

RELIGION

A HUMAN PHENOMENON



XXTH WORLD CONGRESS
of the
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
for the
HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

BOOK *of* ABSTRACTS

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

15-21 August 2010

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FOREWORD

As has been pointed out in the program statement on the Congress web site and in the Congress Program Book, the call for papers for the XXth International Congress of the IAHR solicited contributions to the study of religion as a human phenomenon which describe new data relevant to understanding religion, hermeneutical/interpretative contributions that might provide insightful redescriptions of religions and religion, or contributions that make possible broader explanatory and theoretical accounts of religion. The overall objective of this 'framework' for the program is to provide a degree of constraint on presentations that will allow the common scientific objectives of the multiplicity of university discipline engaged in the study of religious phenomena to emerge. Despite these constraints, the Program Committee also called for critical historical, philosophical, and methodological contributions to understanding the nature of the academic study of religion as a scientific undertaking in the context of the modern research university. The Committee has also 'made room' for the presentation of innovative approaches to the study of religion that might appear to run counter to the 'scientific constraints' championed by the IAHR. Nevertheless, we trust that this 'framework' for the academic program of the Congress will provide both coherence and focus to the great diversity of subjects and projects represented in the abstracts included in this volume. The Committee, however, also wishes to encourage discussion and interaction across the disciplines and has not, therefore, imposed these constraints on the program itself in an effort to influence a particular kind of participation in the congress sessions.

The abstracts were of great value to the section and sub-section chairs of the Program Committee in adjudicating not only the appropriateness of the contributions to the objectives of the IAHR, but also in evaluating the soundness of the research and scholarship promised in them. Individual papers were then put together in panels along thematic and/or methodological lines as indicated by the panel sessions in the Program Book. The Committee also worked cooperatively with their colleagues in the approval of pre-organized panels of papers, poster sessions and other non-traditional modes of presentation.

Given the diversity of the modes of presentations offered, this draft of the abstract book will not include the names of all the participants in the academic program. Scholars involved in consultations/round-table discussions or in poster sessions, among others, have not provided individual abstracts. Furthermore, complicating an already complex program, the Congress Secretariat's extension of the deadline for the submission of proposals for the program has made it difficult for the Secretariat to ensure that all accepted abstracts have been included, and late withdrawals from participation in the Congress will undermine its accuracy. Since the book of abstracts can accurately reflect the program delivered in Toronto only after the event has taken place, the Secretariat will provide an updated version of this volume upon the conclusion of the Congress.

As we have noted on the Congress web site, for environmental and financial reasons the Congress Secretariat decided not to publish a hard copy version of the abstracts. Given the information about sessions provided in the Program Book we hope that having access to the abstracts on the web site (as well as to a number of hard copies in common areas of the Congress venue) will be sufficient to get you to the sessions of most interest and value to you.

Donald Wiebe
Congress Director

Plenary Presentations

In order of Presentation

Catherine L. Albanese – University of California,
Santa Barbara, USA

HISTORICAL IMAGINATION AND CHANNELLED THEOLOGY: TEXTS AND CONTEXTS

*(Sponsored by the Department of Religion, University of
Alabama)*

The phenomenon called channeling has received a good deal of attention in the popular media as well as some interest from psychologists, parapsychologists, neuroscientists, and other professionals from similar fields. Yet little if any attention has been paid to the content of channeling messages as forms of theological expression and as little to the ways that channeled messages reflect a historical imagination that depends on previous ideas and constructions. This is unfortunate because the productions of channels represent a sizable body of popular literature – literature that has frequently made its way to the top of best-seller lists in the nonfiction category. Still more, even a cursory survey of the themes of this literature suggests that it transmits serious religious reflection in ways that connect to recent cultural history and present-day concerns, even as the channeled messages show evidence of more-than-happenstance connections with one another. Channeled theologies address some of the most acute spiritual problems of our times, and they do so in ways that reflect a school of thought in which theological expression builds on previous work. In fact, the messages often offer cosmologies and soteriologies that respond to major cultural currents in ways that compete with more traditional (and professionally produced) theologies. These messages, at the same time, bounce off one another with a circumscribed set of themes as descriptions and prescriptions. Indeed, at times they shift, almost, into novella mode as they recount their stories and messages in what seem didactic fictions.

In this context, I will look at key texts from twentieth- and twenty-first-century channeled sources. It will, at the same time, examine important contextualizing works that give us major clues to the cultural world from which these texts have emanated. My task will be one of introducing this body of material as well as one of intellectual analysis and historical criticism from a religious-studies perspective. What are the main theological themes reflected in this literature? From whence, in terms of textual sources, might the channeled works have originated or received suggestions? To what cultural events and moments are they responding? Do they agree with one another? What attracts them to seekers?

As these questions tell, my work will highlight the historicity of these messages and the various intellectual domains they represent.

To be more specific, I will be looking at a Theosophical and New Thought lineage, often blended, that includes the work of Alice Bailey, Guy Ballard, Jane Roberts, and Esther Hicks. Untangling the sources for these productions can be a challenging business, but there are some large clues in their rhetorical construction that point in both textual and contextual directions. Meanwhile, their channeled worlds fan out into a larger, more accessible new spirituality. Here the mode of theological presentation – channeled “revelation” – begins to take a back seat to the practicality of cosmologies that swiftly morph into guides for everyday living.

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David Sloan Wilson – Binghamton University, USA

RELIGION AS A PRODUCT OF EVOLUTION

*(Sponsored by the College of Arts and Science,
University of Vermont)*

Evolutionary theory is becoming a powerful framework for the study of religion, but not in the way that most people think. It is *not* new to study religion as a human construction. Even the earliest religious scholars, such as Durkheim, James, and Frazer avoided the concept of an intervening God as scrupulously as Darwin. What's new about evolutionary theory is its capacity to *organize* the voluminous knowledge about religion in particular and cultural systems in general. The 21st century will witness an integration of knowledge about humanity from an evolutionary perspective, comparable to the integration of the biological sciences during the 20th century (and continuing). I will provide a broad overview of what evolutionary theory means for the study and practice of religion.

William Arnal – University of Regina, Canada

**WHAT HAS ATHENS TO DO WITH JERUSALEM?
CHRISTIAN ORIGINS WITHIN, AND WITHOUT,
RELIGION**

*(Sponsored by the Department of Religious Studies,
University of Alberta)*

To describe a phenomenon as ‘human’ means, in its strongest sense, that it is seen to have arisen from mechanisms and principles that are universal; that the phenomenon in questions is in some way common to the variegated human species. The study of the New Testament/Christian Origins, by contrast, has for the most part been bogged down in historical specificity, driven, moreover, by apologetic agenda that insist upon the unique and inexplicable origins of Christianity. This paper will argue that the concept of religion does indeed assist us in taking preliminary steps toward generalizing, and thus humanizing, and explaining the origins of Christianity. But it will also argue that ‘religion’ has in some ways also served to protect unremarkable human conduct. Thus while religion does serve the preliminary and tactical function of forcing us to generalize, if we are truly to make sense of the origins of Christianity as a human phenomenon, we must, in the end, situate the earliest presentations of Jesus (as well as the notion of religion itself) more broadly within the human propensity to create and reflect upon imaginary entities, and to treat such entities with varying levels of seriousness.

R. Dale Guthrie – University of Alaska, USA

**EVOLUTION OF ART, INTUITIVE MORALITY, AND
ROMANTIC LOVE IN THE ICE AGE HUMAN BAND**

The Gary Lease Memorial Lecture

*(Sponsored by the Humanities Division of the University
of California, Santa Cruz)*

For at least a hundred thousand years cooperation played a big part in shaping human evolution. The rigorous dynamics of life in small hunter-gatherer bands formed our basic human character. Climatic indicators show the environment in this critical Pleistocene time was unusually unstable and unpredictable. These bands were exploiting an intellectually challenging niche with an enlarging brain that could apply a complex evidentiary-reasoned world-view with the daily experiences of clear testable premises.

However, the end of the Pleistocene, around 12,000 years ago, was marked by a dramatically more warm/wet equable climate. The emergence of this shift underwrote the emergence of new food resources and allowed humans for the first time to regularly accumulate storable surpluses.

These surpluses were essential to support increasing numbers, density, and sedentary village lives. The abrupt change from bands to tribes is well known from archaeological sites, but the best illustration of this shift comes from the art work. I will be showing many slides of examples as I discuss wide repercussions of this change over many millions of square kilometers and across different cultures.

The emerging tribal balance – less mortality, higher fecundity, need to defend stores, increasing population and density – inherently involved a greater reliance on specialization, symbols and authoritarian organization. The tribal experience also featured new, more complex, questions about which there was little information. Without that evidence tribal thinkers relied on supernatural answers and organized religion.

In the last century our modern understanding of the universe has come full circle. Though different in scale and reach, our outlook is ironically more like the band’s naturalistic perspective, less supernatural. Scholarship of free inquiry in a wide variety of fields is today becoming interlinked in answering the questions of who we are and where we came from. Surprisingly, it is ranging into the origin and dynamics of behaviors in morality, art, love, and much else. Still, there remains a deeply entrenched “meme” attachment to the tribe’s supernatural. I will offer some ideas about that.

Robert McCauley – Emory University, USA

**TAKING A COGNITIVE POINT OF VIEW: RELIGIONS
AS RUBE GOLDBERG DEVICES**

*(Sponsored by the University of Waterloo and Wilfred
Laurier University)*

One school of thought in the cognitive science of religion holds that religious thought and action arise primarily as by-products of opportunistic cuing of diverse, maturationally natural, psychological dispositions, which crop up in human minds in the course of normal cognitive development. These cognitive tools do not, however, result from anything having to do either with religion or with one another. Instead, they variously concern the management of common problems that members of our species face. The operations of a collection of cognitive tools concerned with such things as linguistic competence, contamination of avoidance and hazard precautions, kin detection, the recognition of agents and actions, theory of mind, and social transactions, to name some of the most prominent, shape the forms and contents of religious materials the world over. Like Rube Goldberg devices, religions are assemblages of perfectly ordinary items that are deployed in unusual contexts and configured in such ways as to captivate human minds.

The resulting contraptions may have consequences that are functional, but these are functions that can, as likely as not, be alternatively realized with considerably less fuss.

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Jean Grondin – University of Montreal, Canada

TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE NEW ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS A RELIGIOUS PHENOMENON?

(Sponsored by the Faculty of Arts and Science, University of Toronto)

In modern societies, religious practice, and belief, is said to be on the decline, especially in the younger generation. On the other hand, a strong ecological consciousness is gaining ground. It rests on a conception of good and evil, of sin and expiation, on history of fall and salvation, regulating practices, beliefs and hopes. To what extent can it be viewed as a form of religion?

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Meera Nanda – Jawaharlal Nehru Institute for Advanced Study, India/USA

HOW NOT TO STUDY EASTERN RELIGIONS: WESTERN OCCULT IN THE MAKING OF NEO-HINDUISM

(Sponsored by Brock University)

Given the enormous influence of Edward Said's *Orientalism* and postcolonial theory on religious studies, most scholars of modern Hinduism have come to accept the following two assumptions as self-evidently true: one, that the intended or unintended motivation of the Orientalists was (in Said's words) to "dominate, restructure and to have authority over the Orient"; and two, that the Orientalists imposed their own Judaeo-Christian understanding of religion on the diverse traditions of the Indian people and gave it the name of "Hinduism." Modern Hinduism is thus seen as a colonial construct which "Semitized" the pre-colonial religious practices the Hindus.

This paper questions both of these assumptions. It does so by challenging the esoteric amnesia of the academic community by bringing back one highly influential but long-forgotten school of Orientalists – the Theosophists who interpreted Hindu and Buddhist thought through the prism of Western occult tradition. In a clear contradiction of the Orientalist and postcolonial dogmas, the Theosophists' interest in Hinduism and Buddhism cannot be understood in terms of power and domination over the colonial subjects. On the contrary, Theosophists interest in Eastern religions lay in their search for a rational and "scientific" alternative to the Judeo-Christian tradition, which they saw as superstitious and unable to withstand the Enlightenment critique.

The paper goes on to chart the deep and abiding influence of Western occultism brought in by the Theosophists on neo-Hinduism. The Theosophical interest in scientizing occult powers, this paper will argue, lives on in the writings of the founding fathers of neo-Hinduism, notably Swami Vivekananda and Servapalli Radhakrishnan. The scientific interpretations of yoga and traditional Hindu ideas of evolution (and devolution) of life forms through karma and rebirth will be presented as examples of the influence of Theosophy on modern Hinduism.

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Jacques Berlinerblau – Georgetown University, USA

THE ATHEIST PARADOX

(Sponsored by The University of Southern Denmark)

Atheist identity is a complex and unstable sort of a thing. Whereas Village or New Atheists espouse a radical anti-theism coupled with a harsh materialism, an examination of the lengthy history of atheism in Western Civilization reveals that the identity of nonbelievers is far more tensile and diverse than many current celebrities of nonbelief tend to know. Looking at the use of the term "atheism" in classical antiquity and early modern Europe, we quickly see that in these periods this position was sooner correlated with heresy and skepticism than with godlessness. This fact reminds us that atheism as a categorical rejection of the existence of God is a relatively recent phenomenon. It is also a phenomenon, as scholars of the subject have painstakingly demonstrated, that exists in a tight symbiotic relation with theism. This makes contemporary pop atheist efforts anathematize all forms of religion ontologically suspect, if not politically disastrous. Our goal is to identify the complexity and diversity of atheist identity, with especial emphasis on the truism that there are many ways to be a nonbeliever.

Susan Haack – University of Miami, USA

CRACKS IN THE WALL, A BULGE UNDER THE CARPET: THE SINGULAR STORY OF RELIGION, EVOLUTION, AND THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

(Sponsored by Wilfred Laurier University and the University of Waterloo)

A history of the evolution of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and specifically its role in cases involving the teaching of evolution in public high schools. This legal history will be informed by the conjecture that over many years a relatively modest understanding of the Establishment Clause due to James Madison has been largely, though not completely, displaced by a more ambitious understanding due to Thomas Jefferson; and punctuated by philosophical asides on questions about the (in)compatibility of the theory of evolution with religious beliefs, the meaning of “theory,” and the demarcation of science. The narrative begins with a sketch of the origins of the Establishment Clause; next turns to efforts to outlaw evolution, culminating in the Scopes trial (1925); then looks at how, after the Establishment Clause became applicable to the states with the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Everson* (1947), anti-evolution statutes were themselves outlawed; then tracks courts’ ambivalent Establishment Clause jurisprudence in the wake of *Lemon* (1971) and, in the same period, the rise and fall of statutes mandating “balanced treatment” of evolution and creation science; and, finally, explores the present situation, including the legal test of Intelligent Design Theory in *Kitzmiller* (2005).

Hans Kippenberg – University of Erfurt, Max-Weber-Kolleg, Germany

‘PHOENIX FROM THE ASHES’: NEW KINDS OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD

(Sponsored by the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion)

One major item of the agenda of religious studies is in the process of being revised. Assuming that secularization has been depriving religious communities of their legal privileges and an expanding market economy eroding their social base, individual religiosity was considered the only and major social form of religion in modernity. But to the surprise of many in the midst of a torrent of social change a couple of indications point to a new power of religious communities. First, the growth and spread of religious organizations of labor migrants is accompanied by an increasing social power inside and beyond the nation-state. Second, in the wake of nation-states that confer public tasks to private providers, the religious principle of mutual help and solidarity is at the centre of a new social power of religious communality. Third, religious spokesmen address successfully audiences beyond the circle of committed believers. While traditional authorities are losing respect and support, a new type of intellectual is able to mobilize a general public by a new type of religious language, by transmitting the message in new media and by critically reflecting on social issues in the present age. Fourth, a strong ambivalence is typical of the new types of communal religion. Though they are often hailed by scholars and politicians as valuable social capital, they can turn destructive in situations of conflict.

Related Academic Sessions

The International Association For The Cognitive Science Of Religion (IACSR)

The Exrel Project

MINDLab – Aarhus University, Denmark

Sessions

Individual Papers

Related Academic Sessions

(Times and locations for these sessions are set out in the General Program book.)

The International Association For The Cognitive Science Of Religion (IACSR)

The International Association for the Cognitive Science of Religion (IACSR) is an interdisciplinary association of scholars from a wide variety of disciplines in the human, social, natural and health sciences that are interested in the cognitive scientific study of religious phenomena. Issues such as the dialogue between science and religion, attempts to find religion in science and science in religion, or attempts to validate religious or spiritual doctrines through cognitive science are not ones that the IACSR addresses. The objective of the IACSR is attained through scholarly activities such as the arrangement of biennial conferences as well as interim local meetings, the encouragement of research projects and support of scholarly publications, and the exchange of information through electronic or other means.

Specialists in religion have an important role to play, since colleagues from disciplines and sciences that normally do not deal with religion need creative interplay and feedback to better understand the significance of their findings. Cognitive scientists and experimental psychologists, on the other hand, are helping colleagues from study of religion disciplines in hitherto new and exciting ways. Some scholars of religion are also experimental scientists. Some experimental scientists are also highly competent philosophers and scholars of religion. The IACSR is designed to provide an organizational framework for this variety of scholarly interest and pursuits in which we can meet and debate, present new findings, develop innovative theories and help young scholars along their chosen paths.

For further information, see www.iacsr.com

The Exrel Project

The 'Explaining Religion' (EXREL) project is a three-year interdisciplinary investigation into the cognitive mechanisms and evolutionary processes that produce both recurrence and variability in religions worldwide. Funded by a two-million Euro research grant from the European Union, EXREL is large-scale and ambitious in scope, involving collaborations across fourteen universities. Two evening sessions, to which all attendees at the IAHR conference are invited, will be devoted to discussion of EXREL findings and their wider implications. On Monday, 16th August, we present an overview of the project and conduct a survey of audience reactions. On the Thursday, 19th August, we present the results of this survey and host a discussion. Three daytime parallel sessions on the Tuesday and Thursday will focus on major questions that the EXREL project has been seeking to answer:

1. How do religions evolve?

For most of human prehistory, religions bound together small groups. With the appearance of agriculture, a new kind of religion emerged, uniting groups on a much larger scale but not with the same levels of intensity. Since then both modes of religiosity have evolved as ways of accomplishing collective goals that would otherwise have been unattainable. The EXREL project has been investigating the role of ritual in these divergent patterns of group formation by means of experiments and ethnographic surveys, including a study of 645 rituals selected from a sample of 74 cultures. Our findings suggest that low-frequency/high-arousal rituals evolve among groups engaged in high-risk activities associated with strong temptations to defect. By contrast, high-frequency/low-arousal rituals are adaptive for groups competing for small but cumulatively substantial resources across much larger populations. Using mathematical models we have sought to reconstruct and predict the scale, structure, and spread of different kinds of religions.

2. How do we acquire religion?

How deeply engrained in our thinking are cross-culturally recurrent religious ideas such as the belief in a life after death or mind-reading spirits and how do they get transmitted. One approach is to look at the innate architecture of the human mind. To start this investigation, we need to look at the types of core concepts that enable people to form religious views. Here we present the results of our research on the way that children and adults acquire beliefs about the afterlife, supernatural agents, and other concepts pertinent to religion. We focus on two questions: 1) Do supernatural ideas reflect children's first conceptions about death or, respectively, the workings of minds or, do they develop only against the bedrock of ideas about the 'natural' world such as ideas about biological death or the restrictedness of the human mind? 2) Are religious ideas, often violating our expectations about the natural world, remembered more easily than more mundane ideas?

3. Is religion a biological adaptation?

In the field of evolutionary religious studies opinion is divided among those who argue that our predispositions to acquire supernatural beliefs represent an adaptation (the proper function of which might have been, for instance, to promote prosociality among Pleistocene hunter-gatherers) and those who argue that religion is a by-product of cognitive machinery adapted to solve other adaptive problems. In this session we will articulate these different perspectives and will endeavour to provide a clear conceptual framework within which to situate and evaluate relevant evidence, in particular evidence from the EXREL project concerning the connections between religion and punishment.

MINDLab – Aarhus University, Denmark

The Religion, Cognition and Culture (RCC) research unit at the Department of the Study of Religion, Aarhus University explores the dynamic interrelationships between religion, cognition and culture from both top-down and bottom-up disciplinary approaches. Its scientific methodology is explicitly interdisciplinary and draws on and practices laboratory methods as well as fieldwork, textual, iconological and archaeological methods in close cooperation with its partners in psychology, the neurosciences and the humanities.

The Center for Functional Integrative Neuroscience (CFIN) is a Danish National Research Foundation Center of Excellence. Part of the Clinical Institute at Aarhus University, CFIN is located at Aarhus University Hospital. CFIN brings together brain researchers from numerous departments, institutes and faculties within Aarhus University and The Royal Academy of Music, in an effort to understand the human brain. Their goal is to understand the ability of the human brain to adapt to experience, during normal development, learning and interaction with the surrounding social and physical environment.

Abdi, Halkano – University of Bayreuth, Germany
ramzibenamara@gmail.com

Ben Amara, Ramzi – University of Bayreuth,
Germany

DOOR TO DOOR DA'WA IN AFRICA: DYNAMICS OF PROSELYTIZATION IN YAN IZALA AND TABLIGHI JAMAAT

Researches on contemporary Islamic movements generally focus on discourses between and among competing traditions; rise, growth and spread of revivalist movements; and the aftermath of establishment of reformist traditions such as call for revival of Shariah law, increased attendance and significance of Islamic education institutions, prevalence of Islamic symbols in day to day life of believers. Rarely do such researches focus to who and how the 'revivalist' messages are passed. In this article, we wish to argue that the fundamental understanding of contemporary revivalist phenomena lies in the appraising the different strategies adopted by such movements in order call fellow believers to the path of faith. There exists a gap on comparative and/or collaborative study of transnational Islam in Africa. Basing on our primary and secondary data on two transnational Islamic movements in Nigeria and Kenya, we attempt to give an analytical comparison of dynamics of proselytization in relations to reform phenomena in Africa. These two are Tablighi Jamaat, apolitical, quietist lay missionary movement and Jama'atu Izalatil Bid'ah Wa'ikamatis Sunnah (Izala). The former though originating from India is one considered as one of the fastest growing Islamic movements in the world in general and Kenya in particular and the latter is locally initiated anti-sufi movement with large membership in Nigeria and neighboring countries and with immense influence on socio-political and economic aspects of Muslims in this West Africa region. We conclude that while no two transnational Islamic movements are alike though characteristics of their target audiences are the same, the mode of proselytization involves great deal of innovation, pragmatism and experimentation.

Abioje, Pius Oyeniran – University of Illorin, Nigeria
poabioje@yahoo.com

RELIGION, POLITICS, AND SOCIAL UPHEAVAL IN NIGERIA

There seems to be no doubt that the most prevalent understanding of the word "religion" evokes the noble ideas of God, holiness, wholeness, and perfection. Yet, in Nigeria, and some other places around the world, religion is viewed negatively by many right thinking persons who have witnessed or heard about religious-related clashes, carnage, and wanton destruction of lives and property. In Nigeria, religion expresses itself in hateful terms when Muslims and Christians engage in killing, destroying, marginalising, and exploiting one another and many adherents of African Traditional Religion. Currently, this study discovers that the ruling class (many politicians) partner with many religious leaders, mostly tactically, by donation of money and property that can prevent and safeguard the latter from criticising the former. The reality in Nigeria is, of course, that most of those in government at all levels are either Christians or Muslims who attend a church or mosque, respectively, while the religious leaders in the two institutions almost always seek money to accomplish one project or another. Library consultation, participant and media observations reveal that most Christian and Muslim homilies and allocutions in Nigeria are devoid of socio-political concern and critical appraisal. Rather, they centre on "adequate" worship of God and faith in His providence. Not much of social conscientization or telling the truth to the powers that be. The scenario is thus reminiscent of Karl Marx's description of religion (nay the Christianity of his day and experience) as an opium of the people.

Abubakar, Dauda – Freie Universitat Berlin, Germany
bgsmcsda@zedat.fu-berlin.de

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ZAKAT IN THE SHARI'AH STATES OF NORTHERN NIGERIA

This paper examines the role and contributions of zakat institutions in the shari'ah states of northern Nigeria. The collection and distribution of zakat through institutions (and no longer through personal relations) has established a triangular relationship between "the wealthy" on the one hand, "the needy" on another and the state on a third level. This paper explores the following questions: what is the role of zakat institutions in northern Nigeria?

Do zakat institutions operate all in the same way or do they vary from one state to the other? Why has the practice of zakat-giving shifted from being a private to a public/institutionalized affair? Scholars researching into the current transformations in Muslim societies often neglected this area of study. The practice of zakat has existed in Nigeria for a long time without the supervision of any legal body and has been institutionalized only after the implementation of shari'ah in some of the northern states since the late 1990s. Zakat is one of the five pillars prescribed by Islam which makes it obligatory upon wealthy Muslims to give part of their wealth to those identified as "needy." But with the implementation of shari'ah, an institution was established by some states to regulate and control the practice of zakat-giving. These institutions have become shouldered with the responsibility of collecting the "religious alms" annually on private income, farm produce, and livestock amongst others for distribution amongst the poor and needy in the Muslim community. In states like Zamfara, waqf (endowment) is also collected by the zakat board.

Abu-Er-Rub, Laila – University of Heidelberg

AYURVEDA, YOGIC FLYING & DAVID LYNCH: THE DIGITAL (DE)CONSTRUCTION OF MAHARISHI MAHESH YOGI IN GERMANY

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's life seems to be a story of success advanced through media. Back in the 1960s and 70s the Indian guru gained transnational popularity through his contacts with many celebrities, such as The Beatles, Stevie Wonder and The Rolling Stones, who all claimed to use his self-invented technique of "transcendental meditation (TM)." In 1983 he entered the healthcare market in Germany by introducing Ayurveda to the German public. The coverage on the first Ayurveda Spas in TV and print media was quite large and almost exclusively positive. Internet as a medial space, due to its to some extent independence of conventional gatekeepers, made it even easier for the TM-organisation to present themselves to potential practitioners as it wished: Ayurveda.de and tm.de are both purely informational, non-interactive websites on which Ayurveda and TM are presented as scientifically proven health therapies. Nevertheless, the internet also reveals a great deal of criticism against them. For instance, the website agpf.de (Aktion für Geistige und Psychische Freiheit/ Campaign for Mental and Psychic Freedom) is one of the first to be found if "Maharishi" is googled in German language.

The owner of this site has collected negative information about Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and his projects since 1989. Several other German websites question the reliability of the TM-organisation, from contesting Maharishi's "Yogic Flyers" to criticising David Lynch's campaign for Maharishi in Germany. In 2007 Lynch laid the cornerstone for a Maharishi University, under booing announced as the "University of unconquerable Germany". This paper explores the self-presentation of the TM and Maharishi Ayurveda in Germany as opposed to the critical voices mirrored on Anti-Maharishi-sites which have negatively affected the former successful PR strategy of the TM-organisation. Through this case study the author traces how the Internet led to a shift in asymmetrical power relations concerning the making and maintaining of religious authority through media.

Adetona, Lateef Mobolaji – Lagos State University, Nigeria

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF ISLAM AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

This study is an attempt to describe the study of Islam as an academic discipline in the southwestern region of Nigeria covering various kinds of schools ranging from private to Government-owned schools that offer the subject. The syllabi pursued by the private schools especially those using Arabic as medium of instructions are radically different not only one from another but also from the uniform one used by Government-owned schools. The causes for the difference will be studied. The study will also include the qualifications of the staff of the schools as well as the compatibility of the knowledge acquired at the institutions with contemporary knowledge in the community. The paper conciliates with the marketability of the products of the various schools in the community.

Adetubo, Adesoji Aderemi – Lagos State University, Nigeria

HERMENEUTICS AND THE TEACHING OF AFRICAN RELIGIONS IN AFRICA AND THE DIASPORAS

Studies, teaching and researches into the study of African religions have faced various challenges in recent times. Some of these challenges include lack of funds as well as grants for research and the attitude government towards the subject as a function of cultural and social development. Interpreting religious texts, especially classical texts in the teaching of the religion is also one of the problems. It has posed serious challenge to scholars of religions in Africa and the Diasporas for different reasons.

For those in the continent, they face the task of interpreting religious texts within the cultural context of the origin of the text without being part of that culture, especially when the texts in question are not written texts as is the case with the Ifa oracle among the Yoruba of Nigeria. There are two categories of scholars in the teaching of African religions in Africa and Diaspora: Africans and non-Africans. Both categories need to be adequately grounded in the language and culture of Africa for proper interpretation of texts. The need to understand the language of the texts cannot therefore be overemphasized. In the Diasporas, language posed the same problem as above but goes beyond that because the interpreter may not even be an African. In hermeneutics, the interpreter must be able to appreciate and understand the cosmology, cosmogony and theology of African religions. The oral texts form the bedrock of scholarship in African and therefore cannot be wished away, there the need to appropriate interpretation(s) of oral texts.

The language barriers need to be surmounted to have an ideal interpretation(s) of African myths, folklores, fables, prayers, legends, sagas, songs, oracles that behold the sacredness of African religions. Consequently, the issue of hermeneutics in the study and teaching of African religions need to be critically re-examined to appropriate its value in Africa and the Diaspora. This paper seeks to examine the place of hermeneutics in the teaching of African religions in Africa as well as in the Diaspora. It is our intention to also examine types and methods of hermeneutics and determine the appropriate one for the teaching of Africa religions. To achieve our objectives we shall adopt historical and analytical methods and present our deductions in pedagogical manner to stimulate discussion(s) that will encourage the study and teaching of African religion in Africa and Diaspora. We intend to pursue the thesis that hermeneutics is very important to the teaching and studies of African religion both on the continent and in the Diaspora there fore the need for training and retraining of scholars in this regard.

Adogame, Afe – The University of Edinburgh, UK
a.adogame@ed.ac.uk

GLOCALIZING AFRICAN RELIGIOUS CULTURES IN A RUN-AWAY WORLD

Globalization as a concept has been employed by scholars of religion and social scientists as a category for describing and interpreting new, contemporary religious movements as cultural movements. Globalization has stimulated a post-modern interest in fragmentation, not so much in relation to the global, but much more in relation to the local translations of the global.

Joel Robbins (2004) demonstrates how scholars 'use Pentecostals and Charismatics to support theories that construe globalization as a process of Westernizing homogenization and those that understand it as a process of indigenizing differentiation.' Robertson's (1992) innovative concept of 'glocalization' is quite apt in exploring the interconnectedness between local and global contexts at the level of religious movements. Although the popular adagium has been 'think globally, act locally', much of the thinking also takes place at the local level (Droogers 2001: 51). While globalization of new religious movements makes sense largely in terms of their localization, religious traditions themselves have the capacity for self-reflexive critical thinking about globalization (Beckford 2003: 105). Drawing examples from African new religious movements (ANRMs) such as neo-traditional movements and Pentecostalism, I demonstrate in what ways the application of globalization refer both to their geo-mobility, demographic stature, and cultural influence; but also to their 'sense of self' and 'sense of place' within global religious maps of the universe. I will argue that the character of African NRMs in conditions of globality is determined by how and to what extent they negotiate continuity, identity, and change.

af Burén, Ann – Södertörn University, Sweden

JUGGLING DEFINITIONS OF RELIGION IN EVERYDAY LIFE

In discussions on changes in the conceptualization and regularization of what counts as religion, it has been proposed that we use everyday conceptualizations as a starting point for our discussions. People are constantly involved in a process of redefining what "religion" actually means, for them, in a particular geographical, social, and temporal context. The concept religion has acoustic validity to most of us, but a precise articulation of what that word actually means is as hard for the everyday person on the street to express as it is for scholars who have struggled for decades with this issue. Departing from interviews with people living in a neighbourhood in southern Stockholm, Sweden, I discuss different ways of approaching religion among people who are not involved in institutionalized religion. What is found is a discrepancy between a notion of religion described in terms of Lutheran Christianity, where the dichotomy religious/secular is important, and more informal associations that less easily falls under the category religion and where a distinction between a religious and a secular sphere is irrelevant. In the everyday reality of my informants religion is lived at different levels and often they do not work with one definition only but juggle several simultaneously.

Agensky, Jonathan – University of Cambridge, UK
ja413@cam.ac.uk

FAITH-BASED HUMANITARIANISM AND EMERGENT TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE EVANGELICAL IMAGINARY

In the late 1990s, the global Evangelical movement became increasingly involved in the international politics of the Sudanese civil war. Mobilization targeting Sudan engendered new and powerful alliances with both state and non-state actors, highlighting one of the ways in which faith-based organizations are becoming significant players in global civil society. How did the Evangelical movement come to engage issues of violence and suffering in Sudan? What types of political subjectivities have been claimed by Evangelical actors in their domestic and international politics? By looking at Evangelical discourses and practices of intervention targeting Sudan, this paper explores the mobilization and production of a global and globally engaged Evangelicalism. In this paper, I take the position that political-humanitarianism constitutes a new type of faith-based practice. In and through humanitarian intervention, Evangelicals both engage in global governance as well as rehearse their own spirituality and faith-based communality. In so doing, however, these actors become increasingly entangled within the exigencies of 'globalization', whereupon Evangelical identity and imagination are continually worked out amid the flux of global-local spaces.

Agnew, Vijay – York University, Toronto, Canada
vagnew@yorku.ca

SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN'S QUEST FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN CANADA

This paper will locate itself in the Canadian ideological context of cultural pluralism, feminism, and racism and their role in helping to maintain, preserve, and propagate identities based on religion. It will investigate the role of religious organizations in creating a sense of community through the provision of social services in various local settings. It will go on to answer if such attachment to religion and community has helped women assert their right to be treated equitably in the larger society and at home. Alternatively, does such faith and membership fragment the community internally and isolate the women from the larger society and rob them of a sense of place and belonging.

Agnihotri, Vibha – Lucknow University, India
agnihotri vibha@yahoo.co.in

RURAL INDIAN WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENTS WITH HINDUISM: A STUDY IN GENDER BIAS AND DIVERSITY

Historically women enjoyed a respected position in the ancient India. But over time the situation changed drastically and women were isolated or lowly placed in the society. A woman who decides not to observe the rituals and customs dictated by religion has always been seen as a harbinger of conflict, disorder and pain within a family. This is because, for a woman, religion is not just something linked to a god but a cultural practice that she is supposed to preserve. When a community's object of worship and veneration is female, it is logical to expect that women in general will benefit by sharing elevated status. However, a study of rural Indian women shows that the ideological promotion of powerful female models does not contribute to ordinary women's well-being logically contrary to certain feminist expectations, but it appears to be an empirically valid finding. This contradiction can be described as women status in India 'ambiguous'. Hindu women in reality are categorized against and marginalized. While dealing with rural Hindu women and their version of Hinduism, the paper makes an attempt to give a critical and evocative insight into the larger picture of public fortification of patriarchies and contended chipping in of women as active participants and to know how and when it became and what is current position of women regarding Gender, Cultural Diversity and Spirituality in the Indian context.

Ahumada, Cecilia Vázquez – Instituto Nacional de
Antropología e Historia Pue., Mexico

GÉNESIS DE UN MUSEO DE ARTE RELIGIOSO EN LA PROVINCIA MEXICANA

La formación de las instituciones culturales del México postrevolucionario, necesariamente echó mano de los bienes acumulados por la Iglesia católica desde los tiempos virreinales. El caso del Museo de Arte religioso del ex convento de Santa Mónica en Puebla, es un ejemplo de resignificación de objetos en un contexto de lucha ideológica por las conciencias de la ciudadanía en formación.

Aitamurto, Kaarina – University of Helsinki, Finland
Kaarina.aitamurto@helsinki.fi

PAGANISM, TRADITIONALISM AND NATIVE FAITH – NARRATIVES OF RUSSIAN RODNOVERIE

In recent decades, contemporary Paganism has been one of the fastest growing new religious movements both in the West and in Russia.

The aim of this paper is to examine how Rodnovers, the Russian followers of the pre-Christian Slavic spirituality, explain the burgeoning (or revival) of their faith at this particular historical moment. The author analyses the ways in which Rodnovers argue their religion to be a meaningful spiritual framework for contemporary people. These narratives are linked to sociological discussions on late modern religiosity and post-Soviet Russian context. In several Western studies, contemporary Paganism has been approached with such concepts as individualization or subjectivization of religion. Though such features can be found in Rodnoverie as well, the movement also reflects and addresses some specifically Russian societal and religious features. The study material consists of published Rodnoverie books and magazines and it is supplemented with fieldwork material. The analysis discerns three narrative themes that occur in Rodnoverie argumentation: Rodnoverie as a nature religion celebrating pluralism; Rodnoverie as a national Russian (or Slavic) religion, compatible with national interests; and Rodnoverie as a revival of the "tradition." These narratives are not, however, completely distinct, but usually overlap and coexist in Rodnoverie discussions. They resonate both with the post-Soviet nationalistic boom in Russia, the calls to establish societal solidarity and the crisis of authority in late modern religiosity.

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Aizawa, Risa – Tohoku University, Japan

CULTURE AND RELIGION

Koentjaraningrat's Idea of "Agama" is the official category for religion in Indonesia, as determined by the government. Every citizen is obliged to belong to one of the "agama", *i.e.*, Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism or Confucianism. Other local customs and religious practices are not accepted as "religion", but described as "adat" (custom) or "kepercayaan" (belief). Those are classified as "kebudayaan" (culture), a category completely different from "agama" or "religion". In this presentation, I will examine Koentjaraningrat's (1923–1999) idea of "religi" as presented in his 1974 book, *Kebudayaan, Mentalitet dan Pembangunan* (*Culture, Mentality and Development*). Koentjaraningrat is considered to be one of the founders of Indonesian anthropology, and to have played an important role in the process of formation of the state after the independence. Previous studies have connected his theory of culture to Indonesian public policy, especially Suharto's cultural policy. There are two types of terms for religion in his work: "agama" and "religi". He suggested that "agama" should be utilized to describe the "official" religions of Indonesia, while "religi" could be used to speak about religions which were not or had not yet been accepted as "agama".

According to him, "kepercayaan" is a component of both "religi" and "agama", while "religi" is a component of "kebudayaan." However, for him, the essence of "religi" was not related to "kebudayaan". Through an examination of the concept of "religi", I will try to understand Koentjaraningrat in a different light, and rethink about the character of Indonesian anthropology and its role in society.

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Akiba, Yutaka – Osaka Prefecture University, Japan
 akibayuk@hs.osakafu-u

PHASE II AS DEMOCRATIZATION OF SGI

In the late-1970s, SGI-USA entered a period known as "phase II." It was during phase II that the first SGI-USA general director, George M. Williams (Masayasu Sadanaga), claimed that he achieved some degree of success, but there were conflicts among the members which were caused by the Williams' leadership and his direction. The translation of the Buddhist scriptures and writings had been actively and consistently promoted since Phase II began. However, the orientation toward the collective seen at meetings and conventions (such as the wearing of uniforms, and perfectly ordered group activities), and organizational principles that divided people by age/rank or gender (such as men's divisions, women's divisions, youth men' divisions, and youth women' divisions) were seen as far different from the ethos of people in the US.

Phase II was characterized by a recognition of the need for "democratization" against Japanese collective-oriented in nature and values. What SGI members at that time sought was Nichiren Buddhism not the Japanese culture. Looking back, it seems that phase II was a process that was essential for Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism to take root in a society grounded in individualism and democracy. This might even be viewed as "second-stage translation" at the organizational and behavioral level.

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Aktor, Michael – University of Southern Denmark
 aktor@ifpr.sdu.dk

UNTOUCHABLE WOMEN AS MEDIATORS IN TANTRIC RITUAL

"Caṇḍāla" is the name of the prototypical "untouchable" caste in classical Indian texts. Caṇḍālas were sometimes described as indigenous people living at the outskirts of villages and cities, sometimes as a caste whose duty it was to do different types of polluting work, such as cleaning cremations grounds, cleaning latrines, dealing with dead animals and executing criminals. "Domba" is another untouchable caste, most often attributed the task of washing people's dirty clothes.

“Caṇḍālī” and “Ḍombī” are the feminine forms of these nouns. Sexual contact with such women is described in classical texts as particularly polluting. If such contacts became known the high caste sinner would have to undergo elaborate penances. But in the medieval Hindu Tantric traditions, where active transgression of established taboos in terms of food, sex, and alcohol became a ritual means of empowerment or spiritual attainments, “Caṇḍālī” and “Ḍombī” were understood as code words for the Kuṇḍalinī Śakti, the magic power, which is supposed to be awakened through Tantric practices, in particular various rituals involving the exchange of sexual fluids including semen and menstrual blood. This paper will examine these contrasting metaphorical powers of the Caṇḍāla/Ḍomba woman in her capacity of embodying both the threats to social norms and the liberating Śakti that transgresses the same norms.

Alagaratnam, Vellakuddy – Eastern University of Sri Lanka · alagsph@gmail.com

BEYOND AND WITHIN HINDUISM: CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES IN FOLK RELIGION IN EASTERN SRI LANKA

This paper attempts to reveal the distinctive religious phenomena of Hindus who live in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka, which consists of three districts, namely Batticaloa, Amparai, and Trincomalee. Hindus are said to be in the majority, though Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists in more or less in the same percentage live scattered through all three districts. When we say Hindu religious practices, we tend to think about the institutionalised Hinduism which consists of the agama-designed temples, grand deities like Vishnu and Shiva, the Brahmin priests who conduct the puja and kriya rituals, proclaim their ethics and the like. The ultimate end of all such Hindu ritual practices and ethics is supposed to lead to heaven or moksha, liberation from bondage to rebirth. But I argue that this is a misleading view of Hinduism in Eastern Sri Lanka since there are very different practices and perceptions among this particular group of Hindu people. The Hindu system which I am going to portray is quite different from that common perception. The people who follow this tradition do not know much about their religion; only they know that they should worship deities. In Tamil, ‘theivam’ (literally means the one who dispels sorrows), and ‘kadavul’ (literally means he who is beyond human perception and conception) are totally different from their practices. In addition, they have different perceptions about deities, shrines, priests, goal of pujas, etc. We cannot claim that those who follow this practices are from a primitive society or that they are illiterate or ignorant.

They are civilised and educated people. Theirs is a popular tradition in Sri Lanka for which I am going to present a descriptive survey with illustrations. Key Words: agamas (Hindu holy texts), grand deities, moksha or mukti or veedu (liberation from bondage), pujas (offerings), kriyas (offerings and festivals), ‘theivam’ and ‘kadavul’

Albanese, Catherine L. – see *Plenary Presentations*, p5

Albertini, Francesca Yardenit – University of Potsdam, Germany · albertin@uni-potsdam.de

KARAISTIC JUDAISM FROM 7th TO 10th CENTURY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Due to the spare Jewish, Muslim and Christian sources dealing with Karaistic Judaism in the Early Middle Ages in as well as between Baghdad and Basra, my paper represents a hermeneutical investigation of the following historical and philosophical topics: 1. The political and religious position of the Karaites under the several Islamic caliphates; 2. The cultural transition of Greek wisdom (philosophy, mathematics and astronomy in particular) from Muslim to Karaistic scholars; 3. A comparison between rabbinic and Karaistic sources concerning the dispute with the Karaites in the rabbinical schools of Palestine: what was the religious and political focus of such a debate? How did such a debate develop from 7th to 10th century along with the establishment of Karaistic centers in as well as between Baghdad and Basra? 4. Why did the Karaistic conception of the Messiah so deeply bother the rabbinical schools in Palestine? Were the Karaites really conceived as a concrete danger for rabbinic Judaism? My paper aims at deepening the philosophical and historical knowledge of the Karaites as a so-called >heretic and sectarian< group which radically rejected the rabbinic wisdom as well as the rabbinic conception and interpretation of Jewish Law (Halakha).

Alles, Gregory D. – McDaniel College, USA
galles@mcdaniel.edu

KINDS, CLASSES, AND CLUMPS: A PRELIMINARY TYPOLOGY OF CONCEPTS AND SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR THINKING

Much mischief has been done in thinking about religion by a general failure to attend to the different kinds of concepts that the brain employs and each kind’s capabilities. The general assumption seems to have been instead that concepts are or should be all of the same kind. This paper attempts to redress that failure by offering a preliminary typology of concepts.

It identifies three types, kinds, classes, and clumps, defined in terms of “essences” (generative mechanisms), features, and (generally unbounded) sets of instances, respectively. It also points to degree of inferentiality as a property of these types that can be especially consequential for thinking about religion, kinds being inference-rich, classes inference-fixed, and clumps inference-indeterminate. Although careful reflection at times transforms clumps into kinds and classes, it can also lead to the recognition that a putative kind or class may be better considered a clump. An example of the latter – hardly the only one – may be the term “religion.” It is neither necessary nor possible for careful reflection entirely to abandon clump concepts for kinds and classes. It does, however, need to exercise care in what it uses each type of concept to try to do.

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Alles, Gregory D. – McDaniel College, USA
 galles@mcdaniel.edu

CONTESTING DHARM AND SAKTI IN INDIGENOUS INDIA

As one might not expect, there is among indigenous (adivasi) people in eastern Gujarat today disagreement over how to categorize and conceptualize certain classes of traditional thought and behavior. (“Traditional” here means thought and behavior among nagurus, as distinct from thought and behavior among bhagats, that is, people associated with devotional movements that are recognized as having come from the outside, such as the Kabirpa?th and the Ramanandipa?th). For some people, including not only adivasi nagurus and bhagats but also their non-adivasi neighbors, these classes of thought and behavior are properly considered dharm. Others, however, insist that they are not dharm but Saṃskṛti. (Basic literacy and exposure to formal education among adivasis in this area is limited [roughly 30%], knowledge of English much more so; but the relative few who know English translate these terms unproblematically as “religion” and “culture,” respectively.) People in the area also disagree, perhaps even more vigorously, about whether naguru thought and behavior, whether dharm or Saṃskṛti, is properly considered Hindu or indigenous. Given the opportunity, some indigenous people are inclined to appeal to academic experts to settle these matters, but this paper resists that move. Instead it maps out the configuration of the discussions, which do not break easily along the lines of assimilationism and traditionalism. It then turns to a consideration of why these categories, like their English cousins, might be so problematical.

Amstutz, Galen – Institute of Buddhist Studies, USA

TWO HYBRIDITIES IN JAPANESE BUDDHISM IN THE UNITED STATES

The rather friendly, appealing idea of hybridization of cultures has, like the Buddhist metaphor of Indra’s net, become familiar through the work of contemporary theorists, notably for example Homi Bhabha. However, there are different kinds of hybridizations, or multiple hybridities, which occur for different purposes. Certainly often hybridizations are outward-oriented, creating a more open system, but they can sometimes be inward-oriented too, pointing towards closure. Both aspects have been represented in the career of Japanese Buddhism in the United States, because Japan’s twentieth century experience has been contradictory, embracing not only unprecedented cultural globalization but also a tremendous level of ethnic identity-seeking and defensiveness associated with the modern nation state. The globalizing, outward-oriented hybridity is represented by the famous scholar D.T. Suzuki (1870–1966), whose life was spent on the dynamic interface between Japanese and American civilization, where Suzuki’s unique genius was his ability to link his own background in Japanese Buddhist modernism with the trends of American Buddhist modernism (despite a serious element of cultural nationalism on Suzuki’s part). The more purely inward-oriented hybridity is represented by the history of the Jodoshinshu Buddhism in the United States, the most important institution of which has been the Buddhist Churches of America (B.C.A.). This latter history too was a dynamic adaptive process but it was done for the purposes of sustaining an ethnic community. An obvious observation from this record is that the concept of hybridization per se is not a magic solution to anything.

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Anderson, Leona – University of Regina, Canada
 leona.anderson@uregina.ca

MEMES AND THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGION IN POPULAR CULTURE

This paper explores the evolution of religious practice in popular culture. Using the concept of the meme, it analyzes some of the ways in which the imitation of gestures, technologies, architectures and linguistic phrases lead to the mutation and new forms of religious expression.

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Andrews, Dale K. – Kanazawa University, Japan
 andrews@staff.kanazawa-u.ac.jp

THE ROAD TO REDEMPTION: THE RITES OF PASSAGE FOR FALLEN POLITICIANS IN JAPAN

In 2003, when a bribery scandal swept through a rural village in northern Japan, it was reported in newspapers that the villagers were “surprised and in shock.”

