pressing global concerns and people still suffer from lack of resources. While Uganda has been seen as an exemplary country in curbing the epidemic recent numbers show that prevalence rates are now going up. The film is based on my field study in Uganda in the fall of 2010. Its purpose is to raise the need for greater debate and reflection within the U.S. about foreign policy. Success lies, this project suggests, in a richer understanding of cultural differences that inform Ugandan life, that are tailored to their social realities, communal and social configurations. Cultural matters such as gender issues, sexual patterns, religious convictions, as well as level of education has to be taken into account far more than PEPFAR (President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) has done to date. Furthermore international funding agencies as well as national governments cannot neglect the role of religion and religious leaders in fighting this epidemic. In Uganda there is a need to include pastors and churches in the healthcare sector and hence make sure they are educated and understand the challenges as well as the realities of both HIV prevention, treatment and care.

(Note: *The presentation does not necessarily reflect the views of CSSR or its members*)

Notes:

1. Projector for laptop is default throughout, other special requirements are indicated as required.
2. An alphabetized list of presenters and abstracts is included at the end of the schedule.

SUNDAY MAY 28 MORNING SESSIONS

PLACE (all rooms to be confirmed)	9am – 10:30am	10:45am – 12:15pm
SHE Sally Horsfall 554	<p>Panel: Transnational Islam</p> <p>Chair: Merin Shobhana Xavier, Franklin & Marshall College</p> <p><i>The Muslim Brotherhood: The Construction of Ideal Muslim Subjects and an Islamic Order in Egypt</i>, Khalidah Ali, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Institutions of the Aga Khan in Canada: Space, Place and Cosmopolitan Ethics</i>, Sahir Dewji, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>Global Peace in Higher Educational Institutions in Southeast Asia: A Study on Moderation in Brunei</i>, Ahmad Yousif, Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA), Brunei Darussalam</p>	<p>Panel: Women, Islam, and the Politics of Representation in Canada</p> <p>Chair: Ahmad Yousif, Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA) Brunei Darussalam</p> <p><i>#JeSuisHijabi: How Hashtags Can Complicate the Religion/Secular Binary in Canada</i>, Cory Funk, Memorial University</p> <p><i>Canadian Pluralism and Policy: Retracting the "Niqab Ban" at Canadian Citizenship Ceremonies</i>, Zaheeda Alibhai, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Where Have All the Niqabs Gone? Harper, Trudeau, and the Affective Politics of 'Islam'</i>, Matt Sheedy, University of Manitoba</p>
SHE Sally Horsfall 558	<p>Panel: Religion in the Ancient World</p> <p>Chair: Mary Hale, St. Mary's University</p> <p><i>Can Funerary Monuments Express Subjectivity? Inscriptions, Image and Subjectivity on Roman Funerary</i>, Danielle Baillargeon, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>The Metaphor of Servant in the Acts of Paul and Thecla</i>, Joseph Brito, Concordia University</p> <p><i>Women's Prophecy and Sexual Violence in Second Century Christian Texts</i>, Elizabeth Meaghan Matheson, Concordia University</p>	<p>Panel: Taking the Measure of Apocalypse: Diverse Elements in Late Antique and Zoroastrian Literature</p> <p>Chair: Elliot Mason, Concordia University</p> <p><i>Defiled by Female Bodies: The Role of Human Women in the Book of the Watchers</i>, Eli Mason, Concordia University</p> <p><i>The Role of "Vision" in Apocalyptic Literature</i>, Lucas Cober, Concordia University</p> <p><i>Fear and Loathing in the Lost Apocalypses: Rhetoric of Fear and Hope in Early Christian Thought</i>, Tirza Harris, Concordia University</p> <p><i>Hell Envisioned in Zoroastrian Apocalyptic Texts: Arda Wiraz Namag</i>, Miryam Amirdust, Concordia University</p>
SHE Sally Horsfall 547	<p>Panel: Native Canadians and Interreligious Encounters</p> <p>Chair: Qamer Hameed, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Bibles in the Badlands: Colonial Dinosaur Discoveries and the Making of Canada</i>, Anthony Scott, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Armed with an Eagle Feather: Indigenous Ceremony, Secular Liberalism, and Sovereignties in Canada</i>, Stacey Swain, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Mary and the Métis: Indigenous Engagement with Catholic Ultramontaniam</i>, Paul Gareau, University of Alberta</p>	<p>Panel: Religion and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission</p> <p>Chair: Stacie Swain, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Reconciliation and the Secular</i>, Carlos Colorado, University of Winnipeg</p> <p><i>Repudiations of Acts and Consolidations of Authority: How Catholic Institutions Have Responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission</i>, Graham McDonough, University of Victoria</p>

Dr. Michel Desjardins' Retirement Luncheon

12:15pm – 1:30pm

Room: SHE Sally Horsfall 560

Please join us to celebrate the scholarship, inspiration, and mentorship of Dr. Michel Desjardins! We invite colleagues and students to join in a feast of fine food (so apropos!) and bear witness to Michel's accomplishments and crossing of liminal space in his transition to becoming professor emeritus. Come raise a glass and hear his fellow academics share tales of his achievements and his service to the CSSR (President 2008-2010, Past President 2010-2012); as well as service on the executive committees of the American Academy of Religion (Secretary); Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion (Secretary); and the Canadian Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences (Board member).

**SUNDAY MAY 28
AFTERNOON SESSIONS**

PLACE	1:45pm – 3:15pm	3:30pm – 5pm
SHE Sally Horsfall 554	<p>Panel: Islamic Identities</p> <p>Chair: Joseph Brito, Concordia University</p> <p><i>Decolonizing Canadian Diversity: A View from the Internal Muslim Periphery</i>, Jason Sparkes, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>The Propagation of Islamophobic Discourse in American Politics Via the Secular Toolbox</i>, Keelin Pringnitz, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Playing the Islamophobia Card</i>, Syed Adnan Hussein, Saint Mary's University</p>	<p>Panel: Religion and Health</p> <p>Chair: Zabeen Khamisa, University of Waterloo</p> <p><i>Therapeutic Geographies of Sikhism: the Bhai Kanhaiya Sewa Centre</i>, Arlene MacDonald, University of Texas Medical Branch</p> <p><i>The Politics of Prayer and Belonging in Canadian Hospitals</i>, Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham, Trinity Western University and Rachel Brown, University of Victoria</p>
SHE Sally Horsfall 558	<p>Panel: Indigenous Communities, Religion, and Law</p> <p>Chair:</p> <p><i>Many Wives, Many Consequences: Public, Political, and Legal Responses to Non-Monogamous Relationships</i>, Brooke Kathleen Brassard, University of Waterloo</p> <p><i>Skiing in the Presence of the Kachina and Klawla Tuklulak?is: A Comparative Assessment of the Treatment of Navajo-Hopi and Ktunaxa Religious Freedom Claims</i>, Nicholas Shrubsole, University of Central Florida</p>	<p>Panel: Religion and the Law</p> <p>Chair: Catherine Caulfield, University of Alberta</p> <p><i>"Night-walkers" and "Whores of the Night": The Supreme Court of Canada, Morality, and 'Non-Religion'</i>, Cory Steele, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>(Un)Strategic Essentialism: The Reification of Identity Categories in the Dispute over TWU's Law School</i>, Connor Steele, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Negotiating Religion and Sexual Orientation: Trinity Western University's Law School</i>, Heather Shipley, University of Ottawa</p>

SHE Sally Horsfall 547	Roundtable: Beyond Neutrality: Religion, Secularism, and Higher Education	Panel: Religion and Education
	Chair: Braj Sinha, University of Saskatchewan	Chair: Marybeth White, Wilfrid Laurier University
	Panelists:	<i>Perfectly Present: Mindfulness Curriculum as Implicit Religion</i> , Mary Hale, Saint Mary's University
	<i>Overcoming the Hermeneutic of Suspicion in the Secular University</i> , Jennifer Guyver, McGill University	<i>Teaching About Religion in Alberta Public Schools</i> , Margie Patrick and Vanessa Gulayets, The King's University
	<i>Happy, Healthy, and Successful: Spiritual Wellness as the Measure of Religion</i> , Meera Kachroo, University of Saskatchewan	<i>'Studentship': Beyond Normative Conceptions of Civic Education in Québec's ERC Program</i> , Erin Reid and Ilham Reda, McGill University
<i>Informing Humanities Studies: The Place of Christianity in Canadian Higher Education</i> , Rebekah Lamb, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Academy		
<i>Translating Educational Spaces: Muslims in North American Christian Seminaries</i> , Sajida Jalalzai, St. Michael's College		

2017 Craigie Lecture
7:00 – 8:30pm
Room: Ted Rogers School of Management 1-149

What Was the Goal of Paul's Religious Program? Stanley Stowers, Brown University

The apostle Paul is known as the missionary to the non-Jewish world. While Peter preached the gospel of salvation from the coming judgment of God to the Jews, Paul's goal was to baptize and therefore save as many non-Jews as possible. His churches were communities of those who would be saved. This scenario, however, falls prey to major difficulties both from a consideration of the realities of this mission and from a critical reading of what Paul says about his saved gentiles. The lecture will explore the difficulties and argue for an alternative scenario focused on the ontology Paul envisions for his chosen saints "in Christ."

Hosted by CSBS in cooperation with CSSR, CSPS, and CTS

MONDAY MAY 29
Morning Sessions

PLACE	9am – 10:30am	10:45am – 12:15pm
SBB South Bond 306	Panel: Shi'a Imami Nizari Ismaili Muslim Identity, Practice, and Participation in Canadian Society	Panel: Varieties of Approaches to the Study of Islam
	Chair: Alyshea Cummins, University of Ottawa	Chair: Keelin Pringnitz, University of Ottawa
	<i>What it Means to be a Second Generation Ismaili Muslim in Canada</i> , Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University	<i>Muslim Shi'is' Experiences of Everyday Religion in Canada: First Generation Leaders' Perspectives</i> , May Al Fartousi, Niagara Women's Research Center for Social Support and Leadership
	<i>The Evolution of Identity: Kh?j? Nizari Ismailism in Canada</i> , Salima Versi, University of Alberta	<i>Le concept de «muslim» est un adjectif qualificatif, mais n'est pas un nom commun</i> , Suat Yildirim, L'Université Marmara d'Istanbul
<i>Nuancing the Narrative of Islam in Canada: An Ismaili Muslim Movement</i> , Alyshea Cummins, University of Ottawa	<i>Religious Stability and Mahdism in Early Shi'ism</i> , John Cappucci, University of Windsor	

<p>SLC – Student Learning 451</p>	<p>Panel: Buddhist Studies and Sources</p> <p>Chair: Diana Dimitrova, Université de Montréal</p> <p><i>An Early Tibetan Commentary on the Distinction between Autonomist and Consequentialist Madhyamaka</i>, James Apple, University of Calgary</p> <p><i>Guided Tours of the Daydream: Uses of Buddhist Cosmological Imagery in the Shambhala Tradition</i>, Jeff Wilson, Renison University College, University of Waterloo</p> <p><i>Finding Discourse on Social Media: The Difficulty of Discourse Analysis on Twitter</i>, Scott Craig, University of Ottawa</p>	<p>Panel: Buddhisms in Place(s)</p> <p>Chair: Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick</p> <p><i>Casting Buddha's Net: The Merits and Limits of Modernism at a Canadian Dharma Centre</i>, Christopher Emory-Moore, University of Waterloo</p> <p><i>Re-thinking Space: The Story of Sao Si, Gender Dynamics, and Lao Buddhist Ordination Halls</i>, Marybeth White, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>Retailing Religion: Buddhist Pilgrimage Sites as Economic Capital</i>, Rutika Gandhi, University of Lethbridge</p>
<p>SLC – Student Learning 514</p>	<p>Panel: Hinduism: Texts and Contexts</p> <p>Chair: John Cappucci, University of Windsor</p> <p><i>What is the Baghavad Gita?</i>, Richard Berg, Lakehead University</p> <p><i>Print and the Goddess M?riyamma? in Colonial South India: Representations in Tamil and English</i>, Lisa Blake, McGill University</p> <p><i>Reconstructing the Androgynous Feminine Divine Aradhanarishwaar in the Kalika Purana</i>, Braj Sinha, University of Saskatchewan</p>	<p>Panel: Hinduism in Practice</p> <p>Chair: Luke Whitmore, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point</p> <p><i>Spirituality and Cultural Identity in the Radhasoami Tradition</i>, Diana Dimitrova, University of Montreal</p> <p><i>Economies of Speech: Patronage and the Politics of Religious Polemic in Early-Modern India</i>, Jonathan Peterson, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Aesthetic Delight and Devotional Bliss in Rasa Theory: On Pleasure in Hindu Arts and Religion</i>, Marie-Josée Blanchard, Concordia University</p>

Graduate Luncheon
12:00 – 2:00pm
Room: SBB South Bond 312

Digital Humanities and the Study of Religion

You've likely heard the term "digital humanities" many times. Research on the topic is flourishing: new courses, centers, publications, and think tanks emerge each year. If you're nearing the end of your graduate work, you may have even noticed an increasing number of job postings telling applicants: "digital humanities projects are encouraged." But for many students, what digital humanities is, how to interact with it in their own work, and whether they would even wish to remains a mystery. This year's luncheon will host Dr. Catherine Holtmann as she explores how scholars of religion have drawn on the ideas and methodologies of the digital humanities to enhance their interdisciplinary scope, potential audiences, job prospects, and pedagogical practices. Speaking to her experience in translating social scientific data into online projects—which included collaborative work with officials in the criminal justice system, psychologists, and religious leaders—Dr. Holtmann will explore how, from graduate school to her professional career, she has found digital technology to be an essential aspect of research, teaching, and learning.

Dr. Catherine Holtmann is an associate professor at the University of New Brunswick. Her research focuses on gender, violence, religion, and social action. She is the Director of the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research and is also a member of two research teams at the Centre: Religion and Violence, and Violence Against Immigrant and Visible Minority Women.

