

Congrès 2018 / Congress 2018 – University of Regina, Regina

26 mai – 29 mai 2017 / May 26 – May 29 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 26th – CL 127

Sunday mai/May 27th – CL 127

Monday mai/May 28th – CL 127

Tuesday mai/May 29th – CL 127

Saturday May 26

TIME	EVENT	BUILDING – ROOM #
9am - noon	Executive Meeting	CL 345
2pm – 4pm	Annual General Meeting	CL 345
4pm – 6pm	Insta-Networking	CL 345
6pm – 7pm	President’s Reception (including announcement of book prizes and essay winners).	College West – CW 215
7pm – 10pm	Performance Presentation: (see details below)	CL 345

PERFORMANCE PRESENTATION:

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

Film: *Lana Gets Her Talk* by Beth Wishart MacKenzie (37 minute runtime with introduction and discussion with the filmmaker)

Part of a cross-country touring art and film installation, this film observes Lana Whiskeyjack as she works to complete a mixed-media sculpture of a tortured face, the face of her uncle. Lana calls the piece *Losing My Talk*. This brief study of an artist and her work is a creative medium through which we can come to some understanding of the trauma experienced by Canada’s Indigenous people in the Indian Residential School system, of its enduring effects on the children of survivors of the system, and of one woman’s journey to recover what was lost: dignity, identity, and voice. A story of resilience, Lana’s journey speaks of the power of Indigenous “ways of being” in our time.

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 27
MORNING SESSIONS**

PLACE (all rooms to be confirmed)	9am – 10:30am	10:45am – 12:15pm
CL 345	<p>Roundtable: Career Fulfilment Panel (Featuring University of Regina Graduates)</p> <p>Chair: Catherine Caufield, Concordia University Edmonton</p> <p>Participants:</p> <p>Jesse Bailey, BA Hons, MA Michelle Korpan, BA Hons, JD Kirsten Hanson, BA Hons, MA Andrew Lawn, BA Hons, MA Morgan Hunter, BA, BEd, MA</p>	<p>Panel: Research in Action</p> <p>Chair: Catherine Caufield, Concrodia University Edmonton</p> <p><i>Religion, Sexual Diversity and Youth</i> Heather Shipley, York University</p> <p><i>Doing Research on [and Teaching About] Muslims in a Multicultural Islamophobic Age</i> Franz Volker Griefenhagen, Luther College, University of Regina</p>
CL 407	<p>Panel: Studies in Asian Religious Texts</p> <p>Chair: Braj Sinha, University of Saskatchewan</p> <p><i>A Phenomenology of Arjuna's Religious Experience in Bhagavad Gita chapter 11</i> Richard Berg, Lakehead University</p> <p><i>Instances of the Middle Way in Early Mahāyāna Sūtras</i> James Apple, University of Calgary</p>	<p>Panel: Diverse Textual Sources in the Study of Buddhism</p> <p>Chair: Gerjan Altenburg, McMaster University</p> <p><i>Whose Line is it Anyway? Reflections on Textual Borrowing in the Partimoksabhismaranapada</i> Gerjan Altenburg, McMaster University</p> <p><i>Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha as a Gendered Medium: On the Sutra on Transforming the Female Form</i> Stephanie Balkwill, University of Winnipeg</p> <p><i>Kumarylata's "Garland of Examples" and Narrative Naturalism in Buddhist Literature</i> Diego Loukota Sanclemente, University of California, Los Angeles</p>
CL 408	<p>Panel: Contemporary Judaisms</p> <p>Chair: Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick</p> <p><i>An Irish Jew Depictions of Jews and Judaism in Twentieth Century Irish Literature</i> Paul Gillingham, University of Alberta</p> <p><i>Ingathering of the Unaffiliated: Engaging Jewish Youth Through Ecology, Awe, and Wonder</i> Anne Read, Independent Scholar</p> <p><i>God/dess in Contemporary Jewish Prayer</i> Justin Jaron Lewis, University of Manitoba</p>	<p>Roundtable: Space: The Final Frontier—Negotiating Religion and Identity</p> <p>Chair: Elizabeth Guthrie, University of Waterloo</p> <p>Lisa Duggan, University of Waterloo Elizabeth Guthrie, University of Waterloo Doaa Shalabi, University of Waterloo Sahver Kuzucuoğlu, Wilfrid Laurier University</p>

Graduate Luncheon
12:00 – 2:00pm
CW 215

Religious Studies in the Public Sphere: Public Engagement and Community-Centred Scholarship

All student members of the CSSR/SCÉR are invited to attend the Graduate Student Luncheon. Dr. Brenda Anderson (University of Regina), Dr. Michelle Folk (University of Regina), Dr. Rebekka King (Middle Tennessee State University), and Dr. Adéla Sandness (St. Francis Xavier University) will be leading a conversation about public engagement and community-centred scholarship. Exploring this topic through the frameworks of teaching, research, and service, the speakers discuss topics including pedagogies for community-engagement, advocacy scholarship, administrative support for community-engaged work, and strategies for when and how to engage our local communities. Light lunch is provided.

Short Documentary Film Premier
12:30 – 2:00pm
CL 345

Film: “*The Good Life: Decolonizing the Secular*”

This documentary film explores the important role of Indigenous spirituality in Canadian public life and examines whether processes of reconciliation can be “secular”. Notably, secularism in many of its dominant forms segregates spirituality and religion outside of public life, but many of the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report petition for an increased role for traditional teachings, including Indigenous spirituality, in many important public contexts. Indeed, the formal practices of TRC themselves centered on ceremonial aspects, such as the lighting of the sacred fire and the integration of the Seven Sacred teachings (which are themselves represented in the TRC’s logo). To engage this subject matter, the film engages a number of relevant interrelated questions: What is Canadian secularism and how does it delimit the role of spirituality in public life, including ceremony? Do traditional Indigenous philosophies of the “good life”—such as the Anishinaabe notion of “Mino-Bimaadiziwin”—allow for a secular/sacred division? Is the expectation of such a division of life yet another iteration of colonialist structures of power? And if this is so, does secularity first need to be decolonized to allow for real reconciliation?

The film is comprised of interviews with leaders, activists and experts from the Indigenous and non-Indigenous community, including Murray Sinclair, Winona LaDuke, Wab Kinew, Naheed Nenshi, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Mark Ruml, Jennifer Selby, Tasha Spillett and W. Rory Dickson.

The project is funded through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and has been approved by the University of Winnipeg Human Research Ethics Board.

45 minute runtime followed by Q&A.

SUNDAY MAY 27
AFTERNOON SESSIONS

PLACE	1:45pm – 3:15pm	3:30pm – 5pm
CL 345	<p>*PLEASE NOTE: THIS PANEL WILL START AT 2:00PM*</p> <p>Panel: Issues in Contemporary Islam</p> <p>Chair:</p> <p><i>Individuality and Public Reason in Religious Education and Liberal Societies</i> Ilham Reda, McGill University</p> <p><i>The Involvement of Muslims in Online Communities and in Islamic Associations: The Montreal Case</i> Morad Bkhait, Université du Québec à Montréal</p>	<p>Panel: Intra-Umma Dissonance: Intolerance Within the Muslim Umma</p> <p>Chair: Alyshea Cummins, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>A Question of Authenticity: How Do Canadian Muslims View Each Other?</i> Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University</p> <p><i>The Navigation of Ismaili Muslim Identity in the Context of Intra-Umma Identity Construction(s)</i> Alyshea Cummins, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Identities of Muslim Women as “Transgressors” Through Veiling and Unveiling</i> Sana Patel, University of Ottawa</p> <p>Responding: Qamer Hameed, University of Ottawa</p>
CL 407	<p>Panel: On Anguish and Delight in Hindu Cosmology</p> <p>Chair: Brenda Anderson, University of Regina</p> <p><i>Anguish Instead of Delight: The Articulation of Salvation by Tamil Bhaktas</i> Michelle Folk, University of Regina</p> <p><i>The Enemy is Us: The Rgvedic Indra verses Vṛtrá Myth as a Prototype for Enlightenment</i> Aldea Sandness, St. Francis Xavier University</p>	<p>Panel: Asian Religions in the Modern World</p> <p>Chair:</p> <p><i>Sacred Inner-Fires: Moving From Secret Places to Contemporary Spaces</i> Diane Fereig, University of Alberta</p> <p><i>Compassionate but not Religious</i> Julia Stenzel, McGill University</p> <p><i>Religio-nationalism and Religious Diversity in Bangladesh’s Chittagong and Myanmar’s Rakhine</i> D. Mitra Barua, Rice University</p>
CL 408	<p>Panel: Spirituality and its Variations</p> <p>Chair:</p> <p><i>The Gender Puzzle Revisited: Contemporary Spirituality and the Rise of the Feminine</i> Galen Watts, Queen’s University</p> <p><i>The “Spiritual Quest” of Youth Social Justice Organization Free the Children</i> Sharday Mosurinjohn Washburn and Emma Funnell-Kononuk, Queens University</p>	<p>Roundtable: Author Meets Critics: <i>Religion and Intimate Partner Violence: Understanding Challenges and Proposing Solutions</i></p> <p>Chair: Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick</p> <p>Heather Shipley, York University Darlene Juschka, University of Regina Mary Ann Beavis, St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan</p> <p>Responding: Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick</p>

Of Additional Interest to Members

“How to write a sitcom about Muslims – very carefully!”