This is undoubtedly true, but it is not to say that they were left without any means for handling the unfortunate outcome of multiple arrests of their elected officials. As a result of observation and analysis based upon fieldwork, I have discerned a cultural mechanism where the village at large, along with the fallen politicians themselves, acted in a performance, both dramatic and real, which allowed the marginalized politicians to once again enter into local society after a socially determined, albeit self-imposed, period of seclusion. Utilizing the framework of the rites of passage put forth by Arnold van Gennep, I will argue that in opposition to an election where the successful candidate attains a high authority status, a reverse transitory process occurs through which arrested politicians fall from status (separation), enter a period of ostracism and seclusion (transition), and then are allowed to reenter the community (incorporation). The overall process is necessary for the community to move beyond the crisis and obtain a sense of closure. I will further entertain the possibility that this ritualized process is a conflict resolution strategy which aims to avert calamity and social disorder in a fashion akin to the redemption of goryo (vengeful spirits) in Japan's religious history.

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Andrus, Erica Hurwitz – University of Vermont, USA

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA: MONOTHEISM AND THE DEBUNKING OF THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS IN AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE

Science fiction provides a genre of popular culture that is uniquely suited to address questions of religion, such as: what does it mean to be human; who or what made us; what is our purpose; where does evil come from, and how do we face it. *Battlestar Galactica* takes on religion more explicitly, and in doing so adds a complex voice to public dialogue on religion. In the context of post 9/11 America, the show's use of religion belies the simplistic West versus Islam rhetoric of the "clash of civilizations." Specifically, by creating a war in which the "bad guys" are monotheists and the "good guys" are polytheists, the television series problematizes assumptions about the superiority of monotheism and also makes the Other more sympathetic. There are no easy analogies between the West and the "good guys" and Muslims and the "bad guys" because in that context both religions are monotheistic, with Muslims identified as "radical" monotheism. By introducing polytheism as a factor, the equation is thrown off balance. "We" may be different from "radical" monotheists, but we are certainly not polytheists. Although the mythology and certain key ritual aspects of the humans on *Galactica* provide an exotic and intriguing focus for several plotlines, the practices of the individual characters are sufficiently generic and rare that the religion of the humans never intrudes enough to make them seem truly Other.

However, in the series, humans are no more morally "pure" than their cylon enemies, and demonstrate a commitment to cultural survival that extends even to suicide attacks and a willingness to use torture on prisoners of war. In the creation of the fictional universe of *Battlestar Galactica*, giving monotheistic yearnings and convictions to the "machines" is one technique the creators employ to make them more human, and to raise the question of who is human and who is not. By doing so, the show and its creators force viewers to question how we construct our ideas of how religion relates to culture, humanity, and morality in our own national discourse. Using the show itself, commentary of the show's creators, and fan discussions on web-based forums, this paper examines the ways in which both humans and cylons are constructed as the Other, and then provides an analysis of how the show seeks to use science fiction as a vehicle to illustrate the false premise of the "clash of civilizations" interpretation of relations between the "West" and Islam.

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Anghel, Silviu – Gottingen University, Germany
 silviu.anghel@gmail.com

PRAYING WITHOUT STATUES? PAGANISM AFTER THE CLOSURE OF TEMPLES IN LATE ANTIQUITY

Private pagan shrines in Late Antiquity are extremely rare. Most sources are literary Christian accounts. They describe a process of translation of sacred objects, above all of sacred statues from closed down temples to private residences. Looking briefly at a number of Christian texts, it becomes obvious that statues are fundamental in the Christian identification of private pagan shrines. Non-Christian literary, epigraphic or archeological evidence supporting this claim is lacking. This paper explores the reasons for this discrepancy. Two explanations are possible. First, that Christian sources are right, and confirmation is missing due to the random process of discovery. Second, that Christian writers misidentify various situations as active pagan shrines. This paper argues that the last explanation is the more likely one. I will argue that, ironically in a world full of statues, it would have been difficult for a pagan owner to acquire sacred statues. There are good reasons for this absence, both in Roman law and in Roman religious practice. There is also a scarcity of archeological evidence.

The last part of the paper explores some of the consequences the closure of temples and scarcity of sacred statues had on private shrines. These mutations must have varied greatly, the adoption of painted images or the Neo-Platonic alternative methods of theurgy. These mutations have yet to be explored by scholars of Late Antique religion.

Anttonen, Veikko – University of Turku, Finland
veiant@utu.fi

SACRALITY OF THE SELF, OF SOCIETY AND OF THE HUMAN BODY – THE CASE OF A FINNISH TRANSGENDER PASTOR

I shall discuss in my paper the case of a Finnish transgender pastor who in 2008, at the age of 54, underwent sex reassignment surgery. The pastor's decision to change sex and become a woman gave rise to heated debates within the Lutheran Church as well as in the media. Shortly after returning to her work as a pastor, she decided to resign from her office for she felt that she has lost the trust of her colleagues and congregation. So far, her attempts to find a new clerical position have failed. This case raises important questions about the meaning and perceptions of the body and gender of a priest. Drawing on history of religions, anthropology of religion and the cognitive science of religion, I will discuss it from the perspective of marking boundaries between the categories of the self, society and the human body. In my interpretation, it is transgender pastor's anomalous taxonomic status within the normative Christian categorical thinking that creates awe and fear and thereby poses a challenge to conventional theological notions. The discussion is based on my interview with the pastor in April 2010 as well as on media coverage of her case.

Anwar, M Khurshee – University of Rayshohi,
Bangladesh

Islam, M Zulfiquar Ali – University of Rayshohi,
Bangladesh

DRAMATIZATION OF THE PAHARIA RITES OF PASSAGE: A STUDY ON THE ETHNIC COMMUNITY IN NORTHWESTERN BANGLADESH

The present paper is designed to mirror the rites of passage the Paharia people dramatize in the ethnic ways of their livelihood. Their different rites and events those are observed by them to recognize and to label the social status and respective duties are detailed in this essay. In gathering empirical data on their life-cycle rituals, the paper is primarily based on qualitative paradigm and thus it utilizes the techniques of observation, focus group discussions, case studies and oral history. The life cycle of the Paharias stages from conception, birth, and childhood to old age and death through their adolescence and adulthood is decorated with numerous Paharia rituals. It attempts to unwrap the fact that their new cultural identity as Christians impels them to leave their traditional Paharia rites of passage and thus they have to confront with such critical situation as they would not completely ready to leave all of their Paharia tradition.

The paper tries to delineate the time and day regarded as good for rites, the material and non-material aspects of observing the rites, the specific duties of respective persons for each rite of passage. Finally, the paper tries to formulate a number of cultural advocacies for the Paharias which may help them adapting to the changed cultural arena of social life.

Anyanwu, Herbert Onyema – University of Uyo,
Nigeria

RELIGIOUS REFLECTION ON ENVIRONMENTAL CRISES: THE NIGERIAN EXAMPLE

Few of the ecological disasters which man's unfriendliness to nature has created can be briefly discussed. Agulu/Nanka erosion sight in Anambra State, Udi/Ezeagu erosion problems in Enugu State and Okigwe erosion threat in Imo State are now serious issues of national concern. The disheartening truth about ecological crises is that man is the cause of his problems. At the national level, ecological problems necessitated the setting up of National Committee on Ecological problems in 1982. This committee oversees the ecological problems in Nigeria and draws money from the ecological Fund to tackle ecological problems. The term eco-justice as used in the paper is taken from the combination of the words: ecology and justice. The concept of justice always connote equitable treatment and fairness. In environment discourse we use the term eco-justice to refer to the type of equal treatment which should be given the members of eco-system. Eco-justice principles concern the welfare of all the members of eco-system, nay the just course of action to be taken so that the eco-system is maintained and sustained.

PRIMAL WORLD VIEWS AND ECO-SYSTEM

For convenience and space, we shall limit ourselves to the African traditional world-view and the Christian world-view. African traditional world view recognizes three-tier worlds namely the world of God, the Supreme Being who lives in the sky, the world of man, the earth and the world of the spirits ancestors, beyond the earth. The worlds of the gods, spirits and ancestors could be merged to form the invisible world while the world of man (matter) is the visible world. Man, plant, animals and organisms that live in the earth from members of the visible world. Ikenga Metuh explored the interaction of beings in African world view. He maintained that the interaction of beings in African world view is best seen against the background of the African concepts of being and the African concept of time. To relationship in the eco-system, the African world-view recognizes man, plant and animals.

First, the totemic principles govern man's relationship with some totems (animal and plant species which are respected and not destroyed by the people. Secondly, the taboo principle regulates the limit man can go in exploring and explaining nature. As the Africa observes the taboos in honor of the gods and spirits he is indirectly given other members of the eco-system right to live thereby applying eco-justice principles. Thirdly, African Traditional medicine recognizes the symbolic relationship between man and plant and man and some animal species and the governing beings in the universe. Medicinal plants abound in African forests. Viewed against the backdrop of the traditional healing practices, the African world-view encourages merciful treatment of plants and herbs in the field. Land, water and trees are inhabited by God. Both the priests and laity in African Religious thought are bound by set of rules and principles which make them treat nature and plant and animals) with sobriety and religious restraints that give human, plant and animals community sense of justice and right to live.

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Aoki, Kumi – Okinawa National College of Technology, Japan

THE AWAKENING OF SPIRIT AND ABSOLUTE NOTHINGNESS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF WILBER AND NISHIDA

There are some similarities between Ken Wilber's idea on the evolution of "the Kosmos" and Kitaro Nishida's on the self-development of "the Historical World". For Wilber, "the Kosmos", composed of whole/parts or holons, has a self-transcending drive of evolution built into its very fabric. For Nishida, "the Historical World", composed of the one/the many, formulates itself through self-negation. Moreover, for Wilber, the groundless ground of all manifestation is "Spirit", which he also calls "Emptiness", while for Nishida, the groundless ground is "Absolute Nothingness", which is also equivalent to Buddhist notion of "Emptiness". On the other hand, from the viewpoint of "awakening", there is a crucial difference between their ideas. According to Wilber, "Spirit" in us unfolds itself endlessly in order to be awakened to its own true nature; that is, "Spirit" cannot be fully awakened until the last stage of evolution. This idea of evolution gives rise to an issue that Enlightenment is not possible until time has fully unfolded. To resolve the issue, Wilber defines Enlightenment as "the realization of oneness with all states and all structures that are in existence at any given time". Consequently, a person's realization today is deemed "Fuller" than yesterday. Nishida's "Absolute Nothingness", however, does not unfold but it determines itself, whereby time shifts from present to present.

The present moment includes, therefore, eternal future and eternal past, and the full awakening of "Absolute Nothingness", that is, the self-awareness of "Absolute Nothingness", can happen whenever "self" realizes "Absolute Nothingness" as its own true nature.

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Aram, Mohammad Reza – University of Toronto, Canada · Aram_mdrz@yahoo.com

INTERPRETING GLOBALIZATION: GLOBALIZATION, RELIGION AND ISLAM'S ROLE

This is a time in which we are facing complex global changes. New intellectual phenomena arising confront people with different challenges in many fields. Among them is the process of globalization that is an outcome of modernized era of development in information technology. Because of its great impact on culture, economics and politics, globalization is of major relevance as a topic for discussion. Given these stated definitions of globalization and a general description of what the process is comprised of, very little has been written or said about the correlation between Religion and Globalization. Given the fact most people of the world believe in a religion and/or a higher spiritual being, it is surprising that the phenomenon of globalization and its influence on Religion and vice-versa has not been further evaluated. Therefore, it is the initiative of this paper is to discuss and clarify the effects of globalization, both positive and negative, upon Religion, its belief system and practices. As all major religions of the world derive from the same root source, it is importance to realize the significance of mutual respect that has been advocated in all religions. Furthermore, with globalization of free flow of information via high technology and the movement of peoples across borders can positively help the increase in religious tolerance. Considering the effects of globalization and its positive and negative consequences, this study seeks to review different dimensions and aspects of globalization and the Islamic concept of it by using descriptive-analytical method and some verses of Qur'an.

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Argüelles, Anibal – Center for Psychological and Sociological Research, Cuba · reyita@cubarte.cult.cu

CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE RELIGIONS OF AFRICAN ORIGIN IN CUBA

The religious expressions of African origin practiced in Cuba have had to undergo a forced transculturation process to be able to spread and to be deeply rooted among its militant believers. This paper aims at explaining the challenges and perspectives of the religious expressions of African origin to advance and to have an impact on the religious field of the Cuban society.

Arinin, Evgeny – Vladimir State University, Russia
elarinin@mail.ru

A PROFILE OF STUDENTS' RELIGIOUS
IDENTIFICATION IN MODERN RUSSIAN
PLURALISTIC SOCIETY (2000 – 2010)

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

Although 65–80% of students (n=4000) consider themselves to be in one sense or another 'believers', only 9–15% of them think that they are 'believers' first and foremost. The Bible is authoritative only for 3–5%; priests are authoritative for 2–10%. This result shows a considerable indefiniteness and instability of their world orientation. They are quite independent: 30–45% do not refer themselves to any of those 'categories'. 60–73% think that only their own experience is authoritative. One can also clearly see a constructive approach towards political power: 82% stand for a president – a professional person, who must not be either an atheist, or a non-Christian. However, the response rate on political leaders is very low: c. 1–3%. 45–49% vote for the equality of all confessions, religions and religious formations in general. It is impossible to name the resultant worldview as 'theism' (56–70%) or 'Christianity' (26–32% believe in Christ's Resurrection), even though 65–80% say that they are 'believers'.

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Arnal, William – see *Plenary Presentations p6*
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Arora, Daljeet Singh – see *Singh, Arora Daljee*

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]
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Ashdown, Shelley – Graduate Institute of Applied
Linguistics, USA · Shelly ashdown@gial.edu

TRIBAL RELIGIONS FROM THE HEART: HEBREW LEB
AND TOROBO OLTAU

The systems of belief by the ancient Hebrews of the Old Testament and the current Kenyan tribe of Torobo demonstrate both ancient and modern tribal world view in which the religious is interconnected to all aspects of personal existence within each individual. The most important word in the vocabulary of biblical Hebrew and Torobo anthropology is 'heart'. Leb (Hebrew 'heart') and oltau (Torobo 'heart') are divinely ordained conceptual catalysts representing the composite nature of humanity. This paper will explore the concept of heart as the principal, unifying object of attention employed throughout biblical Hebrew and Torobo world view that integrates psychical elements of Self as a cohesive medium for supernatural interaction and moral development.

Asprem, Egil – University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
e.asprem@uva.nl

BOUNDARIES AND THE PROBLEM OF
COMPARISON IN ESOTERICISM RESEARCH

The controversy over geographical and cultural boundaries, and the related possibility of comparison in esotericism research arises from the existence of diverging scholarly intuitions about what "esotericism" is. A historical intuition, which has been dominant in the professionalization of the field of research over the last twenty years, endorses diachronic comparison as a central methodological tool, while it limits the possibilities of synchronic comparison to a strictly local level (e.g., between individual thinkers, texts, related currents, etc.). On the other hand, a typological intuition leads to interest in structural features which can be abstracted and discussed as "esoteric", "esotericism" and other cognate terms, on a second order level. This potentially opens up the scope of synchronic comparison to completely disregard historical, geographical and cultural boundaries. The paper argues that much of the theoretical and definitional debate in esotericism research over the years has its source in attempts to merge these two intuitions, or to argue the superiority of one over the other. Seldom, however, has the radical difference in conceptualization been openly recognized by participants in these debates. The paper suggests that the historical and typological intuitions cannot, in fact, be fully brought together, and that the current situation in esotericism research is one of fundamental disunity between diverging research programmes which ask different questions and aim for different goals. While these research programmes cannot hope to be fully integrated, they may still form a complimentary relationship. To take effect of this complementarity, however, an official stance of methodological pluralism is called for.

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Attias, Isabel Lagarriga – see *Lagarriga Attias, Isabel*
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Auer, Blain – Western Michigan University, USA

SACRED TEXT, RITUAL PERFORMANCE AND THE
PRESERVATION/TRANSFORMATION OF
MOROCCAN SUFISM

This paper focuses on the ritual practices of the Hamadsha, members of a Muslim religious order in Morocco who follow the influential eighteenth-century Sufi shaykh, Sidi Ali bin Hamdoush (d. ca. 1718). The central ritual performance of the Hamadsha is the lila Hamdoushi or the "Hamdoushi night."

There is much to the performative dimensions of the lila but the central activity of the ritual is the singing of qasā'id (qasida sg.), panygeric poems in praise of the Prophet, his family and the shaykhs of Morocco. The ritual evening begins with the performance of al-'ada salat al-nabi "the prayer for the Prophet". This qadisa is attributed to Abderrahman Hamdoushi who lived during the reign of Moulay Hassan I, Sultan of Fez, Tafilalt, Marrakech and Sous (r. 1873–1894) and is compose in darija, Moroccan colloquial Arabic. In addition to the qasaid performed during the lila, there is also a kind of liturgical poem called the hizb. One particular hizb of importance comes from the Dala'il al-Khayrat, written by Muhammad ibn Sulayman al-Jazuli (d. 1465), a work found in wide circulation across the Arab world. Through an analysis of the oral, ritual, literary and metaphoric implications of the lila ritual this paper describes the ways Hamadsha performances combine both classical pan-Arab devotional literatures with localized vernacular Moroccan cultural traditions. This work promises to open new directions in the study of ritual practice in Moroccan through the use of historical, literary, and ritual studies.

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Auffarth, Christoph – University of Bremen,
 Germany · auffarth@uni-bremen.de

WITH THE GRAIN CAME THE GODS FROM THE ORIENT TO ROME: TRADING RELIGIONS IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

To venture into the concept that religions can be 'traded' seems at first sight an obvious question of research, but there are hard obstacles against it. 'Selling' and 'buying religions' is a stock argument employed by 'true' religion in the polemic against sects, esoteric offers and start-up enterprises. The prototype of a religious enterprise based on economic relationship with its patronage is Simon Magus, who wanted to buy the ability to perform miraculous cures from the apostle Paul. He became the antitype of Christian religion, the model of illegitimate private economic interests in the guise of religion, the first heretic.

The idea of browsing a shopping mall of religions and Weltanschauungen was and is estimated strange by many people: polemic designations like 'warehouse of weltanschauungen', 'cafeteria-religion', 'market of religions', 'divine supramarket', or the older terms like 'syncretism' and 'eclecticism' are opposed to the idea that religion as truth is not negotiable. The kind of polemic is due to the perspective of professionals of religion, those intellectuals who are bound to an institution and therefore to a systematic way of thinking and deducing norms from guiding principles.

In a lecture given in 2000 in Berlin Peter Burke outlined a programme of 'cultural ex-change' (Kultureller Austausch), which he expanded as 'cultural translation'. He treats cultural exchange in analogy to material exchange. Up to a certain amount, imported goods do not affect the importing culture. As soon as the amount increases and reaches a certain limit, the impact grows.

The model of Peter Burke is partly useful, but not ideal for describing culture: Negotiating culture, the notion of mutual agency, building up borders and guards, door-openers, culture brokers, power and clashes. He is speaking of cultures as entities within national borders, of goods like Chinese porcelain, which are not transformed during trade. Indeed there are such goods traded as entities: the bust of Buddha, incense-candles, the Tibetan thangka or a Russian icon. They can be put down, lit or hung up without leaving any trace in daily life.

Culture in general, however, and religion in particular involves many other issues which the model of material exchange cannot retrace. And this is not the surplus of the transcendental dimension of religion (like a joker) with a checking account in heaven. I will not speak of a balance with one invisible side. I will concentrate on the human and earthly side of religion. Negotiating religion is turning in two directions: One is spreading religion together with the extension of power. But the other direction is partly subversive to power. Diversity and not unification is one fundamental result of trading religion. I will explore the dynamics of exchange based on examples from the Roman Empire.

Babu, Ravi – Andhra University, India
ravikumbha@yahoo.co.in

PHILANTHROPY AS AN EXPRESSION OF SPIRITUALISM

The belief system inbuilt in religions that spirit has its own existence and that it guides and guards the actions and activities of the individuals may or may not convince the rationalists, but it has its practical value both at individual and the societal level. Convictions, many a time unspoken, about rebirth and transmigration of soul require to be perceived as those which prompt humanistic and philanthropic outlook among the individuals. Most of the funds received by the Religious elite have their root in the deep convictions of the people. Majority of the voluntary or non-governmental organizations involved in social service activities are found to have affiliation with some or other religious congregations. A study on the factors motivating voluntary service and action resulted in the observation that Spiritual path is essentially linked with the humanistic outlook requiring philanthropic disposition.

Babu, Umesh – Ranchi University, India
Puttaiah, E. T. – Ranchi University, India
Parisara75@gmail.com

CONSERVATION VS ETHNIC OF TRIBAL POPULATION: A CASE STUDY OF JENU KURUBA IN SOUTHERN INDIA

A Tribal communities, though rich in traditional knowledge system, are most exploited sections in modern society. They used to be exploited by vested interest groups such as middlemen, land lords, etc. However, the recent entry to this group appears to be the State. In its eagerness to show its commitment for conservation of nature, Government of India has embarked on creation of National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries in a hurry. This immediate creation of protected regions has literally added fuel to the fire that was created by Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Together, these two institutions have made the life of numerous tribals very difficult. One such group is Jenu Kuruba (Honey collection community), spread over Nagarhole National Park and B.R. Hills Sanctuary. They were known for their indigenous ways of protecting nature and also capacity to merge into nature. However, sudden creation of protected areas has forced them to shift their roles from that of benefactor to exploiter. In this paper, we would like to focus on the failures on the part of State in evolving a proper rehabilitation packages for this group of tribes. We also present traditional wisdom of this group in protection of nature.

Baffelli, Erica – University of Otago, New Zealand
Erica.baffelli@otago.ac.nz

PLAYING WITH ASAHARA: REPRESENTING JAPANESE NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS ON VIDEO SHARING WEBSITES

In the mid 1990s some Japanese new religious movements (shinshūkyō) established a presence on the Internet. One of the most active was Aum shinrikyō (Aum Supreme Truth), the group who would go on to perpetrate a sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway system in 1995.

The website was eventually removed and in 2000 was replaced with another site, this one for another religious group that called itself Aleph, which had been established by former members of Aum. On this new site, the figure of Asahara, who had been imprisoned since 1995 and was sentenced to death in 2004, was much less visible. In May 2007, a number of members of Aleph, including Jōyū Fumihiro, a one-time spokesperson and public relations manager for Aum, left the organization and founded another new group called Hikari no wa (Circle of Light). Hikari no wa's website was immediately opened at the time of the group's founding. In contrast to the caution exhibited by Aleph, the leader of Hikari no wa is not only the main figure on the website, but is also becoming something of an Internet celebrity in Mixi, the biggest social network website in Japan.

However, the rise of Jōyū as a Web 'celebrity' seems to be paralleled by an increasing amount of ridicule and criticism directed at Asahara's image online. Large numbers of user-generated videos have appeared on video sharing websites such as YouTube or Niko niko dōga, videos that parody the anime films that Aum Shinrikyō once produced and distributed among members. In the most common form of these videos, an original animation movie or video from Aum is presented with different background music, creating a humorous effect aimed especially at ridiculing the ex-leader Asahara.

This paper investigates the differences and similarities between Asahara and Jōyū's self-representation online. Is Jōyū creating the image of a new leader or in he merely replicating the image of Asahara in new clothing? Is 'Web 2.0' giving rise to what Jolyon Thomas (2006) has called 'playing with religion' (shūkyo asobi)? Do these videos show us the increasingly blurry boundaries between religion and entertainment? How is Jōyū's involvement online impacting his potential influence offline?

Bahna, Vladimir – Institute of Ethnology, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Solvak Republic
vladimir.bahna@gmail.com

CULTURALLY TRANSMITTED SUPERNATURAL EXPERIENCES

Non-institutionally transmitted supernatural and religious beliefs often occur in form of personal experience narratives. In general we could expect that personal memories should be unique, but these stories are often similar to other narratives known in the society and contain traditional motifs and elements. Interesting question is how the culturally spread beliefs get into someone's autobiographical memories? This paper presents findings based on author's field research in rural area of northern Slovakia and on cognitive theories of human memory. Psychological studies show that our autobiographical memory is not a passive information storage and recall device, but an active process of repeated construction of our personal past. During this process people incorporate scripts, concepts, audio-visual pictures, or whole episodes from their cultural and social environment into their personal past, without being aware of it. Author suggests that these psychological findings can be used to explain the formation of perceptual memories containing traditional beliefs. Following his field material he claims that the tendency to interpret and remember some events as direct supernatural experiences, depends on two conditions: (1) emotional arousal during the event, and (2) social context of similar stories heard by the person, that means: who in his social environment was the source and who was the object of the stories.

Baier, Karl – University of Vienna, Austria
Karl.baier@univie.ac.at

MESMERIC YOGA AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDITATION WITHIN THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Hardly anyone will doubt the important role of the Theosophical Society with regard to the opening of the Western World towards Yoga and Eastern forms of meditation. But how did meditation come to play a role within Theosophy? And in what way has Theosophy been influenced by Indian methods of meditation? My paper aims at presenting the results of a closer investigation concerning the history of meditation within the Theosophical Society. My considerations start with the contemplative spirituality of Isis Unveiled and the influence of a mesmeric understanding of Yoga on Blavatsky and Olcott. A new chapter of the story was written by Indian theosophists (mostly from Bengal) who started to experiment with yogic meditation and promoted a positive attitude towards Tantrism and Kundalini Yoga.

Quite likely as a result of negative experiences, the practice of yogic meditation has been partly suppressed by the leaders of Theosophy. They created and propagated a form of Western-style meditation for theosophical beginners. The Indian influence did not disappear completely, however. In her late days Blavatsky taught a form of Neo-Kundalini-meditation within the Esoteric Section of Theosophy.

Balambal, V. – see *Ramaswamy, Balambal V.*

Baltutis, Peter E. – University of St. Michael's College, Toronto

FROM PATERNALISM TO PARTNERSHIP: THE CANADIAN CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, 1972

1972–1973 was a decisive period in the history of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP), the international development arm of the Canadian Catholic Church, and a pivotal moment in the theological maturation of faith-based agencies for global justice. Created as a response to Vatican II, CCODP's mandate is to provide financial support to socio-economic initiatives by peoples in the Global South. During its early years (1967–1972), CCODP understood its objective with a "paternalistic" mindset, which provided funding to the poorest regions of the world without any social analysis of factors which cause these inequalities. In 1972, Development and Peace participated in a seminar of 14 religious development organizations known as the International Co-operation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE) that was hosted in Blankenberge, Belgium. While the majority of delegates agreed upon modest reforms to the existing "paternalistic" strategy for their overseas work, CCODP wrote a minority report that proposed a radical new model for international development. Beginning in 1973, Development and Peace and Australia Catholic Relief initiated the Asia Partnership for Human Development (APHD), which moved away from the traditional donor-recipient relationship to a "partnership" that sought to empower local communities through co-responsibility in decision making. Using an analytic framework adopted from Canadian theologians Robert McKeon and Lee Cormie to contrast these different approaches, this paper will argue that the events of 1972–1973 not only fundamentally changed CCODP's strategy for international development work, but also helped usher in a new understanding of faith-based global justice.

Bano, Shermeen – Fatima Jinnah Women's University, Pakistan

SUFISM VS ORTHODOX ISLAM: A STUDY OF SUFISM AS SPACE OF MODERN IDENTITY (A CASE STUDY OF PAKISTAN)

The present study aims to explore Sufism as a space of modern religious identity and its impact on religious indoctrinations in Pakistan. Sufism acts as a chief source of religious identity in the country. The study explores how the mystical tradition continues to be a significant aspect of religious lives of a large majority of Pakistanis despite their diverse backgrounds. The study further makes a comparative analysis of Sufism and Orthodox Islam. Unlike Orthodox Islam that is often perceived as rigid and extremist, Sufism through its message of love, tolerance and equality creates unique social spaces of religious diversity. Modernization and traditional practices merge and give rise to wide ranging religious and cultural practices within these social spaces; Sufi shrines of Pakistan. Sufi ideology therefore, preserves a distinct Muslim Identity by abandoning conformity to orthodox or conventional subject matter of Islamic thought. For this reason, Sufism is often criticized by the proponents of Orthodox Islam for introducing unlawful changes within the basic premise of Islam by intermingling religious aspects with cultural facets of the region. These changes include ritualistic practices of Sama and Dhamal at Sufi shrines among many others. Participant observations at shrines were carried out at Sufi shrines of Islamabad and Rawalpindi (Bari Imam, Golra Sharif, Eid Gah Sharif and Shah ki Tallian). Purposive Sampling technique was utilized in this study for making a perceptual analysis of Sufism in Pakistan. It includes 33 in-depth interviews and 12 case studies of 18 visitors of Sufi shrines of, 9 non-visitors of shrines and 6 religious scholars of both, Bareilly and Deobandi School of thought of Orthodox Islam.

Bantugan, Brian – St. Paul University Manila, Philippines

THE NETWORK OF ENGENDERED SPIRITUALITY TALK OF "OTHERED" MEN: A COMPARATIVE CROSS-CULTURAL MAPPING

Integrating the spiral dynamics theory of Dr. Don Beck into a modified network structure analysis approach that is more organic, process-oriented and longitudinal in representation, the study attempted to achieve a cross-cultural mapping of the interactions in two selected forums of non-heterosexual men that discussed similar issues on spirituality. Using threads from www.downelink.com and www.guys4men.com with high activity networks involving Filipino non-heterosexual men, the research revealed that both networks are pushed into activity by authoritarian superhubs.

However, a more individualistic and task-oriented superhub (in the global network) allowed for more decentered (superhub-detached) interactions within a network than in a "social-oriented superhub"-focused network. Ownership of the forum thread network was made more manifest by the superhub in the global network and by the community of hubs in the local network. The greater intensity of the spirituality exchanges in the local networks reveal a more spirituality engaged but more conflicted and antagonistic community of non-heterosexual men. Both networks, nonetheless, highlight that "othered" men in real life also "other" "othered" men in cyberspace. There is as much inclusion and exclusion in seemingly more empowered virtual alternative, if not subversive, communities.

Baracs, Martinez Rodrigo – Instituto Nacional Antropologia e Historia, Mexico

THE WRITING OF THE NICAN MOPOHUA

It is well known that the story of the four apparitions in Mexico of the Virgin of Guadalupe to the Indian Juan Diego, of the cure of his uncle Juan Bernardino and of the apparition in Juan Diego's cloth of her image in the presence of bishop Zumárraga between 9 and 12 of December 1531, was first registered in the book published in 1648 in Mexico City by the criollo (born in Mexico) priest Miguel Sánchez, *Imagen de la Virgen María Madre de Dios de Guadalupe*. This narration, in a simplified version, and with the title of Nican mopohua ("Here begins..."), was published in Nahuatl in 1649, in the book of another criollo priest, Luis Lasso de la Vega, *Huei tlamahuiçoltica*. The beauty and strength of this narration has led many authors to believe that, even though it was published after the Spanish version, it can be considered the original version. However, there is no concordance among the scholars: some of them – believers (Chauvet) or not (O'Gorman and León-Portilla) of the historicity of the apparitions story – think that it was written in the XVI century, maybe by Antonio Valeriano, the Nahua disciple of fray Bernardino de Sahagún, but some other historians and philologists (Lockhart, Poole, Brading) think that the narration was written in the XVII century. In a previous work, I have shown that at the time being it is impossible to be sure about the date problem. However, I have been able to gather some historical information that lead to the circumstances of the writing of an original version of the Nican mopohua in 1554–1555.

Bateye, Bolaji – OAU, Nigeria Bolaji88@yahoo.com

DANCING WITH THE SPIRIT: SOUND, GENDER AND RITUAL PERFORMANCE IN THE WATER FROM THE ROCK MINISTRY

African Initiated Churches (AICs) continue to express diverse forms of religious experience in performance, notably in relation to music. Using cultural and feminist hermeneutical approaches, the paper explores the interplay of speech/sound/music/gender and the “descent of the spirit” in the ritual performance of the Water from the Rock Ministry (WFRM). Gender as a dynamic is significant in that the WFRM, a typical AIC, was founded and led by a woman in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. It also has a branch in London and shows a constant indigenization of Christianity. The data for the study are collected from interviews, participant observation and focus group discussions. The aim is not merely to explore how sound plays out in the spirituality of this African Christian community but also to proffer culturally oriented reasons as to why it does so. This is in response to the lament of the Ghanaian musicologist, Kofi Agawu’s that “the spirit of African music is seldom manifest in the scholarship about it.”

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Bauduin, Tessel M. – University of Amsterdam,
The Netherlands · t.m.bauduin@uva.nl

ARTISTS AS “MODEST INSTRUMENTS” OF THE “NEW ERA: SCIENCE, RELIGION AND THE AVANT-GARDE

The European art movements of the early twentieth century, collectively known as the avant-garde, are renowned for their – sometimes quite virulent – anti-religious attitude. This attitude should more accurately be labeled anti-clericalism, anti-intuitionism, or anti-dogmatism, rather than simply anti-religionism or anti-Christianity. Instead, the avant-garde was actively in search of a re-sacralisation of the world and pursued a new spirituality, mainly in response to the perceived materialism of contemporary Western society. Accordingly, as certain exhibitions of modern art have already shown, religiosity and spiritualism in a variety of forms were part and parcel of the avant-garde, and I will briefly discuss these exhibitions and present some important religious tendencies. The avant-garde’s spirituality and its anti-materialism – not to mention its emphasis on art as the only means to all ends – might lead one to think it opposed to science. As I will further show in this paper, this is not necessarily true for all movements, nor individual artists. Both a language of science and new scientific discoveries were integrated in the discourse of the avant-garde.

Further, science even proved to be a further departure point for the avant-garde’s quest for spirituality: science itself could operate in an anti-materialist and anti-rationalist way, paving the way for a re-enchantment of the world; while, on the other hand, science also offered new solutions for a rapprochement between the disenchanted post-Enlightenment world and the sacred, leading to a new enchantment. I will illustrate this tripartite dialogue between cutting edge science, avant-garde art, and new spirituality, by means of tracing concepts such as the fourth dimension, vortex-theory and the impact of early quantum mechanical theory in and upon avant-garde art.

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Baum, Robert – University of Missouri, USA
baumr@missouri.edu

JEOPARDY AND THE QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE: STUDYING DIOLA RELIGIOUS HISTORY IN THE MIDST OF A SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT

For the past 28 years, the Mouvement des Forces Democratiques du Casamance has engaged in intermittent warfare to secure either full independence or far greater autonomy from the Senegalese state. This warfare has included pitched battles, mining of roads, arrests and torture of suspected rebels, executions by both sides, and other acts of violence associated with secessionist rebellions. For the past 37 years, I have engaged in historical and anthropological studies of the dominant religious tradition of the lower Casamance area, which many regard as the heartland of the rebellion. Of the four and a half years of field research in the region, one third of my time there has been during the rebellion. My research, heavily based on participant observation and interviews, involves living in the same village since 1974 and establishing strong personal ties with the community in which I work. Although my first book focused on the period prior to the establishment of colonial rule (approximately 1880), present work on the history of Diola prophetic movements continues up to the present.

This places my desire to understand the nature of contemporary prophetic movements, most which are led by women, in direct conflict with the desire not to place these leaders or their followers in jeopardy. Since the Senegalese government does not know much about these prophetic leaders, who generally avoid contact with outsiders, and since earlier prophets were involved in resistance to French colonial rule, they are the object of considerable interest on the part of government. Since the U.S. government is actively aiding the Senegalese in suppressing this rebellion, they too are very interested in whether or not contemporary women prophets have ties to the rebellion or not.

Both groups are also interested in learning about what goes on in secret religious rituals within sacred forests. Mere identification, by name, of these religious leaders would at best lead to considerable unwanted attention on the part of government and at worst lead to intense forms of interrogation.

These issues manifest themselves in the legal process in terms of people from the region seeking political asylum in the United States or other countries. They also manifest themselves in the peer review process of evaluating other scholars work, when such work may involve writings that place local Diola leaders in harms' way. Such peer review could also have legal consequences in an increasingly litigious society. Then, there is the question of when to testify before government agencies and when not to do so or whether to do so in closed forums or to limit oneself to open forums. Are well informed government agencies necessarily more benign or are they merely more efficient. There is also a question of testifying for concerned NGOs like Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch. Finally, there is the decision of whether or not to publish materials concerning events since the beginning of the rebellion.

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Bechler, Silke – Heidelberg University, UK
bechler@asia-europe.uniheidelberg.de

WHEN RITUALS BECOME TRANSCULTURAL – THE VEDIC SACRIFICE (YAJÑA) IN TIMES OF GLOBALIZATION

New media and technologies change form and content of traditional rituals and bring them from a socially limited context to new transcultural public spheres. The present paper will deal with this development focusing on yajña, a traditional Indian form of worship or devotion, characterized by the act of giving oblation to the gods by spreading sacrificial offerings (ahuti) into the fire. Traditionally, this form of sacrifice, which can be traced back for more than three thousand years, was focusing on individual needs as for instance good health, prosperity and wealth, the removal of obstacles, etc. In course of time, stimulated by various migration flows, yajña crossed its original sphere and now emerges at various places all over the world, where it is performed by Hindus living in the Diaspora as well as by "Westerners" seeking for new religious paths. Strengthened by the influence of new media and technologies the production, consumption, and content of this ritual rapidly changed. Whereas in former times yajña was highly focusing on interests concerning a socially limited group, it now shifts from a private into a transcultural public sphere, where it is often performed as a public spectacle for various ends, focusing on a transnational and transcultural religious environmentalism.

Beck, Guy L. – Tulane University, USA

SONIC LITURGY: A NEW TEMPLATE FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND SOUND

The study of religion has been plagued by the problem of silence. Teaching and research, even about living religions, has too often been shaped by textual and verbal testimony alone, when, in fact, most religions encompass sonic phenomena, including music. While much sonic phenomena elude accurate description and classification in normal academic discourse, they, far from being random or peripheral to a religion's main focus, frequently play central roles in religious worship. In Hindu Puja (ritual worship), for example, "without sound, there is no Puja." New approaches that offer ways to organize sonic phenomena, and more formally inculcate sound and music into the study of religion, are needed. One such approach posits a flexible template in the form of "sonic liturgy." While liturgy (from laos, "people," and ergon, "work" or "action") is defined as "a series of rites that combine word, action, symbol, and/or object performed on behalf of a group by priests or other functionaries," sonic liturgy is conceived as a structure, pattern, sequence, or ritual order of events that incorporates sound and/or music in multiple ways. The approach places sonic phenomena within a tentative framework, and requires a more careful examination of the precise function of chant, song, prayer, bell, gong, cymbal, drum, rattle, clap, string, flute, and horn, etc., as they occur in ritual and as they acquire special meaning for the participants. Drawing on the academic fields of liturgical studies, ritual studies, and ethnomusicology, this paper proposes a strategy, along with some new terminology, for the application of the 'sonic liturgy approach' across a variety of religious traditions. It will be shown how the methodological template of sonic liturgy allows for the deeper significance of sonic and musical phenomena to emerge within the comparative study of religion.

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Beck, Roger – University of Toronto, Canada
Roger.beck@utoronto.ca

"STAR-TALK": A GATEWAY TO MIND IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

In my 2006 book, *The Religion of the Mithras Cult in the Roman Empire*, I postulated as the idiom of the Mysteries of Mithras the language of contemporaneous astronomy and astrology, ?star-talk? for short. By and large my suggestion was not well received, but I shall press ahead with the study of ancient star-talk because, as my title indicates, star-talk furnishes a useful gateway to mind and the making of mental representations in the ancient world.

Star-talk was both an actually existing language spoken/written by ancient astronomers and astrologers (this part of it is also a specialist discourse in Greek and Latin) and an imagined language thought to be spoken by its own signs. The latter, imagined dimension of star-talk (stars understood as both signs and speakers, the heavens as texted book) I wrote about at some length in my book. Since the celestial bodies were considered divine in the ancient world, star-talk was a language of the heavens ? in both senses of that word. A cognitive study of star-talk thus belongs necessarily to the cognitive study of religion.

In studying star-talk I shall draw on ideas from cognitive linguistics, a sub-discipline which I overlooked in my book. In particular I need to take into account the work of scholars such as Gilles Fauconnier, Mark Johnson, George Lakoff, and Mark Turner on metaphor and conceptual blending.

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Belka, Lubos – Masaryk University, Czech Republic
belka@phil.muni.cz

DANDARON MANDALA: BURYAT BUDDHISM DURING SOVIET ERA

As a case-study of the history of Buddhism in Russia will be presented the origination of a new form of Buddhism within the traditional Buryat sangha in the middle of the 20th century. After World War II, the so-called first restoration emerges, consisting in the effort to rescue religious life following a decade of reprisals. In the mid 1960s, during the period of the first criticism of Stalin's cult, a small, nevertheless important Buddhist community originated in Ulan-Ude. An unofficial or clandestine micro-sangha formed around Bidia D. Dandaron, a Buryat Buddhist scholar, which existed until 1972, the year of Dandaron's imprisonment. Subsequently he was sentenced to five years in the gulag, where he died in 1974, at the age of sixty. One of his first disciples was A. I. Zheleznov, a painter. After the death of his teacher, he painted Vajrabhairava mandala. His innovative way of depiction did not conform to the rooted tradition and the painting exceeded all the standards. The aim of the paper is to show by means of the painting the formation of a new religious group, its perception of the outside world and incorporation of such a vision into the mandala. It is surprising how much can be told about Dandaron from this image; what cannot be identified here, is Dandaron's cult, which now as well as during his life has been met with certain disconcertion by the official sangha.

Bellotti, Karina Kosicki – Federal University of Paraná, Brazil

MEDIA AND CHRISTIAN YOUTH GROUPS IN BRAZIL (2000S)

The aim of this paper is to analyze the uses of media languages in the religious practices of Christian groups in Brazil in the 2000s. In the past decade the religious engagement and activism among youth has increased in Brazil due to the massive investment of several churches in new strategies to attract their attention. This study takes a cultural comparative perspective on the uses of media by Catholics and Protestants, and to what extent these media help to intermingle religious and cultural boundaries in the Brazilian religious field. The paper is divided in two parts – the uses made by Catholics and Protestants in the 2000s, focusing the internet, parties, rallies, and other performative activities. I investigated the creation of the “Cristotèque”, a mixture of mass and night club, and the presence of Evangelical artists in such events. Besides, I compared this Catholic initiative with the growing presence of Evangelical youth in new pentecostal churches, such as the “surfer's” church, Snow Ball Church. The main question of this on-going research is : in what ways are youth transforming religion in Brazil? If youth are transforming it the field by the use of media, what is the impact of this transformation on the larger society? The theoretical approach to this material is provided by the scholarly studies on Religion, Media and Culture, in which religious media are considered to contribute to the creation of a religious autonomy, to the communication among converts/believers, to celebration, to evangelization, and to identity formation and affirmation. The last is the most evident attribute of the religious youth media.

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Benavides, Gustavo – Villanova University, USA
gustavo.benavides@villanova.edu

SACRIFICE AND THE PRODUCTION OF RULERSHIP

It will be argued that the appearance of the cluster of practices and representations known as ‘religion’ is inseparable from the emergence of stratification, and therefore from the appearance of individuals believed to embody the capacity to rule. The sacralization of rulership will be explored along two parallel tracks. The first, concerned mainly with the process of production, examines the peculiar tensions found among ruling groups, especially among the rulers themselves, regarding labor and its avoidance. In terms of the process of production/labor, rulers generally try to act, ritually, as the primordial/paradigmatic workers, while at the same time seeking through the same rituals to establish distance between themselves and the harsh reality of physical work.

The second track is concerned with examining the tension between extreme consumption and waste on the one hand, and a quasi-ascetic attitude towards the world of material goods, on the other.

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Berg, Richard A. – Lakehead University, Canada
rberg@lakeheadu.ca

THE THERAVADA BUDDHIST NO SELF THESIS IS NOT A REDUCTIONIST THESIS

Acknowledging the Western perspective of inquiry, this paper explicitly assumes that the psychological notions of self, person, and associated personal properties are second-order functional properties that supervene upon a base of physical properties that belong to the body. It then interprets the Theravada Buddhist anatta (no self) thesis on this basis as a reductivist thesis. It demonstrates the inadequacy of this interpretation for hermeneutical purposes by comparing the cultural-intellectual contexts in which the Cartesian and Theravadin psycho-physical dualisms occur, pointing out that they are not at all the same. Having pointed out other additional contextual failures of analogy that typically prevent Western inquiry from understanding the Theravada Buddhist no self thesis, the paper concludes by interpreting it pragmatically as intimately involved in the practice of alleviating suffering rather than being a piece of Western-style theoretical philosophy, and hence not as a reductionist thesis.

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Berglund, Jenny – Sodertorn University, Sweden
jenny.berglund@sh.se

ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT MUSLIM SCHOOLS IN SWEDEN

My paper focuses the formulation of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at three Swedish Muslim schools where fieldwork was conducted 2005–2008. Its aim is to contribute knowledge of how IRE is formed as a confessional school subject within the framework and under the jurisdiction of the Swedish school system. Even though the general content of all three classrooms was fundamentally the same, specific variations were clearly evident. These variations concerned the Quran and how its verses were taught, Islamic history and how its narratives are used, and Islamic song and how its genres are selected. The paper shows that global discussions on matters such as “authentic Islam”, gender inequality, and Muslim minority life have influenced the teaching that has been offered in the studied classrooms. These discussions have developed out of the many ways in which contemporary Muslims can choose to express their faith.

And although each teacher deals with these issues in her own unique way, they all attempt to connect them to the pupils’ situation as Muslims in Swedish society as well as to the national curriculum and local school syllabi. This leads to the concept of globalization, meaning that just as local conditions adapt to the influences of the global, so do global influences adapt to the conditions of the local. The local is equally visible in the content of the studied teaching and demonstrates that adaptation is occurring in response to both the Swedish school context and the pedagogical discourse taking place therein. In practical terms, this means that each school’s pupils received a somewhat different interpretation of Islam and slightly different answers to both local and global questions. The teachers themselves all indicate a desire to keep within the limits of Islam’s codified laws; however, to varying degrees, each can be seen to press for change. On the one hand, the existing interpretations and previous opinions of renowned Islamic scholars are employed to account for their different educational choices; on the other hand, these interpretations and opinions function to restrict those choices, as do the “fundamental” values of Sweden’s national curriculum. It should be noted in this connection that adapting the content of IRE is not a matter of inventing new interpretations or Islamic traditions; it is a matter of shifting perspectives on what in the common Islamic tradition is considered to be fundamental, essential and relevant. This paper shows that these shifts have often been based on each teacher’s assessment of the behavioural and religious skills that are “required” for Muslims within the framework of Swedish society. This demonstrates how the influences of tradition, local school context, situational perceptions and globally discussed issues work together to affect the content of IRE, meaning the type of Islam that is provided in these schools.

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Berglund, Jenny – Sodertorn University, Sweden
jenny.berglund@sh.se

THRESHOLD RE

State borders are places where people are generally configured differently from those who culturally, geographically but also epistemologically live in the center. Thus, at borders or border areas identities can be both brokered and broken, they carry their own particular meanings. Those who live in the border areas perceive culture, social relations and politics differently from those at the center. Borders also shape relations between “borderlanders” and people and institutions beyond border regions. In such situations, religious education (RE) is interesting to study since RE is a school subject that across Europe implies to foster identity and is often biased in terms of content and orientation to a majority religion of a certain country.

In this paper I discuss how religious education in a border area in the north of Norway, at the threshold of the Russian border (Kirkenes) is affected by its bordered position. This border area is interesting not only as a border between Norway and Russia, but also a border between Lutheran Protestantism and Russian Orthodox/post Sovjet Russia. By using the concept of *liminality* I discuss the political and cultural tensions that occur in relation to the national centre to which the educational system is attached (Norway) but also to the “borderlanders” on the other side of the state border (Russia).

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Berlinerblau, Jacques – See *Plenary Presentations*, p7

Berman, Michael – Independent Scholar, England

SHAMANISM: COUNTABLE OR UNCOUNTABLE?

Mircea Eliade Revisited Despite the fact that Eliade’s reputation has become somewhat tarnished in recent years, his importance in the history of the development of neo-shamanism cannot be over-emphasized. For in addition to rehabilitating nature religions in the eyes of Westerners, he stretched out the geographic borders of shamanism so that it came to be applied to “all non-Western and pre-Christian European spiritualities which did not fit the format of organised world religions and in which spiritual practitioners worked in altered states” (Znamenski, 2009, p.197). What will be considered in this talk is whether he was justified in doing so or not.