MONDAY MAY 29
Afternoon Sessions

PLACE	1:45pm – 3:15pm	3:30pm – 5:00pm
SBB South Bond 306	<p>Panel: Christianity and Shifting Categories</p> <p>Chair: Steven Tomlins, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Casting the First Stone: Transphobic Rhetoric and Conservative Christians in Canada</i>, Amy Clanfield, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Celiac Catholics and the Gluten-Free Body of Christ</i>, Ted Malcolmson, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Mormons, Wiccans, Scientologists and the Politics of Academia</i>, Chris Miller, University of Waterloo</p>	<p>Panel: Churches Built on Sand? Three Cases Studies of Transnational Chinese-Canadian Christianity</p> <p>Chair: Jonathan Tam, University of Oxford</p> <p><i>Not Your Grandmother's Migrants: Transnational Chinese Evangelical Narratives and the (New) Canadian</i>, Helen Mo, University of Toronto *</p> <p><i>The Fractures in Global Christianity: The Case of Transnational Chinese Evangelicalism</i>, Jonathan Tam, University of Oxford</p> <p><i>Orthodoxy in Hongcouver? The Question of Transnational Eastern Chinese Christianities</i>, Justin Tse, Northwesetern University</p>
SLC – Student Learning 451	<p>Roundtable: Discussion of Book Under Development – “Global Buddha: Flows and Forms of Buddhist Modernity”</p> <p>Chair: John Harding, University of Lethbridge</p> <p>Discussants:</p> <p>G. Victor Hori, McGill University</p> <p>Alexander Soucy, Saint Mary’s University</p> <p>John Harding, University of Lethbridge</p> <p>Jeff Wilson, Renison University College, University of Waterloo</p>	<p>Panel: A Discussion on Religious Ethics of Freedom</p> <p>Chair: Keelin Pringnitz, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Two Notions of Freedom in Western Thought</i>, Robert Kennedy, Saint Francis Xavier University</p> <p><i>Freedom From the Self: On Inter-dependent Freedom of Self and Other in Buddhist Tradition</i>, Adela Sandness, Saint Francis Xavier University</p>
SLC – Student Learning 514	<p>Panel: The Politics of Transgender in South Asia: Religious Identities, Social and Legal Status</p> <p>Chair: Adela Sandness, Saint Francis Xavier University</p> <p><i>Religion and Legitimization of Hijra (trans*) Identity in Maharashtra, India</i>, Mathieu Boisvert, Université du Québec à Montréal</p> <p><i>Trans* Masculinity and the Struggle for Rights in Pakistan</i>, Shahnaz Khan, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>Hijraism and the Global Gaze</i>, Claire Pamment, College of William and Mary</p> <p>Respondent : Gopika Solanki, Carleton University</p>	<p>Panel: Contemporary Approaches to Suffering, Evil, and Theodicy</p> <p>Chair: Abraham H. Khan, Trinity College, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>God, Gratuitous Evil, and Excessive Gratuitous Evil</i>”Klaas Kraay, Ryerson University</p> <p><i>Beauty from Ashes: Aesthetic Transformations of Suffering in Gilead</i>, Mark Scott, Thorneloe University at Laurentian University</p> <p><i>The Visual Art of Käthe Kollwitz as Practical Theodicy and its Relevance to Theoretical Theodicy</i>, Michael Stoeber, Regis College, University of Toronto</p> <p>Respondent: Natalie Wigg-Stevenson, Emmanuel College, Victoria University, University of Toronto</p>

TUESDAY MAY 30
Morning Sessions

PLACE	9am – 10:30am	10:45am – 12:15pm
ARC – Architecture 202 “The Pit”	<p>Panel: Sociology of Religion - Canadian Religious Trends: Looking Back and Looking Forward</p> <p>Chair: David Csinos, Atlantic School of Theology</p> <p><i>‘Not that kind of atheist’: scepticism as a lifestyle movement</i>, Jonathan Scott Simmons, University of Alberta.</p> <p><i>“Doing Things Differently”</i>: <i>The Feminization of the Christian Pastoral Role</i>, Kathleen Steeves, McMaster University.</p> <p><i>Religion as a Continuing Source of Grassroots Social Conservatism in Canada</i>, Sam Reimer, Crandall University and Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme, University of Waterloo</p> <p><i>Religious Polarization: Clarifying the Impact of Secularization and Desecularization in Canada and Elsewhere</i>, Reginald Wayne Bibby, University of Lethbridge</p>	<p>Panel: Religion and Immigration</p> <p>Chair: Rachel Brown, University of Victoria</p> <p><i>Migration, Religious Distinction and the Paradox of Self-Exclusion: Low German Mennonites in Canada</i>, Luanne Good Gingrich, York University and Kerry Fast, Independent Scholar</p> <p><i>Faith Communities and the Settlement Sector: Partnering with the Partners</i>, Mark Chapman, Tyndale University</p> <p><i>Faith Based Social Services and Settlement Agencies: A Study of Muslim Social Services of KW</i>, Idrisa Pandit, Renison University College, University of Waterloo</p>
ARC – Architecture 224 “Paul H. Cocker Gallery”	<p>Roundtable: A Discussion of Morny Joy's <i>Women, Religion, and The Gift: An Abundance of Riches</i></p> <p>Chair: Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University</p> <p><i>Author - Women, Religion and the Gift: An Abundance of Riches</i>, Morny Joy, University of Calgary</p> <p><i>Black American Women and the Gift of Embodied Spirituality</i>, Heather Shipley, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Abidah El Khalieqy's Struggles of Islamic Feminism Through Literary Writings</i>, Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University</p> <p><i>Food Gifts (Female Gift Givers): A Taste of Jewishness</i>, Aldea Mulhern, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Economies of Sainthood: Disrupting the Discourse of Female Hagiography</i>, Amy Clanfield, University of Ottawa</p>	<p>Panel: The Enchantment Project</p> <p>Chair: Nicola Mooney, University of the Fraser Valley</p> <p><i>A Fairy Imaginary: Enchantment in a Revolutionary's Garden</i>, Pauline McKenzie Aucion, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>The Enchanted Object: The Sacralizing of Everyday Life from the Occult Underground to the Hipster</i>, Gillian McCann, Nipissing University</p> <p><i>Enchanting Consumption: The Spiritual and Material Commerce of Ayurveda in Contemporary India</i>, Nicola Mooney, University of the Fraser Valley</p>
ARC – Architecture 300F/G	<p>Panel: Religion as Transgression in the Public Sphere</p> <p>Chair: Amarnath Amarasingam, University of Waterloo</p> <p><i>Prayer as Transgression: Accommodating and Resisting Religion in Public Healthcare Institutions</i>, Rachel Brown, University of Victoria</p> <p><i>Minimalist Secularism and Islam: Ibn al-'Arabi on Religion and the Public Sphere</i>, William Rory Dickson, University of Winnipeg</p> <p><i>Piety and Religiosity at the Tomb of Sufi Saints: Sufi Shrines and the Public Sphere</i>, Merin Shobhana Xavier, Franklin & Marshall College</p> <p><i>Langar Beyond Borders: Sikhs, Food, and Activism in the Public Sphere</i>, Zabeen Khamisa, University of Waterloo</p>	<p>Panel: Religion and Political Contexts</p> <p>Chair: Florence Pasche Guignard, Université de Fribourg</p> <p><i>Imagining a Non-Christian India: How Postcolonial Narratives Build on British Colonial Discourse</i>, Clara A.B. Joseph, University of Calgary</p> <p><i>Imperial Secularism</i>, Chris Cutting, Saint Mary's University</p>

TUESDAY MAY 30
Afternoon Sessions

PLACE	1:45pm – 3:15pm	3:30pm – 5:00pm
ARC – Architecture 202 “The Pit”	<p>Panel: Mysticism and Spirituality</p> <p>Chair: Marybeth White, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>Metaphoric Narration: Mimesis of Mystic Experience Hadewijch of Brabant’s “Vision I”</i>, Catherine Caufield, University of Alberta</p> <p><i>The Politics of Self-Spirituality: A Canadian Case Study</i>, Galen Watts, Queen’s University</p>	<p>Panel: Spirituality, Place, and Canadian Identity</p> <p>Chair: Stacie Swain, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Giving Voice to Akiko: Do the Chaudière Falls Serve as a Sacred Site in Contemporary NE Canada?</i>, Judy Jibb, University of Wales</p> <p><i>Conceptualizations of the Self: Canadian Suffragists and the Spiritual Retreat of Bon Echo, Ontario</i>, Kyle Derkson, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Canadian Beasts and Where to Find Them: the Role of Folklore in Constructing National Identity</i>, Elijah Smith, Wilfrid Laurier University</p>
ARC – Architecture 224 “Paul H. Cocker Gallery”	<p>Panel: Religion and Popular Culture</p> <p>Chair: Neil George, York University</p> <p><i>Purchase it with Faith: Religion in the Civilization Game Series</i>, Kurosh Amoui-Kalareh, York University</p> <p><i>Stop Saving the World? The Small Apocalypses of Indigenous Films</i>, Ken Derry, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Reading Religion at Comic Con India: Hindu Myth, Image, and Commodification in Comic Book Art</i>, Sailaja Krishnamurti, Saint Mary’s University</p>	<p>Panel: Mediating Religion</p> <p>Chair: Yael Machtiger, York University</p> <p><i>The Figure of the Jew in Irish Literature Before Leopold Bloom</i>, Michael Gillingham, University of Alberta</p> <p><i>Picturing Diversity: Using Visual Methods in the Study of Religion</i>, Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick</p> <p><i>Printing Christians: Colonial Print Culture at Rossville Mission Press</i>, Roxanne Korpan, University of Toronto</p>
ARC – Architecture 300F/G	<p>Panel: Religion and Economy</p> <p>Chair: Noel Shuell, Memorial University</p> <p><i>Dollars and Sense: Canadian Faith Communities as Community Economic Engines</i>, Mike Wood Daly, Knox College, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Neoliberal Spirituality</i>, Andrew Connolly, Trinity College at the University of Toronto</p>	<p>Panel: Religion and Science</p> <p>Chair: Jason Sparks, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>John Locke, T. H. Huxley, and Discourses of Apolitical Religion</i>, Neil George, York University</p> <p><i>The Science of Collection in Late Imperial Siberian Museums</i>, Marisa Karyl Franz, University of Toronto</p>

INDIVIDUAL PAPERS

* The CSSR is sad to announce the passing of Helen Mo. Remember and celebrate Helen here: <http://www.cssrscer.ca/?q=node/1058>

May Al_Fartousi, Niagara Women's Research Centre for Social Support and Leadership

Muslim Shi'is' Experiences of Everyday Religion in Canada: First Generation Leaders' Perspectives

This paper examines how first-generation, Shi'i Muslims negotiate their cultural, ethnic, political, and religious identities within secular (workplace) and religious (Shi'i community centre) institutions in Canada. The research presents an in-depth ethnography involving 42 open-ended interviews, and researcher observations to 10 different religious and ethnic communities (e.g., Lebanese, Iraqi, Afghani, Khoja). The paper integrates Nancy Ammerman's sociological analysis of the micro and macro negotiations of everyday religion to explore the various religious and spiritual discourses that Shi'i Muslim leaders draw on in their daily lives in Canada. This paper provides new insights into the invisible Shi'i religious authority's impact as it occurs through the roles of young leaders (e.g., face-to-face encounters with youths, peer mentoring sessions, online religious seminars). It calls for further research to examine how this kind of leadership navigates the boundaries within and across religious and secular institutions.

Khalidah Ali, University of Toronto

The Muslim Brotherhood: The Construction of Ideal Muslim Subjects and an Islamic Order in Egypt

The Muslim Brotherhood has been a major political and religious force in Egypt in the past eighty-eight years. Current scholarship, however, has given little attention to its Islamic pedagogical programs implemented at the grassroots level aimed at constructing ideal modern Muslim subjects. This involves methods of training activists as well as educating and preaching to others. Based on my research on the organization in the early 20th century, I argue that the Brotherhood's education program played a larger role in its vision of creating an Islamic order in Egypt far above formal political activism. I also argue that education and knowledge had to truly be embodied – not objectified and detached from the self - for the sake of the dissemination of the organization's Islamic teachings. Rigorous ethical-self cultivation was obligatory for each member resulting in the creation of a strong Islamist body and political opposition in Egypt.

Zaheeda P. Alibhai, University of Ottawa

Canadian Pluralism and Policy: Retracting the "Niqab Ban" at Canadian Citizenship Ceremonies

In the twenty-first century, nowhere does immigration, citizenship, national values, security and religion intersect more fully than government policies regulating and banning Muslim women from wearing the niqab in public spaces. On November 16th, 2015 Canada became the first western democracy to legally retract a policy directive banning Muslim women from wearing the niqab during the oath of allegiance at the Canadian citizenship ceremony. The retraction was framed as a symbol of the Canadian values of diversity and inclusion. Western democratic nations such as France, the Netherlands among others have taken the opposite approach by banning Muslim women from wearing the niqab in public since they are viewed as symbols threatening western democratic values of inclusion, and as an impediment towards successful integration. This paper argues that the Canadian retraction marks a definitive global policy shift demonstrating something distinct and exceptional about Canadian pluralism.

Karoush Amoui-Kalareh, York University

Purchase it with Faith: Religion in Civilization Game Series

Civilization is a series of popular strategy video games, originally developed by the Canadian programmer and producer Sid Meier and first released in 1991. There have since been six main games and a number of expansions, the most recent one being Civilization VI (2016). Throughout the development of this game series, "religion" has gradually become a significant feature of the game. In line with the rising interest in the field of religious studies to further investigate the role of "religion" in video games, this paper offers a detailed account of the ways in which "religion" is represented in and played through the Civilization game series. In short, Civilization presents "religion" as a commodity or an asset that the players should accumulate in order to dominate the game—a mechanism that has strong affinities with the logic and spirit of capitalism.

James Apple, University of Calgary

An Early Tibetan Commentary on the Distinction between Autonomist and Consequentialist Madhyamaka

The teachings of Madhyamaka ("middle way philosophy") have been the basis of Tibetan Buddhist thought and practice since the eighth century. After the twelfth century Tibetan scholars distinguished two branches of Madhyamaka: Autonomist (rang rgyud pa) and Consequentialist (thal 'gyur ba, *prasangika). What distinctions in Madhyamaka thought and practice did twelfth century Tibetan scholars make to differentiate these two branches? This paper examines for the first time an early Tibetan commentary that solely focuses upon the distinctions between Autonomist and Consequentialist Madhyamakas. The paper outlines the contents of the commentary and identifies six points that distinguish Autonomist and Consequentialist branches of Madhyamaka. The paper identifies the commentary's anonymous author as representing a previously unknown lineage of Tibetan Madhyamaka originating from Nag tsho lo tsa ba tshul khriims rgyal (1011-1064 CE), the well-known translator and disciple of Atisha Dipamkarasrijnana (982-1054 CE).

Danielle Baillargeon, University of Toronto

Can Funerary Monuments Express Subjectivity? Inscriptions, Image and subjectivity on Roman funerary

AbstractCan epigraphic and visual evidence on Roman funerary monuments expresses the subjectivity and agency of the deceased? This paper seeks to interrogate these material sources as a primary means for discussing subjectivity and agency. I will draw together epigraphic and artistic evidence found on Roman funerary monuments dating from the 2nd century from Rome to show how textuality and visuality interact within a context of ritual performance to communicate subjectivity and agency. I will discuss the vectors of identity creation involved in the commissioning of the monument that coalesce in the representation of the deceased. I will turn to the formulae and typologies of epigraphic and visual evidence as a means of communicating idealized normative socio-cultural structures. Finally, deviations from the formulaic script provide access to idiosyncratic constructions that blur the distinctions between the reader or viewer, the subject and the agent.