Zarqa Nawaz, freelance writer, journalist, broadcaster, and filmmaker

Sunday May 27, 2018

3:30-5pm

Description:

As a Canadian of Muslim faith, freelance writer, journalist, broadcaster, and filmmaker Zarqa Nawaz address addresses her commitments to participation in the public sphere and the shaping of Canadian identities through humour. As debates rage about changing culture and religious accommodations in various communities, Nawaz will talk about the challenges and rewards of creating *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, the hit ground-breaking television series about a Western-based Muslim community in Canada. As a resident of Regina, Saskatchewan, she will address the diverse creative cultures of her home city.

Room: Luther College Auditorium

Hosted by Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English

2018 International Lecture

7:00 – 8:30pm

Research and Innovation Centre, Room 119

A Modern Monk’s Work: Preserving the Manuscript Heritage of Endangered Christianity in the Middle East

Columba Andrew Stewart, Director

Hill Museum & Manuscripts Library

Research and Innovation Centre, Room 119

Reception: Research and Innovation Centre, 101.6 Atrium

MONDAY MAY 28
Morning Sessions

PLACE	9am – 10:30am	10:45am – 12:15pm
CL 407	<p>Panel: Religion, Art, Advertising, and Technology</p> <p>Chair: Michelle Folk, University of Regina</p> <p><i>Drawing Boundaries Between 'Secular' and 'Spirit-Empowered' Art in the American Pentecostal Context</i> Saliha Chattoo, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Embodiment Matters: An Ecospiritual Perspective on the Promises and Challenges of Human Enhancement</i> Christopher Hrynkow, St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan</p>	<p>Panel: Religion and Humor</p> <p>Chair: David Feltmate, Auburn University at Montgomery</p> <p><i>Atheist Humor and the Performance of Boundary Maintenance</i> Chris Miller, University of Waterloo</p>
CL 408	<p>Panel: Religion and the Law in Canada</p> <p>Chair: Paige Thombs, University of Victoria</p> <p><i>I Know it When I See It? Defining 'Religion' in Canadian Law</i> Paul Hart, University of Alberta</p> <p><i>From Carter to C14: Assisted Dying From Court to Criminal Code</i> Ted Malcolmson, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Caskets in the Courtroom: The Supreme Court of Canada's Understanding of Suffering and Death</i> Cory Steele, University of Ottawa</p>	<p>Panel: Canadian Laws and Indigenous Lands: Conceptualizations of Sacred Space, Religion, and Ceremony</p> <p>Chair: Stacie Swain, University of Victoria</p> <p><i>Religion, Public Interest, and the State's Obligation to Encourage Outdoor Recreation</i> Michael Ruecker, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>The Reoccupation of Parliament Hill: Indigenous Ceremony as an Exercise of Jurisdiction</i> Stacie Swain, University of Victoria</p>

MONDAY MAY 28
Afternoon Sessions

PLACE	1:45pm – 3:15pm	3:30pm – 5:00pm
CL 345	<p>Panel: Religion, Science, and the Problems of Knowing</p> <p>Chair: Darren E. Dahl, St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan</p> <p><i>Religious Diversity and Non-Human Animals</i> Manvitha Singamsetty, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>The Wobbling Firmament: The Cosmologies of Young Earth Creationism</i> James Linville, University of Lethbridge</p>	<p>Panel: Philosophy of Religion</p> <p>Chair: Justin Jaron Lewis, University of Manitoba</p> <p><i>Hospitality and the Test of Translation: The Diversity of Religious Language in Paul Ricoeur</i> Darren Dahl, St. Thomas More College (University of Saskatchewan)</p> <p><i>Human Beings In and Of the World: A Response(able) Epistemology</i> Zachary Gage, University of Manitoba</p>
CL 407	<p>Panel: Religion, Politics, and the Law</p> <p>Chair: Paige Thombs, University of Victoria</p> <p><i>Dreams, Visions, Promises: The Canadian State and Ethno-Religious Settlement on the Prairies</i> Connor Thompson, University of Regina</p> <p><i>Voices in the Ktunaxa Case and Reactions to the Ktunaxa Decision</i> Noel Salmond, Carleton University</p> <p><i>The Idea(l) of Public Reason: Religion in Rawls's Political Liberalism</i> Jonas Brandt, University of Winnipeg</p>	<p>Panel: Inter-religious Encounters Around the World</p> <p>Chair: Catherine Caufield, Concordia University Edmonton</p> <p><i>Embracing Religious Diversity in Political Discourse, Lessons from Faith-Based Institutions in Northern Ireland</i> Maria Power, University of Liverpool</p> <p><i>The Voice of Canadian Religious Schools' Graduates in Intercultural Dialogue</i> Mariia Alekseevskaia, University of Ottawa</p>
CL 408	<p>Roundtable: New Muslim Public Spheres in the Digital Age: Stages of Research, Methodology and Mentorship</p> <p>Chair: Brenda Anderson, University of Regina</p> <p>Jenna Tickell, Luther College at the University of Regina Maysa Haque, Luther College at the University of Regina Sumaria Alwani, Luther College at the University of Regina Kiera Mitchell, Luther College at the University of Regina Mehmet Ali Basak, Memorial Univeristy Morad Bkhait, Université du Québec à Montréal</p> <p>Responding: Brenda Anderson and Franz Volker Griefenhagen, University of Regina</p>	<p>Panel: Gendered Dharmas: Women and the Practice of Buddhism in Pre-Modern Asia</p> <p>Chair: Stephanie Balkwill, University of Winnipeg</p> <p><i>Hermits, Pilgrims, and Teaching Tempresses: Women in the Early Literature of China's Mount Wutai</i> Susan Andrews, Mt. Allison University</p> <p><i>Female Religious Practices and Agency in the Novel Jin Ping Mei</i> Crystal Beaudoin, McMaster University</p> <p><i>Agency Through Adornments in Indian Buddhism</i> Manvinder Gill, University of Winnipeg</p> <p>Responding: Stephanie Balkwill, University of Winnipeg</p>

TUESDAY MAY 29
Morning Sessions

PLACE	9am – 10:30am	10:45am – 12:15pm
CL 407		<p>Panel: Issues in the Sociology of Religion</p> <p>Chair: David Feltmate, Auburn University at Montgomery</p> <p><i>“No Consecration, No Peace!”: The Fatima Center and the Russian Annexation of Crimea</i> Michael Agnew, McMaster University</p> <p><i>Diversity’s Limits in Jonestown and Peoples Temple: From Frame Overlap to Pragmatic Homogeneity</i> Kristian Klippenstein, University of Alberta</p> <p><i>Blurred Boundaries: How Definitions of Religion and Family Life Are Used to Determine Responsibility</i> David Feltmate and Kimberly P. Brackett, Auburn University at Montgomery</p>
CL 408	<p>Panel: Women and Religious Dialogue</p> <p>Chair: Justin Jaron Lewis, University of Manitoba</p> <p><i>‘Gathering Us In’ and Moving Us Beyond Exclusion: How Canadian Women Religious Model Inclusivity and Engender Diversity</i> Christine Gervais, University of Ottawa</p> <p><i>Reflections on Interfaith Art-Making as a Means to Exploring Feminist Religiosity</i> Nilofar Noor and M. Syed, University of Toronto</p>	<p>Panel: Issues in Contemporary Methods and Theories</p> <p>Chair: Stacie Swain, University of Victoria</p> <p><i>Insiders/Outsiders & Others: Colonial Historiographies and Anti-Oppressive Scholarship</i> Roxanne Korpan, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Why Another Christianity Needs to Come Back into the Religious Studies Curriculum</i> Clara A.B. Joseph, University of Calgary</p> <p><i>Sikhs in the Public Sphere in Canada</i> Richard Mann, Carleton University</p>

INDIVIDUAL PAPERS

Michael Agnew, McMaster University

"No Consecration, No Peace!": The Fatima Center and the Russian Annexation of Crimea

The Fatima Center is a Catholic organization devoted to the apparitions of the Virgin Mary at Fatima in 1917. Historically, much of the Center's appeal stemmed from its articulation of a Marian apocalyptic historical vision during the Cold War, one that was grounded in the warnings of the Virgin regarding the existential threat posed by Soviet Communism. Much of the Center's more recent coverage of the Russian Federation however, particularly after the annexation of the Crimea region in 2014, has stressed that Russia's actions have come from a posture of self-defence, in response to aggressive incursions by the United States into the affairs of Russia and the post-Soviet states. This paper will examine how a conservative Catholic organization and its quarterly publication, The Fatima Crusader, once known for its anti-Soviet polemic during the Cold War period, has increasingly advanced a form of pro-Russian apologetics within the current geopolitical climate.