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Berman, Michael – Independent Scholar, England

NEO-PAGANISM IN ARMENIA TODAY

Frequently referred to as one of the cradles of civilization, Armenia is also considered by many to have been the first country in the world to officially embrace Christianity as its religion. Although in popular perception the people who follow Armenian traditions are considered to be Christians, in reality this can include both animal sacrifice and the worshipping by families of holy stones, which for many Christians from outside the Armenian cultural reality could never be accepted as a part of Christian religious heritage. Consequently, the assumption that Armenia is a Christian country is in fact not strictly accurate as what is actually practised by most people is an eclectic mix of traditions. This paper will outline and contrast the two main forms of neo-paganism being practised in the country today – both the ‘bookish’ approach artificially cultivated by urbanized intellectuals, and the more authentic rural movement.

Bernard, Rosemarie – Waseda University, Japan

SHINTO IN SINGAPORE DURING THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION, 1942–5

This paper explores the role played by Shinto during the occupation of Singapore by the Japanese military forces from 1942–1945. A shrine, the Syonan Jinja, and memorials to fallen soldiers were planned by high-ranking Japanese military figures and constructed with POW labour. These sites were key to the veneration of imperial power as well as to the elaboration of the cult of the fallen soldier, both among the Japanese victors in Singapore and their Allied prisoners. Following an exploration of these memorial and ritual sites, I will show how the construction, maintenance and final destruction of Shinto sites in Singapore must be understood, not only as Japanese cultural and political expressions, but rather as part of an historical and cross-cultural continuum of modern warfare in which increasing dehumanization and violence are matched by the religious intensification of nationalist aesthetics of death and sacrifice.

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Bernardo, Luís António Pais – University of Lisbon, Portugal

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

CAN SEPARATISM BE SOFT? MUSLIMS AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS IN IRELAND

Since the 1950s, the Muslim Umma in Ireland has grown increasingly segmented and, I argue, increasingly accommodated in Irish political and societal dynamics. No longer an “Islam of the embassies”, Islam in Ireland is increasingly plural. As opposed to other analogous European cases, the accommodation of Islam in Ireland has proceeded in comparatively smooth fashion. I argue that this originates in the unique institutional arrangement for the management of religious diversity in Ireland. The specific configuration of power relations which emerged in 1937 was determined by a long-term symbiosis between Irish nationalism and Catholicism, thus positioning the Irish Catholic Church in a preeminent moral, political and societal role. But limitations on selective partnerships between the State and specific religious confessions, written in the Bunreacht na hÉireann, established an institutional pattern which I name “soft separatism”, unique in Europe. While the Catholic Church remained preeminent, other religious denominations were legally entitled to enjoy benefits derived from State support and cooperation. I will argue that Islam in Ireland, as the largest non-Christian denomination whose faithful are mostly non-native (and thus subject to specific instances of discrimination), has benefited greatly from this original configuration.

Moreover, as religion enjoys a structural role in the Irish public sphere, Muslims qua religious communities do not face as many political hurdles in order to attain legitimacy. In tandem with “soft separatism”, this specificity of the Irish context explains why, in the wider Western European landscape, Muslim communities in Ireland face a comparatively less contentious path towards legitimization as sociopolitically active groups.

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Berner, Ulrich – University of Bayreuth, Germany
Ulrich.berner@uni-bayreuth.de

MODERN MUSIC-THEATRE AS OBJECT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES: THE INTERPRETATION OF BIBLICAL MONOTHEISM IN SCHOENBERG’S “MOSE AND ARON”

Religious Studies scholars have neglected music in general and music-theatre (including dance and related visual arts) in particular, since the demise of the classical phenomenology of religion – Gerardus van der Leeuw in some of his less known writings had shown great interest in music and art. However, recent cognitive approaches to the study of religion may open up a new perspective on these cultural phenomena, by investigating the relationship between verbal and nonverbal means of religious communication and transmission, and by reflecting upon the various modes of religiosity. Arnold Schoenberg’s opera “Mose and Aron” will be used for a case study that fits into this perspective: as an example of an explicitly religious motif transferred into a seemingly secular context, raising questions about music as religion, and about the religious/secular distinction. This work has to be seen in its cultural and historical context, first, by looking at the emergence of abstract art and Schoenberg’s friendship with Kandinsky; second, by focussing on the conflicts, resulting from the political development in the 30ties of the 20th century and leading to the composer’s (re)conversion to Judaism.

“Representation and anticipation in ritual drama – Examples from medieval Europe and modern Africa,” in: Paideuma. Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde 55: Verlag Kohlhammer, 2009, S. 117 – 135

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Berner, Ulrich – University of Bayreuth, Germany
Ulrich.berner@uni-bayreuth.de

CHINESE-EUROPEAN ENCOUNTER AND THE EMERGENCE OF A (COMPARATIVE) SCIENCE OF RELIGION

The missionary method of accommodation applied by M. Ricci and most of the Jesuits in China (16th/17th century), brought about a serious conflict between the Jesuits and the Dominicans/Franciscans, known as “The Chinese Rites Controversy”.

This theological debate on the legitimacy of integrating Chinese (Confucian) rites into Christianity, however, may have some relevance for reflections on Religious Studies as a discipline. For the Jesuits’ strategy of defence was based on systematically comparing Chinese and European cultural phenomena, discussing the meaning and function of rituals and reflecting upon the very concept of religion itself. Therefore, it seems rewarding to ask if, and to which extent, some of the Jesuits, apart from defending their theological position, succeeded in developing a scientific comparative approach that might be regarded as belonging to the (pre)history of the History of Religions or Religious Studies. Also, it is to be recalled, that the Chinese Rites Controversy met great interest among leading philosophers of the European Enlightenment, thus contributing at least indirectly to the emergence of a science of religion.

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Berner, Ulrich – University of Bayreuth, Germany
Ulrich.berner@uni-bayreuth.de

RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS – KINSHIP-BASED AND/OR UNIVERSAL? EXAMPLES OF DISCOURSES FROM EUROPEAN AND AFRICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

One of the elements proposed for the definition of ‘indigenous religion’ is that it is ‘ruled by kinship’, which implies the assumption that kinship-based religions cannot be universal. However, there are historical examples of discourses from universal religious traditions that document a variety of divergent views on the relationship between kinship obligations and (individual) religious aspirations. A look at discourses like these may be relevant for a reconsideration of the conceptual distinctions between different types of religion and/or religiosity.

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Bharadwaj, Radha Madhav – Deen Dayal Upadhyaya College, India · Rm bharadwaj@yahoo.co.in

ACCULTURATION OF THE TRIBALS IN NORTH INDIA DURING THE BRITISH PERIOD: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE

The modern day Hinduism in north and central India is an admixture of the major Brahmanic religion and the minor traditions of the tribals. This became possible through the process of acculturation in the tribal regions. We have ample references to this in the contemporary literary and epigraphic sources. But what is amazing is that this process of the acculturation of the tribals and their religion continued even during the British colonial period. What is of particular interest is that there is also a vehement opposition by the tribals at attempts to impose Brahmanical religion on them and make them and their religion subservient to the Brahmanic religion.

The case in point is the vehement opposition by the followers of the tribal god Jamlu in Kulu valley to agree to carry their local God to escort the car festival of the Brahmanic god Raghunath as a subordinate deity on the religious festival of Dussehra. To make himself militarily stronger, Jamlu forms alliances with local goddess Hirma and her brother Gyephen. The king of Kulu ultimately gave yielded to them not to bring their deity to escort on the said festival and also not to pay obeisance at the palace temple of god Raghunatha at Kulu. There may be many more attempts at acculturation and opposition to them. Through this paper I wish to focus on this aspect of Indian ethnography to bring to light the fact that acculturation of the tribals has been a continuous process but there has also been vehement opposition by the tribals to such attempts which only aimed at bringing them under the Brahmanic cultural hegemony posing a threat to the religious and cultural identity of the former.

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Bialecki, John – University of California, USA

"THE POSTMODERN" AS NEW DISPENSATION: AN APOCALYPTIC CULTURAL TURN IN A POST-APOCALYPTIC CHRISTIAN MILIEU

The Vineyard, a Southern California originated, but now world-wide church-planting movement, has several well-known, distinctive element, such as its championing the popularization of intense Neo-Pentecostal practices such as prophecy, healing, and expelling demons; what has received less public recognition is that unlike other post-1960s originated 'Jesus Movement' denominations such as Calvary Chapel, The Vineyard has been backing away from the dispensationalist beliefs that have been near ubiquitous in theologically conservative Evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity during the 20th century. Just as striking, though, as this turning away from dispensationalism is the Vineyard's troubled embrace of 'Post-modernity' as a category – used alternately to designate the current era, the Vineyard itself, an upcoming Vineyard generation, or threatening post-Christian others with whom the Vineyard must engage. This language, along with cognate ideas such as the 'death of Christendom' or 'the Emergent Church' not only point to ambivalence and generational change in this boomer-founded church planting movement, but also suggest that the logic of apocalyptic dispensationalism has a tendency to return even after it as been foreclosed. Drawing on over seven years of ethnographic engagement, this paper will examine the discourse and ritual associated with 'The Postmodern' to suggest that due to the Christian influence on secular conceptions of periodization and history, breaking with dispensationalism is more difficult to achieve than it may appear to be.

Bivins, Jason C. – North Carolina State University,
 USA · jcbivins@unity.ncsu.edu

"THE LORD IS HEAVY": IMPROVISED MUSIC AND RELIGIONS

The study of North American religions has recently opened up conversations about the ways in which the senses are integral to religious experience. Rather than simply attending to "the body," attention is now being paid specifically to specific register like sound and vision. As part of these investigations, Religious Studies has become more attentive to the role of sound and music in religious worlds. Yet while Ralph Ellison's observation that much of American life is "jazz-shaped" aptly characterizes American religions, scholarship on religion and music often focuses on traditional forms like gospel and hymnody, musical accompaniments to ritual, or lyrical representations of religion. There is, however, much work to be done on the intersection of religions with various musical cultures, on the hybrid forms of religio-musical identity, practice, and experience that are written and improvised in the United States. When consulting what Ellison called the "lower frequencies" of American culture, we find that jazz registers in unexpected but meaningful places. Jazz music has not just been in conversation with American religions or served as their musical accompaniment, but has contributed to and participated in them. The stories of jazz are integral to the stories of American religions in the last century. But we also see that, once we look and listen, we cannot understand jazz without religion. Religious identity is made and contested through the senses, here especially the sounds of jazz. I will pursue these overlapping narratives in a way that is alert to what Greil Marcus calls the "lipstick traces" connecting disparate phenomena: images, themes, and sounds that resonate broadly, emerging in musicians' own words and performances but also in audience reception and critical writing. These themes – rather than players or periods alone – constitute the heart of this study and its interdisciplinarity; they allow us to see and hear what is religious about jazz without being confined simply to institutions or musical scores. This paper examines the music of, *e.g.*, Cecil Taylor, Wadada Leo Smith, Jason Kao Hwang, and Anthony Braxton as a way of sharpening methodological considerations of music as ritual, the metaphysics of sound, race and representation, and communal expressions of religio-musical aesthetics.

Bochinger, Christoph – Universität Bayreuth,
Germany

RELIGION EDUCATION AS AN EXAMPLE OF APPLIED STUDY OF RELIGIONS

In the field of religions, applied studies seemingly represent the realm of (practical) theologies, not the academic Study of Religions. Nevertheless, the religious pluralisation of modern societies demands a genuine perspective of Applied Study of Religions. Its basic question is: What is the benefit of the Study of Religions for modern societies? As this paper states, it is not its task to improve the appreciation of religion in public life, its apology against secularism, or the development of multi-religious worldviews. Instead, it is a tool for a better understanding and political advice: What is the impact of religion(s) in modern society? Why do some of its members intensively include religious dimensions into their lives, while others do not? How do religious institutions transform? What are the problems of multi-religious coexistence? How should the state – or international organizations – deal with all that?

Religion Education is an important field of Applied Study of Religions. It may focus on (1) confessional, (2) multi-confessional or (3) non-confessional models of education. From a Study of Religions viewpoint, the third perspective is the most interesting one: How is it possible to teach “religion” in a non-normative way, like history, geography, or biology? How do students – and teachers – cope with this type of education? What are its aims? How can it be differentiated from multi-confessional models of education?

Bochinger, Christoph – Universität Bayreuth, Germany

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALISATION, MEDIATISATION AND NEW INSTITUTIONS – A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

As a consequence of processes of modernisation and globalisation, in many parts of the world religious communities transform, and new communities emerge. The term “NRM”, widely used in the study of religions and sociology of religion, serves as an umbrella to work on new developments in this field. Quite often, these developments are characterized by a combination of a “subjective turn” and, at the same time, new social forms and new types of institutions. In my contribution, I will try to develop a comparative perspective, presenting different types of religious movements in early modern and contemporary Europe in order to make them accessible for trans-cultural comparison. Starting from 18th Century Protestant Pietism, my presentation will also include some contemporary examples such as the European “New Age” movement of the 1980s or the Roman Catholic Hildegard of Bingen healing movement.

The central questions will be: a) How do they relate “traditional” and “new” elements of religious symbol systems, or – in other words – construct their own symbol systems? b) How do they relate individual religiosity and social (religious) institutions? I will also discuss their use of the media and their mission strategies.

Bochinger, Christoph – Universität Bayreuth,
Germany

THE ACADEMIC STUDY OF RELIGIONS AND RELIGION EDUCATION

Religion Education as an example of Applied Study of Religions In the field of religions, applied studies seemingly represent the realm of (practical) theologies, not the academic Study of Religions. Nevertheless, the religious pluralisation of modern societies demands a genuine perspective of Applied Study of Religions. Its basic question is: What is the benefit of the Study of Religions for modern societies? As this paper states, it is not its task to improve the appreciation of religion in public life, its apology against secularism, or the development of multi-religious worldviews. Instead, it is a tool for a better understanding and political advice: What is the impact of religion(s) in modern society? Why do some of its members intensively include religious dimensions into their lives, while others do not? How do religious institutions transform? What are the problems of multi-religious coexistence? How should the state – or international organizations – deal with all that? Religion Education is an important field of Applied Study of Religions. It may focus on (1) confessional, (2) multi-confessional or (3) non-confessional models of education. From a Study of Religions viewpoint, the third perspective is the most interesting one: How is it possible to teach “religion” in a non-normative way, like history, geography, or biology? How do students – and teachers – cope with this type of education? What are its aims? How can it be differentiated from multi-confessional models of education?

Bocking, Brian – University College Cork, Ireland
b.bocking@ucc.ie

“A MAN OF WORK AND FEW WORDS”?: DHAMMALOKA BEYOND BURMA

This paper is intended to complement Alicia Turner’s account of Dhammaloka’s activities and interactions with Buddhists and colonial authorities particularly in Burma, and Laurence Cox’s analysis of Dhammaloka as a European plebeian freethinker and movement organiser.

While Dhammaloka's very public career as 'the Irish Hpongyee' ca.1900–1911 was conducted mainly in Burma, he also travelled extensively in other parts of South and East Asia. Dhammaloka's activities in Singapore, where in 1904 he successfully established a Buddhist Mission and free school, can be documented from several sources. We also have independent evidence of his visit to Tokyo in the Autumn of 1902 from which he emerged a 'Lord Abbot', and some information on his several months in Bangkok in 1903. Other reports, largely uncorroborated, place Dhammaloka at various times in Penang, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, Ceylon, India, Nepal and – less convincingly – in Lhasa and Melbourne. In this paper I review Dhammaloka's activities in three very different socio-religious contexts: Japan, Siam and Singapore, during 1902–1905. Japan was an autonomous, emerging imperial power, Singapore was an entrepot British trading colony and Siam was guarding its independence as an Asian Buddhist kingdom. Unlike in the West, where Buddhism was a novelty and could be made to mean almost anything, Buddhism in one form or another was already institutionalised in Japan, Siam and Singapore. How did Dhammaloka position himself as a campaigning Irish/European Buddhist cleric in relation to other individuals and institutions in these very different contexts, and how was he received, and perceived?

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Boer, Diana – *See Fischer, Ronald*

Bogdan, Henrik – University of Gothenburg, Sweden
 henrik.bogdan@lir.gu.se

THE HOLY ORDER OF KRISHNA AND THE MIGRATION OF WESTERN ESOTERICISM INTO A HINDU CONTEXT

The discussion of the term 'Western' in Western esotericism often focuses on the various problems connected to the construct of the 'West', and the tendency among a number of scholars to exclude traditions that are viewed as being non-Western, such as Jewish and Islamic forms of esotericism, but also Eastern forms of esotericism. Yet, it is evident that non-Western traditions have exerted a profound influence on Western esotericism. A case in point is the theosophy of Blavatsky and Olcott which to a large extent can be described as a Western interpretation of Hindu and Buddhist traditions, set within the context of 19th century occultism. This paper sets out to discuss the other side of the encounter of Western esotericism with Eastern spiritual practices, *i.e.*, the migration of Western esotericism into a Hindu context. Using the Holy Order of Krishna (founded in 1905 by Dr. T.R. Sanjivi) as an example, the paper discusses how aspects of Western esotericism have been adopted and

reinterpreted in a Hindu context – such as, for instance, the adoption of Aleister Crowley's motto 'Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law' as a 'supreme mantra' during the 1920s and 30s. It will be argued that just as Western esotericism is influenced by non-Western esoteric traditions, Hindu forms of esotericism can be influenced by Western esotericism. The syncretistic and globalized form of Hindu esotericism developed by the Holy Order of Krishna illustrates an important aspect of the problems connected to defining esotericism as 'Western'. Henrik Bogdan, Ph. D., Associate Professor in Religious Studies at the University of Gothenburg. His main areas of research are Western esotericism, new religious movements and Freemasonry. He has published numerous articles and book chapters on these three fields of research, including Western Esotericism and Rituals of Initiation.

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Boniface, Omatta – Universiteit Gent, Belgium
 omattancy@yahoo.com

ECONOMIC INCENTIVES AS A TOOL FOR CONVERSION OF MUSLIM YOUTH INTO PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIANITY: A CASE STUDY OF NORTH CENTRAL PART OF NIGERIA

Nigeria is considered among the poorest nations of the world. Many people, especially the youth are left in penury as a result of unemployment and absence of social security system. Hence, the youth sort means of economic survival, at all cost; even when it demands abandoning their denomination or religion to pick up another. However, our paper is limited to Muslim youth in the North Central part of Nigeria. The Pentecostal churches, through their massive economic opportunities have become ready platform for the Muslim youth to attain viable economic status. Employment is one notable way these Pentecostal churches assist members. Available jobs are often advertised in these churches for members to take up. There is also a strong network of linking members up to job opportunities wherever they exist. But it is extremely difficult to have access to job opportunities through these churches if one is not a member. Since Muslim youth are desperate to find solution to their problems, they often convert to these churches in order to have the doors of opportunities opened to them and hence crass proselytisation of Muslim youth in the North Central part of Nigeria to Pentecostal Churches. While some Christians see this unprecedented and renewed proselytisation of Muslims to Christianity as a way of curbing Islamic expansionism and extremism, most Muslim leaders view this as a threat. It is the aim of this paper to examine how the phenomenal conversion of Muslim youth to Pentecostal churches through economic incentives strain Christian-Muslim relationship.

Boniface, Omatta – Universiteit Gent, Belgium
omattancy@yahoo.com

THE CONFESSIONALITY OF RELIGION EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: A SOURCE OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS. ARE THERE ANY ALTERNATIVES?

This paper draws on my doctoral research on the interplay between religion, education and politics in Nigeria. Nigeria is historically and imaginarily divided into North and South, with Islam and Christianity maintaining dominance in each respectively. For instance, Christians narrate how Muslim-controlled government manipulated things in their favour; from government appointments to census. The aim of my doctoral research and of this paper is to examine how confessional religion education is one of the major embers that ignite conflict in Nigeria. Confessional religion education was used to get people to embrace Christianity or Islam, rather than being a process or formation for religious tolerance and dialogue. Hence, the two major religions in Nigeria, Islam and Christianity, have maintained their dominant influence in the North and South respectively on both the society and schools, allowing no space for dialogue, respect for religious diversity, interreligious learning, co-existence and collaboration. Finally, this paper discusses the possibilities for a non-confessional religion education based on the academic study of religions, and it also examines whether a confessional religion education actually might also work and be in respect of difference and independent lifestyle and thus also contribute to freedom of religion and to douse conflict between Muslims and Christians.

Bornet, Philippe – University of Chicago/University of Lausanne, Switzerland · philippe.bornet@unil.ch

USING AND ABUSING IMAGES: REPRESENTATIONS OF INDIA IN THE "CALWER HISTORISCHES BILDERBUCH DER WELT" (1883)

This paper focuses on a collection of engravings published in 1883 by the "Calwer Verlagsverein", itself run by eminent members of the Pietist mission of Württemberg (C. G. Barth followed by H. Gundert), known as the Calwer historisches Bilderbuch der Welt and including a short companion Textbuch. Whilst the engravings in question were collected from various sources, their selection and collection in this volume witness to a perception of the represented contexts that anticipate a specific effect on its (mostly German) readers / viewers. We will concentrate on the section concerning India and ask the following questions: What is the link between images and text, and what editorial intention lies behind this? In what measure might the undertaking be deemed successful in constructing visual ideas about

India? Where does the distinction (in Pietist discourse) between right and wrong uses of visual material lie? Finally, we will examine recurrent traits in selected engravings, focusing on the distinction between "natural" and "cultural" characteristics, crucial in the construction of a visual "wild India" vs. a "civilized Europe".

Bradley, Michael T., Jr. – Georgia Perimeter College, USA

CHECKING OUR BEARINGS: EXPLORING THE USE OF SPATIAL COGNITION IN TWEED'S CROSSING AND DWELLING

In *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Harvard, 2006), Thomas Tweed develops an account of religion that focuses on movement and place with a significant emphasis upon the need to examine the connections between biology and culture. Writing in a review symposium dedicated to his project, Tweed addresses criticisms of his theory and whether it is susceptible to modification or revision. While he locates his theory in the traditions of conservative and moderate pragmatism and is therefore more interested in the degree to which the theory is useful, Tweed does point to an example indicating how his theory might be evaluated. "A scholar searching for a claim to assess could study the allocentric spatial representations of the transnational migrants who, I propose, are propelled back and forth between homeland and the new land by the translocative practices and artifacts at the Miami shrine. Does religion provide allocentric spatial orientation for these devotees, as my analysis proposes? If not, I would feel compelled to rethink that aspect of my account" ("Crabs, Crustaceans, Crabiness, and Outrage: A Response," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 77/2 (June 2009): 452). Tweed's use of cognitive science in his effort to describe how religious practices might "work" as compasses orienting adherents to their particular dwellings merits attention.

Bradley, Tamsin – London Metropolitan University, UK
"EDUCATE A WOMAN AND YOU EDUCATE AN ENTIRE NATION": THE POLITICISATION OF MOTHERING IN THE RELIGIOUS DISCOURSES OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, GURU MATA AMRITANANDAMAYI MISSION, AND THE SADHU VASWANI MISSION.

This paper compares and contrasts the religious discourses of three large trans-national Hindu organisations: The Ramakrishna Mission, The Sadhu Vaswani Mission and Guru Mata Amritanandamayi Mission. It argues that despite the centrality of a spiritual message each organisation pursues a less obvious political and gendered vision of the world.

The study combines a review of literature with fieldwork conducted in the centres based in Pune, Maharashtra between November 2008 and October 2009. The fieldwork and analysis of the organisations' religious discourses reveals how the broad, open-ended religious concepts 'love' and 'compassion' are projected through images of women as mothers. The gendered ideologies pursued by each organisation are politicised in that they entail rigorous pursuit of a specific vision of how India and the world should be.

In the case of the The Ramakrishna Mission and Sadhu Vaswani Mission this vision is patriarchal with clear distinctions between the domestic, private responsibilities of women and the public decision-making role of men. Sadhu Vaswani urges women to prioritise mothering, nurturing the next generation of Hindu nationalists who will fight for a unified India. The education of girls is the means through which Sadhu Vaswani hopes to achieve his vision of India hence the title 'educate a woman and you educate a whole nation'. For the Ramakrishna Mission its politicised vision is one that hopes to retain a patriarchal and caste based stability in which each Hindu knows and understands their place in the world. This status quo preserves the privilege of elite high caste men despite the stress the organisation publicly gives to its pro-poor work. Although Guru Mata Amritanandamayi does not describe herself as feminist her gender ideology is conscious to separate women as biological mothers with the social cultural role of mothering. She argues for equality between the sexes stating that men must strive to enact the compassion women naturally experience when they embrace mothering. Although not directly expressed as a feminist politicalised agenda Guru Amritanandamayi through her pro-poor work and teachings is presenting an alternative to the patriarchal teachings and visions of The Ramakrishna Mission and The Sadhu Vaswani Mission.

It represents a sustained effort to draw upon aspects of cognitive science while taking care to respect the cultural systems which exert significant influences upon the dwelling spaces constructed via religious practices. In this paper, I review Tweed's use of spatial cognition and his application of that material to his own theory. I am especially interested in Tweed's effort to connect spatial cognition to the ability of devotees to locate their practices with reference to the ultimate horizons that constitute their religious systems. If this aspect of Tweed's project is borne out, we may have additional tools to draw upon in our efforts to understand the intersections between the cognitive and the cultural in the study of religion.

Brattlund, Åsa – Malardalen University, Sweden
asa.brattlund@mdh.se

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF GOD AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN SCHOOL LIFE?

The aim of this paper is to present some results from my Doctoral Thesis: What Role of God and National Curriculum in School life? A Comparative Study of Schools with a Muslim Profile in England and Sweden. (2009). The aim of this study has been to gain a better understanding of: those principles and ethics that have dominated four Muslim Profiled (MP) schools, two in Sweden and two in England, and the manner in which heads, teachers and other staff have dealt with the encounters between Muslim principles and ethics and the principles and ethics in the NC in Sweden and England respectively. The findings indicate great difference between the two MP schools in Sweden, on the one hand, and the two schools in England, on the other. The fundamental reason for the great difference between the two MP schools in Sweden on the one hand and the two schools in England on the other lies in the parameters which had been established in these countries as the conditions for being permitted to establish and run a school with a confessional direction. Since the schools in both countries had conformed to the relevant legislation and framework in their respective countries with regard to MP schools, they had therefore developed in different directions.

Braxton, Donald M. – Juniata College, USA

MAPPING EMOTIONAL AROUSAL OF JEWS, CHRISTIANS, AND MUSLIMS IN THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM: REPORT ON MOBILE GSR MONITOR FIELD TRIALS

In October 2010, Braxton and student researcher Caleb Gwinn will pilot the field-deployment of a new mobile GSR device. Developed with Greg Link of York College of Pennsylvania, the monitor samples GSR readings at six-second intervals and locates the responses in space and time with a built-in GSR device. The device is accurate to within three feet. Field trials are to determine an optimal route for a three-year study of Jews, Christians and Muslims as they navigate culturally discrete spaces in the Old City of Jerusalem. Optimality is defined as positive GPS lock, plentiful indicators of cultural identity in the four quarters of Jerusalem, roughly equal lengths of time of exposure for a casual stroll. In a three-year study, we will run 400 test subjects (100 from each religion and 100 secular controls) along the same course plotting their emotional arousal rates.

These data points will be mapped into a GIS system so that a map of the emotional terrain can be generated from the averages of the participants and subjected to statistical regressions for age, gender, degrees of religious affiliation, and religious orientation. Our expectation is that emotional arousal will peak in culturally alienating and conflicted spaces. We hypothesize that areas where two or more religious groups generate high arousal rates will be sites with greater potential for Religiously Motivated Violence.

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Brodeur, Patrice – University of Montreal, Canada

THE NEW "ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS CULTURE" CURRICULUM IN QUÉBEC: A REVOLUTION IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR A SECULAR SOCIETY

The field of Religious Education is an excellent example of Applied Religion, or the Applied Academic Study of Religions. This presentation will focus on a case study from the province of Québec, where the introduction of a new curriculum began in September 2008 in order to consolidate a process of secularization that was started over three decades earlier. I will focus in particular on the process by which various scholars of religions have been drawn by the Ministry of Education in Québec into the formation of an expert committee to improve the manuscripts of all future textbooks for a new program on Ethics and Religious Culture from the beginning of primary school to the end of high school. This process started shortly before the beginning of the implementation phase and remains underway, demonstrating the length and complexities of this unique endeavour on the part of the Ministry of Education. This process is unlike any other that accompanied the development of new curricula in a variety of other fields over the last decade. It demonstrates the particular relevancy of scholars of religions when it comes to the intersection between the academic study of religions and the field of both public and private education.

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Bronkhorst, Johannes – University of Lausanne,
Switzerland · johannes.bronkhorst@unil.ch

rites without symbols

"Rituals are symbolic actions." This and similar statements occur again and again in the scholarly literature on ritual. This paper presents a critical reflection on this claim, by concentrating on a number of recognized rituals which, either as a whole or in part, are quite independent of any form of symbolism. Point of departure will be the Vedic Horse Sacrifice, in which a ruler lets a horse roam freely for a year in territories of neighbouring rulers. The neighbouring rulers need to study very little symbolism to understand that the fact

that they cannot, or dare not, stop the horse establishes the sacrificing king as their superior. These and other examples will be studied in the light of the theory of ritual presented at the International Conference "Ritual Dynamics and the Science of Ritual" held in Heidelberg (2008), scheduled to come out one of these days under the title "Ritual, holophrastic utterances, and the symbolic mind" in the proceedings of this conference ("Grammar and Morphology of Rituals", ed. Axel Michaels et al.)

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Brown, Ian – University of Regina, Canada
ian_brown_2@hotmail.com

SCRIBAL IDEOLOGY AND THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS: TOWARDS A SOCIO-HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

Thomas has garnered more attention than any other Nag Hammadi text, but in spite of Thomas' popularity amongst New Testament scholars, the text is rarely examined on its own terms. This is because Thomas has become caught up in the debate over the historical Jesus, and as a result the Gospel's ideological agenda is generally ignored, or even denied. Thomas, instead, is used as a blunt instrument in the historical Jesus debate. I am not interested in the historical Jesus. I am interested in Thomas as a document in and of itself. If Thomas is allowed to speak for itself, it can tell us a great deal about the socio-historical situation of its production. I provide a close reading of the Gospel which focuses on Thomas' rhetorical forms and internal ideology. After undertaking this reading, one thing becomes abundantly clear: Thomas is a formally and ideologically unified document. Additionally, Thomas' unity suggests that both formally and ideologically, Thomas can be located in a scribal discourse. My paper examines why Thomas should be located in this socio-historical milieu, as well as the implications of this claim.

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Bubik, Tomas, Hoffmann – University of Pardubice,
Czech Republic · tomas.bubik@upce.cz

Henryk and Babinov, Jurji – University of Pardubice,
Czech Republic · henryk6@wp.pl
babinow.400@mail.ru

HISTORY AND METHODS IN THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE

The paper outlines the development, the current situation and various methodological approaches within the Study of Religions in Eastern Europe, particularly in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia, focusing especially on the ideological influences determining the academic study of religion.

The first phase of the discipline's development in Eastern Europe (until WWII) was ideologically influenced by positivism, evolutionism, historicism, the freethinking movement, anticlericalism, atheism and by religious worldview. Since the 1950s, the main impact was the Marxist-Leninist criticism of religion on the one hand and the traditionally theological (Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox) approach on the other hand. Until the 1990s, research of religions was generally done within the two ideological frameworks – religious (theological) and Marxist scientific atheism. Consequently the most important task for the new generation of scholars was to draw a strict “demarcation” discipline line. Since that period scholars have put a lot of energy into reviving of the discipline, *i.e.*, by establishing university departments and academic study programs (BA, MA, PhD.), publishing textbooks, journals, organizing conferences and especially by restoring networks of international cooperation both on personal and institutional level (IAHR and EASR).

Buckley, Jorunn J. – Bowdoin College, USA
jbuckley@bowdoin.edu

REPRESENTING Gnostics: THE Mandaean of Iraq and Iran

Since 1995, I have appeared as an Expert Witness in asylum cases in US Immigration Court and in US Immigration Offices thirteen times and I continue to consult internationally on human rights for Mandaeans. These are the last living Gnostics from ca. 2000 years ago, and the religion is in danger of extinction, due to increased war and persecution. The foci of my IAHR presentation are these:

* The representation issue has changed, because the people tend to represent themselves and there seems to be less need for my direct involvement in US asylum cases. What is my role as a scholar now? The delicate position as “diplomat” increasingly demands navigating among different Mandaean interest groups in exile. Multiple “native” competing organizations expose the question: who, at this point, are the real authorities? The priests’ formerly unquestioned authority is challenged by laypeople, and both sides fear the disintegration of the religion/community. Priests and laypeople appeal to me for loyal support.

* Competition for international attention: which threatened populations shout loudest, are heard, and are considered “worthy of being saved”? Are endangered populations like the Mandaeans subject to specific standards of rescue? Or: of oblivion? In other words: whose “religious capital” is more esteemed? Is the US’s bad conscience regarding unintended collateral damage in Iraq an advantage for groups like the Mandaeans?

Or: do people have to be dead before they can be “saved” by hindsight, sad memory?

*The danger of proliferation of information: the Internet. Muslims, who may have been unaware that the Mandaeans still exist, find information on them and threaten them in exile, pressing for conversion to Islam. An institution like Liberty University in the USA accepted a 2007 MA thesis on how to proselytize most efficiently among USA-residing Mandaeans, a thesis emphasizing the natives’ “weak points/errors” compared to Christianity. How do we as scholars respond to such aggressive missions?

* Some Mandaeans are seeking Western-style, academic-level information about their own traditions. How does a scholar support this possibility, which may appear as a threat to the traditional priests?

Bulbulia, Joseph – Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Fischer, Ronald – Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Reddish, Paul – Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

RITUAL EFFERVESCENCE AND EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Experimental psychologists study cognition in stripped-down, controlled environments. Yet what do experimental methods tell us about cognition in natural ecologies? The question of relevance is important to the psychology of religious rituals, where laboratory mismatch appears extreme. Using examples from our experiments on ritual body movement, we argue: (1) Laboratory experiments do not explain ritual cognition in the wild. (2) Laboratory studies are nevertheless indispensable to such explanations. A proper characterization of the specific knowledge that experimental science brings to ritual studies reveals exciting new prospects for collaborative teamwork in the scholarly study of religion, as a human phenomenon.

Bulbulia, Joseph – Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Frean, Marcus – Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

RELIGIOUS COOPERATION IN LARGE SOCIAL WORLDS

According to the Social Intelligence Hypothesis, Theory of Mind (ToM) evolved to support cooperation in groups of escalating size. We argue that among anonymous groups, ToM frequently amplifies the problem of strategic uncertainty.

We sketch a model, called synchronous signalling, which explains how religious cultures evolve to align the cooperative responses of strangers. The model helps to resolve several puzzles in the cognitive and evolutionary study of religion, as a human phenomenon, including the remarkable endurance of ancient religious cultures and their fascinating modulation of religious bodies.

Bunza, Mukhtar Umar – Usmanu Danfodiyo
University, Nigeria • mbunza@hotmail.com

HISTORICAL STUDY OF RELIGIONS IN NIGERIA: AN EXPLORATION IN THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF PROFESSOR TOYIN FALOLA

The effectiveness of the religious genius, the power and the formation of the religious community, the shaping of culture as well as educational and political spheres of life by religion, affirms Joachim Wach, are some of the fundamental reasons for the study of religions by historians, anthropologists and sociologists in human societies. Toyin Falola being one of the renowned historians, (of Nigerian/African descent) in the academia realized this fundamental fact and studied religions (as he did to other fields of human endeavor) in historical perspectives. He specially examines the dexterity and dynamics of religion and its continued relevance in social change in Africa generally, and Nigeria in particular. This paper aims to highlight the contributions of Professor Toyin Falola in the concept and philosophy of religion, with emphasis on the role of traditional religion, Christianity and Islam in transforming and redirecting the Nigerian societies past and present. His views on inter-religious relations, the implication of religious fundamentalism and politicization of religion in modern in Nigeria, would be appraised. Finally, an annotated bibliographic record of some of his works and contributions in the study of religion for easy access to students and researchers in the field follows.

Burger, Maya – University of Lausanne, Switzerland
maya.burger@unil.ch

VISIBLE YOGA: IMAGING AND IMAGINING YOGIS

This paper presents a selection of visual sources from the period when yoga first became visible to outsiders, and interprets these images from the broader perspective of a connected history between Europe and India. Drawings, paintings, pictures, and photos are important sources of knowledge about yoga and its perception by outsiders to the Indian tradition. Visible Yoga has a history of its own and has contributed to changes in perception and modern constructions of the history of yoga. Visual imaging has produced its own yoga language, distinct from written sources, in transnational circulation.

Buss, Andreas E. – University of Ottawa, Canada

INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE RELIGION OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

This paper turns to a tradition in international law theory (monist theory) which does not consider international law and municipal law as essentially different, and on this basis it is suggested that regional religious laws and structures (e.g., the Buddhist tradition in Southeast Asia) can profitably be considered as part of regional international law and should be part of any solutions with regard to the tensions between countries in the region. The case of Preah Vihear serves as an example.

Buss, Johanna – University of Vienna, Austria

PREMIER PRACHANDA AS "RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY": THE DEBATE ON THE POLITICIZATION OF THE PASHUPATINATH-ROW IN THE INTERNET AND BLOGOSPHERE

After the downfall of monarchy in Nepal and the proclamation of a secular, democratic state in 2007, Nepal is being reorganised and restructured. The king had been of central importance to the national identity as a Hindu king. After the institution of the monarchy has breathed its last his religious and ritual obligations have passed to the new government. This led to the curious constellation of the Maoist prime minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal ("Prachanda") acting as head of the trust in charge of the national sanctuary, the Paśupatināth temple.

After the resignation of two Indian priests doing service in the temple, Prachanda appointed two Nepali priests in end of 2008 although the priests of the Paśupatināth temple traditionally are Bhaṭṭa Brahmins from South India. The protests were not directed against the new Nepali priests but rather against the intervention of the (Maoist) government in religious matters.

In Nepal there has also been a fundamental change in the media landscape since 1990. The rapid developing media play a crucial role in the current political process of restructuring the state. In my paper I will analyze the debate about the "Paśupatināth Row" in the internet presences of the biggest national newspapers as well as different Blogs. I will analyse the question of religious authority in the transition of a Hindu to a secular state and how the relation between politics and religion is discussed.

Cappai, Gabriele – University of Bayreuth, Germany
Ga.Cappai@uni-bayreuth.de

SHARÍ'AH INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION. A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

It is a matter of fact, that with the variation of national and regional contexts, the interpretation and implementation of Shari'ah, the Islamic religious Law, also varies. In the Muslim world, this seems to be a common observation among experts. We can distinguish not only one but many Shari'ahs. The main reason for variation of interpretation and implementation seems due to the fact that many conceptions of Laws enter into competition in the same territory: religious law, national law and law-like practices (customary law). Competition and antagonism is here the consequence of the fact that the field is not dominated by one single "ideology" that pretends to guide, control and sanction action. The plurality of Shari'ah in the Muslim world results from the attempt to come to term with this antagonism. Taking a comparative perspective this contribution to the panel asks: who are the main actors in this highly contested field? Which strategies do they use in order to minimise the antagonism? Why are some strategies more successful than others?

Carrillo, Dora Sierra – see *Sierra Carrillo, Dora*

Casadio, Giovanni – University of Salerno, Italy
giovannicasadio@libero.it

METHOD, THEORY AND . PRAXIS IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

In this paper I envisage a radical criticism of American (nay, Anglophone in general: some of the most vociferous spokesmen are in fact British or Canadian) dominant discourse in the field of religious studies. 1. A primary dominating character of the native Anglophone academy is that literature written in a language other than English (or, if in English, by non-native English scholars who are not adherents of the academically correct discourse) is not worth to be read and taken in consideration. 2. With a few exceptions, there is a general tendency to accept at face value a series of uncorroborated statements on fundamental issues in the research in the history of religions and religious historiography. These stereotypical tenets resting on a flawed foundation are chanted and re-chanted continuously like mantras, without paying any attention to serious attempts to dismantle them. Let us list first some examples at hand from the history of religions:

1. West and Christianity are considered two coextensive concepts by ignoring the historical and geographical dimension; 2. Christianity as a religion is characterised by the centrality of individual profession of faith (and belief is considered extraneous to fairly all other religious traditions); 3. Religion is seen as a Christian, Western, late invention. And then some examples from religious historiography: 1. M. Eliade is always wrong; 2. J. Z. Smith (along with his followers) is always right. In sum, the impression resulting from the overall panorama is one of narcissistic self-contemplation rather than one of productive self-reflexivity.

Caufield, Catherine – University of Alberta, Canada

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

CANADIAN RELIGION IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

This paper will gloss some of the major criticisms of organized religion, particularly in the areas of theology and politics. It will do this through presenting a synopsis of the ways in which national associations for Canadian synagogues, churches and mosques perceive their role in relation to issues arising in a globalized context: what does it mean to the representatives of these organized religions to be religious in a context of globalization that overtly claims to be secular? After establishing the validity of this interpretive perspective, the paper will then acknowledge the persistence of religious tradition and organized religion, despite decades of strong criticism and thought-provoking limitations. Based in the reality of this persistence, it will discuss the social and political potential inherent in organized religions for mobilizing world peace.

Cavallin, Clemens – University of Gothenburg, Sweden · clemens.cavallin@lir.gu.se

A REFLECTION ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN CONTEMPORARY SWEDEN

When the Swedish Church ceased to be a state church in the year 2000, the parameters for a change in the relation between academic theology and religious studies (religionsvetenskap) at the state universities was in place. However, it was only with the sharp critique leveled by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket) in 2009 against the confessional nature of courses in pastoral theology that the temperature of the debate became sufficiently high to bring about a reflection on foundational questions for the study of religion. Important changes have also been introduced that will be in effect beginning the autumn semester of 2011.

In my paper, I will briefly present the Swedish situation for those not acquainted with it and then highlight some topics essential to discuss in order to construct an understanding of the nature and function of religious studies that meets the constantly evolving challenges that the discipline and the Swedish society faces.

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Cavanaugh, Kathleen – Irish Centre for Human Rights, Ireland · kathleen.cavanaugh@nuigalway.ie

REGULATING DIVERSITY IN EUROPE

Within Europe, competing narratives frame the discourse on religious pluralism. The first narrative examines the primacy of national models and the principles of subsidiarity (which underpins EU law) and inter-governmentality. At the intergovernmental level, the relativity (in social, legal and political spheres) is reflected in the different (and competing) national models of Church-State relations. The mechanisms which attempt to adjudicate (or referee) the obvious tension between these national and relativistic models and European level institutions inform the second narrative. The second narrative plays out at a transnational level, and endeavours to create new strategies of innovation, where new forms for the regulation of religion are emerging. It is here, I argue, that a limited pluralist European model of regulating or 'managing' diversity has emerged. The limitation in this pluralist model reflects the tensions that exist between the national and transnational aspects of the model itself and the structural limitations of the informal, rather than official nature of the religion-European institutions relations. It is also reflective of emerging debates on religious pluralism and the democratic state. To what extent is it necessary for the regulation of religious freedoms in the 'public square' in order to protect the democratic state? What restrictions on minority religions should be considered 'necessary in a democratic society' and what limitations should be placed on state interferences in minority religions are necessary to protect against the undue influence of a dominant religion? This paper will examine these questions within a European framework, focussing on Muslims in Europe.

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Chakravarty, Saumitra – VVS College, India
saumitra_chakravarty@yahoo.co.in

THE SNAKE-WOMAN AS GODDESS: A STUDY OF ETHNIC CONFRONTATION IN THE MANASA MANGAL OF BENGAL

The Manasa Mangal, a fifteenth century text even today chanted in rural Bengal, is part of the Mangal Kavya tradition spanning four centuries.

The snake goddess Manasa's birth through Shiva's sperm falling upon a lotus-leaf and permeating into the underworld, her denial of entry into the world of gods and her struggle to solicit worship from the upper class Shaivite patriarchy, forms the story of the text. The human-divine confrontation is highlighted by the projection of Manasa as a rural woman in a poverty-stricken household of Bengal subjugated by patriarchy and oppressive social customs, much as her human counterparts were. As such the recitation of this text during the dark monsoon months, (when snakebite is common), is a form of Manasa worship among rural women seeking her benediction, without priestly intervention or elaborate Vedic ritualism. This paper attempts to analyze the conflict between this 'underworld goddess' further alienated by the process of 'Brahminization', and the accepted Hindu pantheon of gods. The next section of the paper will focus on female sexuality and the resurgence of the powerful, inscrutable Feminine principle that is both destructive and restorative, through Manasa's repeated challenges to a powerful caucus of men and gods.

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Chalupa, Ales – Masaryk University, Czech Republic
chalupa.ales@mail.muni.cz

GALLOI IN THE LIGHT OF THE NORM-DEVIATION MODEL: TOO NARROW MANTINELS?

It is a well known fact that galloi, priests of the Great Mother, underwent ritual castration. After the reception of this originally Phrygian goddess to the divinities of the Roman state the observance of this custom caused some tensions, because the condition of galloi was inconsistent with their position of Roman public priests and violated prevalent and generally accepted opinions on gender roles in the Graeco-Roman world. The aim of this paper is to examine three interconnected questions: 1) what motivated this particular practice and what roles this type of priesthood could play in the society of the Roman Empire; 2) whether the attitude toward galloi in the society of the Roman Empire was really so negative as it is sometimes deduced from various literary sources; 3) and to what degree the norm-deviation model can be helpful in the study of this religious practice; is it a useful analytical tool, or rather an excessively rigid classifier based on incorrect and preconceived reading of historical sources applied to various phenomena without careful examination of their historical and social context.

Chang, Chia-Lin Chang – National Chenshi University, Taiwan

THE RELIGIOUS BELIEF SYSTEM IN MORALITY BOOKS AND STABILIZATION IN SOCIETY

Chinese Morality books, in which lies the value system in Taoism, Buddhism and Confucius, were viewed by the ruling class as a crucial tool to educate their compatriots. Meanwhile, gentry class also treated it as a golden rule to cultivate spirit and get into Buddha. Both the rulers and gentry class made use of their political and economical power to print amounts of morality books and use them to educate next generation of their people. Among multitudinous morality books, *Tai Shang Gan Ying Pian*, which was written in 1060s (Song dynasty), is the earliest and most famous work until now. And Emperor Li Tzung in Song dynasty has supported its printing and responsible for all expenses on it. Since 1127 (South-Song dynasty) – 1910 (Ching dynasty), it has become one of the three main guide books for common people in Chinese society. Researches on morality books and *Tai Shang Gan Ying Pian* in the past centered on the fields in human art, history and philosophy, from which we could understood religious meaning in morality books and *Tai Shang Gan Ying Pian* or its origin and connection with social development. However, do Taoism believers in contemporary Taiwan approve Chinese ancestors' intension of social education to print morality books and *Tai Shang Gan Ying Pian*? Do believers consent the contents of the books becoming Chinese main value system and their guidelines for behavior or even the imagination of practicing Buddhist or Taoist rules? These questions were mainly discussed in this study.

Chanthao, Rattana – Khon Kaen University, Thailand

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

PI MAE MAAY: LOCAL BELIEF FOR SURVIVAL OF LAO-ISAAN PEOPLE

Pi Mae Maay is supernatural being in local believe of Lao-Isaan Ethnic group of Thailand. The aim of this paper is to explain their belief, Pi Mae Maay, in four issues: characteristic, power, protection, and effect. Some case studies will be presented to ascertain the relationship between the belief and Isaan communities.

The resource taken from depth-interview with 10 informants living in Kumphawapi district, Udonthani province where set in the Northeast region of Thailand calling Isaan region.

Pi Mae Maay is woman who death while on a divorcee. After that she will kill some men who want to be her husband. So, there is the number of men dead in about the same time by unknown cause.

The villagers believe that it's cause by the action of Pi Mae Maay. Medically, it is described as heart failure.

Men are not only related to access to this belief, but women play a key role to provide protection and sent to the men with whom in their own families. This belief is associated more closely with health conditions and careers of men northeast. Moreover, it has both advantages and disadvantages that affect for well-being of Isaan people.