Richard Berg, Lakehead University

What is the Bhagavad Gita?

Isn't it obviously true that the Bhagavad Gita is a written text composed of 700 verses divided into 18 chapters with each chapter having a colophon or postscript stating its subject matter? But how can this be so if the the Bhagavad Gita also originally existed in its entirety in the Bhishma Paravan, the sixth of the eighteen books of the Mahabharata, where it still appears even now in the form of a series of nested dialogues whose fundamental units are speeches divided only by other speeches which cannot be understood without knowing the identities of the respective speakers, their interlocutors and the contexts in which they speak? The process of identifying and sorting out some of the dynamic tensions in these two conflated and conflicted approaches to the Gita leads to several insightful conclusions about it as a living text that is still being, not just interpreted, but also continuously composed.

Reginald Wayne Bibby, University of Lethbridge

RELIGIOUS POLARIZATION: Clarifying the Impact of Secularization and Desecularization in Canada and Elsewhere

As organized religion in Canada experienced significant declines in participation in the post-1960s, most observers interpreted what was happening through the eyes of the secularization thesis. However, since approximately the turn of the century, accelerated immigration from pro-religious settings has been contributing to a measure of religious resurgence, particularly in the case of Catholicism, Islam, and evangelical Protestantism. This influx is contributing to pronounced religious variations, where large segments of the population are variously embracing religion, rejecting religion, and opting for a "middle" position. Such a situation can best be understood by using a religious polarization framework. It highlights the fact that in every society and every conceivable group setting – national, regional, local, and immediate – some people are religious and some people are not, with others in between. In the context of polarization, secularization and desecularization tendencies are always at work, having an impact on the inclination of people to be "pro religious," "no religious," or opt for a "low religious" position. So understood, polarization may seem like a fairly prosaic and axiomatic framework. But it has considerable explanatory value in understanding past, present, and future religious trends in Canada and elsewhere. It consequently warrants more usage.

Lisa Blake, McGill University

Print and the Goddess Māriyamman in Colonial South India: Representations in Tamil and English

Tamil printed literature dedicated to the goddess Māriyamman, a pan-South Indian village deity most often associated with the diseases of smallpox and cholera, extends back to at least the 1876 Māriyamman Tālāṭṭu ("lullaby"). Drawing on the Māriyamman Tālāṭṭu and late nineteenth century colonial and missionary writings on Māriyamman in English, this paper identifies differences in Tamil and English depictions of the goddess, arguing that they served two distinct purposes. Within the colonial and missionary writings, the "fierce," "demonic" Māriyamman was evidence of the need for a civilizing mission, while the Tamil text, which emphasized Māriyamman's loving characteristics, utilized her fiercer aspects as incentive for maintaining "proper" worship. This research not only documents representations of Māriyamman within two distinct linguistic contexts, but also speaks to the influence of print on localized Māriyamman traditions in the late nineteenth century.

Marie-Josée Blanchard, Concordia University

Aesthetic Delight and Devotional Bliss in Rasa Theory: On Pleasure in Hindu Arts and Religion

Most rasa theory scholars agree upon the pleasure resulting from the experience of rasa, although understandings of this state differ: some theorists recognize rasa as a non-mundane yet secular experience (aesthetic delight), while others perceive it as an other-worldly, religious feeling (divine ecstasy). The introduction of religious themes in the arts, such as devotional poems in literature and linear dance-dramas glorifying gods in (contemporary) classical dance forms, are at the root of this evolution from an aesthetic enjoyment to a divine bliss in rasa theory. In order to unfold the complex relationship between aesthetics, religious devotion, carnal emotions and pleasure in the Hindu imagination, this talk will focus on śānta rasa, the absence of pleasure and pain that corresponds to the idea of mokṣa, liberation; bhakti rasa, passionate devotion for God; as well as śṛṅgāra bhakti rasa, devotion through an erotic idiom.

Joseph Brito, Concordia University

The Metaphor of the Servant in the Acts of Paul and Thecla

Studies on the metaphor of slavery during Late Antiquity have often focused on the socio-historical context that stresses social struggles and matters of human liberty, while other studies have highlighted the theological metaphor of slavery by Paul and other Christian authors. In doing so, these analysis have been limited to the historical description or the theological components, rather than emphasizing the multiple connotations that the term "servant" had. The proposed presentation will focus on the narrative components in the "Acts of Paul and Thecla" to analyze how the metaphors of slave/servant are portrayed, shedding light on the gender issues that servitude offers in this account. The depiction that follows these characters demonstrates how social-class and ecclesiastic-positions are accentuated at the narrative level. However, rather than examining solely the binary genders characterized through Paul and Thecla, this presentation will underline how body, gender and sexuality are interlaced in this story.

John Cappucci, University of Windsor

The Perennial Solution: Religious Stability and Mahdism in Early Shi'ism

One of the most striking features of Twelver Shi'a Islam relates to the future arrival of the Mahdi or Awaited One. The faithful believe that, after over a millennium in occultation, the Mahdi will one day return to purify the world and usher in an age of peace and prosperity. However, while this eschatological belief is centred on the personage of the Twelfth Imam, the idea of Mahdism manifested itself centuries before his birth at several different periods and centring around different prominent figures. The question remains as to reasoning why Mahdism emerged at these points in time and why the personage of the Mahdi changed repeatedly. This paper contends that the earlier appearances of Mahdism emerged during periods of religious uncertainty and political turmoil in order to bring about a sense of stability to the early Shi'a community.

Catherine Caufield, University of Alberta

Metaphoric Narration: Mimesis of Mystic Experience Hadewijch of Brabant's "Vision 1"

The focus of this presentation is on testing Luz Aurora Pimentel's theory of metaphoric narration, utilizing it as a basis for interpreting Hadewijch's "Vision 1." Metaphoric narration provides a conceptual instrument to articulate what Hadewijch's text says and what it is about. Metaphor as manifestation in the language of "Vision 1" is examined through explaining specificity in the semiotic use of the seme /tree/. This is followed by discussion of metaphor as an organizing principle in the text, paying attention to the aspects of virtual narrative and simultaneity of time as

elements that are particularly mimetic of mystic experience. Through producing what it imitates in the complex utilization of metaphoric trope, “Vision 1” permits reflection on narrative as an intellectual form which serves to augment meaning in the field of action, dialectically transmuting one form of understanding to another.

Mark Chapman, Tyndale University College & Seminary

Faith Communities and the Settlement Sector: Partnering with the Partners

With the Syrian refugee crisis there is a rising awareness of the need to help refugees and other immigrants integrate and settle into Canadian society. Christian churches and other Christian organizations have long played a role in this transition. Recently more attention has been paid to how religious organizations and the settlement sector interact. However, we know little about these on-the-ground partnerships. This paper reports on one component of a SSHRC funded project on this relationship. It describes a case study of one organization that tries to facilitate these relationships and evaluates its effectiveness for this task from the perspectives of the organization itself and of its partners.

Amy Clanfield, University of Ottawa

Casting the First Stone: Transphobic Rhetoric and Conservative Christians in Canada

Legal recourse to federally mandated protection for transgender people is a crucial issue in Canada. A recent study by the Trans PULSE Project showed 54% of transgender individuals in Ontario had experienced hate crimes. After Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced Bill C-16 in May 2016, which includes “gender identity and expression” under the Canadian Human Rights Act, several conservative religious groups took to the media to make their anger known. This extremely troubling discourse illustrates the blurred and problematic spaces between religious freedom and hate crimes. Using the theoretical framework provided by Frank Ravitch, this paper will examine the response from one of these groups: a Reformed Christian organization known as “ARPA,” and how they deploy transphobic rhetoric in their online publications.

Carlos Colorado, University of Winnipeg

Reconciliation and the Secular

A common conception of secularism holds that it implies the sequestering of religion to the private sphere, and its concomitant disarticulation from public life. This model of secularism falls under what has been termed “closed secularism”, which is not limited to simple disestablishment in the name of neutrality, but the evacuation of religion from public life. Against this model, my paper seeks to rethink secularity, including how religion can in fact underpin secular democratic order. To that end, I examine a case study involving Canadian Indigenous actors—the Canadian TRC—in order to highlight the ways in which they operate in a spiritual key in the public sphere. My paper considers how the Calls to Action of the TRC—the implementation of which has received support from federal, provincial and municipal governments—imply a re-envisioning of Canadian society that cannot be accommodated within a rigidly closed secularism.

Andrew Connolly, Trinity College at the University of Toronto

Neoliberal Spirituality

In this paper I define and theorize “neoliberal spirituality” as distinct from consumer spirituality, capitalist spirituality, and self spirituality in order to better identify the dominant, popular understanding of spirituality in the United States. To do this, I draw on Michel Foucault’s understanding of American neoliberalism, as extended by scholars like Wendy Brown and Michel Feher. Foucault suggests that American neoliberalism applies an economic logic to areas of life which were previously thought to be non-economic, including family relationships, romance, and religion. Individuals become entrepreneurs of themselves, responsible for investing in their own “human capital” (education, experience, emotional competence, etc.), and for producing their own happiness. I will argue that under American neoliberalism, spirituality becomes a resource that individuals use to increase their human capital and happiness. I will also use examples from newspapers to illustrate that this is the dominant understanding of spirituality in the popular press.

Scott Craig, University of Ottawa

Finding Discourse on Social Media: The Difficulty of Discourse Analysis on Twitter

Social media sites like Twitter have become increasingly popular, to the point that they demand attention as promising avenues of research. Much of the work that has been done is focused on discourse and content analysis, primarily from the viewpoint of communication and linguistics. What I intend to do in the following paper is discuss the possibility and difficulty of undertaking a discourse analysis of Twitter which, as a function of the site, limits the number of words that can be expressed per interaction. This work is an exploratory examination of the method of discourse analysis and its subcategories such as sentiment analysis, within the field of religious studies. As an example, I will be using a subset of tweets which all include the hashtag ‘#zen’ to show the difficulties of tracking religious and secular intent within a tweet.

Christopher Cutting, St. Mary’s University

Imperial Secularism

One version of secularism, illustrated by Charles Taylor’s work, describes secularism as a form of governance that places the state in a position of neutrality in order to arbitrate equally between religions. However, another less-well-known analysis of secularism, illustrated by Talal Asad’s work, argues that secularism can also be a form of power deployed to further other interests of the state. Building on the later, I argue that a new notion of secularism is necessary to address the issue of what I have called “imperial secularism,” which I argue works to create a hierarchy in society along a continuum of secular and modern or dominant forms of religion to minoritized, marginalized, “unmodern,” racialized, orientalized, and othered forms of religion. I argue that this kind of secularism must be countered with anti-imperialist forms of secularism that work toward non-othering forms of secularity that treat all religions equally.

Mike Wood Daly, Knox College, University of Toronto

Dollars and Sense: Canadian Faith Communities as Community Economic Engines

In Canada, the social, spiritual, and communal value of local congregations has long been accepted. Despite this widespread qualitative acknowledgement, few studies have considered the economic impact these congregations provide directly to their surrounding communities. The lack of “hard numbers”, and the quantitative method needed to produce these numbers, often puts congregations and religious communities at a disadvantage when pressed to demonstrate their value in a wider context. At the very least, they lack a common language or “currency” when speaking of value with those who are not part of these worshipping communities, regardless of tradition. The proposed paper reports on the application of a methodology, previously developed in the United States, and

later in an initial case study in Toronto, that explores the economic impact of local Canadian congregations and affirms their important role as critical economic catalysts in Canadian society both now and for the future.

Kyle Derkson, University of Toronto

Conceptualizations of the Self: Canadian Suffragists and the Spiritual Retreat of Bon Echo, Ontario

In 1915, Flora MacDonald Denison founded a Walt Whitman inspired spiritual retreat in Bon Echo, Ontario. Denison was involved in politics and social movements such as the Canadian Suffragist Association (CSA) and utilized the spiritual and democratic poetry of Whitman around her position on women's rights (Whitman's famous "I contain Multitudes," for example). She later stepped down from the CSA because her idea of women's rights did not align with the views of other members. My essay will examine the Whitmanite language Denison used to formulate a concept of the self. To do so, I will be using both psychoanalytic and post-structuralist approaches to theorizing the self. I will argue that Denison's utilization of Whitman's democratic self, as both individual and subject en-masse, provided a unique and alternative position for suffragist discourse in Canada.

Ken Derry, University of Toronto

Stop Saving the World? The Small Apocalypses of Indigenous Films

Arguably the most visible examples of an apocalyptic worldview at the moment are superhero movies. They are inherently dualistic, with the forces of good destroying the forces of evil in a climactic final battle that is earth shatteringly violent, and that saves the world. In contrast to superhero blockbusters, this paper will show, many Indigenous films minimize apocalypses, presenting small-scale revelations rather than cataclysmic battles, putting the focus on reducing harm rather than on saving the world. As Daniel Clarke and Stefan Dercon have recently argued in **Dull Disasters? How Planning Ahead Will Make a Difference**, it is precisely this focus on ground level opportunities to make realistic but critical improvements, rather than on global salvation, that is needed if we are to best meet the challenges – religious, social, political, and environmental – of the next 150 years.

Sahir Dewji, Wilfrid Laurier University

Institutions of the Aga Khan in Canada: Space, Place and Cosmopolitan ethics

Contemporary institutions of Aga Khan IV occupy a strong presence in the Canadian landscape, contributing to civil society. The numerous projects of the Aga Khan display a strong religiosity with cosmopolitan underpinnings adding another dimension to the interpretation of contemporary Islam. This paper examines the central principles that undergird the Aga Khan's cosmopolitan ethic and demonstrate how this manifests in reality via institutions like the Aga Khan Museum. As such, the Aga Khan's vision plays a fundamental role within his institutional structures and encourages a cosmopolitan moral sensibility amongst the Ismaili community on the micro-level. Through the use of two important paradigms (encounter and hospitality), I hope to demonstrate provide how the institutions of the Aga Khan in Canada serve as sites of a cosmopolitan possibility, informed by both concerns of human diversity and development as well as the Aga Khan's interpretation of Islam.

Diana Dimitrova, University of Montreal

Spirituality and Cultural Identity in the Radhasoami Tradition

This paper deals with the question of cultural identity and spirituality in the Radhasoami tradition. Radhasoami is a reform movement which originated in North India in the late 19th-century. First, I discuss first the history and major ideas of Radhasoami and then proceed to analyze several important aspects of Radhasoami religiosity in the modernity. Next, I discuss the complex links between spirituality, modernity, diaspora, globalization, and cultural identity. I focus on questions related to religiosity, identity and the "otherness" of the Radhasoami followers in North America. I also explore the transnationalizing of the diasporic conditions as well as the building of new structures and spaces of thinking, being and believing. Thus, my paper discusses the quest of the Radhasoami community in North America for identity and for keeping the links with the homeland, and explores the role of media in shaping migrants' sense of identity, community, space and time.