James Apple, University of Calgary

Instances of the Middle Way in Early Mahāyāna Sūtras

The Buddha famously taught the Middle Way between the extremes of existence and non-existence in the discourse to Kaccāyanagotta. In this teaching the Buddha indicated the Middle Way between upholding a permanent and substantial "Self", or denying the principles of causality and rebirth altogether. Did the Buddha teach the Middle Way in early Mahāyāna Sūtras? If so, what kind of Middle Way did early Mahāyāna sūtras advocate? This paper examines the Middle Way as defined in two early Mahāyāna sūtras, the Kāśyapaparivarta and Ratnacūḍapariṣcchā. The paper demonstrates that these two discourses present an alternative understanding of the Middle Way that, on the one hand, upholds the Buddhist understanding of causation and its surface reality and yet, on the other, posits a deeper purport of causation which is linked with the nature of reality being unarisen and unextinguished.

Mariia Alekseevskaya, University of Ottawa

The Voice of Canadian Religious Schools' Graduates in Intercultural Dialogue

Within the Canadian context, faith-based schools have come under scrutiny amid growing public concern about their potential to breed intolerance towards secular individuals and members of other religious affiliations. One of the largest ethno-religious groups, which founded a parallel school system in Canada, were post-war Dutch Reformed immigrants. My research traces the evolution of these schools' approach to multiculturalism and openness to interfaith dialogue since the 1970s when these schools were established. The preliminary results revealed that graduates of these faith-based schools embody the roles of both citizens and believers. However, an exposure to a variety of perspectives and the idea of autonomy are not always reached successfully in these schools. Fifty interviews with teachers, experts on Reformed education, and alumni graduated within different decades, who are members and ex-members of Reformed communities, and a content analysis of policy, court, and theological documents are the main sources of this research.

D. Mitra Barua, Rice University

Religio-nationalism and Religious Diversity in Bangladesh's Chittagong and Myanmar's Rakhine

Bangladesh's Chittagong and Myanmar's Rakhine used to be a unified region known for religious harmony derived from historical ethno-linguistic and religious diversity. As the Rohingya crisis indicates that the region has now been plagued with religious intolerance and ethnic prejudices. This paper investigates the history of that negative development from a comparative perspective of Buddhist and Muslim minorities across the Bangladesh/Myanmar border. Since mid-twentieth century, Buddhists in Chittagong more or less have increasingly enjoyed the Pakistani and, after 1971, the Bangladeshi citizenships. The opposite has been the case with the Muslim minority in Myanmar's Rakhine. The Rohingyas' situation deteriorated from the prospective citizenship to the statelessness. With a historical analysis of the minority-majority relationships in Muslim majority Chittagong and Buddhist majority Rakhine, this paper argues that Buddhist and Muslim nationalist discourses in the region have perpetuated the Rohingya crisis that challenges and threatens the religious diversity.

Richard Berg, Lakehead University

A Phenomenology of Arjuna's Religious Experience in Bhagavad Gita Chapter 11

Neither traditional Hindu commentators nor contemporary Western scholars have had much to say about Arjuna's religious experience in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita even though the passage describing it constitutes the dramatic climax of the entire text, arguably even of the larger Mahabharata epic from which it has been extracted. Nor has much been written on the place of this type of religious experience in the historical tradition of Hinduism. Hence the need for a phenomenology of Arjuna's religious experience as a starting point for elucidating the type of religious experience which Arjuna's experience represents, the historical framework of the religious tradition in which it is represented, and the evaluative criteria which account for it paradoxically having received so little attention in the secondary literature.

Morad Bkhait, Université du Québec à Montréal

The Involvement of Muslims in Online Communities and in Islamic Associations: The Montreal Case

As part of the "Canadian Muslim Online" collaborative research project to examine the use of the Internet among Muslims and to study the role played in their daily lives with digital technology, we have begun to obtain preliminary data. Through interviews conducted in Montreal. The presentation will return to the online involvement of Muslim women who demonstrate an interest in the search for religious knowledge, sometimes combined with a desire to be involved offline in community associations. Also, the use of social networks makes it possible to bring their everyday acts into line with religious sources, while trying to change or register their practices in an identity process. The construction of an online community is established with a constant regard to the positions taken by websites visited where the prism of feminism and the status of women by the authorities is important.

Jonas Brandt, University of Winnipeg.

The Idea(l) of Public Reason: Religion in Rawls's Political Liberalism

The political philosopher John Rawls presupposes that Western societies are religiously and politically diverse, and advocates for a formal structure of public discourse that can produce an "overlapping consensus" among an array of competing comprehensive doctrines. Rawls therefore claims that an "idea of public reason" is necessary for mediating political debate, as the most reasonable solutions to social problems will be accepted by the majority. However, a closer reading of Rawls reveals that underlying this neutral "idea" of public reason is a more stringent "ideal" of public reason, which I claim attempts to neutralize those public religious voices whose political message is grounded in the particularity of their faith tradition. I consider Martin Luther King Jr. as an exemplar who uses irreducibly religious language in advocating for the democratic principle of equality; problematizing Rawls's thesis that emptying the public sphere of religion is beneficial for a more just society.

Salih Chattoo, University of Toronto

Drawing Boundaries Between "Secular" and "Spirit-Empowered" Art in the American Pentecostal Context

For almost 70,000 youth attending Assemblies of God (AG) churches throughout the U.S.A., each school year brings a chance to take part in a national competition known as Fine Arts (FA). Hosting over 65 musical, theatrical, and creative categories, students from grades 6-12 participate to enhance their skills in ministry and compete for scholarships. With insiders as both performer and target audience, a complex subculture with its own language, rules of embodied storytelling, and codes of artistic expression has emerged. FA's rapid growth has also led to important discussions within the AG church of what "secular" entertainment is, how to be distinct from it, and how to encourage their youth to think about "insider" and "outsider" art. This paper will address these debates by focusing on the largest FA category: movement pieces known as "Human Videos" that intervene upon current sociopolitical issues while preaching of the redemptive power of Christ.

Darren Dahl, St. Thomas More College (University of Saskatchewan)

Hospitality and the Test of Translation: The Diversity of Religious Language in Paul Ricoeur

A strong account of religious diversity understands it as constitutive and therefore irreducible to any homogeneous substrate or norm. Essential to such an account is an understanding of language where finite linguistic difference is generative of meaningful claims ('saying something') that are, in turn, disclosive of reality as claims to truth ('about something'). In religious language, such generativity and disclosivity occur in an intersubjective space opened by the 'test' of the other—another language, the other person, the Other. This 'test' occurs when, through the claim of the 'foreign', the 'proper' is discovered anew and a 'recognition' takes place that effects the mutual displacement of both poles in a meeting of 'hospitality'. This argument will be developed in reference to the thought of Paul Ricoeur, whose understanding of translation and linguistic hospitality provide an important resource for philosophers of religion seeking to account for a constitutive understanding of religious diversity.