Chaudhry, Hafeez-ur-Rehman – Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad, Pakistan

JIRGA: A TRADITIONAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN TRIBAL AREAS OF PAKISTAN

Tribal jirgas [literally: meeting: faislo, a Sindhi term for both the meeting and the decision: panchayat, council of elders] consisting of elders of the tribe and headed by the sardar [head of tribe] or, if the dispute is of less importance, local heads of the tribe, can either be called on an ad hoc basis or take place regularly. They deal with a range of issues, including conflicting claims to land and water, inheritance, alleged breaches of the 'honour' code and intra-tribal killings. Besides settling inter-tribal disputes, the Jirga is also used to conduct the tribes' relations with the outside world. The British maintained their relations with the tribes through the Jirgas, both in the NWFP, Balochistan and cross the border in Afghanistan. They offered written treaties guaranteeing non-interference in the tribal affairs. The Government of Pakistan honors these treaties and has made similar ones of its own, thus the Jirga is a formally recognized institution in the tribally administered areas of Pakistan. Sitting in a circle, the Jirga has no speaker, no president, no secretary or convener. There are no hierarchical positions and required status of the participants. All are equal and everyone has the right to speak and argue, although regard of elders is always there without any authoritarianism or privileged rights attached to it. The Jirga system ensures maximum participation of the people in administering justice and makes sure that justice is manifestly done. It also provides the umbrella of safety and security to the weaker sections of the tribal people from the mighty ones.

Jirga, through which most community business, both public and private, is settled in North West Frontier province (NWFP) and Balochistan, is probably the closest approach to Athenian democracy that has existed since times immemorial. The Jirga represents the essence of democracy in operation under which every individual has a direct say in shaping the things around him. Thus, Jirga is the only vehicle through which Political administration in tribal areas dispenses justice.

Chaudhry-Ferraro, Simona – University of Luzern,
Switzerland · simona.chaudhry@unilu.ch

THE STEPWELL AT PATAN, GUJARAT: MONUMENT FOR AMUSEMENT OR RELIGIOUS EDIFICE?

The icons and temples of India are the most concrete medium to pass on the message of value of Indian culture and traditions to further generations. They are the creations adhering to the norms of the manuals/treatises on Silpa-sastra (iconometry) and Vastu-sastra (architecture) in addition to religious and spiritual treatises viz. Agamas. As far as the iconography of Vaisnavism is concerned, two agamic branches *i.e.*, Pancaratra and Vaikhanasa play a prominent role in the creation of temples and icons of Visnu. The role of Pancaratra treatises in North India, especially in Gujarat, is proved by the monuments, temples and icons therein. The 11th century Stepwell at Patan (generally known as Rani-ki-vav) is one of the master creations with special reference to the icons of Visnu described in the vast collection of Pancaratra treatises. The array of panels of Visnu in different layers in this magnificent monument displays the theme of well-developed Pancaratra doctrines and development of the cult of Visnu. In the well-preserved early monuments of South India, where the orthodox Pancaratra system is still followed, the architects could not create many panels detailing the doctrines of Pancaratra-Agama. However, one can notice the well-developed panels in Gujarat from after 10th Century AD. This monument raises a question – Is it just a monument to amusement or a religious edifice dedicated to Visnu? The paper compares some of the iconographical panels and themes of Pancaratra Agama to create awareness among art-historians of the value of Pancaratra system for further research.

Chauhan, Anjali – University of Lucknow, India
dranjlichauhan@gmail.com

THE MYSTIC KUMBH MELA : FROM MYTHOLOGY TO REALITY

The legendary Kumbh Mela is the biggest Hindu fair which takes place after every 12 years at four different destinations in India. It is a spectacular congregation of sages, ascetics and common men which is astrologically predetermined. The Kumbh is one of the entries in the Guinness, for the largest number of people gathering for a religious cause. The earliest references of the Kumbh have been found in the Rigveda (10/89/7), Visnu Purana, Mahabharata, Bhagavad-Gita, and Ramayana. Besides being the biggest gathering in the world for a sacred cause, it is 'redeemer of sins' marked by ritual bathing, it is a lifestyle, it is a culture, it is a 'sea of humanity' where larger social, cultural, religious causes

of welfare of humanity are discussed by the saints of India. The paper is based on empirical study conducted during the recent Kumbh Gathering at Haridwar(2010). The paper shall discuss the magnanimous fair as per the following objectives. Firstly it shall attempt to study the historical, mythological, background of the Kumbh. Secondly, it aims to find out as to who are the participants in this fair and what their ideologies are. The third objective is to study the rituals performed during this festival, significance of these performances and the site where these rituals are conducted. Fourthly, to know its spiritual importance. The fifth aspect of the study would be supernatural activities performed during this event. Lastly it intends to study the socio-cultural exchanges made during this mega fair.

Chepkwony, Adam Arap Kiplangat – MOI

University, Kenya · adamchepkwony@yahoo.com

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

THE DYING KIPSIGIS RELIGION AND THE EMERGING SOLUTION

I had the honour to be asked to officially open a Museum of History, Art and Science in a small rural town of Kapkatet in Western Kenya in 2008. The museum is the embodiment of the material history of the Kipsigis people of Kenya. This was a rare phenomenon in Kenya and the occasion went unnoticed by many scholars. The significance of this museum for religion and indeed scholars of religion is the fact that the Kipsigis religion and African religion in general is embodied in its history, material culture and language. Although the Kipsigis people are not among the Kenyan tribes facing extinction, its religion is certainly endangered. In this paper, I shall assess the value of this Kipsigis museum and suggest the need for similar developments throughout Africa as a way of preserving African Religion. The paper will further explore how material culture entails essential elements of Kipsigis Religion and the need to restore the items as a way of retracing the lost elements of African spirituality. Finally, I shall argue that as the material culture of a people disappears, it goes with its religion. In retrieving the lost language, we shall at the same time be returning back to pick what we have lost

Choi, Jeong Hwa – University of Leipzig, Germany

THE EXCHANGE OF RELIGIONS AND THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS IN
GERMANY AFTER WORLD WAR I RUDOLF OTTO'S
VISION FOR THE RELIGIOUS LEAGUE OF MANKIND

The awareness of a plurality of “religions” and the study of non-Christian religions in Germany from the 19th century onwards stimulated the communication between academics and religions in other places and cultural settings. After World War I some German scholars in the field of the study of religions tried to solve their country’s political and social problems by promoting a cooperative social-ethical work with religious groups of other countries. In this view the study of religions was up to more than only analyzing these groups, in some sense the possible usage of their knowledge in a European social context was an expected outcome of those scholars’ research. An example for this symbiosis of the studying of religions and the exchange of religions in Germany during the Weimar Republic was the Religious League of Mankind founded in 1921 by Rudolf Otto (1869–1937). Otto sought contact to leaders of various religious groups worldwide in order to build an interreligious organization. This way he aimed at solving the social problems of mankind altogether after the Great War had ended. His idea of this community of religions may exemplify the ambivalent attitude of the scholars of that time toward the scientific research on religions and its practical implementation. This presentation will at first show by examining specific cases the evidence for the scholars’ communication with religious personalities worldwide in the early 1920s and then discuss some religious implications of the study of religions as an academic discipline by the example of Rudolf Otto.

Choudhary, Raneet Kumar – Ranchi University,
India · prof.rkchoudhary@rediffmail.com

SOCIO-CULTURAL TRAITS OF “BIRHOR” TRIBE OF
JHARKHAND (INDIA) – AN APPRAISAL

Since the inception of the human civilization nature and culture had been playing a pivotal role in human life . Nature and culture are both supplement to each other. It is a crystal fact that nature plays an important role in the life of tribes of India. The present paper highlights the impact of developmental changes in the socio cultural life of the tribes of India with a specific study on “Birhor” tribes. Anthropologists and Sociologists around the world promote researches on th “Birhor” tribes which are now vanishing demographically in India. For the development of any community , group or society needs the development of ecology. “Birhor” tribes of India are the real “Man of Forest” .

Forest has a wider impact on their socio cultural life . They born , brought up and died in The lap of nature . Traditional houses “Kumba” of Birhor tribes are made of forest products . This house is virtually water and fire proof . “Birhor Tribes have seldom visited urban areas . They are at one with ecology and environment . The present paper is multidimensional study of the socio cultural and religious life of indigenous “Birhor” tribes of Jharkhand in India. The state government with the cooperation of central government of India has undertaken several developmental schemes for the betterment and civic life of this tribe. Due to impact of modernization and globalization “Birohrs” are now in changing ecological situation. They are being compelled to live in macadamized house with latest scientific amenities . Today this tribe of Jharkhand in India is in transition phase. The case study of this specific tribe of India is an appropriate method of study to indigenous knowledge for Ecological Resource Management. The present paper focuses the following dimensions . 1. Salient features of “Birhor tribes of Jharkhand (India) 2. Impact of development changes on the ecological situation of Birhors. 3. Conflict of traditionalism and modernity in the socio cultural life of “Birhor” 4. Suggestions and result findings 5. Hypothesis The textual data of present paper is collected from world known Anthropologists and Sociologists around the world and also from different district administration headquarters under Jharkhand State of India.

Christensen, Dorthe Refslund – Aarhus University,
Denmark

ANGELS AND CANDLES. ON THE ONLINE
RITUALIZATION OF GRIEF AND COMMUNITY

Web 2.0 marks a social turn in digitally mediated communication and culture and has become emblematic of how society and our life practices are submitted to mediatization and how participatory cultures are mediated and remediated in social network groups. New websites constantly turn up facilitating mourning processes by engaging surviving relatives in performing their grief online. In this paper I analyze the Danish website mindet.dk (mindet means memory) where participants design online memory spaces for sacralizing their loved and lost one(s) and creating stories of eternal community and love, displaying photographs, poetry *etc.* In our work we focus on the sites produced for memorizing dead children. Participants, aside from performing their own grief express empathy for others by lighting digital candles, share their personal experiences in chatrooms, contribute to calendars, guestbook’s facilities, *etc.* and thereby creating communities with others mourning.

I use the work of *e.g.*, Castells, Lofland and Maffesoli in establishing the ritualizations of Mindet.dk as practices that establish valuable communities of grief to the participants and point to how these practices are influenced both by matrices of social media and ritualizing practices of children's offline burial sites. I demonstrate how the internet and the growing number of social media are perfectly fit to the creation of communities of intimacy and to the spatial and attitudinal demarcations inherent in all ritual and sacralising practice.

Chung, Edward – University of P.E.I., Canada
chung@upe.ca

SELF-TRANSCENDENCE AS THE ULTIMATE REALITY IN INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: A CONFUCIAN PERSPECTIVE

This paper presents the Confucian doctrine of self-transcendence as a topic for enhancing the study of religious pluralism and interreligious dialogue. Its approach is textual and interpretive, assimilating my crosscultural and interreligious experience as well. The first section briefly explores the leading models and issues of interreligious dialogue (pluralistic, theocentric, and christocentric), especially those associated with Hick, Knitter, Panikkar, Cobb, and Küng. Their familiar starting point is usually grounded in Christian thought, and most of these works show a very little discussion of Confucianism. So I suggest that our promotion of interreligious dialogue can be enriched by Confucianism, which will engage my topic further in the following sections. The second section gives a textual interpretation of Confucian self-transcendence as sagely wisdom. The holistic implication of this teaching for the ethical-spiritual transformation of the individual is briefly discussed according to two great classical masters, Confucius and Mencius, and the leading medieval Neo-Confucian Chu Hsi. I note that the Confucian way is about cultivating true humanity, emphasizing a faith in "the oneness of Heaven and humanity" (t'ien-jen ho-i) which unites the immanent and transcendent realities of existence. In the final (main) section, I present a Confucian-oriented model on the basis of the preceding sections, and explain why it is a good one in the advancing field of interreligious dialogue. I also consider other scholars' perspectives on the similar topic (*e.g.*, Ching, Neville, Berthrong, *etc.*). The love for wisdom is not only a common philosophic idea, but also a transforming relationship among the living spiritual traditions of the world; I have in mind Huston Smith's thesis of world religions as "our wisdom traditions." Confucian spirituality offers a religious experience of sagehood, and its belief in the Heavenly Principle (or Tao) as "the Ultimate Reality" emphasizes a self-transcended and virtuous life.

From a global, comparative standpoint, I also envision it as a way to redemption from selfishness and egocentricism, which is compatible with the basic teachings of other religious founders (*e.g.*, Jesus and Gautama Buddha). This is another key to discussing Confucian-Christian dialogue, for instance, and will contribute to our joint efforts at advancing interreligious dialogue forward. The paper concludes by considering this and related perspectives.

Ciurtin, Eugen – Institute for the History of Religions,
Romania

EARTHQUAKES OF THE BUDDHA IN PALI AND SANSKRIT CANONICAL WRITINGS

Perfectly rendered by "terrae motus", "tremblement de terre", "Erd-beben", or "earth-quake", Pa. pathavi-, Skr. prthivi- (or Pa. Skr. bhumi-) Pa. Skr. -kampa (or Pa. Skr. -cala) are common designations of mighty earthquakes manifested in crucial episodes of the Buddha's, bodhisattvas' and sangha's life, as classified in the Pali Canon and (Buddhist) Sanskrit Mahayana. My paper will try to determine the position of the Mahaparinirvanasutra's (MPNS) earthquakes within the larger framework of seismic manifestations of the Buddha in Theravada and other early Buddhist canons. The Bhūmicalasutta mentions eight reasons why the earth "shakes, trembles and quakes", but in some other Pali, Sanskrit and Chinese parallels they are not the same, or are less than eight, or are even, in the same translated text and at the same narrative moment (but in different cities) three and eight (as clearly demonstrated by J. Przyluski 1918 and discussed by E. Frauwallner in 1956 and A. Bareau in 1974). Nevertheless, there is clearly no consensus of scholars as to the position of the Bhūmicalasutta within the six extant versions of the MPNS. I will thus secondly discuss the results of the fundamental contribution by André Bareau (1979/1995), which is the actual state of art for earthquakes as a religious and literary motive. Some limits of the historic-philological method are perhaps perceptible when considering the unsophisticated trajectory of composition it mentions as well as the narrowness of understanding it unfortunately proves.

Cox, James L. – University of Edinburgh, UK
j.cox@ed.ac.uk

THE RAINBOW SERPENT IN AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS: A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

Indigenous Religions: Critical Appraisals from Theoretical and Historical Perspectives. Abstract: The Rainbow Serpent has been interpreted amongst contemporary Australian Christian theologians as a ubiquitous symbol referring to an indigenous Creator God.

This has resulted in the Rainbow Spirit Theology, which attempts to unify Aboriginal Christians around a common belief. This paper contends that the Rainbow Spirit Theology should be rejected, not because it reflects a theological or ethical response to colonialism in Australia, but because it is based on the erroneous assumption that a singular, key concept can be identified that defines the essential character of Australian Indigenous Religions. This analysis sheds light on all such attempts to define Indigenous Religions universally by reference to unifying beliefs.

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Cox, Laurence – National University of Ireland,
Laurence

THE POLITICS OF BUDDHIST REVIVAL: U DHAMMALOKA AS SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZER

This paper explores three, related aspects of Dhammaloka's Buddhism. Firstly, it discusses his work as in effect a social movement organiser within the Buddhist Revival, looking at his funders, publishers, printers, translators and distributors as well as those who wrote about him, laid down their hair for him to walk on, gave him free rides on trains or private yachts, put up his friends in monasteries or let them cross borders, *etc.* It also looks at what we know about his organisations and involvement in other people's organisations, asking who he intended to mobilise and who his audience was, how his use of confrontation and polemic fitted into this, and how successful he was. Secondly, it explores the proposition that Dhammaloka, and other early Irish Buddhists in Asia, were part of the transnational communication of "repertoires of contention" between anti-colonial, ethno-religious cultural nationalisms in Ireland and Asia, and how such encounters can be understood. Thirdly, it relates Dhammaloka to the politics of plebeian free-thought in the US, Germany, Britain and Ireland, discussing known connections and themes shared with his Buddhist Tract Society. It explores the radical accents of this perspective, and asks how effective it was in the context of the Buddhist Revival. The paper concludes with some broader reflections on the relationship between the local practicalities of organising the Buddhist revival, transnational communication between anti-colonial Buddhisms, and the contribution of other modernist radical movements.

Crow, John L. – Florida State University, USA

PLACING WESTERN ESOTERICISM ON THE MAP: EXPLORING THE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF A MODERN OCCULT ORGANIZATION

Since the emergence of the academic study of Western Esotericism, there has been a persistent debate as to where the line between east and west should be drawn. Much of this debate is based on tracing historically the continuities of so-called esoteric ideas and practices, polemics, or discourses. Yet none of these attempts have attempted to draw western esotericism geographically. This is due to many difficulties and limitations. First, by its nature western esotericism seems to manifest in individuals or small groups in a variety of places. This resists the process of mapping esoteric currents, polemics, and discourses. However, with the rise of globalization, the emergence of mass communication, and the normalization of many western esoteric ideas and practices, opportunities to start mapping the geographical distribution arise. In the early twentieth century, poet, mountain climber and occultist, Aleister Crowley, assumed control the organization, Ordo Templi Orientis. Until his death in 1947, Crowley reorganized the group and integrated Thelema, the religion he founded in 1904, as central to the organization's message. After his death there was, at times, confusion and breaks in the organization's leadership. However, in 1985 new management assumed control of the organization and since then the Ordo Templi Orientis has slowly expanded across the world spreading the message of its founder. From 1989 through 2003, the organization released its annual demographic information, noting the membership numbers and countries of presence. Also beginning in the latter part of the twentieth century, there has been concerted efforts by Ordo Templi Orientis members and non-members alike to translate the sacred texts of Thelema. Both of these data sets allow the geographic mapping of presence and interest in the organization and texts of Crowley's religion. With these maps a general picture emerges of just how "western" this form of Western esotericism really is in practice and how wide spread Thelema and its ideas have penetrated different parts of the world. This method of mapping organizations and text translation/distribution also opens up opportunities to explore other sites where the geographic boundaries of western esotericism arise.

Cusack, Carole M. – University of Sydney, Australia
carole.cusack@sydney.edu.au

APPROACHING THE STUDY OF INVENTED RELIGIONS

In the West little scholarly attention has been paid to religions that announce their invented status. That is understandable, as they are openly defying the web of conventions that surround the establishment of new religions, which include linking the new teaching to an existing religious tradition, arguing that the teaching is not really 'new' but rather a strand of ancient wisdom, and establishing new scriptures through elaborate claims of external origin (translation, channelling etc). Scholars of new religions have noted that their narratives are functionally similar to those of traditional religions (e.g., aliens as creators or angelic visitors, ecological devastation as eschatology). Cognitive theorists argue that religion is, to a large extent, about narrative and the success of the story. Humans are narrative beings and communities transmit culture through narrative. In the case of the Church of all Worlds, founders Tim Zell and Lance Christie thought Robert A. Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* was a fiction so good it should actually be true. This thinking also underlies the founding of both Jediism and Matrixism. Invented religions are an inevitable outcome of a society addicted to the consumption of novelties, in which the exercise of creativity and innovation in the development of products is rewarded by wealth and fame. This paper contends that invented religions are exercises of the imagination that have developed in a creative (though sometimes oppositional) partnership with the influential popular cultural narratives of the contemporary West, particularly film and science fiction.

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da Fonseca, Alexandre Brasil Carrero – Institute for Study of Religion, Brazil

de Matos, Vincius Avaurujo Bastista – Institute for Study of Religion, Brazil

de Matos, Marcus – Institute for Study of Religion, Brazil

'CHRIST AND THE BRAZILIAN REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS': INTER-GENERATIONAL DIALOGUES AND MEMORY BUILDING

The fifties and the sixties are known in South America as times of agitation, transformation and hope. In Brazil, ideological oppositions increased conflicts over development and nationalism, following profound social changes happening in the country: industrialization, mobilization and democratic ripening. In this context, Protestant churches developed new forms of collaborating with each other to respond to social challenges: in the Social Responsibility Sector, linked to the Brazilian Evangelical Confederation (CEB), theologians, students and workers organized themselves to promote debates, actions and studies on how churches should influence society. However, after the Military Coup of 1964, Protestant churches abolish those new orientations for being suspicious of "communism" and "leftism". Starting from a gathering of statements from these evangelical leaders – presently aged between 60 and 80 – this research expects to gather information and experiences in audiovisual format, and expose them to today's young leaders acting within the Protestant churches and evangelical organizations. On a second stage, these young leaders will take responsibility on the movie-editing process of the recorded interviews, and chose narratives that will, finally, constitute movies. This paper discusses the possibility of 'memory building' in this project. Using Walter Benjamin 'redemption method' as a perspective, we will test if young evangelical leaders can appropriate themselves of a socio-political memory that was excluded from the official and institutional history of Brazilian protestant churches. To test this hypothesis, the research brings up the concept of memory from authors such as Michael Pollak and Andreas Huyssen. This project is developed by ISER – Institute for Studies of Religion, in partnership with FALE Network, and funded by the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and the Brazilian Lutheran Foundation (FLD).

Dahiya, Neelima – M.D. University, India

PRESENT DAY BIO-ETHICAL ISSUES AND BUDDHISM

The focus of my paper will be to explore a possible dialogue between today's bio-ethical issues and Buddhist ethics. Euthanasia, Suicide, embryo research, and Abortion are some of the serious quagmires of bio-medical ethics of present day which need immediate pronouncements. Various informed sections of society – doctors, humanists, lawyers, philosophers and psychologists – world over have been debating these issues for a long time without reaching any consensus. The reason being the arguments put forth in favour as well as against are equally forceful and have substance and backing. The recent results of brain scanning of 54 unresponsive patients at medical centres in Britain and Belgium have further complicated the issue and have made the task more difficult. The patients earlier thought to be in vegetative states have now been found capable of low levels of responsiveness. In order to come out of the situation of impasse, it is imperative to look analytically at various social institutions and religion is one such major institution. If studied in secular setting, religion is the most potential resource to find a meaningful direction to meet the challenges of modern civil society, though some scholars are against such efforts as to them, "delving in to cultural heritage with the objective to find inspiration for the present may result into wealth of beautiful imagery..." It may be true in case of those religions which preach and propagate only divinity but not in case of religions like Buddhism as V.K Thakur has very well said that Buddhism was the articulation of worldly problems. It is widely known for its reverence for life and humane values. Ahimsa and profound love and respect for life are the core of the Buddhist teachings. Buddhism, like a good physician, is committed to and concerned with the removal of human sufferings.

This leads us to conclude that Buddhism shares the respect for life that is fundamental to the moral and legal traditions of the present time. Buddhism's holistic understanding of human nature encourages a psychosomatic approach to the pathology of disease (Soni, 1976) to which we are, today, increasingly attuned. The present paper is an effort to apply Buddhist insights, ethics and percepts to appreciate and derive response to some major quagmires – euthanasia, suicide, embryo research and abortion – of bio-medical ethics of present day civil society.

Danfulani, Chikas – University of Bayreuth, Germany
Chikasdan01@yahoo.de

SECLUSION IN THE GUISE OF EDUCATION? A BOURDIEUAN PERSPECTIVE ON WOMEN CONTINUING EDUCATION CENTRES

This paper relates Bourdieu's concept of the 'religious field' to women's education in northern Nigeria. It focuses on Women Continuing Education Centers (WCECs) which, since the re-implementation of Sharia provide education for women who dropped out of formal education, frequently as a result of early marriage. Several factors impede women's education in the northern Nigeria of which early marriage and seclusion in addition to family/domestic responsibilities are the foremost. Based on empirical data, the paper argues that the participation of women in these WCECs, which, according to policy makers and implementers, serve to educating women for the future, in fact reproduce the long-existing cultural practice of seclusion and exclude women from the public sphere. With focus on Bourdieu's concept of 'modes of domination', the paper demonstrates that although women centers provide acceptable spaces of equal access to education, the centers are a modified form of Kulle (seclusion) where women are kept within the confines of their homes. With focus on two centers in Kano and Zamfara states, the paper shows how these women centers fall short of preparing women for public responsibility. Instead, they perpetuate a form of mis-education which in turn leads to a reproduction of social dominance of men over women.

Danfulani, Chikas – University of Bayreuth, Germany
Chikasdan01@yahoo.de

BETWEEN RELIGION AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS TO EDUCATION IN SHARIA STATES OF NIGERIA

Religion plays a decisive role in the acquisition of education amongst women in northern Nigeria. At no time is this statement truer than the period of the re-implementation of Sharia in northern Nigeria which started in 1999. It was at this time in the history of female education in the northern states that a great deal of emphasis was placed on women and female education in several Sharia states in Nigeria. However, the brand of education emphasized at this period was the basic Islamic education which is viewed as the most important type of education and believed to be a means that facilitates piety and "nearness to God". Using Zamfara state as a case study, this paper examines women's rights to education and the role of religion as a deciding factor in accessing it in northern Nigeria.

Stressing the Islamic concept of knowledge (Ilm), the paper analyzes the various structures at play in the acquisition of education for women. Furthermore, it compares official government propaganda about women's education and the reality on ground in regards to women's access to quality education in the Sharia states of Nigeria. The paper concludes by examining some structural and cultural impediments against women's rights to education in northern Nigeria.

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Darmayasa, I Made – Dharma Sthapanam
 Foundation, Indonesia · jerodukuh@gmail.com

PEDANDA VIS-À-VIS MANGKU: THE BRAHMIN ELEMENTS IN BALI, INDONESIA

The presence of Hinduism in Bali is well known fact outside Indonesian anthropological studies, but very little is known about its uniqueness and great variance with the Hinduism as practiced in India and Nepal. The institution of priestly class generally known as Pedanda is supplemented by the genre of Mangku (generally called as Pa Mangku) are not like the brhamins in India. Pedanda is a Brahmin by tradition but it would not mean that all of his family members are automatically Brahmin. As there is a tradition to contribute one son to this job of prayers and performance of rituals, the rest in his family can be else, and not necessarily to be Brahmin. Similarly, the Mangkus perform 'priestly' but they are not the priest with the sense of Brahmin. Above all, they can be from any caste, both 'low' and 'high'. Thus it accommodates Shudras in the world of brahmins. Yet, both of them in their over thousand years long existence remain as essential part of the Balinese society for their ritual requirements. Another surprise is the syncretic role of Pedanda some of whom are Buddhist too in the form of Pedanda Budha. The paper deals with such uniqueness of the priestly class of Bali.

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Date, Kiyonobu – Tohoku Fukushi University, Japan
 kiyonobu.date@gmail.com

LA MISE EN ŒUVRE DE L'ESPRIT INTERCULTUREL AU QUÉBEC : UNE LECTURE ANALYTIQUE DES MANUELS SCOLAIRES DE L'ÉTHIQUE ET CULTURE RELIGIEUSE

Au Québec, depuis la rentrée 2008, le nouveau cours de l'éthique et culture religieuse est mis en place dans toutes les écoles du primaire et du secondaire. Ce cours vise très haut, dans la mesure il incite les enfants à réfléchir sur des questions éthiques, à comprendre des phénomènes religieux très divers, et à pratiquer le dialogue pour réaliser une société pluraliste en harmonie. Et pourtant, il est aussi connu qu'il reste encore des problèmes à résoudre, notamment la

formation des enseignants. Tout en tenant compte de ces enjeux, cette communication tente de focaliser sur l'analyse de certains manuels scolaires les plus utilisés (manuels de Fides pour le primaire, ceux de CEC et de Grand Duc pour le secondaire). Comment l'esprit de programme est-il interprété ? Quelle équité les manuels prennent-ils en compte ? Je ne revendiquerais pas l'originalité de la procédure de cette étude, mais ma lecture va nécessairement refléter mon point de vue. En tant que chercheur japonais, j'aimerais ainsi mettre en relief des aspects spécifiques de la laïcité scolaire québécoise. Le cas du Québec jouera alors un rôle de miroir pour éclairer la spécificité de l'équivalent au Japon. C'est ainsi que j'aimerais développer une réflexion comparative.

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Davidson, Markus – University of Leiden,
 The Netherlands · md@teo.au.dk

THE SPIRITUAL MILIEU BASED ON J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S LITERARY MYTHOLOGY

The fantasy works of J.R.R. Tolkien, especially *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–5), have profoundly influenced religiosity in the Western world from the 1960s onwards. Not only has Tolkien's literary mythology inspired both Christians, Pagans and unaffiliated, yet self-identified 'spiritual' individuals. More interestingly, an entire alternative spiritual milieu has formed that treats Tolkien's works as authoritative texts. The main features of this milieu are the belief that Middle-earth is a real place (being either our own world in prehistory or existing on another plane) and ritual interaction with the Valar, the gods of Tolkien's world. Some add to this the claim to be themselves Quendi (Tolkienian Elves), either by descent or reincarnation. In my talk I will (a) present the main ideas and practices of Tolkien-based spirituality; (b) discuss how the individuals and groups involved rationalise and legitimate the fact that their spirituality is fiction-based; (c) sketch the history of the phenomenon from its inception in the 1970s to the growth entailing the mass internet and film adaption of *The Lord of the Rings* (2001–3); and (d) pay attention to the social organisation of the milieu both offline and online. Finally I will try to sum up what this case study might tell us in general about fiction-based religion and alternative religion on the internet.

Davis, Scott G. – University of Richmond, USA
sdavis@richmond.edu

LANGUAGE, NATURE AND CONVENTION IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

This paper develops Donald Davidson's argument for the primacy of the "idiolect" in the study of language. In a number of papers from the 1990s, Davidson argues that "languages," as imagined by linguists and many philosophers of language, do not exist as natural kinds. They are, on his argument, generalizations and simplifications of the linguistic behavior of individuals considered as members of particular communities. Not only does this add an additional component to the critique of the "cognitivist" approach, but, when conjoined to Mary Douglas's *How Institutions Think* (Syracuse, 1986), with its use of David Lewis's *Convention* (Harvard, 1969), Davidson's work provides a defense of Douglas's rehabilitation of Durkheim that helps us see religions as human artifacts without the temptation to reduce beliefs and practices to non-religious causes or to pass judgment, one way or another, on the existence of the objects of religious belief.

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del Pinal, Eric Hoenes – see *Hoenes del Pinal, Eric*
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◀ **de Matos, Marcus** – see *da Fonseca, Alexandre Brasil Carrero*
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de Matos, Priscila Vieira e Souza – Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

MONASTIC LIFE AND THE INTERNET: A STUDY OF THE BENEDICTINE'S OFFICIAL MONASTERY WEBSITES IN BRAZIL

This paper analyses the historical tensions between monastic life and social engagement in Benedictine's Brazilian Congregation monasteries. It discusses the use that this traditional religious group does of new information technologies and its conflicts with some aspects of the Benedictine universe – its rules, organization and routine. The research development focuses on monastery websites to understand the relations between the Benedictine's monasteries in Brazil and contemporary culture. The empirical data was collected by analyzing the five official websites linked to the nine monasteries of the Benedictine Brazilian Congregation. The theoretical framework articulates Jacques Berlioz historical studies and Muniz Sodré bios-media theory considering the 'return of religion' debate in Western culture, which points to the potential of communication technologies for reintroduction of religion into the public sphere.

The Benedictine insertion on the Internet indicates rearrangements of the traditional, the ancient, the modern, and the contemporary. The paper concludes that the monasteries make moderate use of the Internet if considering the modern technological wonder as well as the tension between visibility and media, which tends to the spectacle. This research was developed in the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), and funded by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Level Personnel (Capes).

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de Matos, Vincius Avaurujo Bastista – see *da Fonseca, Alexandre Brasil Carrero*
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Derry, Ken – University of Toronto, Canada
Reg2010@trinity.utoronto.ca
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Michael, Tony – York University, Canada

"TONY STARK WANTS TO SAVE THE WORLD": SUPERHERO FILMS AND BIBLICAL APPROACHES TO CRISIS

Robert Jewett and John Shelton Lawrence argue that a specific Biblical approach to crisis – "Zealous Nationalism" – has been transmitted in America by forms of popular entertainment. In contrast, "Prophetic Realism" is also biblically derived but almost entirely absent from American popular culture. *Superman Returns*, *Iron Man*, and *Punisher: War Zone* indicate that most recent superhero films do fall clearly into the category of Zealous Nationalism. On the other hand, *The Dark Knight* is very much a proponent of Prophetic Realism despite being immensely popular, while *Watchmen's* position on how best to respond to crisis is more complex and at times self-contradictory.

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Desjardins, Michel – Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada · michel.desjardins@wlu.ca

JESUS H. CHRIST: HERMENEUTICS THROUGH FOOD

What did Jesus actually say and do? The importance of this question for Christians in particular has generated different answers and hermeneutical strategies over the centuries. This paper reads the Christian gospels through the lens of anthropological fieldwork I have done on the role that food plays in the lives of religious individuals across traditions. This fieldwork has generated several common themes. My premise is that this research has transhistorical, transcultural relevance: first-century Jews, including Jesus, would not have been radically different from other religious people in our world, or in theirs, when it comes to the religious role of food.

Viewing Jesus through this particular comparative religions lens results in a far more human, far more historically credible Jesus, and allows us to break through the limitations imposed by the textual data about him.

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Devi, Nirmala – Andhra University, India

RELIGION AS A COUNSELOR'S INSTRUMENT FOR BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

Social evolutionary processes indicate that human beings grow in terms of their ability to discriminate between people, events, and situations and so on. Institutions like family, office and others that provide identity to individuals have evolved to demand compartmentalized behavior. Often compartmentalization of the behavior is considered to be akin to maturity and development as opposed to conservatism and traditionalism. The advancements in science and technology are often mistaken to be positively correlated with maturity and development. In other words, the progress in science does not necessarily provide for or assure compartmentalized behavior. Social dynamics are much more complex and its influence on individual and group behaviors go far beyond the scope of either compartmentalization of behavior or the science and technology. Religion as an individual faith does provide for an identity and group formation. It is a social mechanism providing for both individual and group adjustment. From a psycho-social perspective, Religion is an effective instrument in the hands of the counselors. Professional counselors as champions of minimal drug intervention, depend primarily upon Religion as an instrument in eliciting or even inducing the expected behaviors. The counselor-counselee interactions begin on a note of faith. A study conducted on testing the hypothesis that 'religion plays a dominant role in correcting and conditioning the personal and social behaviors of both individuals and groups' revealed several interesting observations. The study was conducted on two different samples. The first group of sample contains 30 couples with different religious background chosen randomly from among the neighborhoods. All of them who were in the sample were married for over 25 years and are in the age group of between 50 and 60 years. Prolonged dialogue and unstructured interview method was followed to assess their compatibility and quality of partnership. The study resulted in the observation that degree of variation on religious faith is an important variable in determining the compatibility in personal and social adjustment between partners. Majority of the respondents who claimed their partnership as successful have expressed the opinion that their behaviors are largely conditioned by their religious faiths. The second sample constitutes 12 school children who were reported to have learning as well as adjustment problems in the school. After trying all the possible techniques, the parents of these children felt the need to

take them to professional counseling. On analyzing the case studies of all of them in the sample, it is detected that not alone the children who are brought as problematic but also the parents possess attitudes that would not enable them to live in social harmony. Both children and the parents require some correction. Finally their attitudes could be corrected by the Counselor by invoking heavily their own religious beliefs.

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Dilley, Paul – Penn State, USA • pcd10@psu.edu

APOCALYPTICISM AND THE "FEAR OF GOD" IN ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY

This presentation will analyze the use of an important apocalyptic image, the judgment of the individual before God, in the self-formation of Late Antique Christian monasticism. The cognitive and corporeal internalization of this image, which was effected through various forms of monastic discipline, resulted in a disposition called the "fear of God" in ancient sources. This "fear of God" was both the central aspect of monastic identity, and a philosophical exercise employed in situations of temptations. I will explore three aspects of the judgment scene central to the fear of God, namely feelings of shame, guilt, and bodily pain, and the process by which these are integrated into novices as they take up the monastic habit.

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Dion, Nicholas – University of Toronto, Canada

'HOMEWARD BOUND': ON RELIGION, PSYCHOANALYSIS, AND THE LONGING FOR HOME

Attempts to understand the 'longing for home' from a psychoanalytic perspective have spilled some ink in the recent pages of Psychoanalytic Dialogues, with analysts Henry M. Seiden and David Lichtenstein adding to the debate. Both can agree that the idea of home is an important one for psychoanalysis and that it has been both undertheorised and underrepresented in psychoanalytic literature. Defining the home as the location of primary object relations, the authors question the ontological status of home and the place of ideas of origin in general in psychoanalytic theory. This paper evaluates psychoanalytic contributions to an understanding of home and, turning to geographical theory and the work of humanistic geographer Yi Fu Tuan, considers the role of religion in creating 'home'. Religion is, in this context, primarily understood as a meaning making system, and such systems help the individual make sense of his or her world. They play a role in directing the ways in which the individual's environment is charged with affect, in creating place out of space. How can psychoanalytic theory and geography work together on this topic? This is my primary interest here.

Djurdjevic, Gordan – Simon Fraser University,
Canada · gordan.djurdjevic@gmail.com

A WEB OF RELATIONS: INTERPRETING INDIAN YOGA AND TANTRA AS FORMS OF ESOTERICISM

The designation 'Western Esotericism' is meaningful because it is possible to demonstrate historical continuity and ideological consanguinity of its currents. However, it would be problematic to identify Esotericism as a uniquely Western phenomenon. My paper focuses on the Indian traditions of Yoga and Tantra and their possible relations with the category of Esotericism. There are many formal elements of resemblance: the importance of secrecy, practices of initiation, notions of intermediary world(s) and subtle body, pursuit of 'occult powers' (siddhis), rhetorical strategies based on the claim of universal knowledge (pace von Stuckrad), and the widespread belief in the existence and importance of the net of correspondences between apparently discreet aspects of reality. Aside from these factors, since the last quarter of the 19th century, there has been an increase in the influence of Eastern traditions on the Western Esotericism, which further complicates the issue and calls for a clearer methodological and conceptual approach to the phenomenon. I suggest that esotericism is best viewed as a conceptual category, which may be contextualized by the study of particular cultural or historical traditions. Just as the scholars of mysticism argued that there is no 'mysticism as such' but only and always Jewish, Christian, and Islamic mysticism, similar attitude may be appropriated in the study of esotericism (which would result in the study of various regional forms of esotericism). The danger of essentializing 'universal esotericism' should be counteracted by paying close attention to the cultural and historical contingencies of the forms of esotericism under scrutiny.

Dobler, Marvin – University of Bremen, Germany

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

IS THERE A POST-PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO MYSTICISM?

From the discipline's beginnings, *mysticism* has always been in the focus of Religionwissenschaft: Rudolf Otto, Freidrich Heiler or Gustav Mensching have all contributed to the scholarly discussion in their well-known classical works. Unfortunately, today it is nearly impossible to unbiasedly use *mysticism* in historical research for a – non-exclusive – number of reasons:

- I. The legitimate criticism of the phenomenological approach has shown the vital role of careful contextualisation.
- II. Innumerable meanings of *mysticism* are causing bewilderment, so that a history of the use of the term mysticism were fascinating a task by itself.
- III. Many concepts of *mysticism* refer to religious experience which is empirically inaccessible.

In my paper, I will propose to use the term *mysticism* analogously to Benson Saler's conception of religion based on Wittgenstein's philosophy of language. In order to show the hermeneutical potential of my approach, I will provide examples from my research on 12th century Cistercian writers.

Dohe, Carrie B. – University of Chicago, USA
cbdohe@uchicago.edu

ARCHAIC MAN, MODERN MASSES, AND THE INSTINCTUAL PASSION FOR THE INNER DIVINITY: A POST-COLONIAL READING OF C. G. JUNG'S CONCEPT OF PRIMITIVITY

Carl Jung's concept of the collective unconscious indicates a universal primitive level of the psyche, the nature of which he claimed could be discovered partly through study of contemporary so-called primitive peoples. Modern people were capable of reverting to a primitive collective mentality, leading to such disasters as WWI. Simultaneously, the collective unconscious was a wellspring of psycho-spiritual renewal and the source of all creative fantasies. The notion of the primitive in Jung's works has been read in an "imaginal" sense; alternatively, his view that the primitive as closer to nature, as opposed to modern westerners, who are cut off from nature, allegedly conveys a positive evaluation. But post-colonial theorists have demonstrated that the notion of "primitive" stereotypes non-white and non-western peoples as inherently inferior, supposedly representing an earlier level of westerners' cultural development. The "primitive" also often reflects the desire of modern westerners to return to a state of nature free of the shackles of civilization. I will argue that Jung's use of the term "primitive," even the apparently more positive ones, remains bound to the concept's colonialist legacy, and that his image of the collective "primitive" reflected both his sense of superiority to non-whites and non-westerns, as well as his contempt for modern mass society. Finally, his theory that the ills of modern society could be cured through in an introversion of the psychic energy to discover the Self in the most archaic layer of the collective unconscious betrays his Romantic and Protestant roots.

Dold, Patricia – Memorial University of
Newfoundland, Canada · pdold@mun.ca

KALI AS KAMAKHYA IN ORAL AND WRITTEN TEXTS OF AN ASSAMESE PILGRIMAGE SITE

Women residents of the temple and pilgrimage site of the goddess Kamakhya, in Assam, maintain a song tradition that includes hymns (Nam) to Kamakhya as the goddess Kali. According to these songs, Kali is a weapon-wielding slayer of demons, she roams about naked with her hair flying wildly, and she is petitioned as a protective mother. This paper explores images of the goddess Kamakhya as Kali from the women's oral tradition of hymns and from Sanskrit texts associated with the Kamakhya site, especially the Kalika Purāṇ, a and Yogini Tantra. This exploration raises the question: "Does the protective maternal Kali of Kamakhya women's Nam represent a modern taming or softening of an older more extreme Kali of the Sanskrit tradition?" Any pre-modern descriptions of Kali as a protective maternal goddess would suggest that scholarly constructions of modernity's taming of Kali collapse when scrutinized through an alternate lens. In this case, modern women's hymns to Kali require a reconsideration of Sanskrit texts about Kali and a reconsideration of scholarship's understanding of the history of representations of Kali.

Duquette, Jonathan – University of Montreal,
Canada · jonathan.duquette@umontreal.ca

WHEN PHYSICS MEETS VEDANTA: A PERSPECTIVE FROM PHILOSOPHY OF QUANTUM PHYSICS

Toward the end of the 19th century, the Hindu monk Swami Vivekananda claimed that modern physics was inevitably to converge towards Advaita Vedanta in the future. In the decades to come, in the midst of the conceptual revolution occasioned by the emergence of Einstein's relativity and quantum physics, a growing number of authors came up holding that there are striking "parallels" between the worldviews of physics and Vedanta. The publication of Fritjof Capra's Tao of Physics in 1975, led to many more such parallel views amongst scientists, journalists, Hindu monks and followers of Indian religions and philosophies. In this paper, we wish to critically examine to what extent there really exist such "parallels" between modern physics and Advaita Vedanta. Issues such as the role of the observer in quantum physics, holism and quantum vacuum will be examined. For the most part, attempts to compare these disciplines have been realized outside the field of physics, with the result that the parallels in question are often inaccurate and over-simplified. We adopt here a more rigorous approach based on insights coming from philosophy of physics. By using such an approach, we aim to bring to light some of the problems that might arise in this dialogue between modern physics and Advaita Vedanta.

– E –

Ebrahimitabar, Ebrahim – Islamic Azad University,
Tehran

THE UNITY AND SPEECH OF THE RELIGIONS

In today's world of variety of ideas and different opinions and beliefs and growing of religious sects, the worldwide peace and the relative welfare of the average people all over the world is threatened, and everyday we are the witnesses of several thousand innocent people killed because of the governments' competitions for gaining the power. For this reason the duty of the enlightenment in clarifying and explaining the divine thoughts and reaching the spirituality and salvation becomes very important. In these situations, avoiding the prejudice and disunion and war is the best way to solve the religious problems in order to have a peaceful coexistence until the things get better. Molavi is one of the most important Persian poets and also an Islamic Knowledge tutor throughout the world who passed the borders of religious prejudices and tried to build a religious euphoria regardless of the nationality and race and color. He called for the religious unification for the nations in the religious wars of the seventh century. He recognized "the unity and speech of the religions" as the most effective healing factor for the religious disunity. In this paper unity in religious procedure from Molana's perspective is discussed.

Echtler, Magnus – University of Bayreuth, Germany

"FEELING SOME OTHER SOUNDS FROM THE OUTER WORLD." EXPERIENCING SACRED DANCE IN THE NAZARETH BAPTIST CHURCH, SOUTH AFRICA

The NBC is one of the largest AICs in South Africa, famous for (and in colonial apartheid times criticized for) its African-style hymns and dancing. I've done fieldwork on them in 2008 to 2009 (as part of the project with Asonzeh and Berner) and interviews especially with members of the 'Scottish' (i.e., young men) dance group. In my analysis I try to combine practice/performance theories with the new cognitive approaches, a combination I find especially fruitful for dealing with this kind of bodily experience of sound/dance.

Echtler, Magnus – University of Bayreuth, Germany

A HUNDRED YEARS AND RUNNING STRONG. THE NAZARETH BAPTIST CHURCH IN THE RELIGIOUS AND ACADEMIC FIELDS

This paper is concerned with one of the biggest African Initiated Churches of South Africa, the Nazareth Baptist Church (NBC).

Throughout its 100 year history, the church skirted the borders of Christianity in a successful strategy to establish itself as an independent church or religion, drawing upon while at the same time distinguishing itself from both African traditional religions and Christianity. In the vibrant religious field of post-apartheid South Africa, the NBC has continued to thrive, and in fact grown considerably since the 1990s. This success can be linked to the repositioning of the church's tradition in the public sphere, where, in the context of the 'African renaissance', the NBC can lay claim on a uniquely local, African tradition, while its global aspiration is based on the charismatic church leaders' claim to represent the Black Messiah. While this ambiguous combination of African and Christian elements is central to the church's success in the religious field, this success is hardly reflected within the academic study of religion in Africa. This is due to a blind spot within the academic field, where discourses on Christianity in Africa tend to emphasise the rapid growth of Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches, thus creating the impression that earlier African Initiated Churches dwindle away in the face of the newer, more vibrant competitors, or, following the long-standing theological traditions, continue to discuss the more or less Christian character of these churches. Based on the example of the NBC, this paper analyzes the interrelations between the religious and academic fields.

Eisenberg, Andrew J. – Stony Brook University, USA

RESONANT VOICES AND SPATIAL POLITICS: AN ACOUSTEMOLOGY OF THE PIOUS SOUNDSCAPE IN MOMBASA, KENYA

This paper presents an ethnography of Islamic vocalization and Muslim communality on the Kenyan coast, with the broader aim of exploring the methodological and theoretical implications of Steven Feld's (1996) "acoustemology" (the exploration of how subjects know the world in and through sound) for ethnographic approaches to subjectivity and social identification in Muslim contexts. The site of my study is Mombasa Old Town, a historic "Swahili" neighborhood of Kenya's port city of Mombasa. Unlike the other "Swahili towns" that dot the East African littoral, Mombasa Old Town has been engulfed by a sprawl of urban development in modern times. Its casbah-like positioning within Kenya's second-largest city has made Mombasa Old Town a primary physical and symbolic location for struggles over Muslim identity and citizenship in Kenya. With this in mind, I explore how local actors in Mombasa produce and reproduce Old Town as a discrete place – a place apart from the rest of Mombasa and the Kenyan nation-state.

In addition to architectural and residential patterns, the production and reproduction of Old Town's discreteness involves a complex set of "spatial practices" (Lefebvre 1991), the most essential of which are the muezzin calls, religious sermons, and Quranic recitations that every day suffuse the sonic space of the neighborhood. I investigate the "acoustemic" dimensions of this "pious soundscape" (Hirschkind 2006) of religious vocalizations in Mombasa Old Town, with an ear toward the production of Muslim identity and communality in the fraught and politically charged context of contemporary Mombasa.

Elhassab, Ahmed – University of Bayreuth, Germany

POLITICS OF ISLAMIC BANKING: HINDERING THE NATIONAL UNITY OF SUDAN?

Islamic banking in Sudan, which overwhelmed the banking sector since 1990s, may pose a direct threat to the unity of the country. The anxiety express in this paper, is based on the feeling that the issue of Islamizing the economy is not an innocent policy, rather, it goes hand by hand with the issue of the contested identity of Sudan which divides the country along the Arabism-Islamized and Africanism-secularized dichotomy. The way the question of national identity was tackled left too many issues swept under the rug of this dichotomy, notably the banking industry. These two contradictory views have been at the very heart of the socio-economic turmoil which lies at the center of the decay of the Sudanese state. Before signing the (CPA), between the government and SPLM/A in 2005, the banking system had been fully-fledged Islamic. Raising Islamization policy as the corner-stone, of the government, was enough for SPLM/A to escalate the fighting. Accordingly, the Islamic banking had been at the heart of the CPA. On the refusal of Islamic banking system, by SPLM/A, the controversy was solved by establishing a dual banking system; an Islamic banking system in the North while a conventional banking system in the South. However, the performance of the CPA is not promising so far. The paper tries to signal out, how manipulating religion to hold-on, the unity of the country, is going to yield a topsy-turvy result.