Christopher Emory-Moore, University of Waterloo

Casting Buddha's Net: The Merits and Limits of Modernism at a Canadian Dharma Centre

The Tibetan founder of the New Kadampa Tradition (NKT), Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, has been described as a Gelukpa conservative for whom the faithful dissemination of the tradition has been far more important than its modernization. His new Buddhist movement has recently appeared fundamentalistic in loud protests defending a controversial Gelukpa protector deity outside the Dalai Lama's public teachings. Despite such signs of parochialism, over a period of twenty-five years the NKT has grown into one of the largest Tibetan-inspired Buddhist organizations in the world with a presence in 40 countries, largely by means of a strong missionary imperative and effective missionizing strategies that are increasingly globalist and modernist. Based on original ethnographic field research at a Canadian NKT centre, this paper examines a nuanced interplay between the movement's conservative theological emphasis on the Buddhist path of renunciation and the local community's deployment of meditation's this-worldly benefits in local missionizing strategies.

Marisa Karyl Franz, University of Toronto

The Science of Collection in Late Imperial Siberian Museums

This paper examines two collection guides distributed by the Eastern-Siberian Department of the Imperial Russian Geographic Society and the Irkutsk Regional Museum. The "Program for the Study of the Beliefs of the Natives of Siberia" (1884) and the "Program for the Collection of Information about Siberian Shamanism" (1880) present an idea of shamanism in late Imperial Russia as a trans-Siberian phenomenon. I argue that in these documents shamanism is understood as a broad cosmological system, which is used to provide an alternative to the ideas of the shaman as an isolated magician, charlatan, or madman—common tropes within the scholarship on shamanism during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This emphasis on cultural contextualisation also points towards changes in museum collection practices, reconfiguring the Irkutsk Regional Museum as a more avant-garde institution, and challenging the idea of the 19th century metropole museum as the centre of museological modernity.

Cory Funk, Memorial University

In the fall of 2015, the Canadian Ahmadiyya Muslim community launched a Twitter hashtag campaign, paralleling the worldwide #JeSuisCharlie tagline, called #JeSuisHijabi. With it, the organization stated that it aimed to challenge misconceptions of Islam and Islamic garb that led to anti-Muslim attacks across Canada. An offline campaign accompanied the hashtag: information booths sought to teach non-Muslims about Islam and the hijab, while encouraging them to try on the garment. With analysis of the campaign's rhetorical and media strategies and consideration of qualitative interviews conducted with Muslims in Winnipeg, MB and St. John's, NL on their use (or not) of hashtags, I argue that the way in which some Canadian Muslims use hashtags complicates

the so-called religious and secular spheres. This paper concludes that “religious” hashtags can help us complicate the religious/secular binary at work in contemporary Canada.

Paul Gareau, University of Alberta

Mary and the Métis: Indigenous Engagement with Catholic Ultramontaniam

The Métis have been perceived as a 'mixed' or syncretic people between the exclusivities of Indigenous and European civilizations. This racialized identification, however, mitigates Métis agency in forming their own socio-political worldview. In the historical record, this racialized ambivalence has surfaced between Catholic ecclesiastical powers and the Métis; where the Métis go from being “good Catholics” to rebels. However, I argue that the Métis uphold an unambivalent sense of self-determination by identifying to Catholicism through Popular Devotion and the Cult to Mary. This presentation will explore the inherently pliant nature of Catholic Ultramontaniam conditioned by Popular Devotion. This religio-political framework builds an exclusivist structure of transcendent religious power and authority, while allowing the laity the means to religious self-determination through Mary. Ultimately, this structure allows for Métis agency to claim Catholic identity while negating the projection of cultural ambivalence from institutional coercion.

Neil George, York University

John Locke, T.H. Huxley, and Discourses of Apolitical Religion

John Locke’s political philosophy was important for theorizing an apolitical religious sphere in Western society. Although studied extensively within the context of political history, the significance of Locke’s work within discourses distinguishing science from religion remains under-appreciated. One of the leading figures in the late nineteenth century conflict between science and religion, Thomas Henry Huxley, aka. “Darwin’s Bulldog,” discussed Locke’s political philosophy in multiple essays, which proved useful for his own thinking about the relationship between science and religion. This suggests that further study is necessary on the relationship between these discourses. Locke’s philosophy benefited Huxley and the scientific naturalists’ by framing their concerns within a broader political discourse, while simultaneously bolstering the broader narratives of secularization and the depoliticization of religion. Better appreciating this connection will benefit scholarship on religion and politics as well as religion and science.

Rutika Gandhi, University of Lethbridge

Retailing Religion: Buddhist Pilgrimage Sites as Economic Capital

Bodhgaya attracts Buddhists and other tourists from around the world. Since 2002, there have been attempts through development proposals and policies to reconstruct the site of Buddha’s enlightenment. These developments are, in part, encouraged by Bihar state’s tourism department, which promotes spiritual tourism as a mode of economic capital. Revenue-raising projects, such as five-star hotels and golf courses have been implemented by the government of India. Since the site’s recognition by UNESCO, other countries have also invested in the reconstruction project. I argue that the emphasis on the revival of Buddhist pilgrimage sites, and the interest in developmental projects surrounding these sites reflect an interest in preserving the past, but more importantly, a contemporary interest in tourism as a means for gaining revenue. The issues that arise between the Buddhist religious groups residing at the site, and the paradoxical extravagance of commercial development are also addressed.

Michael Gillingham, University of Alberta

The Figure of the Jew in Irish Literature Before Leopold Bloom

Jews have always represented a very small proportion of the total population in Ireland. In a predominantly Roman Catholic population, the Jew represents a religious and racial Other. In early Irish literature, depictions of Jews mostly presented negative stereotypes. Maria Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent* depicts a “Jewess”, married for her fortune and abused by her Irish husband. Jewish characters in novels by Sheridan LeFanu and Oscar Wilde are also presented as lovers of money who seek to financially abuse the Irish poor. James Joyce’s work in *Dubliners* and *Portrait* maintains this stereotypical presentation. I want to place these depictions in the larger tradition of British Literature, Victorian culture, and Irish history. The shift from depictions of Jews as moneyed to racialized and religious others sets the stage for Joyce’s literary creation Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses*. Bloom represents the modern subject Leopold Bloom as a religious/national/racial hybrid.

Luann Good Gingrich, York University and Kerry Fast, Independent Scholar

Migration, Religious Distinction and the Paradox of Self-exclusion: Low German Mennonites in Canada

Throughout their history, Low German Mennonites have collectively migrated to preserve their religious integrity. However, their contemporary migrations to Canada are not collective or church-sanctioned, as economic hardship has led many to leave their colonies, or “sacred villages,” in Latin America. In Canada, Mennonite (im)migrant women encounter a relatively generous and well-developed—yet marketized—social welfare system and society. Through the theoretical framework of self-imposed social exclusion woven with the destination experiences of Mennonite (im)migrant women, this paper explores gender and religion in a “secular” social space. Caught in a contest between physical and religious survival, Mennonite women find themselves in conflicting social fields and systems of capital—secular and sacred—that collide. We examine the tension between acculturation and self-preservation for religiously distinct immigrant groups and propose a shift in perspective toward a practical and meaningful conception of integration and inclusion.

Mary Hale, St. Mary’s University

Perfectly Present: Mindfulness Curriculum as Implicit Religion

This paper explores various mindfulness curricula for public schools as an educational tool from the perspectives of its proponents and its critics. There is debate as to whether or not these materials are overtly religious; and as to whether or not these materials should acknowledge that an inherently religious worldview is fundamental to their efficacy. I use Charles Taylor’s arguments regarding belief and unbelief and his conception of fullness as a framework to explore the possibility that, although touted by many experts and purveyors of “mindfulness systems” as a non-religious approach to enriching school curriculum, “secular” mindfulness as it is described and implemented can be seen as a form of implicit religion. I argue that, ultimately, an acknowledgement of mindfulness curriculum as such, provides opportunities for productive dialogue regarding a re-negotiated explicit space for religion in the public sphere.

Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick

Picturing Diversity: Using Visual Methods in the Study of Religion

The development of online photo essays for The Religion and Diversity Project (www.religionanddiversity.ca/en/projects-and-tools/projects/linking-classrooms/photo-essays) is an example of how the methods of visual sociology can be used in teaching and learning environments. The use of visual methods has enormous potential for social change. Working with images is a powerful way to

represent the perspectives of minority groups, eliciting an emotional response from viewers, and facilitating discussions concerning sensitive topics. The use of images can also be a process of transformation and empowerment for researchers and research participants. The photo essays cover topics such as domestic violence, immigrants, religious discrimination, pilgrimage, identity formation, sexual diversity, and religion and technology. This paper will explain how the photo essays are used in teaching and learning to help viewers think about religion and diversity in ways that celebrate difference and enhance deep equality.

Syed Adnan Hussein, Saint Mary's University

Playing the Islamophobia Card

The Federal Election of 2015 was one of the longest campaigns in the nation's history. One of the most fascinating dimensions for the scholar of religion was the cataclysmic failure of the Islamophobia card (compare to Trump 2016). My paper will be an exploration of the ways in which the Conservative Party attempted to play on Islamophobic themes by recruiting comprador intellectuals, Islamophobic pundits and legal injunctions in an attempt to capitalize on a politics of fear to bolster their muscular brand of conservatism designed ostensibly to protect "Canadian values" and Muslim women. Theoretically it will draw on recent explorations of multiculturalism and the framing of the "Muslim Question" in two recent works by Norton and Kazemipur. The study will serve to exploration of the ongoing debates between secularism and multiculturalism which find unique purchase in Canada as it inherits from both the English and French traditions.

Judy Jibb, University of Wales

Giving Voice to Akiko: Do the Chaudière Falls Serve as a Sacred Site in Contemporary NE Canada?

In northeastern North America, a bend in the Ottawa River is home to powerful natural circular shale waterfalls once heard in the approach from more than two leagues. The Algonquin heralded sacred site Akiko or Chaudière Falls can be heard today but not seen, hidden under hydro turbines, crumbling industrial infrastructure and skyscrapers for Federal Government workers in electrically-generated vistas. Using a phenomenological approach, this paper examines the landscape from the perspective of sacred geography, history, culture and cosmology, in the search for the characteristics of contemporary sacredness. The research data derived from literature review and ethnographic material, questionnaires and reflexion, validates that sacred experience is possible at Akiko today, although vastly challenged by collective appropriations and contests, and vagaries of individual belief. Today, visibility of this sacred site appears to be in upwards flux due to changing cultural factors.

Clara A.B. Joseph, University of Calgary

Imagining a Non-Christian India: How Postcolonial Narratives Build on British Colonial Discourse

To acknowledge India as a Hindu majority nation is to acknowledge other religious communities as minority groups in the Indian nation. Yet, cultural critiques and historical narratives tend to represent India as if it were devoid of certain minority communities prior to colonialism. Thomas Christians are a prime example of a minority community treated in this manner. I will consider how these Indian Christians are neither represented nor imagined as having any existence prior to the most recent instance of European colonialism. I will illustrate my point by engaging with scholars such as V.S. Naipaul, Pramod K. Nayar, Gauri Viswanathan, John Keay, and John McLeod. I aver that this tendency in scholarship is driven by colonial ideology even within postcolonial studies, and that its implications are severe on related minority communities – far and wide – in India and in the diaspora, as well as on the study of related disciplines.

Robert Kennedy, Saint Francis Xavier University

Two Notions of Freedom in Western Thought

In most accounts, there are two basic views of freedom in Western thought. The older view holds that the rational ability to choose is oriented to the good, that there is a direct proportion between an agent's freedom and her moral goodness or virtue. A perfectly good agent, on this account, is unable to sin (to use Augustine's formulation), unable to will wrongly, and therefore the perfection of freedom consists in this apparent inability. Conversely, sinning is a diminution of an agent's freedom. The newer view holds that freedom consists only in the power to choose with no influence on the agent's choice; the more options available, the greater the freedom. The argument will be that the older, Augustinian account of freedom reveals deficiencies in more recent accounts, particularly the definition of autonomy in bioethics.

Roxanne Korpan, University of Toronto

Printing Christians: Colonial Print Culture at Rossville Mission Press

In 1845, James Evans had a printing press delivered to the northern Manitoban Rossville Mission to print material in Cree syllabics, a system he designed to teach Indigenous people literacy in their own language. The written word of his Indigenous interlocutors was mediated through Evans' imposition of a rigid type-form of sign-symbols and the contents of the material he printed: Christian psalms, hymns, and portions of the Bible. This paper analyzes Evans' work translating and printing Christian texts and educational materials as an entry-point into the book history of the Bible in 19th century Canada, and specifically, to unpack how the Bible was mobilized as a "colonial agent" in educational settings. By examining the production of Cree-language texts at Rossville Mission, this paper opens up conversations about religion, colonialism, translation, education, print technology, and cultural mediation, and contributes to growing scholarship on print culture in histories of Christian colonialism.

Sailaja Krishnamurti, Saint Mary's University

Reading Religion at Comic Con India: Hindu Myth, Image, and Commodification in Comic Book Art

This paper explores how Hindu imagery circulates through comics texts by focusing on Comic Con India – a series of fan conventions held around the country. Comics with Hindu religious or mythical themes have been popular in India since 1970s with the emergence of the wildly successful Amar Chitra Katha series. A new generation of artists and writers, raised on ACK, is now exploring the intersection of comics and religion in new and occasionally provocative ways. Hindu imagery can appear in many comics sub-genres, varying in theme and style, from superhero comics and fantasy to histories and abstract graphic explorations. Based on field research at Comic Cons in Delhi and Mumbai, this paper looks at relations between producers and readers of these comics. How are religiously themed comics, such as those produced by Graphic India, Vimanika, Holy Cow, and Harper Collins, received at Comic Con? How do fans engage with them?

Arlene MacDonald, University of Texas Medical Branch

Therapeutic Geographies of Sikhism: the Bhai Kanhaiya Sewa Centre

This paper explores the therapeutic geographies that Sikhs in Brampton, Ontario are operating from and through as they seek to make “healthy spaces” for their community in a religiously plural landscape. Drawing on ethnographic research, the paper examines the sewa undertaken by Parminderjit Singh, owner of a religious supply store. Parminderjit uses the profits from his business to tend to the faith needs of ‘stationary’ Sikhs: the aged and infirm in nursing homes. As he translates knowledges and transports patients and their caregivers between nursing homes and gurdwaras, Parminderjit believes he is making a healthier space for those on the margins of his community. Parminderjit is a regular presence in the nursing homes; conversely, nurses, personal assistants, and social workers have extended their care routines into the gurdwaras. The complex spatiality of these practices affords a new lens for conceptualizing religion and healing.

Ted Malcolmson, University of Ottawa

Celiac Catholics and the Gluten-Free Body of Christ

In 2003, then-cardinal Ratzinger, who would later become pope, wrote a circular letter detailing that the official position of the Catholic Church that hosts which are entirely gluten-free are invalid for use in the Eucharist. This paper examines the responses to this judgement, and how Catholics with celiac disease attempt to reconcile religious practice with their ailment.