David Feltmate and Kimberly P. Brackett, Auburn University at Montgomery

Blurred Boundaries: How Definitions of Religion and Family Life Are Used to Determine Responsibility

Most Protestant churches in the Montgomery, AL area define themselves as "family friendly." They offer family ministries that involve youth ministry, pre-marital and marriage counselling, and other activities that promote their visions of family life. Pastors are also aware of the problems facing families today. How do they understand the sources of these problems and the relationship between their religious worlds and these family problems? How do they shape their family ministry and message to the broader

community? Based on thirty interviews with Protestant ministers in the Montgomery area, this paper will analyze the ways pastors define the family, the relationships between family and church, and the sources of family problems. We argue that pastors put responsibility for family problems on individuals and for successes they credit the church, thereby reaffirming a unified vision of church and domestic unit as the foundation of society and solidifying the value of both.

Diane Fereig, University of Alberta

Sacred Inner-Fires: Moving From Secret Places to Contemporary Spaces

The practice of inner-fire, traditionally known as gTum-mo (Tibetan) or caṇḍālī (Sanskrit), has long held fascination in the Western world. A yoga practice from the Tantric system of South Asia, which has been preserved and practiced for centuries in Tibetan Vajrayana; it has traditionally been a secret practice for advanced practitioners. Yet, the modern world seems to hold no secrets and as early as the 18th century we find spiritual vanguards of the West both fascinated with the practice and interested in learning it. Said to be the heart of the Six Yogas of Naropa, recent contemporary interest has exploded over the past few decades, resulting in online discussion forums, literature and Tibetans suddenly willing to teach a once hidden practice. This paper will explore contemporary interest and practice through online media and literature in contrast to the traditional settings of this practice as presented in available primary texts.

Christine Gervais, University of Ottawa

'Gathering Us In' and Moving Us Beyond Exclusion: How Canadian Women Religious Model Inclusivity and Engender Diversity

'Gathering Us In' and Moving Us Beyond Exclusion: How Canadian Women Religious Model Inclusivity and Engender Diversity By drawing on qualitative interview-based data among thirty-two current and former women religious in Ontario, this paper explores how sisters have modelled inclusive processes of gathering and have upheld human diversity within their spiritual and social justice initiatives in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. After briefly illustrating examples of inclusive gathering and governing featured within my book *Beyond the Altar* (March 2018), I will examine experiential accounts drawn from another manuscript currently in progress that shed critical light on how Canadian women religious contemplate controversies and confront contradictions within the Roman Catholic Church. By featuring their views on various concerns and inconsistencies, this paper will shed light on how women religious have espoused diversity through their openness towards, and involvement within feminisms, social justice, women's ordination, reproductive justice and LGBTQ communities.

Michael Gillingham, University of Alberta

An Irish Jew Depictions of Jews and Judaism in Twentieth Century Irish Literature

Jews in Ireland have always been few in number but Irish Protestant and Irish Roman Catholic writers have routinely included Jewish characters and depictions of Judaism in their work. In the twentieth century, Irish writers James Joyce, Francis Stuart, Robert MacLiam Wilson, Robert Welch, Jennifer Johnston, and Ita Daly all continued this literary tradition. Irish-Jewish authors including Hannah Berman, Leslie Daiken, David Marcus, and Ronit Lentin also emerged as important Irish writers since 1900. Catherine Hezser, citing Joyce and Daly, writes, "The much-lauded multicultural New Ireland provides a great opportunity for the development of hybrid identities and their integration into a postcolonial Irish society that not only Roman Catholics may consider their home". How is the Jew as a religious figure and Judaism as a religion being depicted in twentieth century Irish literature, especially after the Holocaust? How do Irish-Jewish authors extend and redirect this tradition in contemporary Irish literature?

Pat Hart, University of Alberta

I Know it When I See It? Defining 'Religion' in Canadian Law

How does law understand, or perhaps rather construct, the term "religion"? With specific reference to the Canadian context, this paper investigates the contours in the Supreme Court of Canada's post-Charter jurisprudence touching on the definition of "religion," and considers the ways in which the law's understanding relates to three major theoretical approaches to defining "religion." Drawing perhaps most significantly from the seminal ruling in *Syndicat Northcrest v Amselem*, and looking also at other subsequent Supreme Court rulings, including the recent decision in *Ktunaxa Nation v British Columbia*, this paper reflects on the content and purpose of the law's definition of "religion," as well as the multifarious and divergent interests involved in contemporary discourse on "religion."

Christopher Hrynkow, St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan

Embodiment Matters: An Ecospiritual Perspective on the Promises and Challenges of Human Enhancement

People who identify with ecospiritual worldviews have reasons to both fear and welcome recent developments in human enhancement. An ecospiritual worldview understands humans to exist in intertwined social, ecological, and cosmological relationships. Working from that perspective on deep diversity, this paper will navigate tensions and promises brought into being by both currently available human enhancements and aspirational technocentric framings that would take people beyond ecospiritual views on the essential nature of the human person as embodied and situated within a diverse world. This eco-methodological approach to the subject matter brings into focus some advantages and disadvantages of human enhancements. It also provides a demarcation range past which human enhancements are deemed to be damaging to human persons-in-diverse relationships when viewed in light of an ecospiritual anthropology. That range and the problematic implications of seeking to transcend it will be articulated thus providing an ecospiritual critique of transhumanism.

Zachary Gage, University of Manitoba

Human Beings In and Of the World: A Response(able) Epistemology

This paper examines philosopher and esotericist Rudolf Steiner's development of a theory of knowledge that he finds inherent in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Weltanschauung*, though which is never articulated by Goethe himself. Steiner's epistemology offers a challenge, and an alternative, to oppositional frameworks that pit humanity over and against Nature and create a rift between the material and the spiritual, as are found in Newton, Kant, Hegel, and others. Through a close reading of Steiner, I ask questions of what it means to inherit intellectual tradition, how basic elements of the human psyche are understood, and of the place of ethics within epistemology. I also draw on the relational and non-oppositional connotations of Steiner's work to show that he offers a practical epistemology that contributes to responsive and responsible ways of living in the world and its diversity, both material and spiritual.

Clara A.B. Joseph, University of Calgary

Why Another Christianity Needs to Come Back into the Religious Studies Curriculum

There are about fifty institutions in Canada offering courses in Religious Studies. Several of these courses are in Christianity. With very few exceptions, such as the courses in Orthodox and Eastern Christian Studies at Trinity College (U of T), courses at the Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies (U of Manitoba), or the Master of Divinity - Eastern Christian Studies at St. Paul University (Ottawa), both Religious Studies departments and departments of Studies in Christianity ignore the history of the Eastern Churches. In this paper, I will argue -- the assumptions that bind these departments to the study of Western Christianity serve an orientalist function. Through a case study of Eastern Christians of India, I will note some of the implications when the culture and history of a community are ignored in mainstream curriculum. I will propose the value of extending religious studies and studies in Christianity to include Eastern Christianity.

Kristian Klippenstein, University of Alberta

Diversity's Limits in Jonestown and Peoples Temple: From Frame Overlap to Pragmatic Homogeneity

Peoples Temple, a new religious movement founded by Jim Jones (1931–1978) in the 1950s, combined civil rights interests, social gospel Christianity, and socialist ideologies in its doctrines. In recognition of these various concerns, the Temple is often portrayed as attracting a diverse set of members. This diversity, however, gradually coalesced into enforced uniformity. Combining the language of "frame alignment processes" (Snow et. al. 1986) with close analysis of the Temple's recorded meetings, this paper traces the way that Jones mapped political, racial, and social frames onto one another. This paper suggests that these rhetorical acts of frame overlap resulted, ironically, in an increasingly urgent call for homogeneity, rather than diversity, within the movement. Ultimately and tragically, the Temple's early openness to diversity -- coupled with Jones's growing paranoia and the resultant challenge of building a secluded commune -- contributed to its growing demands for uniformity and elision of in-group differences.

Roxanne Korpan, University of Toronto

Insiders/Outsiders & Others: Colonial Historiographies and Anti-Oppressive Scholarship

In this paper, I analyze the "insider/outsider" problem in the study of religion in the context of colonial historiographies. The aim of my examination is twofold: I use the analytical framework of insider/outsider to explore the methodological question of how to write rigorously critical and anti-oppressive colonial historiographies, and I use the context of colonial historiographies to think through the usefulness and limitations of the insider/outsider problem. To do so, I pay particular attention to how the insider/outsider problem authorizes and deauthorizes certain voices and subjectivities, both of historical interlocutors and modern researchers. In so doing, I consider how the insider/outsider problem resolves epistemological issues regarding the possibility of studying those other than ourselves, but on the level of human social relations, this paradigm provides an insufficient methodological foundation for anti-oppressive colonial historiographies because it deauthorizes critical voices.