Emerson-Teusner, Paul – RMIT University, Australia
paul@teusner.org

THE STATUS OF THE RELIGIOUS CYBORG

This presentation considers philosophical and sociological notions of trans-humanism as they are played out in the real-life experience of Christians online. A discursive analysis of Australian Christian bloggers, who claim a membership to, or concern with, the "emerging church" movement, will form a case study to illustrate the theme.

Sociologists, theologians, and cultural theorists involved in the twenty year old tradition of research into religion online have always debated about the future of Christianity, and whether the Internet will lead to a rebirth of a spirit-filled people, or to the ultimate demise of organised religion. Many now agree that online forms of religious community serve more as a complement than as a replacement to religious expression and communion in the offline world. For many Internet users, the virtual provides a space to explore new forms of religious expression that can be carried into life offline, and for them the virtual church offers a glimpse for what “real” church could be like. For the same people, however, there are elements of “real” church that cannot be replicated online. So they seek a harmony in their online and offline religious experiences. I propose that the use of Web 2.0 applications, such as blogs and wikis, facilitate this search for harmony, rather than promote a separation between online religion and offline religious practice. Consequently I argue that the increasing popularity of these Internet tools to express a religious identity and seek connections with others has impacts on how people participate in religious institutions in the real world. Specifically, this presentation will explore how bloggers connect online life in a highly technologised society with traditional notions of religious life and community participation.

Endresen, Cecilie – University of Oslo, Norway
cecilie.endresen@ilos.uio.no

RELIGION AND NATION ACCORDING TO MUSLIM AND CHRISTIAN LEADERS IN ALBANIA

The question of the relationship between religion and nation is at the heart of the religiously diverse Albanian society. The nationalist paradigm that religion does not, and should not matter to Albanians is exemplified by the slogan “the Albanian’s religion is to be Albanian”. This paper presents the latest research on religion in Albania after Communism and is based on in-depth interviews with the leaders of Albania’s traditional religious communities: Islam, Orthodox and Catholic Christianity, and Bektashi Sufism.) It is thus an investigation of what the nation means to the people who professionally represent exactly what the Albanians have been urged to disregard: religion. Albania’s muftis, archbishops, imams, Sufi sheikhs, and parish priests, many of them survivors from Communist prison or labour camps, reject the Communist thesis that religion is an alien element in the national body. Instead, they place religion, and particularly their own, at the core of Albanian identity and see it as essential to national welfare. Theoretically underpinned by A. P. Cohen’s symbolic constructivism, the paper shows how religious and national boundaries are built through myth. Nationalist myths exist in

different religious versions, whereas religious doctrine is given a nationalist twist. In the clerics’ symbolic universes the nation is thus imbued with religion, and vice versa. The idea that religion should not divide the Albanian people is central in the clerics’ interpretations of God, the world, and each other. Ironically, the clergy’s rhetoric is influenced by Enver Hoxha’s atheist nationalism.

Engler, Steven – *SEE Gardiner, Mark Q.*

Ensminger, Sven – University of Bristol, UK

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

CONVIVENCIA FROM MEDIEVAL SPAIN – A MODEL FOR CONTEMPORARY INTERFAITH RELATIONS?

This paper explores the coexistence of Muslims, Jews, and Christians in Medieval Spain, commonly known as convivencia, and the ways it can be used as a model for contemporary issues of interfaith relations. The paper will first give a historical outline of the phenomenon and establish some of the core characteristics that led to convivencia. Drawing on sources of the time, it will be seen that convivencia was significantly different from what can be called tolerance in the 21st century sense. Instead, convivencia was a practical consequence arising naturally from the political, religious and cultural circumstances of the time which differed also depending on the geographical location, and the economic and social setting. The second part will examine how convivencia might be used as a model for contemporary interfaith dialogue. Despite the fact that a direct adaption of the Medieval model seems both unrealistic and impossible, it will be seen that there are some valuable lessons to be taken away from the Spanish example which deserve scholarly and practical attention. This paper is a first step into this direction, encouraging both faithfulness and tolerance in the field of interfaith relations.

Enstedt, Daniel – University of Gothenburg, Sweden
daniel.enstedt@lir.gu.se

CONFLICTING VIEWS, MUTUAL DEPENDENCE. CHRISTIAN FAITH, SEXUALITY, AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS

The Church of Sweden decided to acknowledge the blessing of same-sex unions in 27 October 2005. The decision triggered a series of diverse reactions, and two groups with explicit different views on sexuality emerged. These two groups differ in essential ways when it comes to theology, Biblical interpretations and scriptural authority, as well as organizational, clerical, liturgical and practical matters. The main concern here is how these groups comprehend, percept, articulate and relate to each other.

I will argue that these two groups, as different as they at first might seem, are dependent on each other in significant ways. I will consider what implications contradictory views on sexuality have on how social and religious relations are constituted, as well as how these groups are constituted by the understanding and conception of each other. In what ways does a mutual dependence affect the possibilities for social and religious change?

– F –

Farhoumand-Sims, Cheshmak – Saint Paul University, Canada

THE CONFLATION OF CULTURE AND RELIGION IN EFFORTS TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN AFGHANISTAN

This paper looks at historic efforts to promote and protect the rights of women in Afghanistan, and particularly since the fall of the Taliban in 2001. The paper explores the ways in which the conflation of culture and religion has complicated gender equality efforts and the role of patriarchal actors who use religion to justify the violations of women's rights which are rooted in culture, tradition and custom. The paper explores how this has played out in efforts to implement the Women's Convention in Afghanistan (CEDAW) and considers ways forward.

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Farré, Núria M. – University of Lleida, Spain
farrellmontagu@gmail.com

SLEEP DEPRIVATION AS A FORM OF RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOUR IN MEDIEVAL ASCETICS

Sleep deprivation figures prominently among ascetic behaviours. Men and women who attempt to lead their lives in excellence and purity may find in restful sleep an obstacle that prevents them from approaching divinity and acquiring higher knowledge. For many Middle Ages ascetics sleep deprivation was part of a process of mortification and corporal punishment. Examples are numerous and not only in Western culture. This practice of reducing the sleeping time or avoiding a comfortable sleep has not received its due attention in the historical research on ascetic behaviours or it has been seen as a mere epiphenomenon of other self-inflicted sufferings such as fasting or laceration. In my contribution I will explore different practices of sleep deprivation for religious motives as they had been recorded in historical medieval literature, the behaviours associated with them and their neurobiological and psychological correlates (impact of REM and non-REM sleep deprivation, short-term and long-term, partial sleep deprivation and sleep fragmentation). These may give rise to changes in the cognitive and perceptual system that produce altered states of consciousness. In people with strong religious ideals such perceptual and cognitive distortions take the form of religious symbols or other spiritual expectations that gradually fill their lives with meaning and purpose.

Farzaneh, Babak – Islamic Azad University, Iran
B_farzaneh2001@yahoo.com

RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE AND NONVIOLENCE

Most people have been greatly astonished by the violence attending religious revivals of recent decades for it was commonly believed that religious revivals were associated with rekindling earnest passions for peace. The reasons were clear; the eschatologies of the revealed religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) presume peace as the ultimate destiny of humanity, and a major theme or preoccupation of these religions is that one should seek peace whenever one can. Furthermore, particular sects interpret the teachings of their religion to mean that one should never use violence. In the great Indian religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, a reverence for all forms of life is fostered through the doctrine of ahimsa. “Nonviolence” is a nebulous, frequently misunderstood, frequently abused term. It can be used in very narrow or broad constructs and can be based on a wide variety of philosophies and practices. The approach that this essay will take to this variety will have several characteristics. This essay tries to present within a broad understanding that nonviolence is a way of life and no understanding of nonviolence based on one religion or philosophy is adequate so in order to accomplish this, it will focus as much on the ways that the practice of nonviolence has been used to change human societies as on any individual application. Finally, several of the main currents of nonviolent thought and practice (Gandhian, Christian, Buddhist, Feminist, Liberationist, and Social Scientific) has been studied as approaches that have much to offer but that may be inadequate by themselves. Keywords: revealed religions, violence, peace, nonviolent ethic, philosophy of nonviolence, doctrine of ahimsa.

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Faxneld, Per – Stockholm University, Sweden
per.faxneld@rel.su.se

INFERNAL MADONNA AND PATRON SAINT OF ABORTIONS: LILITH IN SATANISM AND THE WESTERN LEFT HAND PATH

Lilith, known from Jewish legends as Adam's first wife before God created Eve, has become a popular figure in the Satanist and Left Hand Path milieu. This entity, once feared by Jewish mothers as a killer of infants, is also celebrated in a wider context of New Age, goddess-worship and feminism. The paper will explore how the Satanist/LHP reinterpretation differs from the more widely spread revisionist view of her as “the first feminist”, but how the two also share many traits. In particular, I will focus on how the theme of child slaying is tackled, and what the symbolic reworkings of the theme tells us about the various ideologies that frame them.

Fedyanina, Vladlena A. – Institute of Foreign Languages of the Moscow Pedagogical University, Russia · fedlada@mail.ru

HISTORY OF THE TENJIN CULT AS DESCRIBED IN THE “LEGENDS ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF THE KITANO TENJIN SHRINE

In the paper to be presented we are providing a critical analysis of the “Legends about the origin of the Kitano Tenjin Shrine” (“Kitano Tenjin Engi”, 1194). This written source presents the first full history of Japan's national Shinto's Deity of Learning cult – the Tenjin cult. The first part of the “Kitano Tenjin Engi” is the life story of the outstanding statesman, scholar and poet Sugawara Michizane (845–903), who was deified after death under the name Tenjin. The second part is the creation and the development history of the Tenjin's shrine in Kitano. Engi's author studied the earlier documents and texts: this conclusion follows from the established fact that the main stages in the formation of the Tenjin cult, selected by our independent, based on the reconstruction of earlier written sources, correlated with the sequence of events described in the Engi's text. However, due to the Engi's author interpretation and through the usage by him of the sources which were not synchronized with events, the chronology of the cult's formation is sometimes time-shifted or fuzzy. Political and religious atmosphere at the XII century caused a significant influence on the Engi's contents by defining the restricted semantic field for the interpretation of the historical events. Buddhist ideology and didactics lie at the Engi's base. Together with that, this text reflects the interaction of the autochthonous and adopted religious traditions, the interaction which defines composite character of the cult: indigenous domestic religious beliefs, Chinese teachings, Buddhism. The history of the Tenjin cult presented by the Engi became the canon, although during the following centuries it was supplemented by new legends.

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Feldt, Laura – University of Copenhagen, Denmark
lfeldt@hum.ku.dk

AESTHETICS, MYTH, AND THE FANTASTIC IN EXODUS 1–18

The paper discusses the potential of aesthetic perspectives on religious narrative or myth, based on a case study of the Exodus narrative of the Hebrew Bible. The paper argues that it is valuable to analyze not only the content of myths and their historical contexts, but also their aesthetic strategies and effects in order to understand what a religious narrative is and what it does.

The strong religious reactions to the literatures of fantasy and the fantastic witnessed recently is used as an impetus for a re-examination of traditional religious narratives in a literary-aesthetic perspective. The paper offers an analysis of the Exodus narrative using a perspective drawn from literary-critical theories of the fantastic. The paper analyses the fantastic strategies used and their effects, and argues that this narrative of the fantastic events at Israel's exodus from Egypt confounds distinctions (natural/supernatural, benign/malign, utopia/dystopia, hope/horror), generates varied reactions in the personae, foregrounds the uncertainty and ambiguity of the events portrayed, and self-referentially points to its own artifice. The fantastic strategies have sensory and bodily effects that are apt to unsettle and disorient the recipient, to disturb and appeal; effects that are not only semantic but also affective, offering provocative emotions and disturbing images. These aesthetic effects mobilize the recipients in a reflection on the status, veracity and meaning of the fantastic events. On the basis of the case study, suggestions are made about the wider potential of aesthetic analyses of myths, including how uncertainty and ambiguity may be incorporated more strongly into theories of what religious narrative is and does. When we discuss the substance and function of religious narratives, their aesthetic expression should be taken into consideration. If we disregard the aesthetics of religious narrative and how it establishes an affective pull, we not only fail to explain central textual elements in their contexts, but we also fail to explain what makes such narratives work for the recipients.

Feldt, Laura – University of Copenhagen, Denmark
lfeldt@hum.ku.dk

ON THE EDGE IN THE WILDERNESS: RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONS OF THE MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS IN SUMERIAN MYTHOLOGY

Wilderness ideas figure prominently in religious beliefs and practices. People go to the wilderness to meet themselves, their demons, and their gods; it can be framed simultaneously as oasis, paradise, waste land, and hell; it is where you can be lead astray, into idolatry or death, or where you can discover a new subjectivity. The wilderness is a space of encounter – between the human self and supernatural others, and between humans and a natural alterity – it is cultural, 'existential' and a natural territory with a unique climate. This paper offers a case study of the mountain wilderness in Old Babylonian, Sumerian religious narratives. The mountain wilderness was here tied to the deities Ninurta and Inana and the heroes Lugalbanda and Gilgamesh and their encounters with tree, stone and bird monsters.

The paper analyses how the mountain wilderness is verbalized, which roles it plays narratologically, and its religious functions. This investigation is part of a larger project about the functions of natural wildernesses in ancient religions. The paper argues that the mountain wilderness in these narratives must be understood neither as an entirely negative nor a solely positive space, but instead as inherently ambiguous, and that nature-culture and chaos-cosmos dichotomies are inadequate. I approach the religious functions of the mountain wilderness by means of a notion of liminal space, in an extension of van Gennep and Turner's concept of liminality, while also paying attention to its embeddedness in a narrative medium by drawing on insights from narratology and cultural geography.

Fernandez, Orlando – University of Exeter, UK
orlandofernandezm@hotmail.co.uk

ESOTERICISM AND THE INTERPRETATION OF QUANTUM MECHANICS

David Bohm (1917–1992) is recognized as one of the most brilliant physicists of his generation. Among many contributions to plasma physics, and quantum mechanics, he is famous for his hidden variables interpretation of quantum mechanics. Bohm's interests were not limited to the scientific, he also wrote extensively on philosophical and other subjects. In his celebrated book *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* he introduced the influential ideas of the explicate and the implicate order that are at the basis of his process philosophy. Bohm was also a very close disciple of Jiddu Krishnamurti, and he acknowledged the influence of Krishnamurti on his philosophy. In an interview he comments regarding the Implicate Order that: "I did follow this things up with Krishnamurti [...] we had many discussions. I think partly through these discussions, although not entirely, I came to the idea of the Implicate Order. He used to greatly encourage me in that direction" His thought was also heavily influenced by G.W.F. Hegel whose place on the Western esoteric tradition has been recently recognized, and he engaged in discussions with several esotericists of his time. This paper will report on recent research conducted on the subject of the influence of esoteric thought in the formulation of Bohm's interpretation of quantum mechanics.

Fibiger, Marianne Qvortrup – University of Aarhus,
Denmark • MF@teo.au.dk

THE TEXTUALISATION OF A ŚAKTI TRADITION IN DENMARK

In spite of Robertson Smith's important observation that rituals seem to be more stable over time than texts, texts (oral or written) with a reference to a mythically framed a-historical past play an important role in legitimating a given cult. Commenting on this need of textualisation, Durkheim in his *Elementary Forms* discussed the importance of memory and the role of mythology in perpetuating it. Without text, no collective memory. This paper discusses the formation of a collective memory among the worshippers of the goddess Apirāmi in Denmark, through what I in this paper will call a process of symbolisation and textualisation. The cult began in the late 1980th in close relation to a laywoman, Lalita Śripalan who is now considered a manifestation of śakti and addressed as "Āmma" (Mother). Because of the fact that she was a laywoman, she did the pūjā in silence and with no reference to anything but her relation to Apirāmi. Today it is not only a well founded community but also known among Sri Lankan Tamils from all over the world, because of Āmma's presumed healing abilities. I have followed this process, and I will show how the collective memory has been established through symbols and texts. This has been done in the form of icons in the temple, as special avatāra days, in songs of praise composed by the worshippers, but also through a mythological awareness. They now both refer to a Apirāmi myth and to the Devīmāhātmya.

Figueroa-Castro, Oscar – National Autonomous
University of Mexico, Mexico

RITUAL AND/OR SPECULATION IN THE TANTRIC TRADITION

Originally centered on various forms of ritual practice, the Tantric tradition experienced a significant change towards the end of the 9th century, especially in the region of Kashmir, where adepts from different local cults attempted to legitimate a Tantric worldview within the context of the great Indian scholastic tradition. This new scenario meant for the Tantrika an intense process of discursive refinement, as well as the need of defending a position in response to competing schools, including Buddhism. Most modern specialists have seen in this turn a definitive distancing from and even the end of the ritualistic spirit that characterized earlier forms of Tantra. By exploring the case of Abhinavagupta, the great Shaiva exegete of the tenth century, this paper attempts to demonstrate that the relationship between ritual and speculation within in the Tantric tradition cannot be fully understood if

treated according to an adversative paradigm (ritual or speculation). Thus, it is argued that more than a mere intellectualization of ritual, what we find in Abhinavagupta is a complex coexistence of both dimensions. Ritual is interiorized as much as speculative thought is ritualized. An example from Abhinavagupta's Paratrishikalaghuvrtti is provided.

Firouzjah, Ali Rahmani – Islamic Azad University,
Iran

INTERPRETATION OF RELIGION IN PUBLIC SPHERE

The aim of this paper is to study the different interpretations of religion in public sphere from Habermas point of view. This study also wants to answer whether there is a relationship between public sphere and religion or not? After studying the special characteristics of public sphere in Habermas ideas, different religious interpretations based on various understanding separation which John Hick divides them into Religious Exclusivism, Religious Inclusivism, Religious Pluralism, we conclude that Religious Pluralism is appropriately similar with Habermas public sphere. Keywords: Habermas, public sphere, religion, religious Interpretation.

Fischer, Ronald – See also *Bulbulia, Joseph*

Fischer, Ronald – Victoria University of Wellington,
New Zealand

Boer, Diana – Victoria University of Wellington, New
Zealand

MUSIC, PROSOCIALITY AND SOCIAL BONDING: PRELIMINARY DATA FROM MUSIC FESTIVALS

Music and musical rituals are found in all cultures and religions. Why is music so widespread? We argue that one central function of music is to mobilize prosociality and to serve as a vehicle for the fulfillment of social needs of group members. The links between music, musical rituals and social coordination and cooperation have been discussed by ethnomusicologists, sociologists, scholars of religious and evolutionary studies, neuroscientists, and psychologists. However, relatively little empirical evidence exists about these prosocial effects of music in real-life contexts. Here, we present preliminary data from a series of psychological studies showing that music increases interpersonal, communal and global prosociality. Our data shows that music increases social bonding and social attraction through the communication and exchange of symbolic information between individuals. This interpersonal process can extend to the group level and becomes an important facilitator of communal prosociality.

Reporting pilot data from participants at both traditional and modern music festivals in Western and non-Western contexts, we demonstrate that attending music festivals increases global prosocial tendencies, prosocial values, forgiveness and lowers materialistic (self-focused) values. We discuss the role of music rituals as a prosocial facilitator, paying particular attention to possible cross-cutting group effects, evolutionary functions of music, and differential effects of diverse music styles and music content.

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Foisy, Catherine – Concordia University, Canada
foisy_catou@yahoo.ca

FROM RUPTURES TO CONTINUITIES: QUEBEC MISSIONARY INSTITUTES FACING VATICAN II

Vatican II, one of the most striking events of the XXth century, has been designated by several theologians as a paradigm shift. French Canadian historians and theologians have studied the impact of this aggiornamento on priests and religious communities in the province; yet, very few have ventured to propose an interpretation of the reception of Vatican II's message by French Canadian missionary institutes and the role they played in preparing some of the theological innovations brought forth in the 1960s. Such a disinterest is unfortunate, since Quebec's effort ranked fourth among all other national Catholic churches sending missionaries abroad (Hamelin, 1984) and represented an important vector of critics, debates, and discussions. Drawing on historiographical as well as original oral material gathered from life story interviews run with Quebec missionaries, this paper proposes a systematic view of mission as dialogue, insisting on the main transformations brought about by Vatican II. By illustrating Quebec's missionary practice and discourse in the period from 1945 to 1980, it offers an interpretation of the main continuities and ruptures in mission from the Quebecois perspective. This paper contributes to deepen our understanding of how Catholic mission has changed with Vatican II in two major ways. On the one hand, it demonstrates how it is inculturation, contextual theologies, and human promotion that characterized Quebec missionary practice. On the other hand, it argues that it is these elements that made the Quebecois missionary experience ahead of the changes promoted by Vatican II.

Francis, Matthew – University of Leeds, UK
m.francis@leeds.ac.uk

IN GOD'S NAME? THE ROLE OF AN EXTERNAL LEGITIMATING AUTHORITY IN THE MOVE TO VIOLENCE

My paper will present findings from my research, exploring how groups make the move from strongly held belief, to violent action. Working from a number of case-studies of groups that have acted violently I have produced a matrix of factors that helps us theorise about the causes of violent potentialities within groups. My case studies include Aum Shinrikyo, al Qaeda, and the Red Army Faction. Through textual analysis of their statements I have coded data into a number of markers which are suggestive of the violent potentialities of these groups. In this paper I will be focussing on one of the markers, 'external legitimating authority', and presenting a comparative analysis of the data from all three of my case-studies. Through an examination of neo-Durkheimian theories on violence, such as those espoused by Georges Bataille and Rene Girard I address the idea of sacred boundaries, in the context of group identity and beliefs (through their application in ideological, chronological and spatial characteristics). As part of a broader role these boundaries help to define the nature and purpose of an external legitimating authority used in justification of violent acts. Through including the Red Army Faction in my case-studies my findings also deal with questions about the methodological boundaries surrounding religion, the sacred and secular. In comparison with the religious groups I studied I am also able to address what is unique, or otherwise, about religious violence, through for example examining the characteristics of religious and non-religious justifications for violence.

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Franke, Edith – University of Marburg, Germany
edith.franke@staff.uni-marburg.de

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM, RELIGIOUS HARMONY AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

What makes the difference? Reflections about the suitability of scientific categorizations in different cultural contexts While religious pluralism is a common term to describe religious diversity of modern societies for European or American scholars, colleagues from Islamic Universities in Indonesia taught me that they would prefer the term religious harmony. Do they refer to the same phenomenon? In which way and in what extent do particular cultural, religious and academic traditions influence the use of terms as well as the perception of religious phenomena – especially if we study religious traditions and behaviour of foreign cultural traditions?

As scholars of the scientific study of religions we have to find terms and patterns for a precise description, analysis, comparison, and for shared communication. But while some of us consider one term as adequate and neutral, others consider the same term as reductionist or normative. In my paper I will analyze how the categorisation/classification of current religious phenomena is – on one side – shaped by scientific and cultural patterns and – on the other side – has an impact on the acceptance, marginalization and privileges of specific religions. My theoretical reflections will be applied to the phenomena of religious diversity on one hand and marginalized religious communities on the other hand, comparing the secularized and Christian orientated context of Germany with the Islamic shaped research and society of Indonesia.

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Frean, Marcus – see *Bulbulia, Joseph*

Freiberger, Oliver – University of Texas, USA
 ofreiberger@mail.utexas.edu

(UN-)DRESSING THE ASCETIC'S BODY: A MICRO-COMPARISON OF ASCETIC DISCOURSES IN HINDUISM AND CHRISTIAN

Proponents of an ascetic life-style tend to have strong opinions about how (or if) the ascetic's body must be dressed. At first glance, definitive rules and regulations seem to suggest that one dress-code applies to all members of a community, but a closer look reveals that controversies about this issue are rather common within ascetic traditions. This paper focuses on two such discourses in Brahmanical Hinduism and early Christianity. An in-depth study will describe how, in both contexts, different proponents argue either for specific ways of dressing, or for nakedness. The analysis and comparison of these discourses (and of the ways they function) result in a more theoretical, meta-level description of the discourse on ascetic clothing. The paper argues that the controversies on how or if ascetics are supposed to cover their bodies result from the different ways in which individual proponents conceptualize asceticism, rather than from doctrinal differences between the broader religious traditions. A few more general conclusions about asceticism may also illustrate that a micro-comparison of religious discourses is a fruitful bottom-up approach for building useful models and theories in the study of religion.

Frisk, Liselotte – Dalarna University, Sweden lfi@du.se

SOME PROBLEMATIC NEW AGE-RELATED ASPECTS OF THE STARK & BAINBRIDGE THEORY OF RELIGION

Some Problematic New Age-related Aspects of the Stark & Bainbridge Theory of Religion Professor Liselotte Frisk, Religious Studies, Dalarna University, Sweden
 This paper aims at discussing new age in relation to some aspects of the theory of religion presented by Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge. Stark & Bainbridge differ between the categories church, sect and cult, with the new age phenomena falling into the category of "cult". This category is further divided into three subcategories (*i.e.*, audience cult, client cult and cult movement). In particular, three special issues, addressed by Stark & Bainbridge and crucial to their theory, are discussed and problematized in this paper. These issues are: the secular/religious dichotomy; degree of tension to society (the surrounding socio-cultural environment); and degree of organization. The discussion is based on material from a recent mapping of religious and spiritual phenomena in a local area of Sweden, Dalarna, in which all "producers" of activities with a religious/spiritual connotation were mapped. The Stark & Bainbridge theory of religion is from 1987, and there are also changes in the field since that time which have to be taken into account. Lastly, some problems of terminology and concepts are addressed.

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Fujieda, Shin – Otani University, Japan
 fujieda@res.otani.ac.jp

KEEPING UP THE GRAND NARRATIVE: NATIONAL IDENTITY AND STATE SHINTOISM IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

This presentation will be on the Yasukuni Shrine's strategies for indoctrinating the younger generation today. The shrine used to play a central role in Japanese militarism and imperialism during the pre-war and wartime periods. As the central shrine of State Shintoism, Yasukuni was utilized by the government to justify the deaths in war and to sustain the centripetal force of Japanese nationalism. Those who died in action in the name of the emperor were enshrined there and revered as "Eirei (great spirits)". Though Yasukuni still proclaims itself to be the "people's common facility for mourning the war dead", legally it is no more a governmental institution as it once was, and a "grand narrative" like this does not function effectively any more nowadays, over 60 years after the end of World War II. A Yasukuni's step to counter the decline of the grand narrative is to bring State Shintoism back to light and to present it as a national identity common to all;

however, in doing so, Shintoism is carefully reintroduced to the Japanese nation as a common knowledge or a moral practice in disguise, but not as a religion. In addition to this, when we look at the history of the formation of State Shintoism, it will become clear that the strategy of Yasukuni is not a novel one, but a mere reprint of the pre-war and wartime periods with the aim of creating a pseudo-civil religion and making the Japanese nation believe it to be a national identity.

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Fujiwara, Satoko – Taisho University, Japan
S_fujiwara@mail.tais.ac.jp

HAS DECONFESSIONALIZATION BEEN COMPLETED?: SOME REFLECTIONS ON QUEBEC'S ERC PROGRAM

This paper presents some comments on Quebec's new "Ethics and Religious Culture" program, upon examination of basic documents issued by the Ministry of Education. The program is described by the Ministry of Education as "the culmination of a long process" of "deconfessionalization," in "which the Quebec school system shifted away from essentially confessional Catholic and Protestant structures to lay structures." The ministerial documents surely indicate that the program is oriented to respect the freedom of religion of all citizens.

Nevertheless, it is also possible to draw evidence from the documents that the program is attempting to superimpose a certain view of religion/religions on pupils. For example, the program for elementary education noticeably shows what the Japanese promoters of intercultural education have been calling a conflict-free "3F (food, festival, fashion) approach." The ERC program also has assumptions that should not be left unquestioned if pupils' rights are to be protected. For example, the program assumes that the closest communities for children, that is, the primary sources of their identities, are their neighborhoods within Quebec. However, what is truly "local" (as opposed to "global") for children in this Age of IT?

This paper discusses these questions by comparing the documents mainly with UK's "Non-statutory National Framework of Religious Education" and with Japan's "Official Guidelines" for the "Ethics" program. Many of the issues to be raised will also be relevant to other provinces and countries that have introduced multi-faith, intercultural religious education.

Fujiwara, Satoko – Taisho University, Japan
S_fujiwara@mail.tais.ac.jp

THE PARADOX OF RELIGION TEACHING

Under the Japanese constitution, religious education has not been allowed in public schools except for partial teaching about religion in social studies classes (history, civic education, *etc.*). However, realities are different from how public education is supposed to be. This paper first shows concretely how "confessional" the descriptions of religions are in Japanese school textbooks contrary to common public understanding, including the understanding of textbook writers and publishers. It will analyze how such paradox has occurred and how it has remained unnoticed, even to the most liberal and critical scholars. Special attention will be paid to factors shaping the textbook images of religions which can be regarded as unique to the Japanese situation. At the same time, the paper questions whether non-confessional, multi-cultural, RS-based religion teaching, practiced in some western countries, is acceptable by the critical minds of post-modern, post-colonial scholars of religion. For example: What about objectivist and liberalist assumptions underlying the advocacies of religion teaching? What about the metaphor of interreligious dialogue that appears in the discourses of religion teaching? The paper will finally ask what gains and losses there will be if RS is "applied" to educational fields, and will then suggest how the losses can be reduced.

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Fukasawa, Hidetaka – Hitotsubashi University, Japan
hidf@jcom.home.ne.jp

CREATING THE PRESENCE OF A RELIGIOUS PAST: LUDWIG FAHRENKROG ON THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

The term "wandering religiosity" (*vagierende Religiositaet*) was coined by the historian Thomas Nipperdey to designate a quality of the search for meaning characteristic of advanced societies at the end of the 19th century. I wish to suggest that this term can have heuristic use, so long as it is not taken to denote something of substance or a sort of religious *a priori*. One of the chief facets of this religiosity is its reflexive relationship to religion in general and its effort to establish a contemporary religion through the assimilation of knowledge attained through the historical study of religion. In this paper, I examine the religious ideas of Ludwig Fahrenkrog, the German artist and founder of the "voelkisch" religious movement "Germanische Glaubens=Gemeinschaft." I situate the voelkisch-religious movement as a canal into which flowed this wandering religiosity, and I attempt to elucidate the close relationship between its religious ideas and historical research into the study of religion at that time.

Despite its seemingly regressive tendencies to reestablish the ancient Germanic faith, Germanische Glaubens=Gemeinschaft seeks to recreate the faith as an anti-theistic, naturalistic contemporary religion, and thus endeavors to put a halt to the “wandering” of religiosity and of the search for racial-national identity in modern Germany.

Fylypovych, Liudmyla – Philosophy Institute of
National Academy of Sciences, Ukraine
lfilip56@gmail.com

NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN UKRAINE: REAL AND FICTITIOUS THREATS

New religious movements came to Ukraine in the late 80's and early 90's of the twentieth century. Since then they have become a significant part of Ukrainian religious landscape, and of the spiritual life of Ukrainians, as well as a subject of interreligious and even church-state relations, always highlighted with mass-media attention. The debates on the causes, consequences of functioning in society, the impact of the new religions on individual's and communities' consciousness still go on and on. The discussions on the dangers and threats that new religious movements (NRMs) bring with them are definitely among the hottest. The main accusations against the NRMs deal with their uncontrolled growth, their rapid intrusion into Ukraine's religious space, aggressive proselytism, possible use of violent methods of attracting people and unlawful psychotechnics, such as hypnosis or brain washing, their possible support by hostile intelligence services, their devastating impact on the cultural traditions, indifference or hostility to ancestors' faith, their incompatibility with Ukrainian archetypes, creating competition with traditional churches, deliberately distorting Christian teaching, unjustly synthesising different religions, and so on. In short, the idea is formed that NRMs are harmful and hostile towards traditional religions and mentality, world outlook, customs, traditions, and Ukrainian culture as a whole. Are NRMs really dangerous for Ukraine? What in these accusations is true and what is fictitious, imaginary?

Gaenssbauer, Monika – University of Erlangen-
Nuremberg, Germany
Monika.Gaenssbauer@sino.phil.uni-erlangen.de

KANG YOUWEI AND KANG XIAO GUANG: QUEST FOR CHINA'S FUTURE BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETY AND CIVIL RELIGION

Kang Youwei (1885–1927) conceived at the turn of the 20th century the idea of Confucianism getting established as China's state religion with a system of preachers (jiangdao zhe) and church-like assembly rooms (jiaotang) both modelled on Western examples. This suggestion resulted from the meeting of Chinese and Western conceptions on the nature of the state and religion at the time and the reflections of Chinese intellectuals about the fitness of their country for the future after the Western powers had defeated China and forced it to open its borders to the West. For a brief period of time Kang exerted enormous influence on the Chinese emperor. But his plans for reform got lost in the intrigues and power battles at the Imperial Court. Chinese emperors had in the past legitimised their rule with the help of Confucianism, which served within this context as a civil theology. It is quite conceivable that Kang Youwei attempted implicitly to support or to re-establish the state cult of Confucianism, i.e., the Chinese civil religion de facto extant up to the end of the 19th century; this objective was to be achieved by making use of Western religious institutional patterns. However, it is also possible that the introduction of such a Confucian state religion might have signified a step forward towards a secular state according to the Western role model, in which the two spheres of state and religion would have been clearly separated and in which religion in the final resort would have had an important role in the formation of a civil society. Kang Youwei, after all, had always been a proponent of the idea that the power of the state had to be sanctioned by the people and he also strongly supported utopian ideas of equality. Kang Xiaoguang (b. 1963), member of the Academy of Social Sciences, has now again taken up Kang Youwei's thesis against the backdrop of modern Neo-Confucianism. Kang Xiaoguang contends that “Kang Youwei's early conceptions had to be brought to fruition today.” He calls upon the Chinese state to declare Confucianism the state religion and demands Confucian places of assembly as well as Confucian social services – along the lines of Western churches. There can be no doubt that Kang Xiaoguang's hotly debated ideas stand in opposition to the present socialist system in China dominated by the Chinese Communist Party.

The party has only recognized the existence of religious communities for the foreseeable future because it could simply not ignore the strong upsurge of religious movements over the last few decades and because the massive acts of repression during the Cultural Revolution have only served to kindle renewed interest in religious topics. Kang's notions can be seen as signposts directing the Chinese society to alternative destinations. My contribution will explore the question of what precisely Kang's perception of society contains and whether it is rather cast in the mould of Western concepts of religion and democracy or if it – veiled in Western terminology – conveys ideas of an authoritarian state and proposes the re-establishment of a Confucian civil religion. And last: How far are academic thinkers like Kang in a position to influence the political and social development in China?

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Gallagher, Eugene V. – Connecticut College, USA

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

SATANISM AND SCRIPTURE: TEXTUAL STUDIES

From Anton LaVey's seminal *The Satanic Bible*, through Michael Aquino's voluminous history of the Church of Satan and ongoing documentation of his own Temple of Set, to Peter Gilmore's recent collection entitled *The Satanic Scriptures*, individual Satanists have claimed authoritative or even scriptural status for their writings through a variety of strategies. In doing so, they align themselves with the founders and prominent spokespersons of many other new religious movements who have also sought to establish their own writings as "new Bibles." Among the many examples that could be cited are Joseph Smith, Jr.'s *Book of Mormon*; Mary Baker Eddy's *Science and Health With Key to the Scriptures*; Sun Myung Moon's *Divine Principle*; Claude Vorilhon's (Raël's) *Intelligent Design: Message from the Creators*, and *The Urantia Book*. A fuller understanding of Satanists' literary productions can be gained by situating their books within that broader context of the innovative uses and readings of scripture produced by other new religious movements. Re-describing books like *The Satanic Bible* as scripture also opens them up to analysis with the now-standard tools of biblical studies, such as redaction criticism, and can yield new insights into the ways in which Satanists have constructed and disseminated their distinctive messages.

Gardiner, Mark Q – Mount Royal University

Engler, Steven – Mount Royal University

sjengler@gmail.com

SEMANTIC HOLISM AND THE INSIDER-OUTSIDER PROBLEM

Semantic holism is a prominent philosophical theory of meaning and one that has been receiving increasing interest and support among theorists of religion. This paper argues that accepting this view collapses the insider/outsider distinction. The interpretations of "insiders" and "outsiders" are constrained by the same limitations (e.g., having no privileged, private, hidden, or incommensurable understanding of their own religious experience), and they cannot generate radically different sorts of theories about religious phenomena. Semantic holism rules out claims that the beliefs of the practitioner are incommensurable with those of the scholar, that the beliefs of the practitioner are uniquely situated to reveal the meaning of religious phenomena, or that the beliefs of the practitioner are theoretically and methodologically impotent, with no role to play in the study of religion.

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Geda, Gemechu Jemal – University of Bayreuth, Germany · gemechuj@gmail.com

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, RITUAL CEREMONIES AND HEALING METHODS AT THE FARAQASA PILGRIMAGE CENTER (ETHIOPIA)

The Faraqasa pilgrimage center is situated at a place called Faraqasa in Arsi zone of the region of Oromia, 225 Kms south east of Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. It was established by a certain woman, affectionately called Ayyo Momina, in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Her early life and religious background is very controversial. During the major pilgrimages, such as the Mawlid and the anniversary of the death of Ayyo Momina, pilgrims gather from all corners of the country and all walks of life to take part in various ritual ceremonies such as singing of hymns praising Momina and Tayye and narrating the miracles they performed, reciting the Qur'an by the Darasa, praying, Arhibu (coffee ceremony), fasting, exorcising and/or harmonizing spirits with the possessed, votive offerings, burning of incense and joss sticks under big trees (adbars), chewing of khat (*Catha edulis*) Ritual ceremonies and healing are related at Faraqasa. Hence, the ritual ceremonies, on which believers take part to get rid of various earthly problems, will be discussed in relation to the following issues: 1) The power of the spiritual leaders, who are believed to have supernatural powers to solve various problems of their followers 2) Healing methods such as taking part on the various ritual ceremonies 3) Traditional medicines such as Hawza (boiled Khat leaves), Emet (ash mixed with holy water), Tsebel (Holy water) 4) The possession cult, zar:

Geertz, Armin W. – Aarhus University, Denmark
awg@teo.au.dk

RITUALIZED ECSTATIC BEHAVIOUR: ON MYSTICISM AND 'DIRECT EXPERIENCE' OF THE TRANSCENDENT WORLD

It is often claimed that ecstatic experiences offer devotees unique and privileged access to the world of the sacred. Through ascetic practices, rituals, music and dramatic dance, participants work themselves into a frenzy or reduce activity to calmness or some other emotional or mental state, followed by distinct feelings of spirit possession, ecstasy, soul flight, oneness and/or union with God or the universe. My hypothesis is that such rituals do not, in fact, offer direct or privileged access to God or the universe for two reasons. First, because the rituals employed and the traditions within which such experiences are understood, are the primary source of the meaning and interpretation of them. In other words, possession and ecstasy are socialized practices. Second, our biology and cognition offer no direct access to anything. Even though we think that we do have direct access, this is an illusion created by our brain. There are good evolutionary reasons for this, which reveal themselves to be quite remarkable achievements.

Gentz, Joachim – University of Edinburgh, UK
joachim.Gentz@ed.ac.uk

INDIGENOUS NOTIONS OF RELIGION IN CHINA AND THEIR IMPACT ON MODERN CHINESE RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Most studies on modern mainland Chinese religious policy start from two basic assumptions. First, that religion is a Western notion and has been introduced to China only in the late 19th century. Second, that religious law and religious policy in 20th century mainland China has to be understood as a reaction to this newly introduced Western notion and reflects the practice of religious law and policy known from Western cultures. Since most studies focus on post-1949 religious policy and laws, modern mainland Chinese reflection and understanding of religion is mostly analyzed in the light of Western Marxist theory. The paper will discuss and differentiate these assumptions. Looking at pre-modern notions of religion in China the paper will firstly show that a discourse on religion and a very clear notion and terminology of religion existed in China at least since the 13th century and has formed institutions for religious policy that have no parallel in the West. For this purpose the paper will refer to discursive institutions like the sanjiao debates as well as to administrative institutions like the religious affairs department in the ministry of rites. In a second step the

process of discursive negotiations between indigenous and Western models of religion and religious institutions will be discussed. The paper will show how despite the obvious Westernization of religious discourses and institutions the traditional discourse on religion in China has, in different historical stages, shaped a modern understanding of and theorizing on religion in China in different discursive frameworks.

Gilhus, Ingvald Sælid – University of Bergen
ingvild.gilhus@ahkr.uib.no

CLASSIFICATION, CONTEXTUALIZATION AND COMPARISON: 'NEW AGE' PHENOMENA AND GENERAL THEORIES OF RELIGION

The problem with the study of new religious movements and New Age has not so much been that the study has lacked a historical dimension – the construction of Western esotericism is among other things an attempt to give parts of the New Age phenomena a history. The problem is rather that this study has not been comparative and taken seriously, cf. the old Müllerian slogan, "he who knows one knows none". If the study of New Age shall contribute to comparative, generalising theories of religion, the study should be contextualized and comparative. This can imply both to contextualize New Age phenomena in their contemporary general field of religion within Western culture and to compare this field with another general field of religion, for instance within ancient culture. For this purpose I will try out three different models and comparative frameworks: Niklas Luhmann and Peter Beyer's model of sectorization, J.Z. Smith's model of Religion here, there and anywhere and a model of concentric circles (earlier used by L. Mikaelsson and myself) to try to map the various degrees of distribution and commitment to religious beliefs and practices in a society. As part of one of the two panels on 'New age phenomena and theories of religion' Organizers: Prof. Ingvald Sælid Gilhus (Bergen) and Dr. Steven Sutcliffe (Edinburgh)* * Panel 1: 'New Age' and General Theories of Religion Ingvald Gilhus (Bergen).

Gillison, Gillian – University of Toronto, Canada
gillison@trinity.utoronto.ca

THE LONG LIFE OF AN ILLUSION: CREATIONISM IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Contrary to the view prevalent within the academy that science trumps religion as explanatory paradigm, I argue that most of what passes for theory in social science, especially Claude Levi-Strauss's structuralism and its "afterologies" like poststructuralism, Derridean deconstruction, Lacanian psychoanalysis and much else that falls under the heading of "the linguistic analogy" or "the linguistic turn," are disguised ideologies that reflect anxieties of post-War European intellectuals rather than pan-human traits of language or culture. As explanatory constructs, these "afterologies" tend to have more in common with Biblical creationism than anything connected with Charles Darwin's theory of evolution.

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Glasbrenner, Eva – University of Munich, Germany
evaglasbrenner@yahoo.ca

AESTHETICS OF RELIGION AS A METHOD OF RESEARCH OF JAINA RITUAL, EXEMPLIFIED BY MAHAMASTAKABHISHEKA

Ritual "Religionsästhetik" or "Religionsaesthetik" is the German term for a new development within the study of religion that has slowly been evolving during the last decade in German discourses of studies of religion. This aesthetics of religion has already gained popularity and is now reaching out to neighbouring disciplines such as Indology or Anthropology – but so far it seems to be a purely German phenomenon. Aesthetics of religion, as the study of religious phenomena under the aspect of their sensory perception, is to be differentiated from the term esthetics of religion, that customarily refers only to the artistically esthetic perspective. By presenting this paper to a wider international audience I wish to share some results of my field work in South India using this new theory, and to thereby show how the new research discipline of aesthetics of religion can have a new impact on Indian ritual studies by means of its focussing on perceptive categories (such as visual and acoustic perception, olfactory components and haptic components). As an example for applying this theory on India studies, I chose the analysis of a famous Jaina temple ritual, the Mahamastakabhisheka, for two reasons: ritual generally is a rather neglected aspect of Jainism within Jaina studies, but a highly interesting one, combining pan-Indian elements with such that are particular to Jainism. Secondly, the Digambara Mahamastakabhisheka, a large-scale anointing ritual, is particularly suited for showing the advantages of a religiously aesthetic research perspective.

Glavac, Monika – University of Zurich, Switzerland
Mglavac@access.uzh.ch

THE REPRESENTATION OF "THE OTHER" IN CARICATURES – EXAMPLES FROM THE EUROPEAN HISTORY OF RELIGION

The representation of Muslims as "the other" in European caricatures has attracted renewed interest since the controversial publication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad in September 2005, in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten. Since the origin of caricature in 17th century Italy, examples can be found that depict elements of the Islamic tradition as "the other". This presentation will begin by exploring the characteristics and strategies of caricature and its relationship with religion. Integral questions will be raised within this analysis, notably 'What is permissible to be represented?' and 'What are the limits of representation?'. The aim of this paper is to contribute to broader discussions on the relationship between religion, caricature and conflict. In the second part of the presentation, the representation of Muslims will be exemplified and analysed by focusing on two caricatures from two alternative periods and places.

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Godlove, Terry – Hofstra University

MEANING, INTERPRETATION AND TRUTH IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

I distinguish between a theory of meaning and a theory of interpretation, and argue that they bear differently on the study of religion. A theory of meaning aims at a regimentation of such basic terms as truth and reference. A theory of interpretation assumes this regimentation and displays the principles on which we rely in understanding one another's actions, including speech-actions. As to the first, students of religion are natural verificationists; they are trained to pay attention to the actual procedures people attach to what they're saying. As to the second, but only as to second, we are all Davidsonians; the necessity of charity and of holism take all the fun out of seeing religions as alternative conceptual schemes. But truth-conditions are nowhere to be found.

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Golestaneh, Seema – Columbia University, USA
sg2166@columbia.edu

MYSTIC MODERNS: SUFI POETRY GROUPS AND THE DISCOURSE OF MODERNITY IN POST-REVOLUTIONARY IRAN

This paper investigates the unique role of Sufism within Iranian modernity, with a particular focus given to the role of poetry reading groups of various Nimatullahi Sufi Orders.

Since the Islamic Revolution, there has been a significant rise in the practice of Sufism, or Islamic mysticism, within Iran. As such, what emerges is a compelling paradox: on the one hand, Iranians are increasingly moving toward a less socially-oriented, more esoteric, some might say “apolitical” or “asocial” form of Islam, but it is this very move that, within the context of the Islamic Republic, in and of itself possesses vast socio-political repercussions. Based on ongoing fieldwork began in 2008, my paper will subsequently focus upon one of the most fundamental aspects of Islamic mysticism: the study, recitation, and composition of mystical poetry (erfan) by Nimatullahi Sufi orders (tariqa) in the cities of Tehran, Esfahan, and Kerman. More informal than Friday prayer sessions, sheikh-led Qur’anic exegesis, or zikr rituals, these sessions provide valuable insight into the important role of personal interpretation of texts within Sufism, which stands in contrast to more standardized Usuli practice. Ultimately, considering the specific socio-political context that Iranian mysticism arises from, the experience of erfan offers not a neutral form of mystical or otherwise passive disengagement with the world, but a type of critical practice, one that simultaneously engages both the personal and the social realms as well as the metaphysical. Indeed, as the point of convergence between religion, literature, and identity, Sufi poetry groups offer a unique entry point into current manifestations of Iranian modernity.

González Torres, Yolotl – Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico

THE CRISIS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MEXICO
gtorres yolotl@yahoo.com.mx

By the decade of the 1950’s, 98% of Mexican population were Catholics. By 2000 it had decreased to 88 %, and in some areas, 40% of the population are non Catholics, mainly Protestants and para-protestants (this year’s new census will give us many surprises, so much so, that the Catholic hierarchy will try to boycott the census)

The decrease of Catholics has obviously worried the Church, who decided to take some measures, one of them was the beatification and canonization of Mexicans: it was since 1862 that Felipe de Jesus, the last and only one was canonized.

Pope John Paul II openly declared his personal devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe and started the proceedings for the beatification and canonization of several Mexicans. Many of these candidates were quite controversial, among them were the ones who had suffered ‘martyrdom’: two Indian children from Tlaxcala, two Indian men from Oaxaca and seven “Cristeros” martyrs; but the most controversial was Juan

Diego, the poor Indian to whom the Virgin of Guadalupe was supposed to have appeared. To all historians, including several Catholic priests, there is no proof that this personage ever existed. Therefore to make a Saint of someone of whose existence there is no proof, shows very little credibility in the proceedings of the Church.

The real crisis came when the Church acknowledged the perverted behavior of Marcial Maciel, founder and director of the Congregation of the Legion of Christ and Regnum Christi, and the protection that Pope John Paul II gave to Maciel is even questioning the possibility of the last’s candidature to beatification.

