

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**Exploring Other Worlds:
Constructing, Locating, and Navigating Imagined Religious Space**

**Stanford University
October 1, 2015 – October 2, 2015**

How is spatial discourse used as a map for navigating imagined domains such as memory, other worlds, lost homelands, and unexplored regions? How are imagined religious geographies such as cosmology and the afterlife made real through narrative and material representations?

Scholars of religion have long examined material space under the rubric of “sacred space,” yet the role of imagined space and spatial discourse in religious imagery, writing, and performance has been largely overlooked. Recognizing that imagined space may be equally or more real for religious actors than the physical world, the organizers of the 2015 graduate student conference in the Department of Religious Studies at Stanford University hope to contribute to new approaches to the “spatial turn” in Religious Studies. To this end, we invite graduate student proposals for presentations concerning imagined space in religious history and culture.

Methods may include, but are not limited to: historical analyses of textual, visual, and performative representations of imagined spaces, their characteristics and their inhabitants; ethnographic inquiries into the use and role of real and imagined space; theoretical considerations of imagined space in religion and society; and other innovative methods of making the imagined real, the immaterial material, and the unseen seen. Questions to consider include, but are not limited to:

- How are the unknown, the afterlife, and cosmology spatially constructed, appropriated, and navigated?
- How are metaphysical, symbolic, and otherwise inaccessible spaces made accessible through texts, maps, material culture, and ritual?
- How do categories of gender, race, species, and alterity operate within spatial discourse?
- What is the role of spatial discourse in establishing, maintaining, and contesting power?

Proposals should include an abstract of 250-350 words and a C.V. Please submit all proposals to rsgadconference@stanford.edu.

Please visit <http://religiousstudies.stanford.edu/gradconference> for more details.

Deadline for submission of proposals: **May 18, 2015.**