Elizabeth Meaghan Matheson, Concordia University

Women's Prophecy and Sexual Violence in Second Century Christian Texts

In Revelation 2:18-22 Jezebel is thrown “onto a bed” by the author as a form of divine retribution for her false prophecy in Thyatira. These few short passages connect Jezebel’s false prophecy with justified acts of sexual violence. In this paper I examine the relationship between women’s prophetic acts and occurrences of sexual violence in early Christian sources. In particular, identifying a discourse that uses sexual violence to regulate claims of religious authority in instances of women’s prophetic ability. As a discourse analysis working with gendered concepts, this paper relies heavily on the work of Judith Butler to frame its historical inquiry. And finally, while the work considers violent applications of this discourse, such as the Jezebel narrative in Revelation, it also identifies instances where women challenged this discourse through their prophetic activity (Hypostasis of the Archons), leaving echoes of resistance in the narrative records.

Graham McDonough, University of Victoria

Repudiations of Acts and Consolidations of Authority: How Catholic Institutions Have Responded to th

Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report documents the many historical wrongs committed by Catholic church groups against Indigenous persons in residential schools. It is a positive first step that the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) has acknowledged these wrongs and repudiated the attitudes that enabled them (CCCCB 2016). However, when read alongside the Church’s history of disparaging non-Christian religions, its clerical sexual abuse scandal, and its modern-day claims to know LGBTQ persons’ true identity, the question of the Church’s sincerity arises as it struggles to find a new approach toward marginalized communities. Will this apology be mainly symbolic? Is there something endemically colonial remaining about institutionalized Catholicism that an apology only soothes, but does not change? This paper examines the implications of these responses on Catholic school educators facing this question as they grapple with how to teach about the Church and its history.

Chris Miller, University of Waterloo

Mormons, Wiccans, Scientologists and the Politics of Academia

What does it mean to be considered marginal? For a religious group, this designation can have negative implications in regards to receiving charitable status and general respect and identity affirmation in the public sphere. For religious groups who find themselves being relegated to the cultural fringes, the academic study of religion is often looked to as a crucial avenue to follow in order to gain legitimacy. Mormonism, Wicca and Contemporary Paganism, and the Church of Scientology, are groups which have had varying levels of success in gaining visibility in religious studies scholarship. Visibility in the academy largely consists of academic associations, journals, and panels at conferences, as well as professorships, course offerings, and discussion in classroom textbooks. My paper examines the strategies these groups have employed and how scholars must be critically aware of the broader role that their work can play in the lives of religious organizations and practitioners.

Jonathan Peterson, University of Toronto

Economies of Speech: Patronage and the Politics of Religious Polemic in Early-Modern India

This paper tracks the circulation of religious polemic along sectarian networks in pre-colonial India, linking the distribution of texts to political cultures of patronage specific to early-modern mercantile economies. In particular, this paper analyzes how expanding systems of patronage resulted in a caustic sectarian polemic that would later shape Hindu religious identities in subsequent eras. This paper argues that a crucial feature of the patronage economy was the production of polemic tracts intended to sway royal opinion towards one religious sect over another. By linking the production of religious polemic to specific patrons within broader sectarian networks, this paper excavates a crucial yet understudied feature of religious sectarianism in early-modern India — the link between doctrine, power, and text.

Idrisa Pandit, Rension University College, University of Waterloo

Faith based social services and settlement agencies: A study of Muslim Social Services of KW

With the influx of Syrian refugees, there is an increase in visibility of the role Mosques and other Muslim groups play in the successful integration of newcomers to the Canadian society. While the involvement of Muslim organizations in settlement of newcomers is not new, their role has never been previously acknowledged either by the government, or the settlement agencies. This paper will present findings of a case study part of a larger SSHRC funded project on faith and settlement partnerships. This paper will investigate how various frontline settlement service agencies view their collaboration/partnership with Muslim Social Services (MSS) of Kitchener Waterloo. It will compare the effectiveness of these services from the perspective of the organization itself and other settlement agencies that it supports through its innovative programs and services.

Margie Patrick, The King's University

Teaching About Religion in Alberta Public Schools

Although religious diversity is now recognized as an important component of both multicultural and citizenship education, education programs about religion in many Canadian public school systems continues to lag behind other jurisdictions. Most Canadian voices in the conversation are scholars and we know little about what occurs in classrooms. Our pilot research project begins to fill this gap by examining how some Alberta secondary social studies teachers view religion in the curriculum and classroom. Interviews and classroom observations reveal three teacher categories which we label as nominal, attentive, and integrative. In this presentation we delineate the three categories and review how the interviewed teachers define religion, their rationales for why they do or do not teach about religion, and how they engage with religion in their classroom. This exploration yields findings regarding religion and multicultural education, teaching about religious violence, and the challenges facing the future development of religions education.

Keelin Pringnitz, University of Ottawa

The Propagation of Islamophobic Discourse in American Politics Via the Secular Toolbox

The secular toolbox embodies terms, ideas, institutions, and embedded beliefs that do work to further versions of the secular, often while privileging popular religion. The tools that wield power work in such a way to embed the concept of the secular in discourse, allowing it to be reified and defended by the public sphere. This paper will apply the secular toolbox to examples of anti-Islamic rhetoric prevalent during the 2016 American Presidential election by presidential candidates. There will be a particular focus on the proposed Muslim registry, and how tools from the secular toolbox worked to “normalize” this example of overt religious discrimination in public discourse.

Erin Reid, McGill University

'Studentship': Beyond Normative Conceptions of Civic Education in Québec's ERC program

In the last 150 years in Québec, religious and moral education shifted from being the foundation of the public school system in the shape of the Protestant and Catholic school boards to being taught strictly within the confines of the government-mandated Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) program in 2008. The ground-breaking ERC program currently serves as the sole curriculum for teaching values, respect, conscience and tolerance to all religions from a secular position (Bouchard, 2009; Boudreau, 2011; Morris, 2011; Zaver and DeMartini, 2016). In this paper, we introduce the term “studentship”, an educational concept that encompasses the ethical values a student should learn and put into practice in an educational setting. We argue for the need of its inclusion in the ERC since merely framing discussions of ethics within the citizenship framework limits the ability of students to fully situate and embody ethical and moral values.

Sam Reimer, Crandall University and Sarah Wilkins-Lafamme, University of Waterloo

Religion as a Continuing Source of Grassroots Social Conservatism in Canada

With Trudeau leading his Liberals to a decisive electoral victory in 2015, bringing to an end nearly a decade of Conservative rule, observers are now wondering if religious conservatism's role in the Canadian political landscape is waning. With processes of secularization underway, many assume religiously active individuals are becoming less important to political outcomes due to their smaller numbers. Or indeed, since no longer permeated throughout society, people's religion and religiosity should play a smaller role in their ideological stance and their political choices. Yet, polarization theory hypothesizes that in fact social and political divisions are growing between religious and secular groups who both occupy an important place in society. In this paper and using data from recent Canadian Election Studies, we test this polarization theory in the context of Canadians' attitudes towards hot-button issues such as same-sex marriage, gender roles and abortion as well as their voting behaviour in the 2004 to 2015 federal elections. Have the contours of religious voting changed between 2004 and 2015? Is there a growing coalition of religious conservatism, especially between Catholics and Protestants? Is there evidence of converging attitudes and voting alignment among the religiously committed in Canada?

Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham, Trinity Western University and Rachel Brown, University of Victoria

The Politics of Prayer and Belonging in Canadian Hospitals

In this paper we draw on data collected from ethnographic research in Canadian and British hospitals that examines the expression of prayer as proxy for the negotiation of religious and cultural diversity. Our analysis of field journals, interviews with chaplains, staff, administrators, patients and families, and observations during walking interviews is revealing how the politics of belonging are interwoven into the dynamics of prayer. Not only are the sacred and the profane, and the public and the private, playing out in our research, but these are occurring against Canada's historic and continuing subtext of “who belongs” reflected in discourses of multiculturalism and secularism. While inclusivity, hospitality, and person-centredness are the spoken values of spiritual care services, efforts toward a “generic” spirituality that is palatable in our secular era is inadvertently placing on the margins indigenous peoples and newcomers to Canada who maintain strong ties to their religious identities.

Anthony Scott, University of Toronto

Bibles in the Badlands: Colonial Dinosaur Discoveries and the Making of Canada

A typical museum collection contains myriad colonial plunders—especially dinosaur fossils. The purpose of this paper is to argue that the excavation of dinosaur fossils was part of the industrial desecration of sacred geologies. My talk features a bogus Jesuit, Jean Baptiste L'Heureux, and Joseph Burr Tyrrell of the Geological Survey of Canada. Both participated in the “discovery” of fossil remains in Canada, which now sit in the bourgeoisie-museum display, void of the community, language and kimmapiiyipitsinni (Bastien 2004) through which they were interpreted by the Blood, Peigan and Sarcee. After contrapuntal archival work into the MSS of L'Heureux and Tyrrell, I will demonstrate how both helped transform all rivers into mine sites—all rocks into resources—and initiated a geological genocide against the First Nations. By problematizing the role of scientific extraction in Canada's last 150 years, dinosaurs are revealed as the epitome of imperialism in Western Canada.

Matt Sheedy, University of Manitoba

Where Have all the Niqabs Gone? Harper, Trudeau, and the Affective Politics of 'Islam'

In recent work, I have focused on the “transmission of affect” prior to and during the widely publicized “niqab affair” in Canada in the months leading up to the federal election on October 19, 2015. Here I've explored how then Prime Minister Stephen Harper was able to generate unprecedented public opposition to the wearing of the niqab during swearing-in ceremonies for Canadian citizenship, starting in February 2015, by claiming that it was inherently “anti-women” and contrary to “Canadian values.” One thing that remains largely unexamined in the aftermath of this affair is

where, exactly, concern over the niqab has gone as Justin Trudeau assumed office on a platform that rejected Harper's anti-niqab rhetoric and quietly reversed the ban, with little opposition or fanfare? In this paper, I will explore the malleability of such affective-political symbols that circulate in popular media, and offer hypothesis on their transmission, transformation, and possible return.

Heather Shipley, University of Ottawa

Negotiating Religion and Sexual Orientation: Trinity Western University's Law School

Debates about the relationship of religious freedom and equality rights based on gender and sexuality are not new, however in recent years there has been a heightened focus on these debates – specific to notions about diversity, inclusivity and ‘accommodation’ of different identities. Religion and sexuality are often presented and understood in black and white or essentialized ways, but the boundaries between the two are not as clear as is regularly presented in public, legal or policy discourses. In this paper, I will consider the law school proposed for Trinity Western University and the controversy it generated, focusing on representations in media about both religion and sexuality. I will integrate data from interviews I have conducted with proponents and opponents of the law school, as well as current and former LGBTQI+ students and allies at Trinity Western to flesh out the framing of these identity categories.

Jonathan Scott Simmons, University of Alberta

'Not that kind of atheist': skepticism as a lifestyle movement

This article examines atheist activists from a lifestyle movement perspective. I focus on how atheist activists adopt the term ‘skeptical’ as a distinct identity marker to represent their growing interest in other types of activism beyond atheist community building and the criticism of religious beliefs. My data comes from 35 interviews with Canadian atheist activists and participant observation in the province of Alberta. In contrast to previous social movement approaches to atheist activism, I deemphasize the importance of collective identity in atheist activism and instead attend to personal identity as the site of social change. My findings show that being a skeptic is a personally meaningful identity in the context of a relatively weak secularist collective identity (Smith and Cimino, 2012). Moreover, atheist activists who also identify as skeptics wish to expand the boundaries of the atheist movement to include individualistic projects of personal affirmation based on science and critical thinking. This work contributes to our understanding of the everyday activities of activists who engage in individual action in the absence of a strong collective identity. In particular, this article expands our understanding of lifestyle movements beyond the current focus on socially conscious consumption. Instead, I return to the roots of lifestyle movement theory, that is, how one's everyday choices serve as a form of protest. Finally, this work contributes to atheism scholarship, which has neglected the diversity of individual identities within atheist organizations and among atheist activists.

Braj Sinha, University of Saskatchewan

Reconstructing the Androgynous Feminine Divine-Aradhanarishwara in the Kalika Purana

The paper examines the conceptual resources and the processes that the brahmanic Hinduism employs in its domestication of the enigmatic figure of Kali represented by the Kalika Parana as the Supreme Feminine Divine invested with creative and salvific powers. The text has been extolled for its glorification of Feminine Divine as the continuation of the feminine gender nuanced theological reconstructive trend initiated by the Devi Mahatmya segment of the Markandeya Purana and culminating in the Devi Bhagvatam. It is my contention, however, that a careful reading of the mythic framework of the aradhanarishwarcharitam within Kalika Purana, outlining the transformation of the great Goddess Kali into an androgynous divine, the Half Female God, seems to deprive the Feminine Divine of her majesty and grandeur, taming and domesticating the Great Goddess to the point of her seeking this metamorphosis in a manner that dilutes the autonomy and supremacy of the Feminine Divine.

Elijah Smith, Wilfrid Laurier University

Canadian Beasts and Where to Find Them: the Role of Folklore in Constructing National Identity

On October 1, 1990, Canada Post released a series of stamps called Canadian Folklore #1. Each stamp contained an illustration of one of four legendary creatures: the loup-garou; the kraken; the Sasquatch; and Oogoo. This study examines historical documents—primary accounts and ethnographic volumes compiled by Canadian folklorists Edith Fowke and C. Marius Barbeau—to propose that these four icons were chosen because they each have analogues in the stories of both Europeans and First Nations prior to contact in the 16th century. The Canadian Folklore #1 series of stamps represented and reinforced four points of similitude between the narrative traditions of both European and indigenous peoples in Canada. Robert Orsi's definition of lived religion (as it relates to folkloric traditions) will then be contrasted with Michael Billig's description of banal nationalism (such as represented by stamps) to elucidate the inherent tensions between regional narrative traditions and national identity projects in Canada.

Jason Sparkes, Wilfrid Laurier University

Decolonizing Canadian Diversity: A View from the Internal Muslim Periphery

This paper examines human diversity in Canada from a decolonial Muslim perspective. First, it examines the thought of Ramón Grosfoguel (UC Berkeley, Ethnic Studies). He contends that while post-colonialism represents a Eurocentric critique of Eurocentrism, decolonialism adopts peripheral epistemologies to critique the modern/colonial world-system. Grosfoguel challenges Muslim academics like the author of this paper to think critically from an Islamic perspective rather than simply to think about Islam. Second, this paper applies Grosfoguel's framework to Canadian Muslims, situating them as one of many peripheral minorities living in the core of the world-system. Eurocentric depictions divide Muslims into anti-modern fundamentalists and progressive modernists. Unfortunately, many Muslims adopt these categories. Instead, this paper argues that Canadian Muslims must reject such binaries and draw upon the dynamic, adaptable, and pluralistic dimensions of their tradition to help build a decolonial future, in solidarity with other peripheral communities, from far and wide.