Justin Jaron Lewis, University of Manitoba

God/dess in Contemporary Jewish Prayer

Many Jews today are dissatisfied with the masculine language and metaphors of traditional prayer. This paper considers two divergent responses in liberal Jewish liturgy. The Reform movement in North America has debated the introduction of explicitly feminine God-language but has by and large opted for gender neutrality. By contrast, the small but dynamic and creative Kohenet movement has produced a prayerbook replete with female characterizations of the divine, drawing on Jewish sources, non-Jewish goddess

traditions, and contemporary creativity. Both of these movements are feminist, with women playing significant roles in the selection and writing of liturgy. They thus provide contrasting answers to the question, across religious boundaries, of the relationship between women's empowerment and Goddess worship.

James Linville, University of Lethbridge

The Wobbling Firmament: The Cosmologies of Young Earth Creationism

Genesis 1 is the scriptural center of Young Earth Creationism's (YEC) worldview but when variously expanded with observations of the natural world and secular science a variety of cosmologies are derived. This paper will argue that this diversity is not simply the result of an uncertainty as to which scientific observations best fit the Genesis 1 account. Rather, creationist culture is engaged in an active process of myth making that scholars of religion should expect to result in multiple forms of core myths stemming from different personal beliefs and preferences, and addressing differing social concerns. Taken all together, however, the diversity testifies to the social status of scientific language in the creationism movement as a lens through which scripture must be understood, while the production and consumption of creationist science become significant practices within the cultural expression of creationist Christianity.

Ted Malcolmson, University of Ottawa

From Carter to C14: Assisted Dying From Court to Criminal Code

This paper does a context analysis of bill C14, looking at what interests were at play for the government actors who made changes to the criminal code after the Carter case. It will focus on determining what interests were at play in contesting the language while writing the bill.

Richard Mann, Carleton University.

Sikhs in the Public Sphere in Canada

This paper explores the tension between Canada's official commitment to multiculturalism and secularism particularly in describing what has been labelled as 'Canadian values' by some Canadian politicians and media sources. This essay explores the representations of Sikhs in newspapers in Canada since the 1980s to the current era. Specifically the essay examines two case studies. The first relates to media reports of Sikhs after the bombing of Air India Flight 182 in June 23, 1985. The second examines debates in Canadian media from the 1990s related to the wearing of turbans by Sikh RCMP officers. This examination of the representations of Sikhs and the Sikh tradition by media sources questions the acceptance of Canadian society relative to minority traditions

Chris Miller, University of Waterloo

Atheist Humour and the Performance of Boundary Maintenance

Atheist comedy is a brand of humour found in stand-up comedy, movies and TV shows, which participates in boundary maintenance between their group and those belonging to all other religions. Boundary maintenance is a discursive strategy of one group explaining how another group with antithetical beliefs continues to exist. This specific form of boundary maintenance is unique, since rather than actively building a case for scientific explanations of natural phenomena, it functions by deconstructing and mocking the beliefs of other groups. Rather than relying on scientists who can properly explain the group's belief, comedians are at the forefront of a movement which hopes to destabilize and eliminate religion from the public sphere. This paper analyzes the discursive techniques employed by several atheist comedians to analyze how their humour constructs religions and religious people as 'Others' who are laughable and confused at best, and manipulative or harmful at worst.

Nilofar Noor and M. Syed, University of Toronto

Reflections on Interfaith Art-Making as a Means to Exploring Feminist Religiosity

This reflective paper will address the experience of art-making as a vehicle for self-expression, exploration of feminist identities and connection with the sacred and the divine through religious scriptures. Specifically, we will revisit our participation in a community-based art-making project in Toronto that explored women's relationship with Islamic and Jewish religious scriptures. First, we will explore the aesthetics (e.g. techniques, colours and symbols) and themes (ideologies, self-discoveries and critical engagements) incorporated in our artwork that emerged from our reading of religious scriptures and cultural traditions that focused on the topics of women and womanhood. Further, we will highlight how on an individual level, this project of Muslim and Jewish women's collective art-making impacted our own sense of religiosity and spirituality and at a broader level, motivated us towards interfaith dialogue and establishing solidarity/community-building with fellow women.

Maria Power, University of Liverpool

Embracing Religious Diversity in Political Discourse: Lessons from Faith-Based Institutions in Northern Ireland

During the conflict in Northern Ireland, language was a weapon, phrases such as 'Brits Out' and 'Ulster Says No!' dominated the political landscape. In addition to such decidedly political phrases, community leaders also used specifically religious language, such as the phrase 'For God and Ulster', as a means of denigrating opponents and ensuring that God belonged exclusively to either the Catholic or Protestant community, but never to both. Such requisitioning of religious phrases was deeply problematic for churches and faith-based organisations in Northern Ireland, the majority of whom were working quietly and diligently towards peace and reconciliation. Using 20 years worth of the presenter's fieldwork in Northern Ireland, this paper will demonstrate how faith-based groups there sought to use dialogue to overcome the violent divisions caused by the use of such language, and help participants to understand the strength that diversity can bring to the pursuit of peace and reconciliation.

Anne Read, Independent Scholar

Ingathering of the Unaffiliated: Engaging Jewish Youth Through Ecology, Awe, and Wonder

This case study investigates the role cultivating relationship with land –both ancestral and local, has in the social construction of Jewish identity, and addresses the increasing popularity of Jewish environmental programs among unaffiliated Jewish youth. Drawing on survey data, site visits, and participant interviews, this research focuses on Shores: Jewish Environmental Programs, the only Canadian centre for earth-based Judaism. Shores, which locates environmental ethics and responsible stewardship as central elements of Jewish identity, is currently the largest Jewish environmental centre in North America. This work reveals how the Jewish environmental movement is transforming the way contemporary Jewish youth identify with, and approach, land. By analyzing how Jewish environmental educators leverage environment ethics and apply the laws of the agricultural cult of the ancient Israelites to address issues of food sustainability, this project demonstrates evidence of an alternative mechanism for creating a sustained Jewish identity.

Ilham Reda, McGill University.

Individuality and Public Reason in Religious Education and Liberal Societies

The discussion paper aims to explore Eamonn Callan's advocacy for the inclusion of John Rawls's liberal conception of justice in citizenship education, and is contrasted with Barry L. Bull's criticism of liberal individualism and educational alternative. Their works will be studied by utilizing discourse analysis as methodology and John Rawls's political liberalism as the theoretical framework and analytical loop. The research will be complemented by my hypothesis that conceptions of good and justice in religious sacred texts allows for reflectiveness and reasonableness needed to reach consensus. I sustain that public reasonableness and rational deliberation are needed to reach agreements in religiously diverse societies while maintaining harmony with the state's choice of principles of justice. I argue that philosophically, the conception of justice and morality in religious traditions as presented in the Qur'an, the Muslim sacred text, is aligned with liberal conceptions of the good.

Noel Salmond, Carleton University

Voices in the Ktunaxa Case and Reactions to the Ktunaxa Decision

The Ktunaxa First Nation has been battling for two decades against the development of a ski resort in a valley held as sacred and deemed the abode of the Grizzly Bear Spirit. In November 2017, the Supreme Court of Canada issued its decision rejecting the Ktunaxa appeal which it had heard in December of 2016. The case is highly significant regarding the court's understanding of Indigenous religion and also significant as it attracted the attention of a variety of non-Indigenous religious organizations who obtained intervenor status in the case being concerned about its implications for freedom of religion. The paper analyzes the invocation of the sacred by the Ktunaxa, the invocation of the sublime (ironically) by the developer, and ends with a Durkheimian reading of the response of National Chief Perry Bellegarde the day the decision came down.

Manvitha Singamsetty, University of Ottawa

Religious Diversity and Non-Human Animals

In this paper I analyze the role religion plays in contemporary issues in environmental justice. Religion, within a liberal democratic worldview, tends to pose structural limitations to the ways in which religion could or would be conceived of in, say, Indigenous frameworks. For example, I present the case of First Nation, Metis, and Inuit populations in Canada, their "practice" of religion and how it connects with their claims for environmental justice. To elaborate, I draw on the Creation myths and stories of the Ojibwe, Cree and Mi'kmaq peoples and focus on the fluidity of the self between human and non human beings expressed within these stories. By taking these ontological frameworks and epistemological principles seriously, I argue that it becomes possible to a) conceptually – revise ways in which religion can be theorized; b) practically, these analyses help us broaden our understanding of religious diversity, and its connection to environmental justice.