Graf, Tim – University of Heidelberg, Germany
tim.graf@zegk.uni-heidelberg.de

THE TRANSFER AND TRANSFORMATION OF
‘RITUAL SITTING’ (ZAZEN) IN JAPAN AND THE
WEST

“Ritual sitting” (zazen), which in modern transcultural conception is often referred to as “meditation”, plays a crucial role for self-understanding and spiritual awakening, especially in Sōtō Zen Buddhism. Surprisingly, the places where priests in Japan actually conduct zazen are relatively few in number. Most priests in Japan stop practicing zazen once they finish their priestly education and start taking over a danka (“parishioner”)-temple. Traditional sites of ritual sitting, by contrast, rather function as sectarian training centers and prayer monasteries (kitō jiin) that stand out from the majority of Zen-Buddhist temples not only in matters of practice and temple-economy, but also in size, popularity, and visitor frequency.

At Japanese kitō-monasteries, the aesthetics of zazen supports the habitual distinction between priests and lay persons, while ritual-participants seem to regard zazen as an obligatory practice that, among other things, allows priests to empower their temple, kitō-rituals and material offerings. The Zen Buddhist practice of kitō, on the other hand, responds with common characteristics of Japanese religions, namely the striving for this-worldly benefits. Ritual sitting and kitō thus complement one another. The religious practitioners seem to perceive Zen-Buddhist prayer temples as prestigious places of power, where monks, not least due to the practice of zazen, mediate simultaneously between the Buddha dharma, the power of local gods, and the wishes and expectations of adherents and visitors of the temple.

In this presentation I will first highlight the disposition of ritual sitting as found in Japanese prayer temples.

Zazen is thereby understood as interactive and complementary to differing ritual complexes that reflect and shape a variety of religious, political, and economical realities. The focus then turns to zazen in the “West”. We here see that zazen practice closely resembles its Japanese counterparts. The transregional flow of zazen to the West did not lead to transformations in its performance. However, ascriptions to zazen in the West indicate major modifications regarding its semantic, pragmatic, and functional dimensions. Lay Buddhist practitioners and religious specialists seem to perceive ritual sitting as a matter of stress reduction, personal well-being, coping, consciousness-alteration and spiritual self-care.

The final part of this presentation will address questions related to the impact of respective transformations on temples and sectarian research centers in Japan. The democratization of zazen, effects of modern transcultural Zen on the priestly education, and scholarly discourses on Buddhism, as shall be argued, are of considerable importance for the study of zazen as an integral yet diverging part of Sōtō Zen Buddhism in a society characterized by ongoing religious pluralism and demographic change.

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Granholm, Kennet – Stockholm University, Sweden
 kennet.granholm@rel.su.se

THE WEST-NON-WEST DYNAMIC IN WESTERN ESOTERICISM

“The West” and self-identities as “Westerners” are often defined in relation to that which is conceived of as non-Western. While the standard has been negative representations of the non-Western, esotericists have tended to adopt romanticizing and positive stances instead. In short, the “perennial wisdom” has often been conceived as something which resides in the far-away either in location – such as the “mystical” Persia, Egypt, India, and even alien worlds – and/or time – such as the pre-Christian cultures of Europe. This, coupled with the fact that it is nigh impossible to demarcate “the West” in any definite way, suggests that issues of “Western and non-Western” are best approached as internal categorizations within esoteric discourse itself – central in the construction of esoteric self-identities. Furthermore, in an increasingly globalizing world essentialising distinctions between “West” and “non-West” are difficult – not to mention problematic – to sustain. Instead, an approach where the focus is on localities and their transnational connections and influences on each other is more fruitful. In this theoretically focused paper I will discuss the nature of “the Western and non-Western” as internal, and conjoined, categories within European esotericism.

I will outline a possible approach through which complex cultural influences can more effectively be explored, by the combination of contemporary sociological theory and historical awareness.

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Granholm, Kennet – Stockholm University, Sweden
 kennet.granholm@rel.su.se

WESTERN ESOTERIC CURRENTS: A DISCOURSE ANALYTICAL APPROACH

Discursive approaches are becoming increasingly popular in the study of complex social and cultural phenomena such as religion. Kocku von Stuckrad has underlined the benefits of studying religion as communication and has presented a discursive take on the study of esotericism, describing the esoteric “element of discourse” consisting of “claims to ‘real’ or absolute knowledge and the means of making this knowledge available”. However, as with most appropriations of the concept of discourse, von Stuckrad’s approach is highly abstract. More grounded, particularly discourse analytical, approaches are called for. In the proposed paper I present a discourse analytical perspective on so called esoteric currents. As described by Antoine Faivre, currents denote “movements, schools, or traditions”. While Faivre’s approach is problematic, the notion of currents is useful when approached as “discursive complexes” within the field of esoteric discourse itself. Additionally, discourse analysis is the ideal instrument for researching these complexes, and their interaction. In this paper concrete examples will be provided from currents such as the Left-Hand Path, Neo-paganism, and the New Age.

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Grieser, Alexandra – University of Groningen, The Netherlands · A.K.Grieser@rug.nl
 Alexandra.Grieser@lrz.uni-muenchen.de

AESTHETICS BETWEEN COGNITION AND CULTURE: A BRIDGING CONCEPT FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION

Currently it is still in question, which place an emerging “aesthetics of religion” will take up within the study of religion. More a perspective of research than a specific method the aesthetic approach brings together reactions to desiderata and criticism in the humanities of the last decades. Integrating the body and the senses into our understanding of religion, considering the importance of all the senses and media, looking anew on long known objects – these few points show that the aesthetic perspective reaches out for an innovative terminology and tries to answer to methodological challenges, e.g., how to create, document and interpret data like sounds, smells, and dances.

Connected to its “internal plurality” the aesthetic perspective involves another aspect, situated within the debate about new organizational forms of scientific work. The tension between highly specialized research and the need for its coordination calls for integrative models and concepts. This is especially true for religion as a vastly complex and multifaceted field of research. Supported by a terminology of perspectivity, framed interconnectedness, and a “rhetoric of the senses”, the aesthetics of religion-project shows the potential to be such a bridging concept. It is the double meaning of aesthetics – sensual perception as well as theories of the artificial, beauty, and the sublime – which inherits the chance to describe the versatile processes between cognitive procedures and culturally shaped patterns of interpretation. The concept of aesthetics may help to overcome competing either/or-positions and can lead to a more thorough inquiry of how “cognition” and “culture” interact. The possible answers may not just concern our knowledge about religion, but also the ability to profit from different cultures of academic knowledge in a complementary way.

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Griffith, Alison – University of Canterbury, New Zealand · Alison.griffith@canterbury.ac.nz

DEAD RELIGION, LIVE MINDS: MEMORY AND RECALL OF THE MITHRAIC BULL-SLAYING SCENE

Scholars who have appraised the Roman Mysteries of Mithras according to Harvey Whitehouse’s theory of modes of religiosity agree that it displays both doctrinal and imagistic characteristics and that its transmission relied on the activation of semantic *and* episodic memory. (Beck 2004, 2006; Martin 2004) Knowledge about Mithras and the cult was apprehended visually and reinforced by ritual performance and a complex “symbol system” that was conveyed by cult iconography, environment, and structural organization. Thus Mithraic “doctrine” consisted of the collective comprehension of this symbol system as a result of cognitive processes in the minds of its followers and was not promulgated by a central authority. (Beck 2006)

The survival of numerous copies of the cult icon – an image of the god Mithras sacrificing a bull – offer historians of religion a way to test what ancient initiates might have recognized and how much they later recalled after they first viewed this icon. This paper will discuss the results of experiments that test this hypothesis: subjects presented with an unfamiliar religious icon will recall it more accurately when it is accompanied by a description that relates the elements of this icon to constellations (a concept with which they are already familiar) than subjects who view the image accompanied by a narrative explanation of its elements, or who view the image with no explanation whatsoever.

These experiments will contribute to the cognitive science of religion data about memory and recall of visual images using an actual ancient religious artefact rather than narratives or word lists devised specifically for the experiment.

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Grondin, Jean – See Plenary Presentations, p7

Grünhagen, Céline – University of Bonn, USA
 c.gruenhagen@uni-bonn.de

SEX AND GENDER TROUBLE IN THERAVADA BUDDHISM – THE COMPLEXITY OF TRANSLATION AND TRANSMISSION

My current research regarding my doctoral thesis lies in the thematic scope of Gender and Religion and focuses on gender relations and sexuality in cultural comparison. In my approach I intend to point out the impact of religious or spiritual perceptions and worldviews on the development of norms and values by illustrating and critically contrasting sexuality and gender in the context of Theravada Buddhism with the “Western” view that has been considerably influenced by Abrahamic religious values. In my paper I will present my approach and expose major methodological difficulties regarding the translation and transmission of Western sexological categories, terminologies and their connotations – which are based on religiously justified principles themselves. For example, categories like “eunuch” and “transsexual”, or the concept of homosexuality that have evolved from a western sexological discourse are dependent on the pervasive binary system of sexuality and gender, which again is legitimized by the Abrahamic myths of creation. Thus (as a “Western” scholar) I am confronted with the problem of successfully describing a foreign culture or phenomenon – in this case associated with Theravada Buddhism – by inevitably applying my own culturally inherent perceptions, ideas and categories, and challenging these at the same time to prevent inaccuracies and misconstructions.

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Gubbay Helfner, Sharon – University of Montreal, Canada · Sharon.gubbay@helfner.ca

Shahram, Nahidi – University of Montreal, Canada TEACHING TEACHERS OF QUÉBEC’S NEW ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS CULTURE CURRICULUM

In September of 2008 a new “Ethics and Religious Culture” curriculum was launched in Québec’s public schools. Designed to support “vivre ensemble” or positive community life, the curriculum responds to ongoing demographic and social changes that have transformed the religious landscape of Québec.

At the Université de Montréal, training for teachers of the new curriculum is being offered by the education faculty in collaboration with the faculty of theology and religious sciences. This paper presents the experience of two instructors whose courses "Introduction to Islam" and "Introduction to Judaism" are both compulsory for teachers-in-training in the new curriculum. Among the issues raised are conflicting demands between the two sponsoring faculties and the effects on these two particular courses of popular perceptions in Québec of Islam, Judaism, Israel and Palestine.

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Guittard, Charles – Université Paris, France

DES HOMMES ET DES DIEUX: L'HUMAIN DANS LA RELIGION ROMAINE

Les conceptions religieuses des Romains sont fondées sur l'anthropomorphisme. Le polythéisme romain a donné aux dieux un visage humain. Toutefois, dans le vocabulaire, l'humain s'oppose parfois au divin. De plus la religion romaine s'est ouverte à un certain nombre d'abstractions divinisées, de notions abstraites, morales ou philosophiques, honorées et reconnues comme des divinités à part entière. Les oeuvres philosophiques de Cicéron, en particulier le Traité "De natura deorum" permettent une approche de ces réflexions sur le phénomène religieux.

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Guignard, Florence Pasche – see Pasche Guignard, Florence

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Gullin, Britta – Religious Studies Umeå University, Sweden
 britta.gullin@religion.umu.se

ONE FUTURE – FOUR PICTURES

Most religions and religious movements express or imply a construction of time. In the context the construction of time embody sacred values and essential ideas and these interact with various cultural, historical and social aspects in a complex process. Ideas about a close or distant better future, in different ways related to past and present, often contribute to the construction of time. In the so-called millenarian movements these ideas are especially outspoken. Some core values, i.e freedom, peace and harmony, are to some extent universal in these kind of movements but the ideas are expressed differently according to the cultural environment. Freedoms from what or for whom as well as the particular character of peace and harmony are described in myths as well as in other oral or written material and expressed in rituals. Differences as well as similarities should be discernable and promote a better understanding for ideas related to the concept better future (the millenarian idea) in general as well as in the particular.

But comparison in the study of religion has lately been very controversial. I will give a brief outline of the critic concerning comparison; different perspectives will be illuminated but I will also discuss the possibilities and the advantage of comparing different religious phenomenon i.e core ideas related to millenarian movements. The issue will be elucidated by examples from four different cultural contexts: christian/western, South African, Japanese and Maori culture in New Zealand.

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Gumo Kurgat, Sussy – Maseno University, Kenya
 suguku@yahoo.com

EXERCISING AFRICAN SPIRITUALITY IN THE ENVIRONMENT: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

United Nations Environmental Programme calls towards involvement of African religionists into the exploration for sustainable natural resource utilization. This paper is set to investigate African Spirituality in the environment from a Kenyan context. Specifically, the paper examines African world view, determines how African spirituality was exercised through the environment, examines African ways of regulating the use of the environment, and explores challenges facing African spirituality and ecology today. The study will be guided by the functional theory of social sciences propounded by Emile Durkheim among others who claim that all aspects of a society serve a purpose, and they are indispensable for the long term survival of the society. The paper reveals that African Spirituality is enhanced through the environment where man worshipped and venerated anything under the earth, on earth, between the earth and heavens and in the heavens above. Consequently, various methods to restrict the utilization of certain natural resources are employed as a way of conserving the environment. Results further show that African spirituality and ecology are currently facing a number of challenges in regard to environmental conservation. It is therefore, recommended that environmental diversity should be conserved through sustainable development where every person from grassroots level is involved in protecting and maintaining God's creation. The paper concludes that African knowledge and believes systems on environmental sustainability can be revitalized and used in environmental conservation.

Key words: Ecology, Environment, African Spirituality, African World View, environmental conservation and sustainability.

Guo, Ting – University of Edinburgh, UK
t.guo@sms.ed.ac.uk

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND SPIRITUALITY:
RECONSIDER SPIRITUALITY, TECHNOSCIENCE,
AND THE MODERN WORLD**

My paper will investigate the emergence of AI research as a distinctive phenomenon of spirituality, in particular the evident reliance of 1st generation AI scientists on concepts of belief and transcendental, spiritual concepts of being. Although AI scientists and theorists quite often overtly disavow the spiritual element of this configuration, this element is nonetheless evident in both the justifications and meanings ascribed to AI research and in the operational technologies. In this sense, all of the above mentioned elements converge in the work (technical and conceptual) of AI scientists, suggesting a type of spiritual culture in the modern world. In sum, a critical analysis of AI from this perspective will offer a novel way to value modern practice and phenomenon and provide a unique perspective on broader research values in religious studies. I wish also to retain the more specific orientation regarding spirituality and modernity evident in the work of religious studies scholars; therefore the intended outcome of my own research would be to contribute both concrete empirical data and a critical analysis of this data that illuminates the persistence and diversity of religious experience in the present. Thus, by simultaneously contributing to a better understanding of how the study of emergent spiritualities and religious movements cannot be limited to secularized categories, frameworks, and taxonomies that would posit humanistic science as a domain entirely distinct from the religious, I am seeking to provide some illumination as to the nature of spirituality in contemporary society.

Guthrie, R. Dale – See *Plenary Presentations*, p6

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Guzy, Lidia – Freie Universitaet Berlin (FU Berlin),
Germany · lidiaguzy@gmx.net

**ETHNOGRAPHY OF RELIGION AND MUSIC. A CASE
STUDY FROM WESTERN ORISSA (INDIA)**

The paper investigates the characteristics of music as medium of social, religious and political messages. The music of the ganda baja village orchestras played by marginalised musicians represents local notions of the utterances of different goddesses in the Bora Sambar region of western Orissa. This ritual music is intrinsically linked to goddess embodiment and trance mediums. At the same time, ganda baja is deeply interrelated with the socio-cultural hierarchy of the caste system and with recent political transformation processes. The paper aims at analysing music as a crucial cultural medium of ritual and mass communication mediating sacred and social, individual and collective change and creativity.

Haack, Susan – See *Plenary Presentations*, p7

Ha, Do Thu – Vietnam National University, Vietnam
dothua61@yahoo.ca

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

THEN: RELIGIOUS PERFORMANCE OF THAI ETHNIC GROUP IN VIETNAM

Then is a type of religious performances conducted by Tay, Nung and Thai ethnic groups in Vietnam. It is considered to be religious epic dealing with the performance and renarration of the journeys to Heaven in order to ask Gods for solving some misfortunes for the performance holders. The epics performed in Then often contain many chapters, paragraphs with different sizes, details and plots. The longest epic collected by Vietnamese researchers up to now includes 4, 949 couplets and 35 chapters. Then is a synthetic performance which include singing, music, and dancing. It is performed at many different situations and ceremonies. Then covers also the spiritual aims of Then performing(*Cung Then*) (praying for good luck, curing diseases, entertainment...), folk games or festive ceremonies combined with (dancing in fire, lovers-finding, sword fighting...), distinctive values (arts, cuisine, literature, religious beliefs...) and great influences on other ethnic groups (Viet, Muong, H' Mong, etc.).

Hagedorn, Katherine – Pomona College, USA
khagedorn@pomona.edu

TOWARD A THEOLOGY OF SOUND IN AFRO-CUBAN REGLA DE OCHA: SONIC PORTRAITS OF THE ORICHAS

This presentation explores the idea of a “theology of sound” within the Afro-Cuban religion of Regla de Ocha, more commonly known as Santería. In the performance of Regla de Ocha, particular rhythms, sung prayers and invocations, and dance movements evoke specific deities, or orichas. My research considers how these performative elements convey theological knowledge, in primarily non-semantic ways, through what I am calling “reinforced utterances.” For certain orichas, these simultaneous “utterances” – praise songs, percussed sound, danced gesture, and a rhythmic superstructure (the *clave*) – combine to convey their theological essence. I am particularly interested in why prayers and other evocations of divine entities must be “sounded” through the body – in this religious tradition, even certain danced gestures imply sound (an anvil hitting a forge, for example).

Unlike some other religious traditions, in which divine evocations can be imagined, thought, or silently processed, Regla de Ocha requires these attempts at divine communication to be produced out loud, as embodied, sonically palpable enactments. To explore this idea I will concentrate primarily on Babalú-Ayé, oricha of smallpox and healing, whose combined drum rhythms, songs, and dance gestures provide a compelling example of embodied theological knowledge.

Hakamada, Rei – The University of Tokyo, Japan
aaaahkmd@hotmail.com

PHILOKALIA AND THE ‘HESYCHAST RENAISSANCE’ IN THE 18–19TH CENTURY GREECE

Philokalia is an anthology containing the writings of monks and priests who lived in the world of Eastern Christianity (especially in the Byzantine monastic world) at the periods of 4th to 15th century. This book is said to be embodying the spirituality of Eastern Christian monasticism and it has been translated into many languages not only those belonging to the Orthodox sphere (such as Russian and Rumanian), but also into English, French, Italian, German and even into Japanese. In this presentation, I will focus on the historical background of the compilation and the publication of *Philokalia*. Under the rule of Ottoman Empire, this book was compiled by St Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St Makarios of Corinth in 1782. What made them compile and publish *Philokalia*? Was there really, so to speak, a ‘Hesychast Renaissance’ at that time? Answering these questions, I will examine the texts of St Nikodimos and observe the relationship between the ‘kollyvades’ group and him (or, the ‘Hesychasm Renaissance’). Through this process, it will become clear that *Philokalia*, which is said to be ‘extremely Orthodox’ book, has also to do with the contact between the Latin Church along with the Western Enlightenment and the Orthodox Church.

Hanegraaff, Wouter J. – University of Amsterdam,
The Netherlands

PLATONIC ORIENTALISM AND WESTERN ESOTERICISM

In this paper it will be argued that the adjective “Western” is essential to what the field of Western esotericism is all about. While the historical sources of Western esotericism can be traced back to (late) antiquity, its conceptualization as a religious field or tradition with an identity of its own began with the Renaissance.

It is based, to a much larger extent than usually realized, upon the historiographical models developed by the early Christian apologists (Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius et alii) in their attempts to defend the legitimacy of Christianity against pagan intellectuals, but proved useful for Renaissance intellectuals to defend the legitimacy of paganism in a Christian context. Frances Yates' concept of "The Hermetic Tradition" is misleading in this context, for in their attempts to defend the value of the "ancient wisdom" of the pagans, authors like Gemistos Plethon, Marsilio Ficino, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola or Agostino Steuco did not just focus on Hermes, but saw him as only one of the great sages of antiquity, next to competitors such as (notably) Zoroaster and Moses. A much better term is "Platonic Orientalism", for the essential thesis defended by these authors was that Plato was neither a rationalist philosopher nor an original thinker, but the inheritor of an ancient tradition of spiritual wisdom that had originated in the Orient: that is to say, not among the Greeks but among the Persians, the Egyptians, or the Hebrews. Like Edward Said's Orientalism, "Platonic Orientalism" is not a historical reality but an imaginal construct developed by Western thinkers as part of a discourse of identity and difference, and even after the Renaissance (up to the present), it remained central to the development of Western esotericism to a much greater extent than is usually appreciated. How sensitive it remains for Western academics who see Greece as the cradle of Western civilization is demonstrated, for example, by the controversies over Bernal's Black Athena.

Harris, Jennifer D. – School of Oriental and African Studies, UK

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

IN GOD'S IMAGE? RE-NEGOTIATING IDENTITY IN THE ART OF POST-DIASPORIC RELIGIOUS MINORITY COMMUNITIES

Based on the evidence examined in this paper, it seems likely that the dynamics of religion and identity evolve in a post-immigration setting in generations that follow the initial immigration. I further suggest that this evolution of faith and identity is developed and expressed in the art of such communities. Hence, the migrant and post-migratory experiences would be reflected in the expressions of faith-related art. This paper undertakes to explore this hypothesis by examining several examples of faith-related art in second- and third- generation post-diasporic, minority Muslim communities in the United Kingdom. The artists selected are examples of individuals from immigrant groups whose religion was a majority in the

sending country but is a minority in the receiving country, which itself is host to significant immigrant populations and their descendant generations. While several key authors have previously considered the identity dynamics of diaspora communities, religion, and immigrants themselves, this paper will consider the shifts that occur in, and are expressed by, post-diasporic generations in their art.

Harwazinski, Assia Maria – Independent Scholar, Germany

POPULAR RELIGIOSITY IN SOUTHERN ITALY: THE VISUAL ARCHIVE OF DOCUMENTARIST LUIGI DI GIANNI, NAPLES/BARI

Italy is mostly known as a country of touristic dreams, while the Southern parts, especially rural areas, remain mostly unknown. Since about 10–15 years, Southern regions like Basilicata, Puglia, Calabria and Sicily gain more attention. Nevertheless, popular religion and traditions remain mostly unknown and undiscovered (the tourist looks at architectural wonders, not so much at behaviour and traditions of the people). Luigi di Gianni, a documentary producer of Naples, held the chair of Visual Anthropology in Bari, Puglia, teaching on unknown traditions of his native country. Influenced by Ernesto de Martino and the School of Italian Neo-Realism, he used his knowledge to produce amazing documentaries of popular religious cults and rites of Southern Italy, hardly ever finding their way into cinemas or intellectual institutions. Thanks to Thomas Hauschild, an anthropologist/ethnologist now holding a chair in Halle/East Germany, di Gianni first presented some of his works to a greater audience in Tuebingen during a film-festival in the early nineties. He came to Tuebingen again in the year 2006 to present elder and new works, celebrating his 80th birthday by receiving a "doctor honoris causa" and founding the "Luigi di Gianni Archives" at the University, being a greater gift to this institution than the other way round. This lecture aims at an overview-presentation of di Gianni's works.

Harwazinski, Assia Maria – Independent Scholar, Germany

HOLY WAR IN ISLAM – AGGRESSION AND MEDITATION

The "Kitab as-siyar" by Abu Ishaq al-Fazari is an old Arabic text edited by Faruq Hamada, Morocco, on the basis of a manuscript. It belongs to the category of "siyar"-literature and is one of the sources of early Islamic legal practices which have been transported to Islamic Spain, Al-Andalus, via North Africa.

It represents old Islamic law schools of Iraqi and Syrian origin, still reflecting the situation of active warfare, combining the tradition of the Prophet with local regional traditions and the day-to-day-necessities of military life. But the text also reflects the beginning of transference into legal theory, so to say: The Making of a School (of war-law). The chapter of "The Booty-Shares of the Horses" is the largest one of the book and shows the important role of the horses at the time and situation in focus in many respects, especially their military, technological and philosophical importance for the change of ideology of "jihad" and the nascent differentiation between "lesser" and "greater jihad". The focus of the research done so far lies in my key-interest in the transformation of ideology changing from war to peace due to ongoing boredom caused by lack of aggressive military activities. This boredom of the muslim warriors results in the development of stable frontiers limiting the expansion of Islam and forces them to cope with the situation by changing the original meaning of "jihad" into two different interpretations: "lesser" and "greater jihad".

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Hasan, Mahmudul – University of Rashahi, India

CHANGE OF RELIGION AND ITS REFLECTION ON THE DEMOGRAPHIC BEHAVIOUR OF THE SANTALS IN BANGLADESH

There are about four dozens of small ethnic group living in Bangladesh today. The Santal is one of them. They are living in Bangladesh for about hundred years. The life style of this people was almost traditional until the few decades ago. But the changes in life style of the Santals are getting clear to clearer since the last quarter of a century. In fact, they are animist. The Christian missionary has entered and exerting influence on them taking the opportunity of their isolation and poverty. As a result, more than half of the Santals have been converted to Christianity in place of their ancestral beliefs. The process of conversion is still continuing. The change of religion is not limited to conversion only. Its influences are reflected in all sphere of societal life. For example, the size of the family has been limited or they are becoming interested in the control of their fertility. Field study shows that many capable Santal couples are presently using different methods of birth control. It indicates that the size of the family is becoming smaller day by day. But those who did not change their ancestral beliefs are not been showing such trend. Therefore, the change of religion is constantly influencing them to change their demographic behaviour too. The present paper is written based on the information directly collected from the field – the Santals settlements in Bangladesh .

Hasegawa, Shuichi – Tel Aviv University, Japan

A TERRACOTTA MASK FROM TEL REKHESH – A "MISSING LINK" BETWEEN THE CANAANITE AND CYPRIOT-PHOENICIAN M

The excavations at Tel Rekhes in the eastern Lower Galilee have unearthed a terracotta mask, a typical cult object on Cyprus and in Phoenicia in the late second and the early first millennia BCE. This study aims at locating the mask from Tel Rekhes in the course of development of the terracotta masks in the Eastern Mediterranean region from the late second millennium to the early first millennium BCE. The date of the mask and its typological similarity with the Early Iron Age Cypriot-Phoenician "heroic masks" suggest that the type of the mask, in contrast to the previously suggested view, does not have to be regarded as originating in the Cypriot prototype. The mask from Tel Rekhes might be one of the earliest examples of the type discovered outside Cyprus, which could be viewed as a "missing link" between the Late Bronze Age Canaanite and the Early Iron Age Cypriot-Phoenician "heroic masks". It also indicates the close connection between Cyprus, Phoenicia, and the Galilee region already in the late second millennium BCE, not only in the commercial but also in the religious aspect.

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Hashimoto, Tetsuo – Suchiin College, Japan

Hasimoto@sjuchiin.ac.jp

SUFFERING AND SICKNESS

In our ordinary lives 'sickness', 'illness' and 'disease' are the causes of 'pain' or 'misery'. But in almost all of the major verses inof Buddhists' Canon, 'sickness', 'illness' and 'disease' are not said to be the causes of 'pain' or 'misery'. Vyādhi as a disease is said to be the cause of dukkhita, 'to be painful'. When vyādhi is said to be the cause of dukkhita, 'to be painful', the mechanism is this: vyādhi is a disease which is easily 'stigmatized'. Roga is a punishment from Brahmins. Punishments make persons painful. When vyādhi is said or thought to be one of rogas, vyādhi makes persons painful, that is, vyādhi becomes the cause of dukkhita. In short, vyādhi makes patients painful because it is one of rogas, punishments. The direct cause of dukkhita is not a vyādhi but a roga.

In the field of sickness, the meaning of dukkhita is not the same as that of dukkha. Dukkha is a feeling and means 'to be painful' made by vyādhi as a roga. Dukkha is 'a temporal condition based on an individual's practices'. Although dukkhita arise from roga, dukkha does not arise from roga.

There are close similarities between dukkha and roga except for the way of their arising and extinction.

The most important difference is that dukkha is not a punishment, though roga is.

One verse indicates that hunger is to roga what saṃ khāra, 'temporality' is to dukkha. When hunger is said to be roga, hunger should be given an implication from roga which 'hungry' didn't have before. It is a 'punishment', which makes persons painful. What is a new implication should saṃkhāra be given, when saṃ khāra is said to be dukkha? It is 'the condition based on an individual's practices'. It means that any sickness or disease is temporal and to be cured by our own conducts in this life. When vyādhi is said to be a roga, it causes 'to be painful'. Otherwise, when vyādhi is said to be a dukkha, it does not cause 'to be painful' but becomes a token of hope that any sickness or disease is temporal and should be cured by our own conducts in this life.

Dukkha is a token of hope in the field of sickness.

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Hayashi, Makoto – Aichigakuin University, Japan
BYC01450@nifty.com

RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN JAPAN: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Putting aside the definition of Religious Studies, a practical way to trace the history of the field is from the viewpoint of the institution of modern university. For the history of Religious Studies in modern Japan, I propose three periods, which might also be valid for writing the histories of other academic disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. The first period is from the establishment of the first department of Religious Studies in Japan at Tokyo University in 1905, to the end of World War I in 1918. During this period, Religious Studies departed from Buddhist Studies, a field with which it was closely related from the beginning. In the second period, between 1918 and the end of World War II, scholars in the field of Religious Studies contributed to the Japanese imperialist expansion in Asia. During this period, Durkheim's theory of religion was widely popular among scholars and not a few representative scholars of Religious Studies came to be specialized in Ethnology of Religion and went to survey in Asia. The third period begins with the Japanese defeat in the Second World War, after which Japanese academia (including the field of Religious Studies) changes orientation from Europe to the United States. Since new American style disciplines such as Sociology, Psychology and Anthropology started to be imported widely, Sociology of Religion and Anthropology of Religion became leading fields in Religious Studies in Japan. [panel: Comparative Perspective on the Development of 'Religious Studies': Turkey, Brazil and Japan]

Hayashi, Makoto – Aichigakuin University, Japan
BYC01450@nifty.com

SHADOWS OF MAX MÜLLER

Although Max Müller is widely known in present-day Japan as a founder of Religious Studies, scholars of religion contemporary with Müller over a hundred years ago did not pay enough attention to his work. As an academic field in Japan Religious Studies has been separated from Buddhology from the beginning; Müller was originally introduced as a leading Western scholar of Buddhism but not of Religious Studies. It does not mean that his influence was limited. On the contrary, Müller's impact was wide and deep among Buddhist intellectuals in late nineteenth century Japan due to his view that Mahayana Buddhism was not the real teaching of Buddha. I would like to introduce the activities of three persons who received definite influences from Müller's Buddhology. Firstly, M.L. Gordon, an American Protestant missionary who had engaged himself in missionary Christianity to Japan in the 1880s, was the first man to address the works of Müller. Gordon utilized Müller's argument to show that Japanese Buddhism was false. Secondly, Bun'yu Nanjo, who had been a cleric of True Pure Land Buddhism, visited Müller at Oxford University to learn Sanskrit for sutra studies. Although he respected Müller's work sincerely, Nanjo did not maintain a standpoint subordinate to Müller's. Thirdly, Sensho Murakami promoted the view that Mahayana Buddhism was not the teaching of Buddha and created an original idea that Mahayana Buddhism including Japanese Buddhism had a different value from original Buddhism. Ironically Müller's severe judgment of Mahayana Buddhism contributed to bringing about a high evaluation of Mahayana in Japan. [panel: The cultural contact zones of modern Buddhism]

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Hayes, Leslie – University of Toronto, Canada

CROSSING THE LINE: ANCIENT CHRISTIAN WOMEN

By virtue of their profession, historians travel many roads which take them across a number of ideological, theoretical, and cultural borders before they ever reach their chronological destinations. But if the historian of women and early Christianity must cross a number of borders to reach her subject, so must her historical subjects make those same crossings in the other direction. These borders are in fact intersections between academic methods and larger, culturally determined epistemological discourses that govern constructs of religion. This paper explores the consequences of the choices of method for the historical study of ancient Christian women by tracking how implicit ideologies of comparative method and implicit ideologies of historical method in religion chart the maps ancient women must follow to become visible in academic discourse.

Hazarika, Manjil – Leiden University, The Netherlands

TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING THE ORIGINS OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AMONG THE HILL KARBIS OF ASSAM, INDIA

Understanding the origins and development of religious practices among several ethnic group of India's northeast is a complex task due to scanty source material. Karbis, earlier known as the Mikirs, possibly derived from the word mi-kiri meaning hill-man, are one of the dominant ethnic groups of Assam. They practice slash-and-burn cultivation which reflects ecological adaptation and man-land relationship in high altitudes. This has become a part and parcel not merely as an agricultural practice for them, but as their cultural practice and acts as a base of their religious believes . Our recent fieldwork among the Hill Karbis of Garbhanga area of Assam resulted several archaeological sites in the hill slopes similar to the present day settlement pattern. The archaeological record includes neolithic stone artefacts, potteries, megaliths, *etc.* Karbis still erect megaliths in memories of deceased person performing several rituals. Karbis consider the neolithic stone axes or adzes as thunderstone, and offer Puja to Ithabo or Thengcho, the God of the Sky for preventing further destructive thunder activities at their settlements and agricultural fields. These kinds of Pujas are practiced with a uniquely organic material culture, austere in clay, stone or metal artefacts, finally leaves no or few material remains at the activity areas, which may have resulted in scanty nature of archaeological record of Karbi religion. Our objective here is to understand the dynamic interaction of the Karbis with surrounding nature instrumental in the origins and development of their religion by exploring oral sources, ethnography and archaeological record.

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Heike, Peter – Halmstad Hogskola

HISTORY OF RELIGIONS, USELESS AND BY THAT TOO EXPENSIVE? A STUDY OF THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PAST IN SWEDISH TEXTBOOKS AND NATIONAL CURRICULA

Historical research, especially research without clear genealogical bonds to contemporary world religions, seems to be on the way out of the national curricula in Sweden, both in secondary school and at the universities. The new national guidelines for the secondary school, decided by the government 2010, show this clearly. This situation diverges greatly from the curricula just 30–40 years ago where the proportions have been nearly the opposite. This study aims to investigate the difference between today's situation and the last decades more closely.

As material for this study, textbooks for the secondary school and national curricula representing different milestones have been selected. The method is both qualitative and quantitative. How much space does the past take compared to the present? Which past is represented, what are the main themes? Is there an argument for the selection? Are the past and the people of the past treated differently than present religions? The theoretical starting point is inspired from anthropological research about race, ethnicity and religion, looking for implicit and explicit valuations of religions and peoples from former times, trying to outline the differences over time.

The analysis of the national curricula raises questions of education politics and the role of past religions within it. Have there been power-shifts of minority and majority groups? This would be interesting for further investigations both in comparison to other countries as well as to other academic disciplines like history.

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Heimola, Mikko – University of Helsinki, Finland

A SIGNALING MODEL OF RELIGIOUS CHANGE

Recent research by Richard Sosis et al. shows religious groups to be more cohesive and survive longer than non-religious groups. To account for this, it has been suggested that religious behaviours (such as taboos and ritual requirements) work as costly acts that reliably signal cooperative intention, which would have had also adaptive significance in our evolutionary past. But previous accounts of this have for the most part treated only implicitly what triggers changes in religious behaviour, and leads to revivals and formation of new groups and movements. In my paper I 1) review the state of the signaling theory of religion, with some novel suggestions of my own concerning the role of norms and emotions; 2) survey empirical evidence of religious responses to environmental and societal hazards, and discuss two theoretical constructs (the deprivation theory and the hazard-precaution system model); and 3) offer a tentative conceptual model of religious change from the signaling point of view, with some testable predictions. By way of illustration I discuss some aspects of the Christian revivals that occurred in late 18th and early 19th century Finland.

Heinämäki, Elisa – University of Helsinki, Finland
elisa.heinamaki@helsinki.fi

GEORGES BATAILLE AS A WRITER OF THE POST-SECULAR

This paper examines how the modern dichotomies religious vs. secular, sacred vs. profane – fundamental to the modern secular paradigm of the study of religion – become undone in the writings of the French writer and philosopher Georges Bataille (1897–1962). The paper states that this undoing can be seen as a post-secular trait of Bataille's work, and aims at a contribution to the ongoing discussion on the post-secular through an analysis of Bataille's writings. In the study of religion, Bataille is probably best known as a dissident theorist of the sacred. According to this view, Bataille develops a subversive modification of the Durkheimian sociology of religion by bringing to the fore the impure and violent character of the sacred. This reading is based on a one-sided emphasis on Bataille's work stemming from the context of Collège de Sociologie, an association devoted to the re-examination of the themes of the French sociology of religion. Yet, Bataille continued to struggle with the question of religion also after the short-lived Collège. This paper concentrates mainly on those writings that Bataille himself labeled atheological. Lately, there has been a renewed interest in these writings, especially with regard to their connection with mysticism. What has not been elaborated, however, is how these texts modify Bataille's previous understanding of religion, not so far removed from the parameters of the modern secular science of religion. For example, Peter Tracey Connor, in his excellent *Georges Bataille and the Mysticism of Sin*, states that Bataille disrupts the sacred-profane dichotomy, without elucidating how this is done. The paper presents an analysis of the expression and (dis)organization of the religious quest and the deployment of religious imagery in Bataille's atheological writings. It is demonstrated, firstly, how Bataille's texts, over and against their emphasis on the ecstatic, transgressive experience (of the sacred), are doubled with a commentary on the conditions of possibility and impossibility of such a quest; and secondly, how these texts, over and against Bataille's overt contempt for the Christian tradition, remain attached to but also displace certain traits of the Christian imagery. The aim of the analysis is to show how Bataille unsettles the difference between the secular observer of religious phenomena and the religious subject, and how his texts uproot religious signifiers, manipulate them, and still remain open to their seduction. It is argued that these are the traits of Bataille's work that can be conceptualized as post-secular.

As clarified through the analysis of Bataille's texts, the post-secular could be described as a religious attitude characterized by a combination of a consciousness of loss and a will to be seduced, and by the deployment of religious signifiers detached from any overall "plausibility structure".

Helewa, Sami – University of Edinburgh, UK
helewasa@hotmail.com

THE CONSTRUCTION OF POLITICAL JUSTICE IN AL-TABARI'S HISTORY AND AL-THALABI'S TALES OF THE PROPHETS.

The accounts of the prophets in Islamic historiography, such as al-Tabari's *History*, and the *Qisas al anbiya* of al-Thalabi have received some scholarly attention, but they have not been studied as myths with the social function of promoting the ideal of Islamic society. The reception and appropriation of these accounts of prophets from pre-Islamic sources demonstrate a process of Islamization which had as its goal a new ideology of leadership. In this paper I will argue that these tales and accounts contain religious responses to the political leadership of the fallen caliphate in the tenth to the eleventh centuries, and provide reformed ideology that would eventually spread far beyond the geographical limitations of the two cities of Baghdad (center of caliphate power) and Nishapur (the edge of the empire). I shall apply a methodology of text and context. For my analysis of the text, I will use Northrop Frye's notion of *factum* – the social function of a text. I will frame my discussion of the context in Richard Bulliet's categories of the 'view from the centre' and the 'view from the edge'. In particular, I shall discuss how the portrayal of political justice in the tales of the prophets of Joseph, David and Solomon reflect the political context of al-Tabari's 10th century Baghdad and al-Thalabi's 11th century Nishapur through the socio-political ideologies they promote.

Hellman, Eva – Uppsala University, Sweden
Eva.hellman@teol.uu.se

AN EMERGING HINDU GRAMMAR OF DIVINE FEMININITY: SANNYASINIS AND THE PERFORMANCE OF FEMALE GENDER

In normative Hindu thought "divine femininity" is a key theme. The Sanskrit male gods have female divine consorts who all perform specific functions; in established ontological systems female principles such as *shakti* and *prakriti* are foundational; and Tantric texts represent Devi, the "great goddess", as creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe. Inherent in this tradition is a sharp divide between divine femininity and human women.

Representations of goddesses and divine female principles are mainly located in ontological, epistemological, soteriological, or ritual contexts, but not in ethical ones that establish a link between divine femininity and the lives of women.

However, in the contemporary Hindu landscape women launch new religious narratives, which present divine femininity as prescriptive for the lives of women (and in some cases of men). In texts and in practice feminist theologians, religious specialists and religio-political activists prescribe various ways of implementing divine femininity in the lives of women (and men) in order to improve their existence.

This paper focuses on *sannyasinis*. The aim is twofold. On the one hand it illustrates and questions different constructions of prescriptive divine femininity among contemporary *sannyasinis*. In addition it tests a set of theoretical tools (discourse theory, gender performativity, multiple femininities) for mapping, comparing and analysing such constructions in the emerging narratives created by *sannyasinis* and other Hindu female agents.

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Herman, Jonathan R. – Georgia State University,
USAjherman2@gsu.edu

PENISES ARE RELIGIOUS, VAGINAS ARE SPIRITUAL

In recent years, and with good reason, those engaged in rigorous academic study of religion and religious phenomena have rejected the term “spirituality” as vague, ahistorical, apologetic, and even narcissistic, leaving theologians, theologically beholden scholars, journalists, and religious practitioners of all stripes to do with it as they please. Of course, the term is one of many in the contemporary koine – e.g., holy, pious, sage, cult, radical, extremist, etc. – which illustrate how easily what are actually theological judgments can be mistaken for legitimate scholarly categories. And yet, this particular term is so embedded in the “lay” conversation about religion (or imagined alternatives to religion), that scholarly silence serves to widen the already broad gap between the academic and non-academic understandings of religion. In effect, to ignore “spirituality” is to abrogate one’s responsibilities as a public intellectual, as well as simply to miss an interesting characteristic of how many in the modern West choose to construct themselves religiously. In this paper, I take steps toward rehabilitating the term “spirituality,” not as a descriptor of a “real” or autonomous religious phenomenon, but as a specific rhetorical strategy employed within particular contexts and toward particular ends. The paper concludes with a working definition of “spirituality,” situating it historically, providing a corrective to its various promiscuous uses, and passing theoretical muster for it to function as a useful scholarly category.

Hermans, C.A.M. – Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands · c.hermans@kpnplanet.nl

CHILDREN’S IDEAS ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH. THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE AND COGNITIVE ARCHITECTURE

A continuing problem in the field of the study of religion, is the question why people hold the beliefs that they do. People can hold all kinds of religious beliefs about life, gods, spirits, the nature of the self, life after death. Through different forms of cultural transmission, religious systems communicate beliefs to people (such as prayer, memorizing holy texts, rituals, devotional practices, pilgrimage). Why are some beliefs more successfully transmitted through time than other beliefs? An explanation for this (lack of) success cannot only be given by the (lack of) effect of cultural transmission? In the ‘cognitive science of religion’ a second factor has been proposed to explain why some beliefs survive or spread more easily among people, namely the cognitive architecture of people (Tremblin 2006; Boyer 1990; 2001). Our research project wants to contribute to this general problem by studying the ideas of children about life after death. The project builds on previous research in this field by Bering (2002), Bering & Bjorklund (2004) and Harris & Giménez (2005). Our general research question is: Which ideas about body and mind of human beings and animals do 11 year old Children have, while controlling for their religious socialization and religious priming? This general question is specified into four research questions. 1. In what way do children make a difference in the functioning of body and mind of animals and people after death? 2. To what extent does the religious background makes a difference in the way children think about the functioning of body and mind of animals and people after death and the causes which they give for this functioning? 3. To what extent does the religious priming makes a difference in the way children think about the body and mind of animals and people after death and the causes which they give for this functioning? In order to answer the research questions we have developed a research design which tackles some of the critique on previous research. The critique on Bering & Bjorklund (2004) is that did not take into account differences in religious priming, and Harris & Giménez (2005) can be criticized because did not taken into account the influence of different religious backgrounds of children. We have developed a research design which controls cultural transmission in two ways: first by taking into account the religious socialization of the children, and second the cultural priming of religious ideas (in our project by texts). The general thesis behind our research question is that if children express the same ideas about the life of animals and persons after death while controlling for cultural transmission, this fact cannot just be attributed to cultural transmission alone.

Or to frame it differently, if children express the same ideas about the life of animals and persons after death despite differences in the influence of cultural transmission (*i.e.*, religious socialization and religious priming), there must be another influence in order to explain the fact that they hold the same idea, namely the cognitive architecture of human beings. The research sample consists of 80 children of 11 year old with different religious backgrounds, namely Catholic, Protestant, Islamic and non-religious. In each category, we will select 20 children at random of schools of primary education in the Netherlands. Our sample consists of Children because the effect of cultural transmission is supposed to be less than for adults. We selected Children of 11 year old because previous research has shown that they are able to hold a dual perspective on body and mind after death (Harris & Giménez 2005, p.147). Younger children (Age 4) have difficulties in combining different perspectives on body and mind. Our research questions do not focus on the development of ideas in children. Therefore we select Children of 11 year old. The data are (will be) collected between October and November 2009. The research results will be discussed in two ways. What has this research project contributed to the theory building of previous research on the ideas of children about life after death? And, what does this research contribute to the general problem about the influence of cultural transmission and the cognitive architecture

Hewitt, Marsha – University of Toronto, Canada
marsha.hewitt@utoronto.ca

AFFECTIVE AND COGNITIVE DIMENSIONS OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Although it may be widely accepted that the capacity for religious experience constitutes a mental state which, as with all mental states and inner experiences, has a neurological foundation, it is not so readily agreed upon as to what the psychological significance of such a state might be. That is to say, what are the affective components – both emotional and biological – that pertain to that excess or “more” of religious experience that can be identified across specific religious traditions and histories? For William James, the proper study of religions must begin with the actual, felt religious experiences of human beings in specific contexts. Yet it is this focus on religious experience that appears to leave some contemporary theorists of religion uneasy, as if the exploration of the affective dimension negates or ‘softens’ the by now clear neurological basis of religious experience and beliefs. Underlying this unease, of course, is that the psychological/phenomenological approach conceals a hidden theological interest. That this is often true is more by contingency than theoretical necessity.

This unease goes back as least as far as Freud’s ambivalence toward the ‘oceanic feeling,’ or what cognitive archaeologist David Lewis-Williams refers to as ‘absolute unitary being’ that is a widely valued feature of religious experience for believers. This ambivalence should not marginalize the importance of ‘psychological significance,’ however, as it did in Freud’s writing on religion and as it continues to do in contemporary theorists, particularly those who turn to neuroscience as an important explanatory resource in the study of religious experience. This paper will argue that conceptual balance addressing the emotional and biological elements of religious experience is methodologically more adequate and theoretically richer than more strictly cognitive approaches. The paper will focus most centrally on the work of William James and David Lewis-Williams.

Hoenes del Pinal, Eric – New York University, USA
ehd1@nyu.edu

RECONFIGURING ESCHATOLOGIES IN POSTWAR GUATEMALA

The second half of the Twentieth Century saw much of Latin America undergoing intense periods of political instability and violence resulting in major social and political changes. In this climate new forms of religiosity emerged and took hold as people tried to understand the changes around them. Responding both to this uncertain political climate and the call to openness initiated by the Second Vatican Council, several theological movements began to take shape within Latin American Catholicism that sought to reimagine the present and future of the Catholic Church. Critical to these projects was a refiguration of salvation history that could better account for to the social and political inequalities faced by many Latin American Catholics and that could be responsive to the immediate needs of marginalized peoples. This paper examines the various ways that Liberation Theology, Inculturation, and Charismatic Catholicism can be said to have proposed eschatologies that were especially responsive to social and cultural experiences of marginalized groups in Latin America. Drawing on field research conducted among to rural and peri-urban Maya Catholics in north-central Guatemala, this paper also explores the legacies of these movements and the extreme violence of the Guatemalan Civil War in shaping contemporary understandings Catholicism in the region.

Hofstee, Willem – Leiden University, The Netherlands
w.hofstee@hum.leidenuniv.nl

EXPLANATION FOR WHAT? WHY COGNITIVE SCIENCE OF RELIGION IS NOT ABOUT RELIGION

The search for unchanged principles and abstract generalizations still is the ideal standard method of empirical research and it is dominated by an essentialist methodology. Comparison and explanation are inextricably bound up with formalization and generalization about human affairs, apart from time and space, and its methods need formalized concepts. The alternative would be a sterile relativism or even pseudo-science, characterized by a nominative methodology, and consequently by speculation and uncertainty. Because the study of religion as an academic discipline has much to gain in distinguishing itself from theology, the choice is made not for the last option but in favour of the first: scientism seems to be the only way to avoid 'pseudo-science', and to strengthen the image of the discipline which should be reliable and should produce 'true knowledge'. In this paper it is argued that the search for general laws hinders the study of religion. The cognitive science of religion is taken as an example to show that such an explanatory strategy will lead to the end of Religious Studies as part of the Humanities.