Connor Steele, University of Ottawa

(Un)Strategic Essentialism: The Reification of Identity Categories in the Dispute over TWU's Law School

Unlike the United States Constitution, the Charter does not consider racial discrimination to be the paradigmatic and paramount example of inequality. Yet, ironically, in the controversy over Trinity Western's proposed law school, which would discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, owing to the schools biblically informed code of behavior, one sees the logic of essentialized ‘sexuality,’ ‘culture,’ ‘community,’ ‘race,’ and ‘religion’ in arguments for and against TWU. By means of a content analysis of submissions to the Nova Scotia barristers' society regarding TWU's law school, I shall examine the ways in which categories of religion and sexuality are (de)reified, in order to gain a rhetorical advantage, obscure historical power relationships, and parse constructs of religion neatly from constructs of sexuality. Essentialist legal strategies overlook the fundamental tension between liberty and equality in liberal legal thought, and the historic reasons for this friction.

Cory Steele, University of Ottawa

"Night-walkers" and "Whores of the Night": The Supreme Court of Canada, Morality, and 'Non-Religion'

In 2013, *Canada v. Bedford* was heard before the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC). Three female appellants, all who had a history of involvement with sex work, argued that the criminalization of various aspects of prostitution infringed their individual rights to "life, liberty, and security of the person" under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The decision in *Bedford* has been seen as controversial by some; the SCC decided that the criminalization of certain aspects of prostitution was indeed unconstitutional. I am interested in exploring the construction of morality as enacted by the SCC in their decision; although several religious groups objected based on their own concerns about the morality of sex work, it is the framing of sex work by the SCC that is of interest. This paper will utilize Lois Lee's theory of "non-religion" to illustrate how morality is constructed by the Canadian state.

Kathleen Steeves, McMaster University

"Doing Things Differently": The Feminization of the Christian Pastoral Role

The entrance of women into pastoral roles within several mainline protestant denominations is arguably one of the most salient transformations in the Canadian Christian church in this century, raising questions around if women pastor differently, and how they might change or revitalize the institution of Christianity in Canada in the future. Drawing on a series of 44 semi-structured, in-depth interviews, this qualitative study reports three fundamental ways Canadian female pastors perceive they are revitalizing Christianity and changing the pastoral role through: (a) bringing new perspectives to "old" church problems, (b) using their experiences as women to relate to other marginalized groups and inform their practice and teaching, and (c) actively maintaining a presence in their communities, bringing "Christ" outside the four walls of the church through their social justice engagement. I argue that, as increasing numbers of women enter into pastoral leadership roles, they will reshape broader societal norms around what it means to be a "Christian" and "pastor." This is a trend to pay attention to in the future of Canadian Protestantism.

Stacie Swain, University of Ottawa

Armed with an Eagle Feather: Indigenous Ceremony, Secular Liberalism, and Sovereignties in Canada

This paper suggests a need to examine the relationship between the domains of spirituality and governance in relation to Indigenous ceremony. Despite case law citing secular neutrality, the Canadian state still legitimizes itself through theistic authorizations. How does this ambiguity relate to whether and how Indigenous 'spiritual' practices function within governance? How does their inclusion relate to historical and ongoing Indigenous resistance? Deployed both within settler colonial state contexts and instances of dissent, the eagle feather is an Indigenous ceremonial practice that entangles multiple discourses of the past and present. This paper performs a critical discourse analysis of press reports and legislative proceedings involving Indigenous deployments of the eagle feather from 1990-2016 to examine the intersections of Indigenous ceremony with secular liberal governance. Treating 'Indigenous' as a recognized social, political, and legal category within a diverse Canada, this paper addresses matters of settler colonialism, sovereignty, and futurity.

Galen Watts, Queen's University

The Politics of Self-Spirituality: A Canadian Case Study

In the last quarter century, a steadily increasing number of North Americans, when asked their religious affiliation, have self-identified as "spiritual but not religious" (SBNR). Paul Heelas (1996) has deemed this new religious form, "self-spirituality." Many have taken a critical stance toward this recent cultural development, positing that self-spirituality is a byproduct of the self-obsessed and individualistic culture which saturates the west, or that spirituality, at its worst, is simply a rebranding of religion in order to support the ideology of late capitalism. In this paper, I seek to problematize these accounts. Drawing from qualitative data collected from semi-structured interviews with Canadian millennials who self-identify as SBNR, I will argue that self-spirituality is less individualistic than these scholars assert, its relationship to capitalism is better understood as ambivalent, rather than genial, and due to their methodological prejudices these critiques of self-spirituality are inadequate to analyse the politics of self-spirituality.

Marybeth White, Wilfrid Laurier University

Re-thinking Space: The Story of Sao Si, Gender Dynamics, and Lao Buddhist Ordination Halls

This paper analyzes data from research conducted at the site of Wat Si Muang's ordination hall in Vientiane Laos. The mythical story of Sao Si figures prominently in establishing gender dynamics, relational norms, and comportment within the temple's areas. By exploring the story of Sao Si and comparing the ordination spaces at both Wat Si Muang and Wat Lao Veluwanaram in Caledon, Ontario, this paper aims to study the relationship between authority and gender in Lao Buddhism. My findings suggest notions of power, gender, and legitimacy that are not embedded within particular sites but within relationships of broader dialogues and transnational spaces.

Jeff Wilson, Renison University College (University of Waterloo)

Guided Tours of the Daydream: Uses of Buddhist Cosmological Imagery in the Shambhala Tradition

In 2016 two teachers in the Shambhala Buddhist lineage published books that used Buddhist cosmological images and ideas to convey teachings to a mixed audience of Buddhists and non-Buddhists. David Nichtern's "Awakening from the Daydream: Reimagining the Buddha's Wheel of Life" illustrates the six realms of existence with purely this-worldly drawings: the hell realm is shown as parents fighting, the realm of hungry ghosts is shown as a clothing store sale, etc. Meanwhile, Samuel Bercholz's "A Guided Tour of Hell: A Graphic Memoir" depicts the hell realms in vivid colour, full of demons, fire, and suffering beings, to illustrate the author's trip during a near-death experience. Despite their similar origins and materials, the significant divergence in the type of images and textual framing of these images reveals diversity and tension within the Shambhala lineage, and Western Buddhism more broadly, over interpretation of traditional Buddhist imagery.

Suat Yildirim, L'Université Marmara d'Istanbul

Le concept de «muslim» est un adjectif qualificatif, mais n'est pas un nom commun

Le mot «muslim» cité dans le Coran plus de 70 fois est un terme très important qui qualifie musulman. Ce terme a les sens suivant : sincère, soumis, qui se livre au Dieu Unique et qui vie en paix avec tout le monde. Les plus connus des commentaires du Coran sont unanimes sur cette interprétation. Malgré cela, la grande majorité des traductions turques du Coran le traduit en nom et perd des attributs qui qualifient le Musulman. Comme nom propre d'une personne ne change pas depuis sa naissance à sa mort, celui qui porte le nom «muslim» (musulman), suppose continuer d'être musulman; malgré tous les offenses que condamne l'Islam. J'ai étudié environ quarante traductions turques, quatre traductions française et quatre traductions anglaise du Coran pour réaliser ce travail. J'ai constaté que les traductions occidentales sont plus rigoureuses que les traductions turques.

Ahmad Yousif, Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA), Brunei Darussalam

Global Peace in Higher Educational Institutions in Southeast Asia: A Study on Moderation in Brunei

In Southeast Asia (SEA) as well as other parts of the Muslim world, academic institutions of higher learning often ignore the importance of Wasatiyyah (moderation) as an instrument for determining solutions to contemporary challenges, including global peace. This is especially evident in the field of Islamic Studies. The majority of Islamic institutions in SEA develop their academic programs utilizing traditional approaches and techniques. Although such approaches do have some merits, they have a number of disadvantages. This paper will examine the importance of Wasatiyyah as an instrument for global peace in higher educational institutions in SEA, exploring the model of its application at the Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA), Brunei Darussalam. It is hoped that this academic exploration will lead towards the development of a new model for global peace, which can be adopted by institutions in and outside SEA.

PANELS

1. Churches Built on Sand? Three Case Studies of Transnational Chinese-Canadian Christianity

Immigrants will largely determine the future outlook of Canada's religious landscape. However, given many immigrants live transnational lives, these networks consist of bidirectional flows and Canada has become an importer and exporter of religious symbols and resources. Since Jenkins advanced the global Christianity paradigm in 2002, its study has mostly focused on the global South. Comparatively, the Chinese have largely been left out of the picture. This is especially surprising in light of the explosion of Christianity in China in tandem with the nation's rise as a superpower. This panel consists of papers contributing to the study of transnationalism and global Christianity from the perspectives of geography, sociology, and the interdisciplinary study of religion using three Chinese-Canadian case studies. We engage the idea of global Christianity by tracing the network of relations of Chinese Christianity and grounding them domestically in Canada, abroad, and in-between.

* Helen Mo, University of Toronto

Not Your Grandmother's Migrants: Transnational Chinese Evangelical Narratives and the (New) Canadian

As scholars of migration have observed, today's migrants often make transnational circuits rather than one-way journeys—thus cultivating mobile dispositions and lifestyles that persist well beyond an initial settlement period. For many Canadian newcomers, religious identity, beliefs, and associational networks mediate the challenges of such a transnational life. This paper argues that within a Chinese evangelical imaginary spanning late-colonial Hong Kong and present-day Canada, oral histories and associational networks provide first-generation Chinese evangelical migrants with a sense of cohesion; their transnational continuity enables meaning-making and place-making despite the migrants' ever-shifting political, economic, and cultural outlooks. Drawing on oral-historical and ethnographic fieldwork in Hong Kong and Canada, I demonstrate how Canada and its palimpsestic "ethnoburban" landscapes emerge as simultaneously utopic, carceral, and mundane spaces in both individual and community-level narratives.

Jonathan Tam, University of Oxford

The Fractures in Global Christianity: The Case of Transnational Chinese Evangelicalism

There have been limited studies on the second-generation in the study of transnational religious networks. This is understandable given many children of immigrant congregations have just come of age. However, the future of these networks hinges on whether the second-generation of immigrant congregations chooses to continue their predecessors' transnational practices. I engage this literature gap by using the case of the Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism (CCCOWE). I first outline the differences between Chinese and mainstream evangelicalism's discourse on global mission. Specifically, the CCCOWE movement is structured around the notion of the Chinese elect grounded on a pan-Chinese identity. I then use CCCOWE's Canadian constituency to highlight the fractures within this transnational Chinese evangelical network and maintain that the CCCOWE's rallying call of evangelism behind ethnicity stands on tenuous grounds. Finally, I discuss this paper's contributions to the study of transnationalism and global Christianity.

Justin Tse, Northwestern University

Orthodoxy in Hongcouver? The Question of Transnational Eastern Chinese Christianities

Transnational accounts of Chinese Christianity rarely consider Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, and Eastern Catholic participants in their purview. However, the leadership of Byzantine Christians in Vancouver's transnational solidarity with Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement in 2014 and its aftermath suggest that this scholarly exclusion of the Orthodox needs revision. Not only were Byzantine practices deployed for demonstrations in both Vancouver and Hong Kong, but the entrance of the Orthodox as participants in Hong Kong's contested 'Election Committee' reveal a dispute about which Orthodox group is truly 'Orthodox': Russian, Greek, or Coptic? I argue that this intra-Orthodox contention makes the Orthodox full participants in the ongoing debate in Chinese Christianity about the church's alliance with authoritarian establishments. This paper thus contributes to the transnational study of Chinese Christianity by considering the role of Byzantine and Coptic practitioners in a sphere that is dominated by Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.

2. Contemporary Approaches to Suffering, Evil, and Theodicy

Panel Abstract: This panel draws together scholars from early christian studies, philosophy of religion, spirituality, systematic theology, and contextual theology, in exploring the topics of suffering, evil, and theodicy, with some attention to specific artistic treatments of these themes: Klaas Kraay will analyze claims about gratuitous or unjustified evil in relation to God and the human sense of morality; Mark Scott will focus on the religiously transformative effects of even very extreme suffering as it is developed in Marilynne Robinson's novel *Gilead* (2004); Michael Stoeber will explore the visual art of Berlin artist Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945), especially as it functions as practical theodicy and relates to questions about the status of theoretical theodicy; and Natalie Wigg-Stevenson will respond to these papers from a contextual theological standpoint.

Klaas Kraay, Ryerson University

God, Gratuitous Evil, and Excessive Gratuitous Evil"

Abstract: In analytic philosophy of religion, "the problem of evil" refers to a family of arguments that attempt to show, by appeal to evil, that God does not exist. Here is an influential example: (1) If God exists, no gratuitous evil occurs. (2) Gratuitous evil occurs. Therefore, (3) God does not exist. Most of the contemporary debate about this argument has focused on whether the second premise is reasonable to believe, since the first is widely accepted by theists, atheists, and agnostics alike. That said, there have been several important attempts by theists to resist premise (1). One is due to William Hasker, who argues as follows. If God were to prevent all gratuitous evil, then human moral motivation would be compromised. But since God's plan for creation involves ensuring that human moral motivation is not compromised, God must permit gratuitous evil. In this paper, I critically evaluate Hasker's argument.

Mark Scott, Thorneloe University at Laurentian University

Beauty from Ashes: Aesthetic Transformations of Suffering in Gilead

Abstract: In my presentation, I explore the theme of suffering in Marilynne Robinson's Pulitzer prize-winning novel *Gilead* (2004). Reverend John Ames, the story's protagonist, encounters deep suffering throughout his life, from the death of his wife and daughter as a young man to his impending death as an old man, which forces him to leave behind his new wife and young son. In his letter to his son, which is the text of *Gilead*, Ames meditates on the meaning of suffering from the perspective of Christian faith, hope, and love. What gradually unfolds in his reflections is the realization that even in times of profound suffering grace appears in moments of beauty that signal God's ability to transform suffering. In my analysis, I will expound on the theological significance

of *Gilead* as a literary foray into the question of suffering in human experience.

Michael Stoeber, Regis College, University of Toronto

The Visual Art of Käthe Kollwitz as Practical Theodicy and its Relevance to Theoretical Theodicy

Abstract: Some theorists have characterized art that actively engages people in meaningfully religious ways as a form of “practical theology”. This paper will analyze how the visual art of Berlin artist Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945) functions as practical theology—with special attention to theodicy—that is, its role as religious response to the realities of suffering and evil. There is a call among some scholars and theologians to abandon all attempts to defend God’s love and goodness in the face of destructive evil and suffering (theoretical theodicy), and rather to focus solely on how people ought to respond practically to such realities (practical theodicy). Kollwitz sensitively integrates ethical-feminist and socio-political concerns with her art, thus instilling deep compassion and consolation, in stimulating positive social change and genuine theological hope. The paper will illustrate Kollwitz’s work as a powerful form of practical theodicy. It will also explore questions on the relevance and status of theoretical theodicy, in relation to such practical theodicy.