Julia Stenzel, McGill University

Compassionate but not Religious

Following the lead of the steadily expanding mindfulness movement, Buddhism-derived secular compassion training has entered mainstream American culture. This paper explores the question of what it means when a Buddhist meditation that was embedded in a religious framework including the belief in karma, rebirth, awakening, and emptiness, is transformed into a strictly nonreligious exercise that claims to produce compassion for others, but also scientifically measurable health benefits for its trainees. Interestingly, the principal agents in the transformation process are Buddhist scholars themselves. They follow a long hermeneutic tradition of adapting teachings to the needs and understanding of the time. This paper examines the transformation of the compassion meditation dubbed “equalizing and exchange” that emerged in 8th century India (Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra*) but was transformed in Tibet’s Mind Training tradition in such fundamental ways that its subsequent secularization in 21st century North America was rendered possible.

Cory Steele, University of Ottawa

Caskets in the Courtroom: The Supreme Court of Canada’s Understanding of Suffering and Death

In 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in its Carter decision that the prohibitions against physician-assisted dying were unconstitutional because they violated an individual’s section 7 rights as guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. While the jurisprudence of this case is certainly interesting, what is of particular interest to this paper is the Court’s shift from religious to nonreligious interpretations of concepts (e.g., life) that were once at the heart of religious doctrine. Using the results of a discourse analysis of the Carter decision, this paper questions the ‘secularity’ of the Court by examining the changing nature of the Court’s interpretation of suffering and death from religious to nonreligious. This paper asks: is the Supreme Court of Canada a ‘secular’ institution based on its nonreligious conceptualization of suffering and death and what implications does this have in a religiously diverse Canadian society?

Connor Thompson, University of Regina

Dreams, Visions, Promises: The Canadian State and Ethno-Religious Settlement on the Prairies

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many idealistic and utopian dreams, visions, and promises were created regarding what Canadian Prairie society could be. However, in writing the history of ethno-religious Prairie settlements from this period, what has perhaps been neglected is the explicit acknowledgement that some form of political power was often necessary for facilitating religious goals. These political ambitions occasionally conflicted with the Canadian state, leading to either the demise of these utopian societies as envisioned, or some form of accommodation: of the settlers to the government, or the government to the settlers. I will demonstrate that the Canadian state holds a Protestant-normative definition of what religion is, and will reflect on the implications of this research for understanding recent conflicts between religious orientations and the Canadian state – particularly, the recent court ruling on the Ktunaxa First Nations’ objections regarding the development of Jumbo Glacier.

Sharday Mosurinjohn Washburn and Emma Funnell-Kononuk, Queens University

The “Spiritual Quest” of Youth Social Justice Organization Free the Children

Free the Children is Canada’s largest youth empowerment initiative. It neither defines itself as religion or alternative to religion, but uses the language of spirituality, aligns well with Knott’s (2013) characterization of ‘the secular sacred,’ Dawson’s (2006) criteria for NRMs, and du Toit’s (2006) ‘secular spirituality.’ In previous work we proposed ‘new secular spiritual movement’ as a heuristic for exploring the relationship between FtC and religion and spirituality. However, this conceptual analysis did not explain what the experience of FtC membership is actually like. We do so here by using Benson and Roehkpartain’s (2008) and Astin, Astin, and Lindholm’s (2011) theories of youth spirituality to frame three sets of qualitative data, plus Schechner’s ‘efficacy/entertainment braid’ model as a way of dealing with ritual in an expanded field. Our analysis demonstrates how the spiritual meaning offered by FtC is produced by a ‘quest’ propelled by ritual.

Galen Watts, Queen’s University

The Gender Puzzle Revisited: Contemporary Spirituality and the Rise of the Feminine

Debates surrounding the increasing popularity of the “spiritual but not religious” (SBNR) moniker have tended to be couched in terms of rising individualism, the loss of traditional forms of community, and the spread of consumer culture. Resultantly, little attention has been given to what Woodhead and Heelas (2005) call the “gender puzzle,” referring to why, historically, more women than men have been interested in alternative spirituality. In this paper, I turn my attention to this much-ignored, yet pertinent, subject. Drawing from in-depth interviews conducted with Canadian millennials who self-identify as SBNR, I demonstrate that SBNR spirituality values traditionally feminine characteristics—emotional, nurturing, flexible and peaceable—in both men and women. I then trace the intimate relationship between feminist and alternative religious movements in the West, and conclude that the increasing number of both female and male SBNR millennials is evidence of what we might call the rise of the feminine.

PANELS

1. On Anguish and Delight in Hindu Cosmology

Panel Abstract: What is enlightenment if not a turning of anguish into delight? This panel will reflect on the themes of the cosmogonic and cosmological in Vedic and Puranic traditions which appear to indicate a parallel between the enlightenment of the individual and the birth of the world. President: Brenda Anderson, University of Regina

Michelle Folk, University of Regina

Anguish Instead of Delight: The Articulation of Salvation by Tamil Bhaktas

The nāyaṅmār Cuntarar traversed the Tamil landscape. While singing praises of Śiva at Chidambaram's temple as the great lord at Puliūr, he also sang of the god who had Umā as half of his body, embracing Tamil and brāhmanical symbolism to articulate his devotion to a lord who would rather enslave his devotee than take him in death (Tēvāram 90). Re-formulated in Cēkkilār's Periya Purāṇam, the bhakti of the nāyaṅmārs was also articulated in the material culture of Tamilnadu, as in the story of the Periya Purāṇam on the walls of the Darasuram temple. Using methods from intersemiotic translation, I will examine nāyaṅmār poetry and material culture to understand how the cosmological was perceived in the Tamil milieu: it is the Śiva who begets anguish instead of delight, bringing enlightenment to his devotees.

Adela Sandness, St. Francis Xavier University

The Enemy is Us: The Rgvedic Indra versus Vṛtrā Myth as a Prototype for Enlightenment

The Rgvedic story of the hero Indra who defeats the demon Vṛtrā, the model for all subsequent Hindu god versus demon stories, is usually considered a story of external conflict. Indra is a great warrior, with a well-developed taste for sōma; he is also, however, a poet and priest. Using as his weapon the vājra (thunder bolt), his destruction of Vṛtrā – whose name means “Obstacle” – permits him to cut through the space in-between the primordial realm and the world of form. There are several variations in which the act is perceived as cosmogonic. Using the methods developed by Elizarenkova, and the Moscow Tartu School of Semiotics, this paper will examine elements of the story of Indra versus Vṛtrā which indicate that this is rather a question of internal, spiritual warriorship and the prototype for both Hindu and Buddhist perceptions of enlightenment. The enemy is us.

2. Canadian Laws and Indigenous Lands: Conceptualizations of Sacred Space, Religion, and Ceremony

Panel Abstract: Canada is currently experiencing an upswing in questions of land, law, and legitimacy due to Indigenous nations' territorial and rights-based claims. In some cases, these claims are expressed and negotiated in relation to sacred space, religion, and ceremony. This interdisciplinary panel asks how such concepts function in relation to land in Canadian jurisprudence and Indigenous activism. Drawing from religious studies, political science, and legal scholarship, papers explore: the legal frames and conceptual references that shape understandings of sacred space; the functional opposition of public interest and religion in the November 2017 *Ktunaxa Nation v. British Columbia* ruling; and, the “Reoccupation” of Parliament Hill as an exercise of Indigenous jurisdiction through ceremony. President: Stacie Swain, University of Victoria.

Michael Ruecker, University of Toronto

Religion, Public Interest, and the State's Obligation to Encourage Outdoor Recreation

In this paper, I analyze the concepts of “religion” and “public interest” in the recent decision by the Supreme Court of Canada on the *Ktunaxa Nation v. British Columbia* case. I begin with general observations about the history of these two concepts in both Canadian law and liberal political theories, which tend to put the concepts in opposition with one another, and require governments to defend a general “public interest” against particular “religious” interests. In light of these histories, I move on to question whether Canadian courts are able to understand non-property-based conceptions of land as matters of public interest, or if such conceptions can only be viewed as religious interests. Finally, I consider whether the Supreme Court's understanding of these concepts undermines the federal and provincial governments' stated goals of implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and working towards reconciliation with First Nations.