Hogan, Claire – Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
clhogan@gmail.com

ISLAM AND THE IRISH LEGAL SYSTEM: TOWARDS REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

Despite a recent fall-off in Church attendance, Ireland is predominantly a country in the Roman Catholic tradition. Nevertheless, membership of the Muslim community has greatly increased in recent years, leading to a more religiously diverse population. The arrival in Ireland of Islam as a major religion and counter-point to the Christian faith poses a variety of important legal questions. I have studied the accommodation of Islam under the rubric of topics including Education Law, Employment Law and Medical Law; conducting a comparative analysis with England, France and Germany. The courts in England, France and Germany have adjudicated on many high-profile claims for accommodation of Islam in the chosen areas of law. I have examined the relevant caselaw, legal and constitutional provisions, and Church State relations in each comparator country, in order to analyse the variety of possible legal approaches to the manifestation of religion generally, and Islam more particularly. Unlike in the comparator countries, Ireland is just beginning to encounter claims for the accommodation of Islam.

For example, the request from a student in a Gorey to wear her hijab led to the formulation of recommendations on school uniform policy, issued by the Minister for Education in September 2008. In the seminal case of *Quinn's Supermarket Ltd. v Attorney General* [1972] IR 1, Walsh J. declared: "Our Constitution reflects a firm conviction that we are a religious people." It has often been suggested that the State has a confessional ethos which tends to favour the majority religion at the expense of religious minorities. However, Ireland is also committed to the interculturalism, which recognises that integration is a "two way street" and places demands on both the majority and minority communities to create proper conditions for harmonious integration. I aim to demonstrate that the approach of "reasonable accommodation" of Islam is both legally warranted and appropriate for the Irish legal system. International, in particular, Canadian, caselaw which works out the contours of this approach shall be called in aid to demonstrate its utility and its limitations.

Höpfinger, Anna-Katharina – University of Zurich, Switzerland · a.hoepfinger@access.uzh.ch

THE SECOND SKIN. CLOTHING AS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION IN RELIGIOUS SYMBOL SYSTEMS

Wherever nakedness does not form part of ordinary life, clothing presents a common medium of communication, as it outwardly defines the body. Clothes not only form the body, but they also construe a self, an identity, and thereby convey a certain view of the world. As a medium of communication, clothing takes on a significant role in religious symbol systems.

The research project presented in this paper aims to shed light on the complex interplay between clothing and religion by looking at select examples from a cultural studies perspective. Both religion and clothing are thereby understood to be autonomous communication systems which, nevertheless, reveal multiple interconnections.

Hoppal, Bulcsu – International Academy of Philosophy, Hungary

FROM THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION TO THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

The paper will address methodological issues. The aim of the paper is to show that the main ideas of the early philosophical phenomenological movement can be found in the hypotheses of Mircea Eliade and Gerardus van der Leeuw.

The secondary aim of the paper is to show that historicism and historical approach in religious studies cannot be conceptualized without a previous application of a strictly philosophical phenomenology. In order to come to this conclusion I will make clear what I mean by “early phenomenology” and phenomenological approach in religious studies. As a second step I will contrast the two main methods of religious studies: the phenomenological with the historical approach. I will argue that the historical approach has been influenced by the philosophical-phenomenological method, which has a long tradition in the Western thought. I shall analyze the methodology of two classical figures of religious studies (Eliade and van der Leeuw). Mircea Eliade called “phenomenologists” who claim that they can grasp the essence and structure of religious phenomena and “historicists” or “reductionists” who claim that religion is the subject of a historical approach without any further meaning and value beyond history. In the paper I will point out that Eliade as well as van der Leeuw refused all kinds of reductionism and considered phenomenology as the proper method of religious studies. I will argue that Eliade, van der Leeuw and other leading figures of religious studies of the 20th century applied the main ideas of the philosophical phenomenology, which has its roots in the thought of Edmund Husserl, Max Scheler, Adolf Reinach and Dietrich von Hildebrand. In the third section of the paper I shall concentrate on the notion of philosophical phenomenology. By the help of the clarification of the notion of phenomenology we will have a better understanding of what religious science is. And we will see what the “way back” from the history of religion to the phenomenology of religion is.

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Horie, Norichika – University of the Sacred Heart,
 Japan · norick.h@nifty.com

NARROW NEW AGE AND BROAD SPIRITUALITY: A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEMA AND A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

This paper aims at a critical re-examination of the concepts ‘New Age’ and ‘spirituality’. It attempts to construct a set of workable analytical concepts for use in comparative religious studies and in contemporary debates on global/local relationships. ‘New Age’ as a historical concept refers to a worldview in the 1970–1980s that expected a coming new age of awakening consciousness. However, it is too narrow to serve as an analytical concept for the global, synchronic, and individualistic phenomena of the ‘spiritual quest’ at large. In this paper I shall present a concentric circle schema, consisting in hardcore New Age (counter-culture), new spirituality (mild anticipation for a coming new age), and comprehensive spirituality (connecting with established religion and mainstream culture).

This comprehensive spirituality can further be classified into (1) folk spirituality (elemental), (2) spirituality in established religions (reinterpreted), (3) spirituality in foreign religions (unorganized), and (4) systematic spirituality (universal). The principles of classification I shall use in turn to analyse each of these sub-types are: religious or non-religious (both pre- and post-religious); global or local; theoretical or practical; and the order of occurrence. In order to illustrate which element is strong and to what extent, I present an analysis and interpretation of the particular historical and cultural conditions and the mode of development in each country: Japan, the U.S., and the U.K.

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Horie, Yuri – Ritsumeikan University, Japan
 ecqa_yh@ybb.ne.jp

RE-QUEERING CHRISTIAN SEXUAL NORMS IN JAPAN: ON “RECOGNITION” OF SEXUAL MINORITIES

Lesbians and gays began speaking out for their rights in Japanese society since the late 1980s. These struggles for their human right in the wider society of Japan also impacted Christians. Among Christians the goals of gay/lesbian activism were: 1) to create “safe” spaces for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Christians and 2) to form a network of solidarity with heterosexual women in churches. While the above socially significant struggle was on-going it is a sad note that there was/is very little critical reflection, intense discussion and debate on such issues about LGBT Christians in Japan’s academic field including that of Christian Theology. Considering this situation, in this paper, a case concerning LGBT Christians in Japan will be introduced and analyzed. In 1994, a group named “Ecumenical Community for Queer Activism (ECQA)” was formed and established in Japan: 1) for discussing strategies to challenge the power structure that is based on hetero-normativity and 2) for sharing experiences of LGBT Christians with each other. From the above, the group found a way to do a “re-queering” of Christian norms in Japan that have thus far been and continue to be dominated by heterosexism and sexism. In other words, they have found a way to question and critique both, sexism and heterosexism through a queer perspective which critically reconsiders the thoughts and attitudes contained within hetero-normativity, gender binary, and sexism. Thus, this paper examines an alternative way to find a new horizon for minorities.

Horiuchi, Midori – Tenri University, Japan
h-m-6140@sta.tenri-u.ac.jp

THE ACTIVITIES OF “LOVE GREEN NEPAL”: FREEING WOMEN FROM LOCAL MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

“Love Green Nepal” (LGN) is a NGO established in 1991, which has been working in the field of environmental conservation and quality education in rural areas of Nepal, contributing to development of sustainable livelihoods for economically disadvantaged people in grassroots communities, for uplifting rural communities through integrated development interventions with focus on utilization of locally available resources. The main activities are; (1) environment, (2) sustainable agriculture development, (3) educational development, (4) community small infrastructure development, (5) community health. In the mountain areas where LGN is working, people have to fully rely upon forests for their daily livelihood which has led to the severe depletion of natural resources, such as forests. It is the women and girls who usually go collecting wood for fuel and bring water. These tasks which take them many hours are their “duty” or “role” according to their tradition that is strongly influenced by Hinduism. Because of these traditional attitudes and roles, girls have fewer chances to learn at school than boys. It is for this reason that the fields of environmental conservation and quality education in rural areas of Nepal have been adopted and are regarded as closely related in providing a means to improve the quality of women’s lives. The general secretary of LGN, herself a Nepalese who has studied in Japan, has undertaken research in rural areas of Nepal in order to understand better the needs of women’s lives. She determined to help them initially by putting their abilities to work in helping to revive forests. So LGN started DCGD (Deforestation Control and Greenery Development) project (*e.g.*, planting seedlings, training leaders and participants, constructing bio-gas plants). According to the results of LGN activities, the task of educating women by training them for this work is a positive method for improving the quality of life in rural communities. In so doing, it basically refines and expands on their traditional religious roles and tasks in subtle ways. My discussion will be focused on her these methods to mobilize and encourage local people towards conservation as a means of making them self-reliant in their lives, while carefully integrating this into the traditional religious roles of women. The project does not employ the words “rights” of women, but the general secretary believes girls can be “a model” to demonstrate new ways of acting and thinking both for themselves and for their own people. My intention in this paper is to consider the effects of this environmentally centered project on women’s activities and the changes it is effecting on traditional ways of thinking and acting by women in both their social and religious contexts.

Hornborg, Anne-Christine – Södertörn University, Sweden

I’M SPIRITUAL, NOT RELIGIOUS”: ON THE APPROPRIATION OF A NEW CONCEPT OF SPIRITUALITY

“I’m spiritual – not religious” seems to have become a key expression of a new form of globalized religion focussing on a specific notion of spirituality. Books, articles, courses, blogs, *etc.*, employ a concept of spirituality signifying a universal human essence, located deep inside each individual. The message is: Spirituality unites us into a single humanity, while religion, with its dogma and rituals, separates us. But is this new concept of spirituality, disembedded from place and tradition, congruent with other concepts of spirituality? In order to discuss the construction of a universal spirituality, promoted by its missionaries as a common ground for all of humanity, I will draw on my experience from fieldworks in the Canadian Mi’kmaq reserves and compare the framing of Mi’kmaq spirituality with that of the new spirituality, considering also the diversity of discourses within the Mi’kmaq community itself.

Horst, Steven – Wesleyan University, USA
shorts@weslehan.edu

WHOSE INTUITIONS? WHICH DUALISM?

Proponents of Cognitive Science of Religion (CSR) have claimed that dualism and belief in non-material agents are either “intuitive” (Bloom, Guthrie) or “counter-intuitive” (Boyer, Barrett). However, these claims require greater philosophical scrutiny as to just what is meant by “dualism”, “belief” and “(counter-)intuitive”.

Bloom’s account builds upon developmentalists’ claims for “core knowledge systems” for objects and agency, exploiting the fact that these systems are dissociable: the agent detection system can be activated without the object system being activated. (This seems consonant with Guthrie’s pioneering account.) Indeed, children may have to learn the further skill of triangulating humans and animals through two systems. On the Bloom/Guthrie accounts, the ability to conceive of agents without bodies should not be counter-intuitive or cause cognitive dissonance, at least at an early developmental stage. This is what underwrites the claim that we are “Natural-Born Dualists”. But the account does not really support a truly dualist view (one that claims that agents are something distinct from bodies), as thinking of agents without thinking of bodies falls short of thinking of agents-without-bodies, much less “thinking but unextended substance.”

Boyer and Barrett suggest that concepts of disembodied agents arise quite naturally when our species-typical schemas of Theory of Mind and Folk Biology come into contact with our ability to alter parameters of such schemas to form Minimally Counter-Intuitive Beliefs such as “minds without bodies”. Such concepts are much closer to counting as truly “dualist”, though of course they do not contain all the elements of a formal dualist metaphysics like that articulated by Descartes. They are “counter-intuitive” at least in the sense stipulated by Boyer, but one might also argue that they are “intuitive” in the sense that human minds are highly biased towards forming and accepting them.

Whether these two accounts are truly in competition with one another may depend upon further details of the development of cognitive schemas like Core Agency and Theory of Mind. For example, advocates of Core Agency (Spelke, Carey, Wynn) argue that it can be found about as early in development as we can reliably test, whereas the most celebrated criterion for Theory of Mind (the false belief test) is not passed until age three. This suggests that Theory of Mind may be a later arrival, perhaps even built upon a more primitive Core Agency system that is shared with many other species. If this is the case, then the two accounts presented may actually be snapshots of separate developmental stages: Bloom’s of an early stage, prior to the development of Theory of Mind or Folk Biology. At this stage, Agency and Object systems may be fully dissociated and separately activated. Boyer and Barrett’s theory may reflect a later developmental stage, in which schemas for humans and animals have come to incorporate criteria of both objecthood and agency. At this stage, thinking of ghosts or deities as “persons without bodies” would arguably truly be counter-intuitive in the cognitively-stimulating fashion that Boyer suggests.

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Hosseini, Seyed Mohammad – Islamic Azad
 University, Iran

ENCOUNTER WITH MODERNITY RELIGIOUS INTELLECTUALS IN IRAN

Modernism growth in any country on the type of approach has its intellectuals. Religious intellectuals in Iran in determining social change have a large role. The purpose of this paper reviews the type of confrontation with the religious intellectuals in Iran is to enter modernity. Religious intellectuals in Iran in the face of modernism can be divided into two groups: intellectuals and intellectuals opposed to modernism agree.

Hrotic, Steven – Queen’s University Belfast, UK
 stevenhrotic@yahoo.co.uk

INTERDISCIPLINARITY, POLYPHONY, & THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

For cognitive scientists – especially those with an evolutionary perspective – the existence of religion is difficult to explain. Why, for example, would groups of people sacrifice so much with no measurable return? Two of the general responses to this problem are: 1. religion is not adaptive, but is epiphenomenal to adaptive traits, and 2. religion itself confers a selective advantage.

Both these responses relate to an “aesthetic” theory of religion. For the first part, as the power of the media may lie in stimulating our appreciation for socially-relevant information (*cf.* Barkow 1992), perhaps the ubiquity of religion in human cultures may be understood in part as a side-effect of adaptive aesthetic preferences. For the second part, once religion is available as a social tool, it may offer a direct (if second-order) advantage by increasing internal social cohesion. Certain patterns of ritual, for example, appear to be effective ways to develop and maintain social ties.

There is a difficulty with the last point, however. There are multiple forms or ‘Modes’ of ritual that produce unique patterns of social ties; each pattern is effective only in quite specific contexts (Whitehouse 2004). By what mechanism is the correct ritual form chosen? An interdisciplinary perspective (*sensu* Frodeman, Klein & Mitcham 2010) on aesthetics may be useful.

For example, the 16th century Council of Trent debated the use of polyphonic music in the Catholic Mass. Many of their objections match the conflicts predicted by Modes. However, the Council did not come to a conclusion on polyphony. Curiously, generations of commentators believed that they had. This systematic error suggests that it is possible to make a decision on the proper ritual form collectively – and that the mechanism could be patterns in aesthetic judgments.

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Hrynchyshyn, Taras – Institute of Philosophy of the
 Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences, Ukraine
 tarasyi@gmail.com

THE KYIVAN CHURCH STUDY GROUP: PAST AND PROSPECTIVE

Interdenominational tensions have historically provided some of the greatest barriers to national unity and prosperity in Ukraine. The very existence of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church constitutes, in the opinion of some Orthodox, a major stumbling block to ecumenical relations with the Catholic Church.

How can such tensions be resolved? Can unity between Orthodox and Catholic Ukrainians be accomplished? And if so, how might other Christian churches attempt to adapt such a model for unity on a global scale? This paper analyzes the activities of the Kyivan Church Study Group (SHKC), an organization which, in its attempt to address these important questions, has formed one of the most fascinating aspects of modern Ukrainian church history. The SHKC, consisting of Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian scholars and clergy from five countries, met seven times in various countries and cities (including Ottawa), between 1992–1996. Among the subjects that the Study Group's participants discussed were: intercommunion, papal primacy, and other thorny issues dividing Catholics and Orthodox. The SHKC met exclusively in the Ukrainian Diaspora (eight of its total 27 participants hailed from Canada). The formation of independent Ukrainian Orthodox Churches – and the associated problems of canonicity – halted plans to shift the dialogue to Ukraine itself. Nevertheless, even though the SHKC never possessed any official status, its work remains the most serious attempt at ecumenical dialogue between the historic churches of Ukraine. Additionally, the SHKC provides an important precedent for ongoing ecumenical initiatives in Ukraine, in particular the Ukrainian Christian Academic Fellowship.

Hsieh, Shih-Wei – National Chengchi University, Taiwan

EXORCISM IN BUDDHO-DAOIST CONTEXT: A STUDY OF EXORCISM IN THE METHOD OF UCCHU'MA AND LUMINOUS AGENT

This research compares and contrasts the apotropaic rituals of the Ucchusma and Luminous Agent Marshal Ma, and analyses the relationship between them. This paper first discusses Ucchusma and analyses its images and ritual methods in the light of related texts. Additionally, this paper analyses “the esoteric rites of the Numinous Official Martial Ma”, taking as its subject the images and ritual magic from juan 220 to 231 of the Daofa huiyuan, paying particular attention to the apotropaic methods of juan 224 and 225 and the commonalities in images and incantations between the Ucchusma and Luminous Agent Marshal Ma. The author finds that Song Dynasty images of Luminous Agent Marshal Ma are not stabilized, and that certain early images, with three heads, nine eyes and six arms, are derivative from those of Ucchusma, in addition to various incantations which show similar derivation. This demonstrates the close syncretic relationship between Tantric and Daoist ritual, a phenomenon which also occurs in the Marshal Tianyou.

After the Ming dynasty, images of Marshal Ma became gradually more standardized, in particular the form with three eyes and two arms, one which is closely related to those of Wuxian and Huaguang Bodhisattva. This paper also focuses on tantric possession and child-possession to identify the role of young boys in apotropaic rituals of exorcism, and proceeds from this to analyse the overall structure of the ritual. This method for using young boys in apotropaic rites bears a strong relationship to the avesas rites transmitted from India, which also use boys as mediums to perform divination and exorcism. From the Tang dynasty onwards, this kind of ritual gradually spread in common religion, by both Daoist priests and specialists of common religious magical rites. The author understands that these kinds of exorcistic ritual did not only appear in scriptures, but were practiced in folk religious contexts by Daoist priests, Tantric monks and ritual master, as can be seen in rough descriptions of such in the Yijianzhi. According to records in the Yijianzhi, avesas rites and Ucchusma were both practiced in sects of Daoist magic and ritual masters. The Esoteric Method/ Rites of Marshal Ma also contains complex and detailed exorcisms using children, from which its uses in Daoism and Tantrism can be seen. From the analysis in this paper, it can be demonstrated that there was a great deal of interchange, borrowing and transformation between Song dynasty Daoism and Buddhism, generating a rich and multi-valent ritual culture.

Huang, Pochi – National Chengchi University, Taiwan
huan99@ncuu.edu.tw

FROM UPANAYANA TO BRAHMACARYA

This paper explores the implications of upanayana and brahmacarya as religious phenomena in the history of Indian religions. To be sure, doing something “historical” within the Indian context is always a daunting challenge as well as an intellectual adventure. Yet, I am convinced that there is a religious history behind the institution of four stages of human life (asrama system). The first stage is called brahmacarya and the upanayana ritual is necessary for a future brahmacarin. As the ceremony of investiture with sacred thread, it is an important rite of passage, a new point of departure in which a twice-born is initiated in the acquisition of sacred learning in order to become spiritually. When a twice-born is thus initiated, he is lead into a life of Vedic student (brahmacarin). During this period of studentship, a twice-born stays in the house of his guru and learn from him what a good adult life is. At the end of this period, a twice-born enters another stage of life. In a broader sense, as a rite of passage, upanayana is one of a series of purificatory ceremonies (saṁskara) in which a boy is sanctified to become a full-fledged member of twice-born castes.

The performance of the sequence of saṃskaras, purifies the twice-born both mentally and physically. However, as suggested by many scholars, upanayana as in the ritual of investiture with sacred thread might have an Indo-Iranian origin. Nonetheless, it is generally assumed that the initiation of upanayana is equivalent to that of a brahmacarin in the dharmasastras. How does this connection between upanayana and brahmacarin come to being is the task undertaken in this exploration.

Hulsether, Mark – University of Tennessee, USA
mhulseth@utk.edu

SOME DIFFERENCES THAT MUSIC MAKES IN THE OVERLAPPING TERRITORY BETWEEN RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE AND CULTURAL CRITIQUE, WITH EXAMPLES FROM RECENT US HISTORY

This paper is part of a larger project that analyzes cases in the overlapping territory among North American popular music, religious discourses, and cultural critique. Of course many scholars and critics have worked on cases that fall within discursive fields where all three of these issues are salient. However, I believe that through bringing together my distinctive skills in the study of religion, North American cultural history, and interdisciplinary cultural studies I can focus greater attention on this important area of overlap (which arguably is underappreciated) and bring to bear significant insights about it. Too often scholars in this area are tone-deaf to religious nuances, whether from disinterest or from using excessively narrow working definitions of religion. Meanwhile scholars in religious studies are too often thin in their readings in musicology and the cultural history of music.

This paper takes up just one small piece of the larger inquiry: the challenge of clarifying what sorts of musical styles and sounds related to the genres of “folk” and “country” – plus a variety of other intersecting genres including gospel, rhythm and blues, and folk-rock – have gained a conventional or popular status as “religious.” The more one listens to music in these genres and studies their tangled historical genealogies, the more difficult it is to draw clean lines among them. Where does “secular” music cross over to “religious” and vice-versa? When do they overlap? Can certain musical styles (whether fused with lyrical meanings or operating purely in registers like melody, tone, and rhythm) signify “religiousness”? To what extent to the people performing and producing these sounds (as distinct from their listeners) control the process of religious meaning-making? How should scholars cope with the many gray areas where different working understandings of religious meaning are in play simultaneously?

I assume there is no one “essential” way to answer such questions and that simply to clarify the popular understandings of how the term “religious” operates does not resolve the question of whether this is an optimum way for scholars to proceed. My goal is to reflect on some of the key patterns through which people commonly approach such questions, with a goal of sharpening our working definitions and analytical frameworks for further study.

Hutt, Curtis – University of Omaha and the University of Jerusalem, USA and Israel · curtis_hutt@uhl.ac

PILGRIMAGE IN TURBULENT CONTEXTS: JERUSALEM

In this paper, I survey – against the backdrop of hundreds, even thousands, of years of pilgrimage – the present day state of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic pilgrimages to sites in Israel and the Occupied Territories with a primary focus on Jerusalem. I argue that adopting a dissipative approach to ritual change, combined with an understanding of pilgrimage as social action, is necessary in order to explain historical developments in this often most turbulent of contexts. In addition to examining ritual transformations in specific pilgrimages, I attend to two under-researched phenomena: ritual birth and ritual death. I begin by addressing twentieth and twenty-first century Jewish pilgrimage. After initially focusing upon changes in ritual practices that are made possible and are even catalyzed by socio-political events, I discuss the birth of distinctively new pilgrimages – especially those associated with the rise of the State of Israel. Strategic interests informing the representation of the past to pilgrims in the present are highlighted. Secondly, I turn to local and international Christian pilgrimage related to the traditional Palm Sunday procession on the Mount of Olives. The effects of political and demographical changes are considered. In closing, I scrutinize ritual changes in historical Islamic pilgrimages to sites in Israel and the Occupied Territories. Underscored is the demise of several Islamic pilgrimages in the years since 1948.

Hylén, Torsten – Dalarna University, Sweden
thy@du.se

PRAYING ALOUD OR IN SILENCE? ON CONCEPTUAL BLENDING AND EMOTIONS IN THE ANALYSIS OF RITUALS

In this paper I try to apply theories from cognitive linguistics, mainly the idea of “conceptual blending” as outlined by Fauconnier and Turner in their book *The Way We Think* (2002).

Arguments and metaphors, they hold, can be analyzed as conceptual blends. In an article from 2005, Edward Slingerland connects this theory with the concept of “somatic markers” or “gut feelings” as developed by the neurologist Antonio Damasio (1994). Slingerland argues that the somatic markers are important when presenting an argument. We do not only rely on the purely rational capacities of our listeners when we argue, but by connecting our arguments to somatic markers we appeal to the feelings of those we try to convince. Two basic arguments in my paper is 1) that rituals can be analyzed as conceptual blends, and 2) that an important function of many rituals is that they reinforce certain basic feelings, thereby disposing the performer of a specific ritual to follow the norms that underlie the current interpretation of that ritual. As an example I use the controversy on the Muslim salat among the Gayo people of Sumatra, that John R. Bowen describes in his works (1984, 1993).

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Ibrahim, Vivian – University College Cork (UCC),
Ireland · v.ibrahim@ucc.ie

MAKING THE ‘INVISIBLE’ VISIBLE? RECONSIDERING ‘MUSLIMS’, IDENTITY AND THE INSTITUTIONAL BOX

Approaches to the study of Islam in Western Europe have tended to focus on the transnational nature of various Muslim communities within the boundaries of formalised and institutional expressions of religion and practices. The result of this is that ‘visible’ organised religious practice is the normative indicator of ‘a Muslim’, the implication being that non-organised practice or belief results in ‘invisibility’ or indeed non-existence. While recent scholarship has sought to remedy this institutional bias of religious expression within the framework of contemporary contexts (Berger, 2007; Jedloft 2010), this area nonetheless remains problematic within the context of examining political, social and economic roots of migrant ‘Muslims’ within a historical context. This paper proposes to address a number of key questions in relation to universalist definitions of ‘Muslims’ by researchers and the imposed, as well as ‘self’ identity markers used by individual migrants in the historical context of Ireland. In particular, the paper proposes to use various examples taken from early migrants to Irish shores such as Mir Aulad Ali, Professor of Hindustani, Arabic and Persian at Trinity College Dublin. To begin with, the paper will examine how researchers approach the question of ‘Muslims’ in a specific geographic and ‘alien’ European context. Who is a Muslim and who is not? The problem of definition is significant, particularly in a historical context, since before the establishment of formal institutional ‘visible’ structures in the West, what – if one is to accept the contemporary assumption that normative labels of religion are directly derived from practice and participation – would serve as a marker of adherence? And if indeed such a marker is necessary, do individual early migrants as a result become ‘invisible’ or are they, as much of the existing literature implies, the early precursors to various ‘visible’ models? This paper will argue that adopting such a ‘trajectory’ outlook to understanding Muslim communities in the west is problematic as it firstly makes the assumption that men like Mir Aulad Ali would approve, participate and indeed actively lead contemporary religious movements; secondly, it raises question concerning the degree to which we as researchers objectify our subjects labels in order to fit them into normative models of understanding western models of Islam.

The paper will conclude by suggesting that it is necessary to examine the self-identity markers and labels adopted by those whom we classify and objectify as 'Muslims' in order to avoid being excessively selective in our understanding of European Islam. This paper is part of the pre-organised panel 'Islam in Ireland: Issues and Challenges in Researching on a Muslim Community in Europe' which has already been accepted as part of the conference programme.

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Illman, Ruth – The Donner Institute, Åbo, Finland
ruth.illman@abo.fi

METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES IN RESEARCHING POST-SECULAR RELIGIOSITY

This paper discusses methodological challenges facing the interdisciplinary group of researchers involved in a large scale research project concerning post-secular values and the changing religious landscape in Finland, conducted at Åbo Akademi University during 2010–2014. The aim is to create novel and critical ethnographic perspectives on post-secular religiosity. A central methodological challenge is to create new ways of approaching the diverse religious landscape. Post-secular religiosity has so far predominantly been analysed in limited studies where certain phenomena seems to be automatically and a priori connected to certain groups or trends in a way that hampers creative and explorative investigations into the question at large. Thus, there are significant blind spots in previous research caused by a one-sided application of theory and method. As we see it, the dynamic web of post-secular trends and phenomena must be addressed in a boundary-breaking fashion in order to trace novel forms of interplay and intersection between values, groups and agents. Another challenge is to create methodological tools for sharing ethnographies within the group and to facilitate the fruitful integration of personal expertise in joint analytical processes. Our aim is to generate a common and coherent methodological matrix, allowing us to make meaningful comparisons and to create genuinely new perspectives on contemporary religiosity where influential groups and phenomena are cross-examined, compared and categorised in an unbiased way. Achieving this goal is methodologically challenging, including critical issues ranging from abstract questions of epistemology to highly concrete matters of software tools and storage.

Ilo, Stan Chu – St Michael's College, University of Toronto, Canada

EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF A CULTURAL HERMENEUTICAL METHOD IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

My paper will address three concerns; (1) that the persistence of African religio-cultural worldview in African Christianity reflects the resilience of African Tradition Religion in spite of the cultural currents of Western change elements and agents; (2) that Ogburn's culture lag theory presents a helpful hermeneutical key in interpreting the resilience of the non-material aspects of African Traditional Religions in present African Christianity; (3) that the historical studies in African Traditional Religions can be applied successfully in giving an account of African religiosity in post-colonial discourse and contemporary African Christianity on the shape and direction of African societies. I will propose how a cultural hermeneutical approach in African Christianity could pay attention to the phenomenology of religion in Africa with regard to the instrumental, cultural, and hermeneutical morphology which will yield sufficient interpretative epistemology for understading the hidden cultural grammar which is yielding a greater religious output in Africa than in many other parts of the world. I shall round up the paper with showing how such approach could valorize the agency of Africans to the pursuit of abundant life which is the goal of African Traditional Religions.

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Imbert, Raphaël – École des hautes études en sciences sociales, France

THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE HOLY GHOST: THE AVANT-GARDE TRINITY OF COLTRANE, SANDERS, AND AYLER

John Coltrane, Pharaoh Sanders, and Albert Ayler, the most famous saxophonists of the avant-garde of the sixties, viewed their friendship and artistic collaboration not without humor. But this self-designation also reveals the religious references in their musical imaginary (the title is actually part of John Coltrane's suite "Meditation" [1965]) and may help to clarify how certain spiritual tendencies (the mystical tendency for John Coltrane, Albert Ayler's religious tendency, and the metaphysical tendency for Pharaoh Sanders) are integral to their musical creation and sense of improvisation. Thus, starting from the roots of American and African-American liturgical music, and evoking the names of Duke Ellington, Mary Lou Williams, Django Reinhardt, Louis Armstrong, and others, we can better understand how a musical movement, namely Free Jazz, blew open the boundaries of sound, tonality, modality, and rhythm.

Free Jazz was more often linked to the political revolutions of this time than with the deep religious and spiritual claims of the musicians who created it. This paper aims to reveal the special relationship between pioneering sonic research and a quest for lost origins, both nurtured by marked spiritual convictions.

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Inaba, Keishin – Osaka University, Japan
k-inaba@hus.osaka-ac.jp

CONVERSION PROCESS OF SGI-USA MEMBERS

This paper analyzes the reasons that Americans cross ethnic boundaries to adopt the Buddhism promulgated by SGI and examines what appeals to them about it by looking at theories of conversion and linking those to the ethos and social conditions in American society.

Using the Lofland-Stark model of religious conversion (Lofland and Stark, 1965), we analyze the environmental and individual factors in conversion, the process of joining the religion, and the processes that occur after conversion. Many of the converted members had faced problems related to poverty, illness or interpersonal conflict prior to joining SGI-USA. About 80% of the members were seeking happiness, including relief from these sufferings. Practitioners explain that the most important reasons for continuing in their faith were intimate interactions and emotional bonds among members.

Since the 1960s when SGI first developed its activities in the US, American society has experienced several shakeups such as the counter culture, liberalist movements, the conservative movement flourished in the 1970s as a reaction to the 1960s, and a conflict of cultures and values, referred to as the “culture war”. In this changing environment, SGI-USA maintained liberal concepts of personal morality, a religious worldview without original sin and fate, and a completely benefits-affirming principle. This group, which emphasized bonds between people and might have been called neo-communitarian insofar as it marketed and displayed diversity, appealed to people in American society by skillfully employing rhetoric that intertwined issues of values, ethnicity, and race.

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Ingalls, Monique – Independent Scholar, Canada
monique.ingalls@gmail.com

NEGOTIATING LOCAL AND GLOBAL RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES THROUGH EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN WORSHIP MUSIC

Contemporary evangelical Christian congregational worship songs are firmly planted in both local communal practice and global mass-media commodity culture.

Based on interviews and observations from ethnographic fieldwork in the US, Canada, and the UK, this paper narrates the complex roots and routes of this musical transmission, focusing on a series of cross-border musical relations among worship music industries in Canada, the US, and the UK that began in the mid-1990s. Even as new networks, technologies, and corporate partnerships encouraged the tearing down of borders between evangelical congregations across national boundaries, the distinctions between evangelical worship in North America and the UK were not flattened in this process; rather, an even stronger sense of international difference between worship songs, artists, industries, and Christian communities has emerged as a new series of discursive borders and boundaries has been erected between these evangelical Christian communities. This study carries implications for how scholars understand religious musical creation and transmission within the context of twenty-first century global flows and calls for a more nuanced representation of the transnational cultural processes at work within religious communities and their music.

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Irimoto, Takashi – Hokkaido University, Japan

ECOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM: EXORCISING RITES IN VILLAGE AND MONASTIC FESTIVALS

Tibetan Buddhism is usually viewed in terms of its religious characteristics such as mysticism, tantrism or enlightenment by meditation. For ordinary Tibetans, however, it has ecological and practical meaning in their day-to-day living. Those living in Ladakh, Western Tibet, attribute misfortunes they experience in daily life, such as disasters and diseases, to the work of various evil spirits, and try to exorcise and expel them through liturgy and incantations. They also participate in a traditional rite at the beginning of each New Year; collecting diseases from villagers, transferring them to an effigy, and throwing the effigy away from their village. In addition, during a sacred mask dance festival, which is held at monasteries, monks destroy a small effigy that exemplifies both evil spirits and the ego as part of Buddhist rituals that teach the people, both monks and laymen, about the observance of the precepts of Buddhist doctrine. At the same time, a large ritual cake (gtor ma) is also thrown into a bonfire to expel evil spirits. In this way, seasonal and collective festivals are held in an annual social and ecological cycle involving monasteries and villages. This paper aims to point out the ecological and anthropological significance of Tibetan Buddhism as a subsistence strategy in the lives of the people.

Irizarry, Joshua A. – University of Michigan, USA
jirizarr@umich.edu

CULTIVATING AN 'INTERNATIONAL ZEN GARDEN': DAIHONZAN SŌJIJI IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Few religious institutions in Japan have as vibrant a history as Daihonzan Sōjiji, one of two head temples of the Sōtō Zen sect of Japanese Buddhism. Over the course of seven hundred years, clergy affiliated with Sōjiji have been instrumental in guiding the growth and development of Sōtō Zen throughout Japan through innovations oriented towards the laity, such as funerals, ordination ceremonies, devotional rites, and more recently, zazen practice. Following a catastrophic fire in 1898 that destroyed the entire temple, Sōjiji was moved from its historical location on the remote Noto Peninsula to a hill overlooking the international port of Yokohama, from where it could better fulfill its mission to “spread the True Dharma to the world.”

Within the last century, and the past fifty years in particular, Zen has become a global spiritual and commercial phenomenon. This has led to dramatic transformations in the ways in which clergy, adherents and practitioners (both in Japan and elsewhere) imagine Zen practice. In this paper, I use data from over two years of ethnographic fieldwork to discuss the ways in which Sōjiji, publicized as an “international Zen garden,” is attempting to reconcile the postmodern expectations of a commodified, transcultural Zen with its historic roles as a seminary for training Sōtō clergy, as a thriving parishioner temple, and as a bastion of Sōtō Zen traditions and ritual practice. I argue that Sōjiji’s ongoing negotiation of the tense dialogue between history and tradition, on the one hand, and innovation and modernization, on the other, speaks directly to issues of identity, authenticity and legitimacy which are pressing concerns for both the Sōtō Zen sect and Japanese Buddhism as a whole.

Ishikawa, Tomoko – Rikkyo University, Japan

THE ORTHODOXY-HETERODOXY PARADIGM IN THE GERMAN STUDY OF RELIGIONS

From the beginning of the study of religions in the nineteenth century, various paradigms and categories have been developed to compare and to understand different religious traditions. The necessity of those kinds of terminology is much more urgent when religious phenomena are increasingly complex and variable. The orthodoxy-heterodoxy concept can be found here, which has its origin in Western context and imported the study of religions. We can find its usage in two different contexts: on the one hand, this paradigm is used by those who think of themselves as “orthodox”

within one religious tradition and differentiate themselves from “heterodoxy.” On the other hand, the concept can be seen as a useful means for comparative study to understand the dynamics of different religious traditions in pluralistic society. The former is a normative usage which is applied inside a religious tradition. The latter can be called a descriptive usage, and is applied by the study of religions in order to describe how the orthodoxy-heterodoxy concept constructs historical or contemporary cases of religious pluralism. Based on this understanding, an investigation of the ways in which the modern German study of religions relates to this orthodoxy-heterodoxy differentiation is necessary. I would like to focus on the question of which aspects of contemporary religious phenomena can be highlighted through the differentiation. In particular, I will look at the example of the differentiation in German religious education in order to illustrate how the study of religions deals with this important notion of inter-religious positioning. (249 words)

Isiramen, Celestina Omoso – Ambrose Alli
University, Nigeria

THE CREATOR CREATED, HUMANS REVOLTED AND RELIGION INTERVENED: AYELALA IN PERSPECTIVE

Creation Myths abound as explanatory answers to the questions that confront humans regarding the created. God is presented as the Creator of a good creation. Humans are charged with culpability for the severance from the Creator and the original purpose of creation. Religion becomes a human phenomenon for restoration and repair. The objective of this paper is to examine how the Bini forged a spiritual link between the living and the dead in the worship, invocation and veneration of the deified Ayelala in the bid to restore the divine will in human community. In the study of Ayelale, recourse is made in this paper to a historical methodology which attempts to trace its changing perspective in modern Bini society. This study is facilitated by a systematic enquiry into the rites, character and structure of Ayelala which shows her as a consequence of a moral strategist; but now gradually facing non-recognition amidst the quagmire of a growing universal awareness of the successful metamorphosis of a particular individual into a divinity, the emergence of science and education as well as the seemingly conflicting religious experience. Information will be extracted from Oredo Local Government area, Benin-City where the worship of Ayelala is most pronounced. This field work reveals Ayelala to be an appropriation by the Bini as an instrument of spiritual control in the community and that its gradual annihilation could also be a consequence of the expediency that gave birth to it.

Islam, M. Zulfiquar Ali – see *Anwar, M. Khursheed Anwar*

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Isomae, Jun'ichi – International Research Center for Japanese Studies, Japan · icb74921@hotmail.co

DOUBLING BUDDHISM: BENEATH THE PROPER NAME

In recent years it has been recognized that the modern Japanese word for religion (shukyo) – although as an item of vocabulary it had its origins in Buddhist lexicons which came into being before the modern period – shukyo as a term with the current meaning of “religion” is a product of historical circumstances. When Japan entered the era of the mid-nineteenth century (bakumatsu) the term was established as the rendering for the word “religion” translated from European languages. Also in that new context another new word bukkyo arose, which was considered to belong to the unitary category of religion (shukyo). Yet this was a modern terminology, a shift away from the terms buppo (Buddha-dharma) and butsudo (Buddhist path) which had been used in the premodern period, by which the older Chinese characters ho (dharma) and do (path) were replaced by the character kyo (teaching). As scholar of religions Russell McCutcheon has said, if we assume that “religion” was established on the premise of an intrinsic essence, or if we assume the validity of the critiques offered by Daijohibussetsuron and against traditional ritual (funeral) Buddhism – which were promoted by the Buddhist studies which came on the scene in the 1890s, as they aimed at the restoration of some fundamental Buddhism – then the thing itself of aiming at that pure authenticity, as the essence of religion, wouldn't this escape the area of actual religious faith?

Iwai, Hiroshi – Tezukayama University, Japan
hiroshi.101@gmail.com

CULTURAL IMAGE OF ISLAM IN SOUTH KOREA: A CASE OF INCHEON CITY

This paper is an ethnographic study on the cultural image of Islam in South Korea. In order to explore the cultural image of Islam in South Korea, I will describe the process of opening, close and reopening of the Korean Center for Arab and Islamic Culture founded in Incheon Metropolitan City in 2007. The center was founded to promote the cultural understanding between South Korea and Islamic countries. However, in 2008, Incheon Metropolitan City suddenly decided to close the center. Behind this, there may be criticism from Protestant churches against the center. In addition to that, a narrative on Islam was spread on the internet. The narrative is that the Islam mission strategy to convert South Korea to an Islam country by 2020 is in progress. In 2009, supported by public opinion the center was reopened as not the center for “Arab and Islamic Culture” but the “Global” center. In this paper, I will touch upon the geopolitical characteristics of Incheon Metropolitan City, where Protestantism was firstly introduced.

Jackson, Peter – Stockholm University, Sweden
peter.jackson@rel.su.se

APPARITIONS AND APPARATUSES: ON THE FRAMING AND STAGING OF RELIGIOUS EVENTS

Two assumptions associated with the burgeoning field of cultural studies, the indeterminacy of meaning and the strategic play of power determining the limits of knowledge is often prescribed as an antidote to the delusions of religion and scientific realism. We need not wholeheartedly subscribe to this epistemic relativism to acknowledge that similar assumptions could also be applied to situations that are overtly framed and staged within culture so as to invite momentary participation. Despite the occasional insistence on unconditional faith and adherence, this seems especially true of religious behaviour. In demonstrating how such assumptions can be productively redescribed as focal concerns of religious participation, this paper endeavors to remove religion from some of the dichotomous sets (belief/disbelief, rationality/irrationality, obligation/freedom, agency/chance) in which it often gets entangled.

Jacobsen, Knut A. – University of Bergen, Norway
knut.jacobsen@ahkr.uib.no

SALVIFIC SPACE (TĪRTHA), GODDESSES AND WOMEN IN THE HINDU DHARMANIBANDHAS

Elaborate treatments of salvific space (*tīrtha*) and pilgrimage (*tīrthayātrā*) became part of the Hindu *Dharmaśāstra* literature only with the creation of the genre of texts of *Dharmanibandha* (legal gestic) from the 12th century. Several *Dharmanibandhas* have separate volumes on salvific space and pilgrimage. This paper investigates the female dimension of Hindu traditions of salvific space and pilgrimage in two of these texts, the *Tīrthavivekanakāṇḍa* of Lakṣmīdhara (12th century) and *Tīrthacintāmaṇi* of Vācaspati Miśra (15th century). A characteristic feature of the Hindu traditions of salvific space and pilgrimage is that they offer the same salvific rewards to all regardless of social status and also of gender. This characterizes also the *Dharmanibandha* texts. While the texts are dominated by male gods and the model pilgrim often is the male person, the texts also contain material that gives information for the understanding of goddesses and women in the pilgrimage culture. The paper presents an analysis of the goddesses described in the *Tīrthavivekanakāṇḍa* and *Tīrthacintāmaṇi* and the rules and rewards specified for women in these texts.

Jash, Pranabananda – Visva-Bharati, India

THE PRAJNAPARAMITA-HRDAYA-SUTRA: HISTORICAL APPROACHES

The Prajnaparamita-hrdaya-sutra (The Heart of Perfect Wisdom) is a well-known Mahayana Buddhist Sutra that is very popular among the Mahayana Buddhists both for its brevity and depth of meaning. It is still an enigma to the scholars for determining any specific date to the rise of the Mahayana sect and also to assign any particular date of this scripture. The most important feature for designating a particular form of Buddhism or a particular text as Mahayana is ascertain whether it: a. teaches dharma sunyata (non-reality of phenomenal objects) besides pudgala-sunyata (absence of any substance such as soul); b. incorporates the conception of countless Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; c. advocates the worship of gods and goddesses; and d. recommends the use of mantras for attaining emancipation. Historically speaking Mahayana Buddhism originated about the first century B.C. in the Andhra country where the Mahasamghika school of the Buddhists had their centre; it became a recognized form of Buddhism at the time of the Kushana king, Kanishka-I; and then it spread all over northern India in the first or second century A.D. to blossom into its full glory under excellent intellectual ferment of Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga and Vasubandhu. The present paper also argues that the mention of two names – Rajagriha and Gridhakuta mountain in the Sutra – are very important showing that the concept of Mahayana was in the pipe line among the Buddhists in a fluid stage during the time of Mahapadma Nanda (c. fourth century B.C.) and the idea is later corroborated by the statement of Taranatha.

Jensen, Jeppe Sinding – Aarhus University, Denmark
jsj@teo.au.dk

NORMATIVE COGNITION IN RITUAL AND RELIGION

In religious thought, practices and institutions various modes of cognition come together: physical, naturalistic object cognition is basic, but social and symbolic modes of cognition also contribute to the workings of human minds in 'the wild'. This is possible because of our aptitude for processing sign information, i.e., signs that point to referents of various kinds. Combining this semiotic stance with issues of normativity in thought and behaviour I will demonstrate how religion is a prime example of human 'normative cognition', where several modalities (visual, tactile, etc.) are employed in the processes of cognitive governance. The examples will be taken (mainly) from the normative Islamic system of ritual purity "Tahara" because it links minds and bodies with social norms and cosmological fate.

Jensen, Jeppe Sinding – Aarhus University, Denmark
jsj@teo.au.dk

RITUALS AS COGNITIVE GOVERNANCE TOOLS

Humans are the only species that (as far as we know) are able to cognize, *i.e.*, to process symbolically mediated normative information. Humans can acquire, produce, distribute and implement social norms and concepts. To be able to do so is to have certain cognitive skills and so be able to use symbols, concepts and norms as normative cognitive tools. Knowing what is right and wrong, pure and impure, *etc.* is to be guided in cognizing and an aid in predicting probable ranges of behavior in self and others. As a primary cognitive tool, humankind has depended upon ritual for normative cognitive skills and governance. Ritual practice draws on many kinds of objects, and their semiotic properties are used to deploy emotional valence, conative direction and cognitive salience. In the presentation some cases will be presented from the history of religions and from anthropology as tools for further discussion.

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Jiménez, Sonia – Center for Psychological and Sociological Research, Cuba

IMPACTS OF THE NEW SPIRITUALITIES IN THE CUBAN RELIGIOUS FIELD cusa@cubarte.cult.cu

◀ The variations in the Cuban religious field during the last two decades have not only been limited to the extension of religious groups, but they are evident through the practice of several spiritualities, many of which emerged in our country with great relevance in the 1990s, as consequence, among other factors, of the late presence of a range of spiritual elements and alternative options associated to the New Age and to the thrust of Oriental philosophies.

The so-called new spiritualities, without occupying large spaces in the religious field, have certain visibility in the national religious context, as accompanying elements of certain manifestations of popular religiosity, that must be taken into consideration in socio-religious research, even though they do not bring about an abrupt change in the religious world outlook of believers.

Johannsen, Dirk – University of Basel, Switzerland
dirk.johannsen@unibas.ch

SUMMONING THE QUEER FROM THE GRAVE? GENDER AND COUNTERINTUITIVITY IN OLD NORSE RELIGION

In 2007, the Viking burial mounds of Oseberg and Gokstad (Norway) were reopened and the bodily remains reanalyzed. Due to the condition of the bones, the analysis remains somewhat speculative, with the more interesting speculations including the male person of Gokstad to be acromegalic (gigantism) and one female person of Oseberg to suffer from virilism. These speculations combined with the abundance of evidence on gender discourses in Old Norse texts serve as a starting point for a cognitive perspective on the Old Norse religion in its last heyday during the 9th and 10th century. It will be argued that, in terms of Harvey Whitehouse's Modes of Religiosity-Theory, late Old Norse religion had a strong 'imagistic' character, with elements that could serve as an explicit demarcation from Christianity.

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Juschka, Darlene M. – University of Regina, Canada
Darlene.Juschka@uregina.ca

HUMAN AND NON-HUMAN ANIMAL RELATIONS: INTERMINGLING AND SEPARATION OF HUMANS AND "BEASTS"

▶ In this paper I will identify, examine and compare the separation of human and non-human animals in the Classic Maya myth the Popul Vuh, the Pueblo A:shiwi emergence myth, and the Iliad of ancient Greece. My intention, beyond showing similarities and differences between these myths with regard to this separation, is to demonstrate how systems of belief and practice are central, and in some instances foundational, to how we determine the boundaries and borders of existence.