3. The Enchantment Project

Weber and other early social theorists predicted the triumph of rationality, science, and the secular over the sacred, mystical, and affective domain of religion as part of the disenchantment project of modernity. More recently, Berger and others have questioned this hypothesis. It has surely become apparent - for instance, in the claim of being ‘spiritual, but not religious’, in the broad manifestations of the New Age movement, and in a diverse range of alternative health and wellness practices - that enchantment, disenchantment, and re-enchantment processes occur simultaneously and share complex relationships with each other, as well as with tradition, romanticism, nostalgia, and visions of the future. Such observations suggest revivalist and utopian dissatisfaction with and efforts towards the improvement of modernity. Our papers explore the magic of objects among Occult practitioners and Hipsters, 18th century European discourses of fairies and gardens, and the commerce and branding of Ayurveda in India.

Pauline McKenzie Aucoin, University of Ottawa—“ A Fairy Imaginary: Enchantment in a Revolutionary's Garden”

Studies of religion have long engaged with the concept of enchantment, a state of mind described as charmed, beguiled, seduced, or even entranced. Weber envisioned the increasing disenchantment of Western society with the embrace of rationality, a continuation of Enlightenment’s progress towards modernity. With secularization enchantment was stigmatized as mystical, irrational, and deluded. Against this background, this paper explores an imaginary of fairies, nature and woodland life circulated in the 18th century writings of French and British liberal intellectuals, those who also embraced the ideals of science, reform and social equality. Examination of this imaginary as expressed in poetry, writings on landscape design, correspondence of the Harcourt family, and in Rousseau’s fairy tale, *The Fantastic Queen*, reveals a counter discourse wherein enchantment circulates with the intent of debunking reigning religious beliefs in divine kingship and church dogma, as a new political and social order is ushered in.

Gillian McCann, Nipissing University—“ The Enchanted Object: The Sacralizing of Everyday Life from the Occult Underground to the Hipster”

At the turn of the last century both Max Weber and Emile Durkheim predicted the increasing rationalization of western society with the waning of the power of religion. This paper will look at the ways that religious and social movements such as the Occult, the Neo-pagan and the varieties of “hipster” approaches have attempted to reverse the process of disenchantment. All of these movements have focused on the importance of material objects and their magical possibilities. Using the work of David Morgan, and theories of the material practice of religion, this paper will examine why these attempts have only resulted in a partial success in bringing the sacred into the everyday.

Nicola Mooney, University of the Fraser Valley—“ Enchanting Consumption: The Spiritual and Material Commerce of Ayurveda in Contemporary India”

Even as Weber predicted the triumph of the secular, he drew close connections between religion and capital, and thus suggested the continued integration of material and spiritual domains. Such a synthesis has long been obvious in the close relationships between religion, health, and food practices. This paper explores the recent emergence of alternative food and health practices and the related growth of guru-founded consumer product lines such as Patanjali and Sri Sri Ayurvedas among middle class Indians. These trends variously reflect disenchantment with contemporary regimes of food production; the enchantment and re-enchantment of natural foodstuffs, traditional wellness practices, indigenous knowledge, and the swadeshi movement; and an internet-facilitated alignment with Western, new age trends in ‘alternative’ health and spirituality. While the middle-class embraces enchanted consumption as an expression of an Indian modernity and its spiritual capital, gurus such as Baba Ramdev amass fortunes that contribute to their political capital.

4. Indigenous Communities, Religion, and the Law

Panel Abstract: The presenters in this panel will explore themes of law and religion in indigenous communities. Using a variety of anthropological and historical methodologies, they will seek answers to how Indigenous peoples negotiate identity when challenged by the colonial legal system. Their case studies involve non-monogamous marriage practices in southern Alberta, water protection in North Dakota, and conservation of sacred spaces in British Columbia and Arizona. How do Indigenous communities thrive in multicultural settings when their beliefs and practices fall under attack? Furthermore, how are religious freedoms guaranteed in a multicultural environment which maintains colonial structures and conflicts with Indigenous values?

Kathleen Brassard, University of Waterloo

Many Wives, Many Consequences: Public, Political, and Legal Responses to Non-Monogamous Relationships

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Kainai Nation managed a complicated relationship since the LDS settled on neighbouring land in 1887. What they had in common, however, made them targets of the Canadian government. Both the Kainai and the LDS practiced polygamy and plural marriage within their separate communities, but Canadians served harsher punishments to the Kainai than the LDS. Methodologically, I will explore ethnographies, court proceedings, interviews, and Indian Agents’ reports to understand Canadian responses to non-monogamous relationships of indigenous peoples. Family histories, diaries, correspondences, and meeting minutes will inform my comparison of the responses to Mormon marriage practices. Additionally, debates from the House of Commons, Pricy Council reports, newspapers, and Canadian statutes/legal amendments will also benefit my analysis of reactions to non-monogamy. In this paper, I will argue that Canadian public, political, and legal responses to non-monogamous relationships varied when dealing with different offenders.

Nicholas Shrubsole, University of Central Florida

Skiing in the Presence of the Kachina and Klawla Tuklulak?is: A Comparative Assessment of the Treatment of Navajo-Hopi and Ktunaxa Religious Freedom Claims

In Canada and the United States, Indigenous Peoples face threats to sacred spaces on occupied territory. When these cases come before the courts, a light is often cast on the continuity of colonialism and the impossibility of Indigenous religious freedom. This paper offers a comparative examination of two recent cases, focusing on legal reasoning as it relates to community perspectives and interpretations of impact. In both cases, the courts have ruled that the impact on Indigenous communities is neither coercive nor significant despite Indigenous perspectives to the contrary. In Canada, I turn to the case currently before the Supreme Court involving the Ktunaxa Nation and the development of a year-round ski resort on Qat'muk in southeastern British Columbia. In the United States, I focus on the Navajo and Hopi attempts to stop the use of sewage water at a ski resort in Arizona.

5. **The Politics of Transgender in South Asia: Religious Identities, Social and Legal Status**

Khwaja sara, hijra, are two terms used to qualify traditional “trans*gender” in South Asia; the first term is primarily used in Pakistan whereas the latter, in Northern India. These communities constitute visible and marginalized social groups. This interdisciplinary panel aims at clarifying aspects of khwaja sara / hijra identity in Pakistan and Northern India. Presenters stem from very different disciplines (gender studies, religious studies, political science and theater) and each bring a particular approach to the question, thus clarifying various dimensions often not explored by contemporary research on trans* identity in South Asia.

Mathieu Boisvert, Université du Québec à Montréal—“Religion and Legitimization of Hijra (Trans*) Identity in Maharashtra, India”

The marginality of hijra is based on a paradox: it is both marked by the seal of purity, because of the “power” conferred on them, and impurity, which is associated with sex work. Following this logic, it is important to emphasize that hijra’s individual and collective identities mix categories generally perceived as opposites: Hindu/Muslim, sacred/profane, blessing/curse, inclusion/exclusion, legality/illegality, chastity/sexual activity, pure/impure and masculine/feminine. This paper presents the result of a SSHRC funded research led from 2013 to 2016 and based on 25 semi-directed interviews, each of approximately 6 hours. The research unveils the fact that religion plays a key role in shaping individual and collective hijra identity: rites of passage such as *rit* and *nirvāṇa*, ritual activities such as *badhāi*, *maṅgti* and pilgrimage will be closely analysed.

Shahnaz Khan, Wilfrid Laurier University—“ Trans* Masculinity and the Struggle for Rights in Pakistan”

In pre-colonial Asia, the ruling elites allowed forms of masculinities that operated outside the gender binary, something that both indigenous reformers and subsequent colonial rulers of European background found distasteful and regulated against. Colonial laws regulating sexuality continue to remain on the books in the postcolonial states of South Asia. Drawing upon interviews with individuals in Pakistan who cannot be contained by the gender binary, I argue that legacies of colonial laws have been challenged in ways that suggest a complicated relationship among sexuality, gender and modernity. I draw upon Partha Chatterjee’s notion of political society to situate this relationship and challenge problematic assumptions in mainstream queer politics that Muslim societies are static and ahistorical which appear to assume progress and struggle for sexual rights to be a Western attribute. In so doing I argue for a more complex understanding of the rule of non-normative sexualities in Muslim societies.

Claire Pamment, College of William and Mary—“Hijraism and the Global Gaze”

Pakistani khwajasaras (hijras) have long traditions of performing a cultural role of dancing, singing, repartee, and issuing prayers or *badhai* at weddings, births and Sufi shrines. Recent Supreme Court rulings, promising citizenship rights to these vulnerable communities, have given little consideration, if not outright negation, of these performance traditions. Compounded by foreign funded/ NGO initiatives, khwajasaras are increasingly subsumed under a globalizing LGBTQ agenda, discussed as problems and victims, relegated to frameworks of HIV/AIDS, sexuality, prostitution and pitched outside a dominant Muslim moral habitus, further marginalizing them. Amidst these tensions wrought by the global gaze, my presentation foregrounds the rich repertoires of performance—what I call hijraism— that continue to provide important modes of engagement with the public sphere, negotiating increasing socio-religious ostracisation within the Sufi shrine, neighborhood performances, and towards explicit political activism as khwajasaras contested their place in the national 2013 elections.

6. **Shi’a Imami Nizari Ismaili Muslim Identity, Practice, and Participation in Canadian Society**

Muslims in Canada come from a diverse array of cultures, languages, ethnicities, schools of thought, and political histories. The exodus of South-Asians from Uganda in the 1970s marks the first mass wave of Ismaili Muslim migration into Canadian society. Like other Muslim communities, Ismailis bring with them a diversity of backgrounds and histories that impact religious practice as well as personal and communal identity constructions. This panel investigates Ismaili Muslim identity and practice in Canadian society (Versi, Ramji, Cummins). It also looks at how the Ismaili community is responding to their identity being challenged by mainstream global and local narratives (Cummins). This panel presents Ismaili identity and practice from personal narratives, using original data derived from both online surveys and interviews.

Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University—“What it Means to be a Second Generation Ismaili Muslim in Canada”

This paper examines the religious expression and involvement of Ismaili Muslims growing up in Canada. It reports the results of in-depth face-to-face interviews. Utilizing interviews of Ismaili Muslims from two SSHRC funded projects (Beyer-“Youth Immigrant Project” and Marcotte, Anderson, Selby and Ramji, “New Muslim Public Spheres”), this paper will examine ten participants who identify as Ismaili: they include both religiously involved and uninvolved, as well as those who maintain their parental religious identity. Patterns and tendencies regarding religious attitudes and identity will be discussed within a framework of quantitative analysis that looks for continuities and discontinuities in religious orientation and involvement in comparison with the larger Muslim cohort. In order to better understand the creation of religious identity within the Canadian context, it is necessary to examine the integration and acculturation experiences of those who have grown up in Canada.

Salima Versi, University of Alberta—“ The Evolution of Identity: Khōjā Nizari Ismailism in Canada”

This paper will use rich, qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews to examine Canadian Ismaili Identity, looking especially at the way that the community in question has developed since the migration of some of its members from East Africa to Canada in the 1970s. Of particular interest are the ways in which religious and national values seemingly overlap, especially in the way that community members understand and express Canadian multiculturalism and the pluralism that has been recently promoted by both the Canadian government and by the Aga Khan, the

Imam of the Nizari Ismailis. The paper will also examine the continued role of the Imam as the central pillar of Canadian Ismaili identity, with some attention given to how individuals' understanding of that role has evolved over the years.

Alyshea Cummins, University of Ottawa—"Nuancing the Narrative of Islam in Canada: An Ismaili Muslim Movement"

Today, Western mainstream media consistently disseminates anti-Muslim discourse. This often results in harmful consequences for Muslims both nationally and transnationally. Nurturing fear and distrust fosters an environment of discrimination and exclusion, normalizing hostile anti-Muslim sentiment. In Canada, the Shi'i Ismaili Muslims are one Muslim community who have taken it upon themselves to challenge these harmful discourses both formally and informally. This paper investigates how the Ismaili Muslim community in Canada is responding to anti-Muslim narratives. The research is informed by original online survey data and one-on-one in-depth interviews with Ismaili community members and institutional leadership. This paper presents the individual, communal, and institutional ways in which the Ismaili Muslim community is actively attempting to challenge the narrative of Islam in Canada.

ROUNDTABLES

1. **Beyond Neutrality: Religion, Secularism, and Higher Education**

Since the latter half of the 20th century, the secular university has risen to become the predominant institutional model for higher education in Canada. While faith-based or denominational universities continue to exist, their capacity for critical scholarship and support for academic freedom has been called into question. Consequently, the secular framework has become the dominant framework for the academic study of religion. This panel explores how this shift has affected, and will likely continue to affect, scholars and students on secular and faith-based campuses. In what sense is the secular space of the university conducive for the study of religion? Is there a place for religious practices on secular university campuses? Is there something to gain by establishing a collaborative dialogue between secular and non-secular universities? How does a faith-based institution accommodate and support other religious affiliations?

Jennifer Guyver, McGill University—“Overcoming the Hermeneutic of Suspicion in the Secular University”

It is commonly recognized that religion is a sensitive subject that is best observed and discussed from a neutral perspective. As non-denominational, secular institutions, Canadian public universities claim to offer the ideal environment to teach about religion. In the last decade scholars like Talal Asad and Charles Taylor have challenged the explicit association between secularity and moral neutrality. What does their critique mean for the study of religion in secular, higher education institutions? This paper examines how the secular environment of the university shapes pedagogy in the field of religious studies. I argue that the secular approach to teaching religion is informed by an irreligious hermeneutic of suspicion that problematizes its object of study and is inherently skeptical of religious claims to truth. This paper will examine the limitations of the hermeneutic of suspicion and propose how it may be replaced by an areligious hermeneutic that encourages contemplation over skepticism.

Meera Kachroo, University of Saskatchewan—“Happy, Healthy, and Successful: Spiritual Wellness as a Measure of Religion”

Following an inclusivist and pluralist model of secularism, religious activities are sanctioned and supported provided they align with institutional values and mission. Religion becomes measured through the lens of public policy, ‘universal’ human rights, and quantitative analysis for salutary physical and mental outcomes. Many Canadian Universities’ Multi-Faith and Interreligious activities fall under the guiding policies and structures student wellness; the rubric of “spiritual wellness” elides diverse emic cultural and theological understandings of what constitutes health and wellbeing. Collaboration with community members and religious professionals must also be tempered with these secular values in mind. This paper will survey the academic literature in the areas of counselling, mental health research, student development studies from the perspective of a scholar of religious studies; questioning the positive and negative aspects of this process of quantification, and interrogating it for implicit assumptions about the nature of religious identity, practice, and experience.