Stacie Swain, University of Victoria

The Reoccupation of Parliament Hill: Indigenous Ceremony as an Exercise of Jurisdiction

On the night of 28 June 2017, a grassroots and Indigenous-led movement called “Reoccupation” entered the Canadian parliamentary grounds to erect a teepee and hold a four-day public ceremony. In this paper, I draw upon the December 2016 Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation land claim to characterize Parliament Hill as contested land subject to a plurality of legal and governance orders. I then consider the rhetorical and political significance of Reoccupation's emphasis upon their inherent right to perform ceremony on unceded Algonquin territory. Initially held back by police but then able to remain until 1 July, the Reoccupation of Parliament Hill prefaced the climax of Canada 150 and challenged Canadian legitimacy. With ceremony conceptualized as an exercise of Indigenous jurisdiction, I close by considering state responses to Reoccupation as techniques of containment.

3. Diverse Textual Sources in the Study of Buddhism

Panel Abstract: This panel will explore a diverse selection of Buddhist texts that challenge the ways in which Buddhist literature is commonly conceived and utilized in the study of the tradition. In the first instance, and by using digital humanities methods, one short commentarial digest on monastic rules will be analyzed in order to query the ways in which commentaries are written. In the second instance, a unique piece of Chinese Buddhist apocrypha will be investigated with the purpose of examining the utility of apocrypha for studies of gender in religion. And in the third instance, the possibility of a genre of narrative naturalism in ancient India will be explored, with the aim of discovering what such a genre might offer to the field of Buddhist Studies. As a whole, the aim of the panel is to show the dynamic research potential that non-normative sources hold for the study of Buddhism. President: Gerjan Altenburg, McMaster University.

Gerjan Altenburg, McMaster University

Whose Line is it Anyway? Reflections on Textual Borrowing in the Pratimokṣasāhīśmaranapada

No part of Danasila's Indian Buddhist commentary, the Pratimokṣasāhīśmaranapada (hereafter Abhismaranapada), is truly original. Rather its author, Danasila, merely condensed and rearranged material from other Buddhist textual sources. Extant in a classical Tibetan translation, Danasila's Abhismaranapada functions as a digest of commentaries on the Pratimokṣasūtra (the list of rules of individual conduct pertaining to Buddhist monks). The contents of his Abhismaranapada appear verbatim, scattered throughout longer commentaries on the Pratimokṣasūtra, also available in the Tibetan Buddhist Canon. In this paper, I use digital collation to map textual borrowing in the contents of the Abhismaranapada. In uncovering the extent to which other Pratimokṣasūtra commentaries share content with the Abhismaranapada, I discern which premodern monastic authors drew upon shared Pratimokṣasūtra commentarial traditions.

Stephanie Balkwill, University of Winnipeg

Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha as a Gendered Medium: On the Sutra on Transforming the Female Form

In no text of the Buddhist tradition does a woman ever become a Buddha in her own body. Instead, if she'd like to become a Buddha, she must first become a man. No clear explanation has been provided in Buddhist texts as to why the female body is so restricted. In seeking answers, scholarship has long pointed to latent misogynistic interpretations of the body rampant in Buddhist literature. And yet, my own research into the textual archives of early medieval China has revealed a unique Chinese apocryphal text which both contests and reinterprets this problem, situating it as a problem of gender and not of sex. By exploring the text and its creation, my paper will put forth the possibility that Buddhist apocrypha provided a means for re-encoding the gendered practices of women in a canonical form, and that this mattered to women of early medieval China.

Diego Loukota Sanclemente, University of California, Los Angeles

Kumaralata's "Garland of Examples" and Narrative Naturalism in Buddhist Literature

A widespread scholarly notion presupposes the ancient Indian mind to be primarily concerned with the eternal truths of philosophy and religion to the detriment of a description of the real world. As other stereotypes, this one may contain a kernel of truth, but it holds especially inadequate to characterize a genre of naturalistic Buddhist and Jaina literature that engages with a description of contemporary society rather than with the evocation of a legendary past. These narratives developed during a phase of urban life in ancient India that was followed by a process of dramatic de-urbanization. My paper traces the trajectory of this narrative literature with a focus on Kumaralata's "Garland of Examples Adorned by Poetic Fancy," a pivotal text in the development of the genre, with an eye to exploring what the text tells us about the practice and portrayal of Buddhist faith in early India.

Respondent: Christopher Jensen, Carleton University

4. Gendered Dharmas: Women and Practice of Buddhism in Pre-Modern Asia

Panel Abstract: This panel will query the diverse ways in which women have practiced unique forms of the Buddha's teachings by using three specific, extra-canonical texts of the Buddhist tradition from across pre-modern Asia. With the three papers examining early Indian Buddhism, early medieval Chinese Buddhism, and Late Imperial Chinese Buddhism, the texts which serve as sources for the papers include both literary and historiographical genres that depict the Buddhist practices of women in ways that we simply do not see in popular Buddhist sutra literature. Such a gendered analysis is important for it allows us to challenge the notion that though women practiced Buddhism just as their male counterparts did, their voices have been silenced. Rather, the three papers in this panel show that women practiced Buddhism differently than did their male counterparts, and that their voices are clearly heard when one looks outside of mainstream Buddhist literature. President: Stephanie Balkwill, University of Winnipeg

Susan Andrews, Mt. Allison University

Hermits, Pilgrims, and Teaching Tempresses: Women in the Early Literature of China's Mount Wutai

The earliest records of China's Mount Wutai include many fascinating but little studied accounts of the roles that women—real and imagined—played at this holy territory. Set prior to the eighth century, these materials include references to lay and ordained pilgrims practicing individually and in large groups at the mountain, as well as dramatic stories of the Buddhist deity Manjusri's (Wenshu) appearance there in female form. Focusing on these little-studied miracle tales, this paper explores the ways the religious lives of women practitioners were imagined during the period of Mount Wutai's transformation from a place of local significance to an international religious center. In addition to Huixiang's (seventh-century) *Gu Qingliang zhuan* (Ancient Chronicle of Mount Clear and Cool), key sources for this work include writings of Daoxuan (596-667) and Daoshi (?-683).

Crystal Beaudoin, McMaster University

Female Religious Practices and Agency in the Novel Jin Ping Mei

In the patriarchal milieu of sixteenth-century China, women demonstrated agency in their communities through their religious practices. Male family members typically performed Confucian rites related to ancestor veneration; yet there were many opportunities for women to participate in practices associated with other religious traditions. The Ming dynasty (1368–1644 CE) religious scene was eclectic, and this is certainly evident in the novel *Jin ping mei*. Shifting opportunities for religious practice afforded women agency and freedoms that were, in some cases, unique to this historical period. In this paper, I analyze a practice in which the female characters of *Jin ping mei* frequently engage: supporting the sangha. Based on this case study, I argue that literary sources, when used in conjunction with other sources, support the construction of a more nuanced understanding of gender roles in early modern China.

Manvinder Gill, University of Winnipeg

Agency Through Adornments in Indian Buddhism

In Indian Buddhist discourse, liberation cannot be attained until one has renounced all attachments. For men, attachment primarily manifests as desire towards women while for women, attachment is strongest towards their children and bodies. A woman's body is the locus of her beauty and is where the desire that she elicits from men is located, and this body includes her jewelry and various bodily adornments. Although Indian Buddhist texts perpetuate the essentialist notion of the inherent differences between men and women and the attendant superiority of the male form, this paper will use the discourse of Saba Mahmood alongside the Buddhist notion of non-conceptuality to situate the female practice of bodily adornment as a form of agency and not of oppression. Through narratives featuring pious women, the use of bodily practices—specifically wearing adornments—will be situated as an agential action that serves a liberating purpose.

Responding: Stephanie Balkwill, University of Winnipeg

5. Intra-Umma Dissonance: Intolerance Within the Muslim Umma

Panel Abstract: The rise of Muslim exclusivism, sometimes violent, is not a new phenomenon but has existed within umma for centuries and mainly targets other Muslims. This type of intolerance is known as Takfirism and is best described as an ideology that perpetuates a particular Muslim ideology as the only legitimate one, dehumanizing millions of other Muslims in the process. Takfiri ideology, arguably, is the underlying cause of Muslim intolerance, usually with other Muslim communities. This panel explores Canadian examples of intra-umma dissonance as a result of such supremacist thinking. Whether it is stigmatizing Muslim men and women who do not adhere to another Muslim's way of being 'Muslim' or the overall rejection of a particular Muslim community's legitimacy, this type of intolerance is having an effect on Muslim unity and identity in Canada. Presenter: Alyshea Cummins, University of Ottawa.

Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University

A Question of Authenticity: How Do Canadian Muslims View Each Other?

This paper examines the religious expression of Canadian Muslims about their fellow Muslims. Are they authentic Muslims or inauthentic? Are certain sects of Muslims viewed as being more prone to violence or not? Using ethnographic data from interviews conducted in two SSHRC funded projects, this paper reports the results of the way Muslims from different sectarian backgrounds view themselves in relation to other Muslims who have grown up in Canada. 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 in comparison with the larger Muslim cohort. In order to better understand the creation of an Islamic religious identity within the Canadian context, it is necessary to examine not just the integration and acculturation experiences of Canadian Muslims amongst non-Muslim Canadians, but amongst other Muslims also growing up in Canada.

Alyshea Cummins, University of Ottawa

The Navigation of Ismaili Muslim Identity in the Context of Intra-Umma Identity Construction(s)

In the diaspora, Muslim migrants are confronted with other Muslims that differ in culture, language, ethnicity, socio-political history, and school of thought. This diversity is not always accepted, often as a result of intolerant and rigid ways of thinking. Although a lot of scholarship has been conducted on the impact of Islamophobia on Muslim identity, little has been done to examine the effects of intra-umma intolerance on Muslim identity. Using original survey findings and open-ended in-depth interviews, this paper explores how the Shi'i Nizari Ismailis, a minority Muslim community in Canada, negotiate their Muslim identity in the context of intra-umma dissonance. Through narratives, this paper showcases subtle and overt examples of intolerance Ismailis face when confronted with other members of the umma in the Canadian diaspora and how they are responding to this intolerance.

Sana Patel, University of Ottawa

Identities of Muslim Women as "Transgressors" Through Veiling and Unveiling

The practice of veiling is common among Muslim women and it is a topic of great discussion and controversy within and outside of the Muslim community. Stereotypes of Muslim women include their victimization of oppression or not having any agency in some or all aspects of their lives. This has resulted in alienation and othering of some Muslim women. This paper seeks to examine the collective identity of "transgressors" formed by the women who veil, don't veil, or unveil as a part of constructing their Muslim identities and in turn were rejected by their religious communities and loved ones. Using an intersectionality perspective, this paper analyses the challenges that Muslim women who practice wearing the hijab, or who decide to no longer wear the hijab face within and outside the Muslim community.

Responding: Qamer Hameed, Policy Analyst, Government of Canada

6. Research in Action: Navigating Sensitive Topics

Panel Abstract: This panel of experienced academic researchers explores issues in the research process when working in sensitive areas.

Heather Shipley, York University

Religion, Sexual Diversity and Youth

My core research interest continues to be to reflect on the relationship (negotiation, conflict, cohabitation) of religious and sexual diversity; both in their lived dynamics but also to consider the limitations placed on that relationship in law, public and policy debates. In the process of examining these subjects, including conducting surveys, interviews, and focus groups, what I have also been (unwittingly at times) examining is how research about sensitive subjects is viewed – by research ethics boards, by participants, by individuals peripherally engaged in the debates. While it's important for researchers to be sensitive of the work we are doing, it has also become apparent that part of our job is negotiating the presentation of these communities more broadly to demonstrate systemic issues and also the strength and resilience in the face of systemic disadvantages.

Franz Volker Griefenhagen, Luther College, University of Regina

Doing Research on [and Teaching About] Muslims in a Multicultural Islamophobic Age

In this presentation, I reflect on the sometimes unsettling experience of doing and disseminating research on Muslims against a background of Canadian multiculturalism that purports to support and encourage cultural and religious diversity, and of a toxic Islamophobic environment especially on-line. Bruce Lincoln discounts the role of "friend and advocate" as being part of religious studies scholarship while others encourage engaged or activist scholarship. Negotiating this tension in terms of the interplay of emic and etic perspectives, and irenic and critical approaches, is explored through two themes: the danger of being drawn into intra-Muslim disputes, and the contested relationship, especially in the case of Islam, between religion and violent extremism.

Catherine Caufield, Concordia University of Edmonton

The More Things Change the More They Stay the Same

The current heightened context of public shaming and the denial of public funding, job loss, and professional shunning in the wake of expressing positions that are inconsistent with "political correctness" is enough to instill fear in all but the most intrepid academics. Is the mandate of academic researchers to broaden knowledge of our world? If so, is there an ethical issue regarding the role of the researcher at stake here? In the current context, should an academic researcher, particularly those in the burgeoning untenured cadre of university faculty, simply avoid sensitive topics? Should only conforming research be publicly funded, presented, and published in the high impact journals? Are there times and places and approaches in which

including non-conforming research content in liberal academic discussion and debate is not tantamount to sharing the experience of Galileo facing the Roman Inquisition?

ROUNDTABLES

1. Author Meets Critics: *Religion and Intimate Partner Violence: Understanding Challenges and Proposing Solutions* (Oxford University Press, 2018)

Religion and Intimate Partner Violence: Understanding Challenges and Proposing Solutions, Oxford University Press, 2018. Nancy Nason-Clark, Barbara Fisher-Townsend, Catherine Holtmann and Stephen McMullin. The publication navigates the relatively uncharted waters of intimate partner violence in families of faith. The program of research on which it is based spans over twenty-five years, and includes a variety of studies involving religious leaders, congregations, battered women, men in batterer intervention programs, and the workers who assist families impacted by abuse, including criminal justice workers, therapeutic staff, advocacy workers, and religious leaders. The authors provide a rich portrayal of the intersection of intimate partner violence and religious beliefs and practices that inform daily life. The focus on lived religion enables readers to evaluate ways in which religion both augments and thwarts the journey towards justice, accountability, healing and wholeness for women and men caught in the web of intimate partner violence.

Heather Shipley, York University
Darlene Juschka, University of Regina
Mary Ann Beavis, St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan
Responding: Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick

2. Career Fulfilment Panel

This panel brings together a number of graduates from the Masters in Religious Studies at University of Regina to hear about how they have built on their Religious Studies work, opening diverse and wide-ranging career paths. Includes time for discussion and questions. President: Catherine Caufield, Concordia University Edmonton

Jesse Bailey, BA Hons, MA
Michelle Korpan, BA Hons, JD
Kirsten Hanson, BA Hons, MA
Andrew Lawn, BA Hons, MA
Morgan Hunter, BA, BEd, MA
Jyoti S. Haeusler, BA Hons, MA, JD
Responding: Catherine Caufield, Concordia University Edmonton

3. New Muslim Public Spheres in the Digital Age: Stages of Research, Methodology and Mentorship

This roundtable features the work of co-investigators, collaborators and graduate researchers in a national, qualitative research project interviewing Canadian Muslims on digital practices. Presentations emphasise the stages of work in this multi-year effort. Conversations on changes in digital technology since the inception of this project in 2012, the role of digital activism amongst Muslim youth, the impact that differences in cultural ethnicity may have on individual and community usage of technology, and the significance that geographical location may have in the role of the digital in religious beliefs and practices, are generated from first-hand experiences of interviewers and transcribers and are examined through the four areas of interest to this project: authority, identity, community and diversity. The importance of supervised research opportunities and mentorship for graduate students will be highlighted. President: Brenda Anderson and Franz Volker Greifenhagen, University of Regina

Sumaira Alwani, Luther College at The University of Regina
Mehmet Ali Basak, Memorial University
Morad Bkhait, Université du Québec à Montréal
Maysa Haque, Luther College at The University of Regina
Kiera Mitchell, Luther College at The University of Regina
Jenna Tickell, Luther College at The University of Regina
Responding: Brenda Anderson and Franz Volker Greifenhagen, University of Regina

4. Space: The Final Frontier—Negotiating Religion and Identity

For our Roundtable, we will discuss diverse types of spaces. The spaces we focus on are the digital, secular, educational, and social and how religion is negotiated within each of them. We begin our discussion with Lisa R. Duggan's (University of Waterloo) examination of how a religion changes and adapts from the physical to the digital world. We then turn our discussion to Elizabeth Guthrie's (University of Waterloo) spatial analysis comparison of multi-faith prayer spaces in a secular university and hospital setting. Doaa Shalabi (University of Waterloo) will then talk about religious diversity in Muslim Student Associations in secular universities. Finally, Sahver Kuzucuoglu (Wilfrid Laurier University) will detail the experiences of invisible minorities and decolonializing identity negotiation in social spaces. President: Elizabeth Guthrie, University of Waterloo

Lisa Duggan, University of Waterloo
Elizabeth Guthrie, University of Waterloo
Doaa Shalabi, University of Waterloo
Sahver Kuzucuoglu, Wilfrid Laurier University