Rebekah Lamb, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Academy—“ Informing Humanities Studies: The Place of Christianity in Canadian Higher Education”

While many universities and colleges across Canada are renewing and expanding commitments to exploring what it means to engage in Humanities Studies, a particular set of institutions of higher education, committed to these same explorations, are often left in a more marginal position: namely, the Canadian Christian confessional institutions of higher education. This is a significant problem as Christianity developed the origins of the university systems we have today and Christian Humanism offers rich resources for thinking about what it means to be human and in the world. This paper will explore what benefits are present in the Christian philosophy of higher education in Canada and how such a philosophy shapes various social, communal, and philanthropic initiatives on the one hand and, on the other, extends and broadens the questions we can ask ourselves in the Humanities.

Sajida Jalalzai, University of Toronto—“Translating Educational Spaces: Muslims in North American Christian Seminaries”

This paper examines the “translation” of space- physical, intellectual, and ideological- resulting from the inclusion of Muslim students at Christian seminaries in North America. I focus on various spatial translations that result from the formation of Muslim leadership programs at three historically Protestant Christian seminaries in the United States and Canada. Some of the issues examined include the alteration of the physical spaces on campus (encompassing art, architecture, aesthetics, functionality), the use of prayer to sacralize the classroom (and the conflicts that arise with the introduction of a new religious community into these spaces), as well as the creation of new intellectual spaces, in which Muslims view these seminaries as mitigating the perceived challenges of studying Islam either in the secular university or in more “traditional” settings. Throughout the paper I analyze the distinct approaches to inclusivity employed by each seminary, ranging from models of neutrality to models of pluralism.

2. **Discussion of Book Under Development—“Global Buddha: Flows and Forms of Buddhist Modernity”**

In 2013 Harding, Hori, and Soucy received a 5-year SSHRC Insight Grant to critically investigate Buddhism and its study at a global level, in order to establish a more historically accurate and sophisticated platform for studying Buddhism as it manifests in Canada and other locations around the world. One outcome of this project is a forthcoming co-authored volume proposing that the globalisation of Buddhism should not be confused with either the westernisation or modernisation of Buddhism, though they may overlap. In this roundtable, the authors will present the central argument and outline of the book and then hear comments from a respondent, Dr. Jeff Wilson, who has been a lively interlocutor of their previous edited volumes on Buddhism in Canada. The authors hope that this roundtable will generate a robust discussion that will help refine the book and advance the larger project of which it is a part.

Panelists:

G. Victor Hori, McGill University

Alexander Soucy, Saint Mary’s University

John Harding, University of Lethbridge

Jeff Wilson, Renison University College, University of Waterloo

3. Religion as Transgression in the Public Sphere

These papers explore the various ways in which religion can transgress, contest, and define the secular limits of the public sphere. Social theorists have long understood secularization as the “differentiation and emancipation of the secular spheres – primarily the state, the economy and science - from the religious sphere” (Casanova 1994, 19), simultaneously marking public space as secular and privatizing religion. Following Georges Bataille (1976) however, this roundtable attempts to tease out how the sacred materializes to transgress the secular order of public space. Michel Foucault (1977) in his “A Preface to Transgression” suggests that limit and transgression depend on one another. These papers, therefore, are particularly interested in the limits that prevent religion from emerging and flourishing in the public sphere, those moments where the limits of the public sphere no longer contain (when they have been transgressed by religion), and how public space is redefined following the transgression of secular boundaries.

Rachel Brown, University of Victoria—“Prayer as Transgression: Accommodating and Resisting Religion in Public Healthcare Institutions”

This paper examines how prayer can transgress the limits of the public sphere in Vancouver, BC. According to the 2011 National Household Survey, 44% of British Columbians claim to identify with no religion. In Vancouver that number increases to 48.9%. The public sphere in Vancouver, and the institutions representative of it, therefore are shaped by, and respond to this context. One might imagine that hospitals are one place where religion does not show up, or better, is relegated to specific times, places and groups. By exploring how different individuals approach religion, specifically prayer, in a public, yet denominational, healthcare organization I reveal how the boundaries around the definitions of public/private and secular/religious are transgressed - tested, crossed and re-created - in Vancouver. For this paper I draw on data collected from my postdoctoral work on an interdisciplinary and international SSHRC funded study that is conducting research in Canadian and British hospitals.

William Rory Dickson, University of Winnipeg—“Minimalist Secularism and Islam: Ibn al-‘Arabi on Religion and the Public Sphere”

In a time of growing Islamophobia, it is particularly important to look to Islamic thought for resources to think through contemporary North American formations of secularism, multiculturalism, and pluralism. In particular, the work of Spanish-born Muslim mystic and philosopher Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-‘Arabi (d. 1240) offers a remarkably relevant metaphysic to address the role of religion(s) in the public sphere. Key elements of his thought will be highlighted in consideration of their applicability to contemporary debates over the possibilities and limitations of religious expression within civil society. I argue that a “minimalist secularism” (Laborde 2016) that welcomes diverse religious expressions in public space (without thereby compromising the differentiation of the social spheres) best fits contemporary pluralistic social formations, and can be articulated in part by utilizing Ibn al-‘Arabi’s metaphysics.

Merin Shobhana Xavier, Franklin & Marshall College—“Piety and Religiosity at the Tomb of Sufi Saints: Sufi Shrines and the Public Sphere”

Using examples of contemporary Sufi shrines (mazar), this paper examines how Sufi sacred spaces play a transgressive role in public spheres topographically (i.e., market spaces, farmlands and city-scapes etc.) but also culturally and religiously. Shrine spaces such as those of Bawa Muhaiyaddeen (d. 1986) in Sri Lanka and America, as well as Hazrat Inayat Khan’s (d. 1927) in New Delhi, India, both South Asian Sufi teachers with North American followings and connections, showcase how the manifestation of sacred spaces in public realms dissolves boundaries through transnational travel and pilgrimage routes. Furthermore, the entombment of the remains of those perceived as the closest to the divine (Sufi saints) and the sacred and secular activities that unfold around their shrines (individually and communally) are indicative of how transgressive religiosity challenges simple binaries in the public sphere.

Zabeen Khamisa, University of Waterloo—“Langar Beyond Borders: Sikhs, Food, and Activism in the Public Sphere”

Central to Sikh religious thought and practice is the communal meal, or langar, that has been traditionally served in Sikh places of worship (gurdwara) as a means to feed the poor and erase the socio-economic divisions amongst the congregation. More recently, Sikhs around the world, especially young Sikhs, have been taking the practice of langar to the streets as a form of community outreach, and alliance building with non-Sikhs. From feeding the homeless to providing food at protest rallies such as Idle No More and Black Lives Matter, this paper examines how Sikhs are simultaneously transgressing the boundaries of traditional worship and the seemingly secular public sphere by interpreting the religious practice of langar as a form of political engagement, and an act of moral responsibility for Sikhs.

4. Taking the Measure of Apocalypse: Diverse Elements in Late Antique and Zoroastrian Literature

This roundtable seeks to investigate and interrogate seemingly contradictory and problematic elements of late antique and Zoroastrian apocalyptic and visionary literature. Moving from Jewish apocalyptic works from the second temple period, through to Christian conceptions of the apocalypse and afterlife, the panel will conclude with a comparative approach to Zoroastrian otherworldly journeys.

Eli Mason, Concordia University—“Defiled by Female Bodies: The Role of Women in the Book of the Watchers”

In The Book of the Watchers from 1 Enoch, women feature prominently as both the recipients of angelic revelation, and the means of angelic destruction. Taking into consideration the work of Annette Yoshiko Reed, this paper seeks to analyse the concept of bodily defilement, and the misogynistic underpinnings of this element of the narrative. While Yoshiko Reed rightfully addresses the issue of the effect of modern bias in interpretations of the Asael narrative from The Book of the Watchers as misogynistic, the concept of the defilement of the angelic bodies by those of female humans remains a topic of concern. Building on the work of Yoshiko Reed, this paper seeks to address the misogyny that is seemingly inherent in an understanding of women's bodies as a source of defilement, while simultaneously exploring whether such a narrative can be engaged with by modern scholarship without inherent bias.

Lucas Cober, Concordia University—“The Role of ‘Vision’ in Apocalyptic Literature”

A critical element of most apocalyptic literature is that the protagonist experiences some manner of vision. It is through this vision that the revelation is generally imparted, and though this is a common feature in apocalyptic literature, the mechanism of the revelation itself is rarely explored. In this paper, I will explore the concept of ‘vision’ in apocalyptic literature, as related to the privileging of sight in epistemological constructions of knowing. Taking arguably the best known book of apocalyptic literature in the western canon, the biblical Book of Revelation, as my main example, I will explore the role of sight and vision in receiving divine knowledge and discuss the ways in which apocalyptic literature therefore participates in reinforcing the hegemony of able-bodied vision that predominates Western intellectual discourse.

Tirza Harris, Concordia University—“Fear and Loathing in the Lost Apocalypse: Rhetoric of Fear and Hope in Early Christian Thought”

While many early Christian conceptions of the afterlife employ a rhetoric of hope in their depictions of what Christians can expect after death, certain non-canonical works, such as The Apocalypse of Peter, and The Apocalypse of Paul take a seemingly inverse approach, using images of startling torment to evoke emotions of fear and repulsion. This paper will analyse differences in the language employed in late antique Christian apocalypses and depictions of the afterlife generally, in order to investigate and understand the complex themes at work, as well as authorial intent in promoting seemingly contradictory ideas surrounding the afterlife.

Maryam Amirdust, Concordia University—“Hell Envisioned in Zoroastrian Apocalyptic Texts: Arda Wiraz Namag”

The book of Righteous Wiraz is a Sassanian middle Persian text, narrating priest Wiraz’s heavenly journey to the afterlife – heaven and hell. From Proto-Indo-European religion to the Iranian Islamic literary tradition, Wiraz’s vision of hell follows a long line of depicting dead soul’s fate, contemplating on the sets of punishments in regards to the sin. This article investigates possible developmental trajectories that characterizes hell in Zoroastrian eschatology, establishing commonalities of such images among other religious traditions.

5. **Women, Religion and the Gift: An Abundance of Riches**

This roundtable will discuss various chapters from the recently published book, "Religion and the Gift: An Abundance of Riches" (Springer 2017) by Morny Joy that re-examines women’s relations to the notion of the gift in ways that challenge conventional readings. Written from a cross-cultural perspective, it challenges depictions of women’s roles in religions where they have been relegated to compliance with specifically designated gendered attributes or affiliations. The chapters challenge the resultant stereotypes that deny women recognition. Each chapter describes women as engaged in an aspect of religion, from that of ritual specialists, to benefactors and patrons, as well as exemplary innovators. Sainthood and sacrifice are examined so as to refine outmoded ideas in constructive ways that no longer devalue women. The term “gift” transforms it from both figurative and literal perspectives. The collection provides a significant contribution on the part of women in their quest for recognition.

Morny Joy, University of Calgary – “Women, Religion, and the Gift: An Abundance of Riches”

"Religion and the Gift: An Abundance of Riches" (Springer 2017) by Morny Joy re-examines women’s relations to the notion of the gift in ways that challenge conventional readings. Book Overview and Discussion of "Gifts of Wisdom: Images of the Feminine in Buddhism and Christianity" Written from a cross-cultural perspective, it challenges depictions of women’s roles in religions where they have been relegated to compliance with specifically designated gendered attributes or affiliations. Morny Joy’ chapter evaluates the contemporary appeal to the ideal of wisdom as a category that inspires two contemporary women scholars in Catholicism and Tibetan Buddhism. In both instances wisdom has been appreciated as affiliated with “feminine” aspects, though not in any absolute sense. It is viewed a bounteous gift. Joy considers the implications of this evocation, given the many debates in the past twenty years among women scholars as to constructivism and essentialism, nostalgia and innovation.

Heather Shipley, University of Ottawa – “Black American Women and the Gift of Embodied Spirituality”

"Religion and the Gift: An Abundance of Riches" (Springer 2017) by Morny Joy re-examines women’s relations to the notion of the gift in ways that challenge conventional readings. Discussion: Chapter "Black American Women and the Gift of Embodied Spirituality" The focus of Stephanie Mitchem’s work is Black American spirituality, especially that of black women’s embodied spirituality. Mitchem locates her study within the interdisciplinary approach of Religious Studies, allowing that it provides a space to explore the multi-faceted dimensions of the “crafting” of identity today, specifically by black American women. She pays attention to the dynamics of gender, race, and class, reflecting on the diverse experiences of different social groups as they respond to centuries of colonialism and marginalization.

Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University - "Abidah El Khalieqy's Struggles of Islamic Feminism Through Literary Writings”

"Religion and the Gift: An Abundance of Riches" (Springer 2017) by Morny Joy re-examines women’s relations to the notion of the gift in ways that challenge conventional readings. Discussion: Chapter "Abidah El Khalieqy's Struggles of Islamic Feminism Through Literary Writings" Diah Arimbi introduces a woman novelist and poet from Indonesia, Abidah El Khalieqy, who was the first to speak out in her writing about abuses of women: child marriage, marital rape, domestic violence, in ways that challenged orthodox interpretations as they existed in her country. She addressed women’s lack of awareness of their rights, be they to education, or of a reproductive nature, or sexual.

Aldea Mulhern, University of Toronto – Discussant – “Food Gifts (Female Gift Givers): A Taste of Jewishness”

"Religion and the Gift: An Abundance of Riches" (Springer 2017) by Morny Joy re-examines women’s relations to the notion of the gift in ways that challenge conventional readings. Discussion: Chapter "Food Gifts (Female Gift Givers): A Taste of Jewishness" Norma Joseph explores women’s close relationship to food in Judaism revealing their unrecognized productive power, religious centrality and ritual jurisdiction. She reveals the ways in which women’s control of compulsory food gifts establish community and family bonds. Her chapter describes a number of situations where this can be illustrated. Firstly, Joseph details specific aspects of the feast of Purim. Then, she views family life, where women’s control of eating and feasting promotes a complex network of relations.

Amy Clanfield, University of Ottawa – “Economies of Sainthood: Disrupting the Discourse of Female Hagiography”

"Religion and the Gift: An Abundance of Riches" (Springer 2017) by Morny Joy re-examines women’s relations to the notion of the gift in ways that challenge conventional readings. Discussion: Chapter "Economies of Sainthood: Disrupting the Discourse of Female Hagiography" Kath McPhillips undertakes a critical appraisal of traditional hagiographies of women saints. Her critical reading of the depiction of Mary MacKillop, a recently canonized Australian nun, indicates that Mary did not conform to conventional ideals of patience, humility, or of submission to male clerical authority. McPhillips raises questions concerning the construction of female sainthood and wonders how its normative constraints can be disrupted by a transgressive mode of reading. While such a reading is not, in the strict sense of the term, a gift, it promotes deeper and more realistic insights.