Kaden, David A. – University of Toronto, Canada

**APOCALYPTIC DISCOURSE AND MIMICRY:
RESEMBLANCE AND MENACE IN THE APOSTLE
PAUL'S APPROPRIATION OF IMPERIAL ROMAN
PROPAGANDA**

Comparing early Christian discourse with Imperial Roman propaganda has become a fruitful area of investigation that helps address the question of how a rural Galilean movement could become the official state religion in just three centuries. Scholars have begun to trace this development to the Apostle Paul's borrowing of Roman political terminology. When examining this phenomenon, however, Pauline scholars have almost unanimously concluded that Paul was either "counter-empire" or "subversive" of empire with very little nuance. The apocalyptic elements of Paul's writings have been incorporated into such studies as have elements of (post)colonial theory, but in virtually every case the assumption remains that Paul either resisted or opposed the Roman Empire. This paper proposes a more theoretically sophisticated approach to this issue by filtering the apocalyptic themes in Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians through Homi Bhabha's categories of "mimicry" and "hybridity". Mimicry is not merely repetition, but is an effect of hybridity that menaces and ruptures colonial discourse. Integrating these categories into a broader analysis of Pauline and imperial discourses can help explain why traces of apocalyptic discourse in Paul's later letters are more difficult to detect. This is not necessarily because Paul's "theology" of the Parousia evolved, as much as it is a function of the colonial situation. From the perspective of religion as a human phenomenon, this paper demonstrates that early Christian discourse is made possible by the broader discursive field or episteme of empire, and in turn makes possible the consolidation of Christianity as Imperial religion.

Kaden, David A. – University of Toronto, Canada

**RELIGIOUS POWER CREATING RELIGIOUS TRUTH:
EUSEBIUS, ASAD, AND AUTHORIZING DISCOURSES**

Talal Asad has written that "all human sciences deal with real people." Historical inquiry into the political, theological, and social machinations of the early fourth century CE uncovers not just a world-altering transformation of the Roman Empire, occurring virtually overnight, but also a series of personal stories about "real people". In the writings of church historian Eusebius, Constantine the Great is the protagonist in a narrative that witnesses Christian history's most significant rupture.

The bedraggled and suppressed Christian church that limped into the second decade of the fourth century would be baptized with imperial power, imbued with state and sword-wielding authority, and consolidated under Constantine's watchful eye into a bureaucratic behemoth. The Council of Nicaea, the establishment and active promulgation of The Book (scriptures), and the stamping out of heretical sects within this new Christianized Rome were aspects of what Asad calls "the authorizing process by which 'religion' is created." This "authorizing process" was centered on the control of discourse by an emperor sympathetic to Christianity, but savvy enough to use its writings for his own political objectives. Asad asks, "How does (religious) power create (religious) truth?" According to Eusebius the answer was straightforward: there needed to be a narrative of divine sanction, an active suppression of heretical books, a formalized creed with signatories, and copies of the new "canon" disseminated to the Christian faithful. This discursive process from first to last was infused with text and writing, power and the production of a carefully crafted truth.

Kamada, Shigeru – University of Tokyo, Japan

kamada@iocc.u-tokyo.ac.jp

**UNITIVE EXPERIENCE OF ISLAMIC MYSTICS AND
THEIR DISCOURSES: EARLY ŞÜFİS AND MYSTICAL
PHILOSOPHY IN ISLAM**

The most significant aspect of mysticism in different religious traditions may be mystics' unitive experience of the Real. Mystics express or explain the experience in different types of discourse from a simple intuitive utterance to a systematic philosophical theory. I will here focus on the experience and its discourses concerning the phenomenon of the disappearance of human ego, which must be one of the important aspects on the way to the unitive experience. The unity of human ego and the Absolute, which is the apex of mystical quest, needs the disappearance of the former in a certain way in order to attain its full realization. Mystics of Islam in its early period express this phenomenon in the term *fanā'* (passing away). Later this simple idea develops into various forms of understanding of the Reality, among which is the Shī'a mystical philosophy represented by Mullā Ṣadrā. I would like to shed some lights upon the role of the divine scripture of Islam as providing a common ground between mystics' simple utterance and philosopher's sophisticated formulation.

Kamppinen, Matti – University of Turku, Finland
Matka@utu.fi

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MEETS THE NORMATIVE RATIONALITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION: THE CASE OF FINLAND

Religious education in Finland used to be education in religion and practice of evangelical-lutheran tradition. Recently religious education changed into multicultural teaching of “one’s own religion.” That is, if there are enough muslims or buddhists in the school, education in islam or buddhism must be provided. For those without religion, worldview studies or life philosophy is provided. The change from monoreligious education into multireligious education has radicalised the difference and contrast between religious education and science education. In science education, students get practice in critical thinking, in experimental testing, in the assessment of evidence and in the rules of rational argumentation, but in religious education the teachers can educate students in religious reasoning and rules of inference, that in most traditions are radically different from the normative rationality of science education. The dominating role of Christian theology and of theologians in Finland has resulted in situation where ethical issues, for example, are deemed as questions of religion and not of secular philosophy. However, the future prospect of religious education in Finland will question the dominant role of religion and steer towards scientific study of religion that harmonises with secular philosophy and its rules of argumentation.

Kapalo, James A. – University College Cork (UCC),
Ireland • j.kapalo@ucc.ie

LITERACY, LANGUAGE AND LAY AGENCY: ACCESSING THE DIVINE WORD IN GAGAUZ ORTHODOXY

This paper explores the reading culture and performance of sacred texts amongst Orthodox Christians in the Republic of Moldova. My central focus is on the agency of lay practitioners in accessing scarce, largely paracanonical, texts as a means of securing religious capital and authority. This study is primarily based on the narratives of women of the Gagauz minority (Turkish-speaking Christians) collected during ethnographic fieldwork in southern Moldova. For the Gagauz, a linguistic minority in a largely Russian and Romanian speaking region, reading in their Turkish mother tongue is orientated to a very large degree towards the divine. However, poverty and marginalization has resulted in a generation of women, today in their sixties and seventies, that is largely monolingual, speaking neither the language of the Church nor the state with proficiency, and is

characterized by high levels of illiteracy or semi-literacy. In this context, women’s strategies for accessing and participating in the religious textual culture offer insights into relations between lay practitioners and the divine realm. I focus on the miraculous nature of the acquisition of literacy and the performative use religious textual resources in the Gagauz language in order to open a window on the agency of lay women in the Orthodox community. This paper also explores the gendered and polyvalent nature of the relationship between orality and literacy in the performance and transmission of religious culture.

Karjalainen, Mira – University of Finland, Finland
mira.karjalainen@helsinki.fi

EMBODIED RELIGIOUS PRACTICES IN THE WESTERNIZATION PROCESS OF SPIRITUAL PHYSICAL EXERCISES

Embodied religious practices in the westernization process of spiritual physical exercises Religion is always embodied practice because everything we do, we do in our bodies. But if religion is always lived in the body, and religiosity and spirituality are profoundly embodied practices, how to view practices that consciously involve the physical body as a medium of religiosity and spiritual growth? The paper looks at embodiment and religious practices related to physical exercises. There are number of globally popular physical leisure activities connected with religions and spirituality: yoga and Hinduism, Asian martial arts and Buddhism, Zen-Buddhism and Taoism, and Afro-Brazilian martial art capoeira and Candomblé. These exercises have gained popularity in the wake of the subjective turn. The popular physical exercises as yoga and various martial arts are now practiced across the urban world, and therefore they are taught and perceived in new and sometimes unusual ways in relation to their religious and philosophical background. In order to fit in the urban global late-modern world which embraces the body and where deeply spiritual exercises are often taken as a “gym sport”, there is a slow westernization process taking place in these activities. The westernization process of these practices that are both embodied and spiritual is scrutinized in the context of consumerism and subjective turn. What remains and what gets omitted, when these physical exercises or spiritual practices are transformed to appeal the western taste? The religious and spiritual experiences in these exercises may become manifested and interpreted in various and unexpected ways when the religiosity and spirituality slowly give away to the westernization – including the body/mind dichotomy and its scientific descendants.

The religious market place has for long recognized and thus catered for the demand of embodiment in modern religiosity. In relation to religiosity and spirituality this means that the consumer culture of physical wellbeing, holistic approaches to physical exercise and spiritual growth, and trademark exercises (such as internationally well branded yoga schools) are now gaining ground in the spiritual-physical marketplace.

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Kawabata, Akira – Osaka University, Japan
kawabata@hus.osaka-u.ac.jp

A TWO-STAGE TRANSLATION

The history of SGI-USA can be divided into the following four eras.

- (I) 1960 to mid-1960s: The era when members of Japanese origin and descent predominated in SGI-USA, starting when Daisaku Ikeda first visited the United States.
- (II) Mid-1960s to mid-1970s: Era of mass membership growth among Americans as a result of street proselytizing (shakubuku).
- (III) 1977 to early 1990s: A period of stagnation following “phase II.”
- (IV) Since the 1990s: Transition era due to changes in policies related to their activity, influenced also by the split from Nichiren Shoshu.

Previous research has pointed out the factors underlying Soka Gakkai's popularity in the United States. In this paper, I primarily address the translation of religious teachings and suggest that when exploring the factors that assisted a Japanese religion in becoming established in the United States, the translations must be considered from four different aspects.

Those aspects are: (1) discussion meetings, a venue for communication among members; (2) organization publications; (3) works written by Daisaku Ikeda; and (4) sacred texts (Gosho [scriptures by Nichiren], glossaries of Buddhist terminology).

A careful examination shows that the translations in time underwent a transformation from a first stage – awkward translations that adhered too strongly to the original Japanese – to a second stage characterized by a more natural-sounding English. This transformation made it possible, starting in the 1980s, for Americans to relate to and more easily understand the teachings of Nichiren as followed by the Soka Gakkai, and formed the basis for the development of SGI.

Kawai, Yuko Doshisha University

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

METAPHOR OF SUFFERING

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Kazmina, Olga – Moscow State University, Russia
okazmina@mtu-net.ru

PERIODS IN RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT AND CONCEPTUALIZATION OF RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA

While studying and conceptualizing the shifts in religious development of post-soviet Russia it is worthy to set apart three periods: early 1990s – mid 1990s, late 1990s – mid 2000s, and mid 2000s – present. The division into periods is based on a set of attributes: position of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) – the largest denomination, and other religious organizations, the state's attitude to religion, balance between secular and post-secular tendencies, dynamics of the conceptual ideas of religious legislation, the shifts in collective cultural identities and the place of religious identity in their hierarchy, the involvement of the human rights concept, and its understanding by religious organizations. The first period can be characterized by the neutrality of the state to all religious organizations, unlimited religious freedom, intensive missionary activity of various religious organizations, the rise of the proselytism problem, the defending position of the ROC. The characteristics of the second period are the strengthening of the positions of the ROC, increased correlation between religion and ethnicity, politicization of religion, favoritism of the state toward the ROC, isolationist tendencies of the ROC in its contacts with Western Christians and friendly relations with some non-Christian religions. The third period is marked by the increased influence of the ROC on the state and society, more intensive Orthodox missionary activity, greater openness of the ROC to the dialogue and joint activity with Western Christian denominations, the engagement of the ROC in developing the human rights doctrine and supplementing it with the concept of increasing dignity.

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Kellman Green, Pamela – Independent Scholar, USA
**WHO WAS MOLECH? EVIDENCE EXCLUDED FROM
THE STUDY OF CHILD-SACRIFICE**

For over thirty years, American scholars have preached to the general public that ancient Semites practiced child-sacrifice. There is no factual support for this. Proof of child-sacrifice consists of scholars' selective use of classical literary references long discredited as propaganda, form-critical interpretations of ambiguous OT passages, and a flawed linguistic theory published by Otto Eissfeldt in 1935 under Nazi supervision.

Conversely, results of decades of osteological study of cremated infant remains are exculpatory, and yet are excluded from the literature of this field, without explanation or even comment! The same can be said of other exonerating evidence. This is not consensus but collusion.

Consider the following. Eissfeldt argued that *mlk* was a technical term for sacrifice; hence, Molech could be dismissed as an invention of biblical writers to mask the true recipient of child sacrifices, YHWH. In defense of this, scholars argue that no deity *MLK* existed outside the Semitic culture of Akkad in northern Mesopotamia in the 3rd millennium bce. Excluded is evidence suggesting a revival of Akkadian religion by the Assyrians, but harder still to justify is the omission of the Semitic god Melichios, worshipped throughout the Mediterranean during the 1st millennium bce, and compared with Molech by many classical scholars prior to WWII. The parallels to Molech are profound – and no children died!

Other omissions, such as the geographical distribution of the symbol of Tanit and a Sumerian link to the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, will also be addressed.

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Kersten, Carool – Kings College London, UK
carool.kersten@kcl.ac.uk

POST-TRADITIONALISTS & LIBERALS: ALTERNATIVE ISLAMIC DISCOURSES IN INDONESIA

Since the post-1998 political 'Reformation' Indonesia has witnessed a widening expression of religious ideas in civil society, which had been set in motion during the Suharto years (1965–98) when a space was created for the development of a cultural Islam initially by Muslim intellectuals associated with the 'Renewal of Islamic Thought' Movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and sustained by the neomodernist Muslim intelligentsia of the 1980s and 1990s. The present paper examines the heirs of this legacy, represented by an upcoming generation of culturally hybrid Muslim thinkers and scholars, combining a firm grounding in Indonesia's Islamic heritage with an equally solid knowledge of recent achievements in the humanities and social sciences by the Western academe. Cosmopolitan in outlook, these intellectuals critically engage with the Islamic tradition using methods and concepts from postcolonial studies, postmodern philosophy, poststructural anthropology and linguistics, as well as the ideas developed by progressive and innovative Islamic thinkers from other parts of the Muslim world. Although prolific writers, so far little research has been conducted by Western academics into this strand of contemporary Islamic thought, and only

very few publications in English make mention of these most recent developments in the most populous Muslim nation in the world.

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Khan, Adil Hussain – University College Cork (UCC), Ireland · adil.khan@ucc.ie

TRANSNATIONAL INFLUENCES ON IRISH MUSLIM NETWORKS

The process of individual Muslims in Ireland coming together as an organized Irish Muslim community has gradually been taking place for nearly sixty years. External factors, including international politics, have driven this process and shaped its outcomes from the very beginning. As this process developed over time and the Muslim community in Ireland grew substantially, due to an increase in migrants from Muslim majority countries in the Middle East and South Asia, influential individuals within the Irish Muslim community, who were guiding the progression of this process, were gradually displaced by influential transnational organizations, whose ambitious aspirations incorporate the vision of a more globalized role for Irish Islam. Remarkably, in recent years this transformation has enabled Dublin to become the seat of the prestigious international assembly of Muslim scholars, the European Council of Fatwa and Research, despite Ireland having one of the smallest Muslim populations in Western Europe. Within this globalized context however, the transference of authority that has taken place in Ireland, from local Muslims to international umbrella organizations, is not surprising when considering the involvement of certain transnational influences. This paper will trace the key events in the historical evolution of the Irish Muslim community and explore the role of external influences on the development of Muslim networks, within the country and abroad, in an attempt to contextualize the position of Irish Islam in a globalized framework. This paper is part of the pre-organised panel 'Islam in Ireland: Issues and Challenges in Researching on a Muslim Community in Europe' which has already been accepted as part of the conference programme.

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Khan, Ehtesham – Gaya College, India

TRIBES OF JHARKHAND: RELEVANCE OF THEIR RELIGION

Religion is one of the oldest socio-cultural characteristics associated with the mankind and civilizations created by them over thousands of years of known history. Different communities and people perceive religion in their own unique way.

According to the census of 2001 India has 1028 million population in which tribal peoples constitute 8.2% of the nation's total population, over 84 million people. Jharkhand has a population of around 26.90 million in which tribal population is around 26.3% more than 7 million people. There are 427 tribes inhabitants in Indian in which Jharkhand has 32 tribal groups. As per census record Santhal, Munda, Oraon and HO have 77.31% share in total tribal population in Jharkhand. Tribals are the oldest inhabitants of this area. Their villages and huts are scattered widely in forests, hills, mountains and plains. The Tribals of Jharkhand were originally classified on the basis of their cultural types by the Late professor L.P. Vidyarthi His Classification was as follows. Hunter gatherer type Birhor, Korwa, Hill Kharia Shifting Agriculture – Sauria Paharia Simple Artisans – Mahli, Lohra, Karmali, Chik Baraik Settled Agriculturists – Santhal, Munda, Oraon, Ho, Bhumij, etc. The reason which compelled me to concentrate on Jharkhand was that out of 6.6 million people who belong to other religions and persuasions including tribal religions in India as per 2001 census, Tribals of Jharkhand alone constitutes more than 3 million population in this category. Secondly, after getting a status of 28th state of India on 15th Nov. 2000, the tribals of Jharkhand have the honour of having four tribal chief Ministers of different political parties. Now Shree Shibu Soren of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha heading the state government. These factors show the very strength and unity of the tribals. So far as the tribal religion is concerned it plays an immensely important part in the life of the tribals and their belief in gods and goddesses, in bhuts and spirits is ingrained in them from their very childhood. The worship of these supernatural beings is supposed to protect them from all evils and calamities and enhance the fertility of their community, domestic animals and agricultural fields. Tribal religion also serves to engender and strengthen group consciousness and solidarity among them. Every tribal village has in one of its corners a sacred grove called Jaher or sarna and is believed to be the seat of all deities dwelling there. The village has a priest, too, known as the Pahan, the Deuri, the Naik, the Kelo, and so on, who performs all worship on behalf of the whole village. He is held in high esteem by the villagers and enjoys manifold privileges. Mati or Ojha the spirit doctors are believed to cure people of the diseases and miseries caused by malevolent spirits. They are also regarded as physicians possessing knowledge of medicinal herbs and capable of curing the diseases by means of herbs as well as magical incantations. The santhals, the Mundas, the Oraons, the Hos have no temples or idols for purposes of worship, they took upon such natural objects as hills and dales, trees and groves for whorship.

For all of them Singbonga is the Supreme Being and ranks highest in the hierarchy. He is believed to the creator and destroyer of all creatures Thus, the tribal region fulfills an immensely important social purpose. It has strengthened the social unity of these tribal people. A sense of social responsibility and a strong consciousness of righteousness has created among them. Many tribal festivals like Sarhul, Karam, Tusu Parab or Makar, Hal Punhya, Bhagta Parab, Rohini, Bandana, Jani-Shikaar unite and delight the tribal community. Ramdayal Munda tribal intellectual rightly states the main features of tribal society as : – Casteless, classless and based on equality; – Economy revolves around the community ; – Co-existence with nature; – Self rule based on consensus; – Struggle for respect, prestige and autonomy – History based on adjustment; – People oriented art, dance and literature; – Change according to demand of time. These all proved the very relevance of tribal religion, which unites the traditional and modern values and integrates and strengthen the society.

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Khanna, Madhu – Jamia Millia Islamia University,
 India · khanna_madhu@yahoo.com

POLITICIZATION OF RELIGION AND ITS POSSIBLE IMPACT ON THE ACADEMIC STUDY RELIGION IN INDIA

Even after sixty years of independence from British rule, there is neither an institutional forum nor an Educational policy that considers the academic study of religion to be relevant. India has adopted a secular democracy. The proponent of secularism sharply criticized and rejected the very idea of including Religious Studies as a part of their educational agenda. Thus, Religious Studies, as a critical academic discipline was not given its due place of importance. In India, the secular constitution made it mandatory that religious traditions should be indirectly approached through the study of ancient history or as a handmaid of philosophy. This reinforced a total alienation of universities from an unbiased, objective, wisdom-oriented speculation of religions in India. Religious Studies has, therefore, remained an under researched area in Indian academia. After sixty years of freedom from foreign rule, the alienation of study of religion from mainstream education has deepened.

On the other end of the spectrum, there has been rising tide of the current political ideology of Hindutva produced by the modern patriarchs of the BJP-RSS-VHP combine. Communal politics poses a serious threat to the unbiased, dispassionate and objective study of religion.

The irony is that those who claim to protect Hindu religion are ruthless supporters of Hindutva ideology. In recent years, their mis-readings and distortions of the Hindu religious texts have precipitated rage, hatred and religious violence between Hindus and non-Hindu communities.

This paper attempts to chart the impact of politicization of religion on the Hinduism and the impact that communal interpretation of scripture may have on the academic study of religion in South Asia.

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Khanna, Madhu – Jamia Millia Islamia University,
India • khanna_madhu@yahoo.com

WHEN SITA VANQUISHED RAVANA: RE-VISIONING A HERMENEUTICS AND SOCIAL APPLICATION OF THE ADBHUTA RAMAYANA

This presentation attempts to re-examine a one of the most important versions of the vernacular Ramayanas, the Abdhuta Ramayana. The Shaktas, who revere the goddess as the supreme Feminine Principle consider this text to be an important authoritative source of their tradition. This version of the Ramayana is unique in that, some seminal parts of the narrative celebrate the invincible power of the feminine. Thus, Sita, the heroine of Ramayana is poised to emulate the active feminine principle, who vanquishes Rama's adversary, Ravana. This episode marks a departure from the frame story of Valmiki's Ramayana.

My presentation is divided in two parts. The first part will discuss the Shakta codings of the Adbhuta Ramayana and the changing role of the characterization of the Sita from a self-effacing wife to an empowered goddess. The next section will examine the diverse contexts in which Sita's mythology can be invoked for the empowerment of women in India. The discussion will explore that an innovative hermeneutics has the potential to transform a religious text into an experiential document that can be made relevant for women's empowerment today.

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Kim, Chae Young Sogang – Seoul National
University, Korea • chaekim@sogang.ac.kr

WILLIAM JAMES, BERNARD LONERGAN, AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

One of the key subjects to study in religious studies would be on the transformation dimension of human life individually or collectively. The transformation issue has been identified as the category of "conversion" in the field of psychology of religion or religious studies since the early periods of the 20th century in New England of America. This has been named as one of the unique American fields emerging from the Protestant context.

Due to this reason, most scholars of conversion studies such as William James, Granville Staley Hall, and Edwin Starbuck in the earlier period have been from the Protestant background. Still the main group would be from that background. Relatively the Roman Catholic tradition did not expose its interest on the issue seriously. However the key exception would be a Jesuit "methodologist", Bernard Lonergan's exploration of conversion studies. He developed systematically various types of conversion, especially intellectual conversion, moral conversion and religious conversion. Further he extended the category from the individual dimension to the collective, social and cosmic dimension. For the more historical development of religious conversion studies I think that Lonergan's study should be more related to William James' seminal works of conversion studies in his Gifford Lectures. But I could not find any seminal indications about a possible connection to James's thought in any of Lonergan's works or in anything written by any of Lonergan's followers. Unfortunately, Lonergan have been seemingly turned away from attending to the earlier James' and others' studies of religious conversion. Thus, in this essay, I will try to specify and compare the ideas which are shared between William James and Bernard Lonergan in their study of religious conversion. Further I will indicate that the collaboration of their study would give a direction for the further research of religious conversion in a global pluralistic religious world.

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Kim, David W. – University of Sydney, Australia
davidwj_kim@yahoo.co.uk

THOMASINE LOGIA: A COLLECTION OF SAPIENTIAL TRADITIONS

This paper argues the sapiential characteristic of an ancient text in the history of early Christianity. Although Thomas is a creative and distinctive text for its own community, the major framework of the Logia in a textual-statistic way was based on the traditional sophia literature that had affected the culture, custom and authority of the Hellenised Jewish societies. Then, what kind of scrolls, books and writings could be the religio-historical materials for Thomas? How was Thomas transformed from those sapiential manuscripts? The Greek fragment of P. Oxy. 654 and NHC II, 2. 32: 10–51: 28, through three comparable datas of 'the Pauline sophia concept', 'the sapiential Logia in Thomas and Q' and 'the sapiential themes of the Jewish apocalyptic writings', will evince the new insight that the ancient Logia of the Thomasine community was not 'the traditional Q', but could be 'a new Q' coming from the common (oral, or written, or both) sophia tradition, as an independently developed one.

Kim, Hyun-Ah – University of Toronto, Canada

HOMO LUDENS, MUSIC, AND LITURGICAL PERFORMANCE: A CRITIQUE OF J. HUIZINGA'S PLAY THEORY

This paper re-visits Huizinga's cultural theory of play presented in his *Homo Ludens* (1938), with a focus on the performance practice of religious music. Huizinga regards play as a free, meaningful activity for its own sake, a 'voluntary activity', bound by a self-contained system of rules and performed 'seriously' in imaginative pretension – not a task imposed by duties or necessities but done at leisure. Examining the role of play in law, war, science, poetry, and philosophy, Huizinga argues that the instinct for play is the central element of culture: 'play is not a biological phenomenon but a cultural phenomenon' – 'more than a mere physiological phenomenon or a psychological reflex'. Regarding 'ritual', which is 'seriousness at its highest', Huizinga claims that 'the ritual act has all the essential characteristics of play', especially in that 'it transports the participants to another world'. His argument for this identity of ritual and play is rooted in the Platonic view that comprises the *sacra* in the category of play (Laws, viii, 803). In light of the key feature of play, 'exhibitionism', this paper attempts to elucidate the role of play in music which is integral part of liturgical performance – both public worship and private devotion. It argues that although 'the play character' attaches to music, the Platonic ideas of music do not always fall into the play concept, when considering its notion of singing as contemplation – 'prayer' – as distinguished from play, in terms of the etymologies of play that are pertinent to musical instrument.

King, Matthew – University of Toronto, Canada

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

'TIBET' AS AN IDEOLOGICAL CATEGORY IN EARLY-MODERN MONGOLIAN BUDDHISM

Understanding the role that Mongolian Buddhists have played in Tibetan religion, and conversely the ways that Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism have informed Mongolian religious and cultural identity, is a very complex and understudied topic. This paper takes up these questions in relation to the life, education and textual output of the early twentieth century Khalkha Mongol Buddhist scholar and hermit Zawa Damdin Lam (1867–1937). Better known to researchers of Tibetan religious history by his authorial names Blo bzang rta dbyangs, Sog po bLo bzang rTa mgrin, or rTsa ba rTa mgrin, his career is representative of the final engagements with Tibetan religious culture by Khalkha Buddhists on the eve of the brutal purges of the Mongolian People's Party in the late

1930s. As such, his life is indicative of some of the challenges scholars have faced in conceptualizing not only the adoption and adaptation of Tibetan Buddhist culture in Mongol areas, but in the active Mongolian participation in late 19th and early 20th century religio-political developments in Tibet proper. This paper queries instances of these final, pre-socialist statements by Zawa Damdin on Khalkha Mongol religious identity to try and characterize the complex narrative strategies used by the author to locate a (Khalkh) Mongolian Buddhism in relation to Tibet. Though sharing a common imagined community with Tibet (and by extension Buddhist India and Qing China), Zawa Damdin's historical works challenge the researcher to account for the agency, innovation and self-conscious deviations of Mongolian Buddhists from Tibet. Elaborating upon Diemberger and Bulag's 'critical cosmopolitanism' (2007) analytical paradigm on the basis of Zawa Damdin's histories, this paper attempts to locate the Tibet of the Mongolian imaginaire and the complex (and sometimes contradictory) ways that Mongolians saw their cultural identity in its light.

King, Rebekka – University of Toronto, Canada

'STILL, ALREADY, YET': A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF TEMPORAL ADVERBS IN PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

Theological debate concerning the existence or the necessity of God may seem out of place in an ecclesiastical setting, but this is not the case with conversations increasingly being conducted by a loosely organised network of mainline liberal churches and individuals who have adopted the moniker 'progressive Christianity'. This paper draws on two years of formal fieldwork at five Canadian churches that identify themselves as 'progressive' and feature reading and discussion groups that engage popular liberal theological texts. Upon encountering these texts, many of the Christians I have studied have adopted the stance that Christianity should reject the notion of an interventionist or relational deity – for some this means the rejection of a deity altogether. This representation of God is perceived to be both non-empirical and immoral (in addition to this view, progressive Christians argue that Christianity will survive into the twenty-first century only if it rejects other traditionally core components of Christianity, such as the miracles of Jesus, the authority of scripture and atonement theology). For many of the progressive Christians who participated in this study, belief in a theistic deity was seen as a something that the church might outgrow: my interlocutors speak of "still believing in certain traditional tenets"; "having already given up other beliefs" and being "not quite ready to give up particular key components of the Christian narrative."

This use of temporal adverbs like 'still', 'already' and 'yet' which, along with their identification as "progressive," are of particular interest because they suggest a continual and unfinished evolutionary process of beliefs and practices that divert from a normative, static Christian temporality (see Harding 2000: 230). The rhetorical use of adverbs relating to unfinished time (e.g., 'already', 'still' and 'yet') challenges a traditional and evangelical Christian worldview in which the past, present and future are understood as biblically revealed. My study of progressive Christian reading and discussion groups offers scholars of religion a means of examining the ways in which religious identity is formed outside of, and in opposition to, established identities. In this paper, I analyze the linguistic practices which emerge in a collaborative engagement of texts by progressive Christians. I draw upon theoretical contributions from the 'ethnography of reading' (Boyarin 1989; see also Bielo 2009; Davie 2005) to look at the ways in which reading texts serve as a venue for identity construction (Lambek 1990; Wimbush 2008; Wuthnow 1994). I argue that the language and practice of collaborative reading enables the members of the reading and discussion groups to construct an identity which is simultaneously Christian and atheist (or non-theist). In doing so, they move the primary location of Christian identity into a space of resistance to more traditional definitions of the Christian subject. In this paper, I locate progressive Christian religiosity in a temporally-situated rhetoric which is constructed in relationship with the texts being studied. For each adherent this rhetoric draws on both their personal experiences, as well as a collective "shared subtext," articulated through a collaborative engagement with these popular texts.

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Kippenberg, Hans G. – See *Plenary Presentations*, p8

Kippenberg, Hans G. – Jacobs University, Germany
MUSLIM WEBSITES AND THE ISSUE OF ACTING IN PUBLIC INTEREST

The Internet has been a privileged place for publishing fatwas since its beginning. fatwas are opinions given by Muslim experts, not only clerics, in response to questions posed by Muslims how to act in situations, that are not clearly defined in the tradition. In the beginning these collections were published on static HTML-pages. With web 2.0 a direct exchange between believer and adviser became possible and changed the genre fundamentally. A questions can now be posted on the website, the mufti can respond directly and make his advise accessible to other users as well. My paper will address the religious repercussions of this technological change: differences between the opinions of muftis are becoming public;

muftis do introduce into their decision arguments that derived from non-Islamic social and political discourses. Websites become the arena of disputes on e.g., suicide operations by Muslims in Palestine or the London Bombings in 2005. In online services of Muslim scholars the traditional genre of fatwa develops into a medium that addresses the public benefit of Muslim activities.

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Kirby, Danielle – University of Queensland, Australia
 danielle.l.kirby@gmail.com

MERGING WORLDS: EXPLORING THE CONTINUITY BETWEEN THE REAL AND THE FANTASTIC IN THE OTHERKIN COMMUNITY

In the late modern digitised age there are numerous examples of religious and spiritual behaviours that integrate the sacred and the secular. Most particularly, there are an increasing number of groups that explicitly incorporate fantasy narrative within their personal metaphysics. Jediism, Matrixism, and various Paganisms all exemplify this trend, demonstrating an eclectic and idiosyncratic approach to personal spiritual realities and fantastic narrative. The Otherkin, a group who believes that they are in various ways non-human, also belong within this category of spiritual behaviour. Their primary metaphysical assertion, that they own non-human souls, tends to lead to the adoption of fantasy creatures such as dragons, elves, and vampires as their own true selves. This type of belief, while not entirely new, has seen significant increase since the popularisation of the Internet, and appears at least in part bound up in the perceptual shifts that such media suggests. This paper seeks to explore the specific relationship between the Internet, fantasy narrative, and personal metaphysical realities through the example of the Otherkin with a view to mapping out the nature of the interaction. This paper will address issues such as the Internet as a form of communication and a forum for self-expression, the proliferation of fantasy narratives and icons across media, and subjective experience as the central reality of contemporary alternative spiritual practice.

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Kirmani, Nida – University of Birmingham, UK

TREADING A DANGEROUS PATH? THE USE OF ISLAM IN WOMEN'S RIGHTS ADVOCACY

Although the promotion of women's rights is often seen as a 'secular enterprise', efforts to incorporate religion within gender-related advocacy are growing. This has followed a growth in various forms of 'Islamic feminism' during the past two decades, which aim to reclaim Islam for women.

A variety of non-governmental organisations and members of women's movements have drawn on these ideas and have, either by necessity or choice, begun to engage with Islamic discourses and actors in their efforts to promote women's rights on a variety of issues, especially in relation to reproductive rights and family laws. Some of these activities have also been encouraged by donor agencies as a possible way around the 'cultural bind'. However, analysis of these strategies is scant, and opinions amongst feminists remain divided about the effectiveness and possible limits of such approaches. Drawing on examples from various parts of the world including Asia, Africa and the Middle East, this paper critically analyses the efforts made by NGOs and women's movements to promote women's rights within an Islamic framework. It then explores the possibilities, assumptions and dangers of such approaches and argues that, although women's rights advocates cannot afford to ignore the issue of religion, it must be approached with caution.

Kirmani, Nida – International Development
Department, University of Birmingham, U.K.

Zaidi, Dr Sarah – International Treatment
Preparedness Coalition, UK

AN UNEASY RELATIONSHIP: RELIGION, PHILANTHROPY AND DEVELOPMENT IN KARACHI

This paper explores the role of religion in philanthropic activities and in development initiatives in Karachi, Pakistan. The authors discuss the different approaches to development taken by welfare-related organisations that are locally-driven and funded and non-religiously affiliated NGOs, which are largely reliant on foreign funding. The paper explores why these locally-driven organisations distinguish themselves from the NGO-led 'development sector' even if many of their activities are focused on alleviating poverty. The drive to engage in philanthropy in Pakistan is closely tied to religious practice, with the majority of funding originating in religious forms of giving such as zakat and sadqa. Hence, although these organisations may not identify themselves explicitly as 'faith-based organisations', religion is intimately intertwined with their identity and practice. Christian organisations are an exception to this rule because of their position as members of minority groups and due to their participation in international networks. NGOs, on the other hand, speak the language of 'development', and do not actively incorporate religion into their work. The role of religion in these sectors of civil society must be understood in the wider context of both the Pakistani state, which has historically appropriated religion for its own purposes, and the international donor community's uneasy relationship with Islam.

This research contributes to the wider understanding of 'faith-based organisations' and competing notions of 'development' in Pakistan and beyond.

Kitchen, John – University of Alberta, Canada
John.kitchen@ualberta.ca

METONYMY AND THE END OF THE WORLD: THE AUGUSTINIAN INTERPRETATION OF MATTHEW 24:36/MARK 13:32

"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the son, but only the Father." Two tendencies mark the patristic reception of Matthew 24:36. The first claims that the text is faulty – "nor the Son" is a "heretical" interpolation. The assertion of textual corruption entails "orthodox" denunciations of Arians, who relish the phrase's expression of Jesus' ignorance and hence inequality with the omniscient Father. The second tendency is intertextual exegesis of high consistency: to interpret the verse and its Markan parallel, commentators tend to draw on the same biblical passages underscoring Christ's full divinity. Departing from those tendencies, Augustine considers linguistic usage. By keeping the parousia secret, Christ "causes" (facit) the disciples' ignorance. This "modus loquendi" Augustine illustrates with a common example: We call a ditch "blind" (caeca), even though we are the ones who cannot see it. Medieval authors designate this way of speaking "metonymia" when they take-up Augustine's interpretation. Significantly, the trope named in the exegetical literature bears on the findings of cognitive linguists, who have treated "cause-and-effect metonymy" in terms resembling the Augustinian position. Theorists have also noted metonymical operations at work in religious worldviews. In light of such insights, closer examination of the Augustinian exegesis shows the Christian "vision of the end" hinging on metonymical signifiers. The paper thus invites listeners to consider whether metonymy – not metaphor – is the trope of Christian eschatology.

Klautau, Orion – Tohoku University, Japan
orion_usp@hotmail.com

RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN BRAZIL: MODERNITY, CATHOLICISM AND THE STATE

Considerations on the religion(s) of the "other", albeit within theological boundaries and for proselytizing purposes, predate "modernity" in Brazil by a few centuries. However, it was not until the nineteenth century that "religion" became an object of study in the modern sense of the term.

It was a medical doctor, Nina Rodrigues (1862–1906), the first to publish, in French, “scientific” works on the religious practices of the black population of Brazil. Nevertheless, there was no “Brazilian school of anthropology” for him to influence at the time: even when compared to other Latin American countries, Brazil was late in developing a university system. The University of São Paulo, Brazil’s first university to offer graduate courses in the field of humanities and social sciences, was not founded until the 1930s. Based on a French model, the study of “religion” at that university had its place: sociologists, historians and anthropologists all dealt with the subject. But unlike other countries, no independent department for “religion” was created. To this day, despite a few exceptions, such departments in public Brazilian universities are mainly inexistent: it is in confessional institutions of higher education (such as Catholic universities) that “religious studies” has its place, at times independently, but always with some sort of connection to the field of Theology. In this presentation, I will give a brief account of the study of “religion” in Brazil, considering how the field’s configuration in this country can help us understand some aspects of “modernity”. [Panel: Comparative Perspective on the Development of ‘Religious Studies’]

Kleine, Christoph – University of Leipzig, Germany
c.kleine@uni-leipzig.de

BUDDHIST MONKS AS HEALERS IN EARLY AND MEDIEVAL JAPAN

The contingency of health has presented a major concern for human beings throughout their entire history and spanning all cultures. According to a well established theory, the main function of religion is to offer people sets of beliefs and practices to cope with the contingencies of life, such as illness, calamity and death. Japanese Buddhism is no exception and from the earliest times rituals have been performed in order to heal the sick, prevent disease, and end epidemics. As in many cultures, including premodern Japan, religious experts such as Buddhist priests were not least of all seen and respected as healers – both in a physical and a spiritual or religious sense (if this distinction is at all applicable). Healing by means of the recitation of mantras or dhāraṇīs was a common occupation of the monks.

Mainly through the analysis of chronicles and edifying narratives from ancient and medieval times, I would like to pose and answer the following questions: Has the image of Buddhist monks as healers changed over the course of time? If so, why and how has it changed?

Klocová, Eva – Masaryk University, Czech Republic
eva.klocova@gmail.com

RELIGION, RELIGIOSITY: IS THERE REALLY A PROBLEM OF DEFINITION?

As we all know too much, too good, there is no such thing as universal definition of religion. But what are its consequences for the Study of Religions as a scientific discipline? Such is an issue since the very beginning of our discipline. But what are the possibilities today, what choices do we have? What brings the postmodern philosophy to the Study of Religions and what is the cognitive approach good for? The aim of this paper is to bring out the difference between Science and Philosophy of Science and to make clear the competences of each. The main subject of this comparative approach will be the problem of the definition of the basic terms of the Scientific Study of Religions such as religion or religiosity. To illustrate the problem on the level of philosophy, the paper will deal mostly with the approach of postmodernism or more precisely deconstructive methods. On the scientific level, I chose the cognitive approach for it is in my opinion the most scientific approach nowadays. On each level, I will show the important conclusions for the possibility of defining the basic concepts and I will focus on its benefits as well as weaknesses.

Knott, Kim – University of Leeds, UK
k.knott@leeds.ac.uk

CHRISTIANITY IN BRITAIN THROUGH A MEDIA LENS: CONTINUITY, CELEBRITY, CONTROVERSY AND CONTEXT

This paper is based on findings from a research project on ‘Media portrayals of religion and the secular sacred: A longitudinal study of British newspapers and television’ (within the UK research councils’ ‘Religion and Society’ Programme). The study – of the content of a range of newspapers and terrestrial television early in 2009 – replicated an earlier one conducted in the 1980s. Results on the representation and treatment of Christianity from both studies will be presented and analysed. How far has the portrayal changed, and to what extent are differences explained by generally held views about religion in contemporary society (in the 1980s and today)? What does the comparison suggest about the changing nature of media culture and discourse? Is a more secular perspective in evidence, and what difference does the current equality and diversity agenda make to the way Christianity is positioned by the media? Other issues include Christian plurality, denominations and new forms; hot topics – what gets Christianity onto the front page; the media debate about the establishment of the Church of England; and the relationships between Christianity and Islam, and Christianity and atheism.

I will argue that media rhetoric produces a certain type of domestication of Christianity focused on continuity and tradition, key figures and major controversies, though how these are treated depends on the editorial stance, priorities and values of the newspaper or television channel.

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Kobayashi, Naoko – Keio University, Japan

SECULAR BENEFITS OUTWEIGH RELIGIOUS RESTRICTIONS – THE EXCLUSION OF WOMEN FROM SACRED PRECINCTS

It is not uncommon that secular benefits outweigh any religious reasons for restricting women from sacred sites. For centuries, women have not been able to enter Sanjogatake, a part of Mt.Omine in Nara, Japan because of several cultural and religious reasons. Sanjogatake has been the sacred ascetic place for only men for over 1300 years, and women, even ascetic practitioners, have been excluded from there. There are four big gateways prohibiting women from entering the mountain, so female climbers must take a detour around the no-go zone. In fact, however, the area of women's exclusion has been getting smaller and smaller, not for religious reasons, but for extremely secular reasons, such as admitting female tour bus guides and tree planters into the mountain. Moreover, today some local people who engage in tourism for Mt. Omine begin to insist that they should accept female climbers because male climbers have been decreasing in recent years. In short, religious restrictions can be revised for secular reasons, such as financial profit and convenience, which are unrelated to the religious dimension. Although several cultural and religious restrictions have prevented women from entering Sanjogatake for a long time, secular benefits tend to come before cultural and religious traditions in the actual arguments for opening Sanjogatake to women. In so doing, female climbers, the extremely important people concerned, are left out of the argument. In the end, however, it is usually the female climbers who are confused by changing views on the exclusion of women from Sanjogatake.

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Koenig, Carolin Evelyne – University of Glasgow, UK
c.koenig.1@research.gla.ac.uk

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

FRONTI NULLA FIDES: CONTEMPORARY ART AND LEIBNIZ'S VINCULUM SUBSTANTIALE

“There are mystically in our faces,” wrote Sir Thomas Browne 1643 in his *Religio Medici*, “certain characters which carry in them the motto of our Soules, wherein he that cannot read A. B. C. may read our natures...”

The finger of God hath left an inscription upon all his workes.”

Over many centuries, the understanding of bodily signs as a universal expressive system has remained constant. René Descartes, as he makes clear in his *Passions of the Soul*, saw the operations of the body as innate, universal, and exempt from change. Such an understanding consequently makes a reading of physical signs – the observation of the body and the interpretation of its symptoms – necessary. Everything, it seems, depends on the visibility of the signals. Which standards, however, are applied hereby and who is skilled enough to read those signs without failing? What does the quotation cited above suggest to a seemingly disenchanted world and what does it mean for our contemporary trust and distrust of the body as a reliable source?

Taking eighteenth century writings by artists such as Charles Le Brun (*A Method to Learn to Design the Passions*) as a starting point, I would like to discuss contemporary works of art by Jana Sterbak, Sigalith Landau, and Mona Hatoum. Those female artists demonstrate a marked misogyny that is endemic to physiognomy due to its essentializing doctrine. Furthermore, their work allows for a critique of Descartes' understanding of the human body as a machine which I should like to contrast with Leibniz's concept of the *vinculum substantiale* and Tristram Shandy (Laurence Sterne, 1759): “Our minds shine not through the body, but are wrapt up here in a dark covering of uncrystalized flesh and blood.”

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Kogelmann, Franz – Bayreuth University, Germany

SANUSI LAMIDO SANUSI AND THE CONTESTED BORDERS OF THE RELIGIOUS FIELD IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

The religious field of Northern Nigeria is dominated by different Muslim groups since decades and led regularly to violent intra-religious conflicts. The situation came to a sudden end in 1999. The “rules of the game” and the borders of the religious field changed dramatically. The rules became democratic and borders have been re-defined by the state. Islamic law in civil and criminal matters has been re-implemented. With only a very few exceptions the majority of Muslim organizations and scholars stood united behind this at the very beginning state-initiated sharia project. One of these rare exceptions was Sanusi Lamido Sanusi – since 2009 governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria. Immediately after the re-implementation of “full sharia” he intervened in the then intense debate on the implications and borders of sharia in Northern Nigeria.

The paper is focused on a single actor – Sanusi Lamido Sanusi – and on a single event – a conference on comparative perspectives on sharia in Nigeria held January 2004 in Jos, Plateau State. Sanusi Lamido Sanusi was one of the presenters of this conference and he came under fire for his positions vis-à-vis the sharia project. The hefty dispute over his presentation demonstrates clearly the strategic positions of some main actors of the sharia project. The aim of the paper is to draw attention to the contested borders of the religious field in Northern Nigeria.

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Kolodnyy, Anatoliy – Ukrainian Association of
Researchers of Religion, Ukraine

**AN ANALYSIS OF 'NATIONAL CHURCH' AS AN
ETHNO-CONFESSIONAL INSTITUTION IN
ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY** · cerif2000@gmail.com

The globalization of religious life questioned the existence of national churches and religions. Universalism of Christianity or Islam as world's religions do not need, and even deny, their narrow national forms of institutionalization. However, all arguments about unnecessary of the national churches, which functioned in specific geographical, cultural, historical and everyday living conditions of some people, failed. This especially became apparent to newly established States as a result of the collapse of former empires, including Yugoslavia, USSR, *etc.* National churches became the main ethnic identification markers, initiators of the revival of national movements. Russians, Serbs, Macedonians, Ukrainians, Moldovans and others loudly expressed the need to have their national churches as the religious organizations with clearly ethnic coloration, national languages of worship, their saints, calendar, holidays, and theological literature. Advocating and protecting the national interests in the religious sphere has led some people (nations) to tension and sometimes conflicts between the subjects of interfaith relations. The relationship between national Orthodox Churches of once conquered peoples (Macedonians, Ukrainian) and dominant peoples of the empire (the Serbs and Russians) have become especially acute. The report reveals the history and causes of current confrontation between the National Local Orthodox Church, analyzes the current relationship between different Churches, projects inter-Orthodox ways to overcome the split, as well as the impact on Christian unity as a whole.

Komatsu, Kayoko – Tama University, Japan
komatsu@tama.ac.jp

**WOMEN RESEARCHERS IN RELIGION-RELATED
FIELDS**

This paper aims to analyze and redress the male dominant structure, gender blindness, and institutional androcentrism that are built-in to the religious studies community in Japan. The debate concerning the introduction of a quota system to an association in Japan should serve as an illustrative example of the characteristics of the scholarly association's attitude toward gender. When the introduction of a quota system was proposed in an association, there were statements that did not clearly declare opposition but did express doubt that the proposal would accord with the reality of the situation, that is the contemporary phenomenon of women who do not do the work or do not want to do the necessary work. At the same time, this stance has the additional effect of draining the meaning from efforts to deal with actual situations by referring to those efforts as political. It became clear that even if gender discrimination of some kind exists, the effort to point it out and do something about it tends to be viewed as political activity that cannot be reconciled with research activity. We need to recognize that the scholarly world, which has been termed neutral with regard to political and intellectual authority, contains deep-rooted sexism. In addition, we also need to realize that the coexistence of diversity of genders contributes to the improvement of scholarship itself.

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Königstedt, Christiane – University of Leipzig
christiane.koenigstedt@googlemail.com

**'NEW AGE' RELIGION IN PRACTICAL LIFE AND IN
COMPARISON WITH THE GERMAN PEACE
MOVEMENT IN THE 1980s**

In my presentation I propose a refined macrotheoretical structuring of 'New Age' religion through that different forms of religion/spirituality/magical world-views could be tested empirically in a semi-standardised microstudy on their impact on the construction of a collective identity in the field. The results show considerable interrelationships between the systematic structure of 'New Age' beliefs, certain characteristics of individual attitudes, and ensuing behaviour. To highlight aspects concerning the topic of collectivity, these findings will be compared with a "new" form of collective identity that appeared within the German Peace Movement in the 1980s. I seek to draw conclusions also about the impact of studying the 'New Age' phenomenon on the macro-theoretical and phenomenological dimensions of research on religion, religious diversity and collective identities.

The approach extends Eileen Barker's thesis of the social significance of New Religious Movements – as I argue the 'New Age' has been, at least from the late 1960s to the 1980s – towards a macrotheoretical level. It also shows a practical way to differentiate and compare between several forms of religion on the one hand, and on the other to bridge the gap between cognitive theories and social network theories.

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Krasniqi, Shemsi – University of Prishtina, Kosovo
shemsi.krasniqi@gmail.com

LA PIERRE COMME LA MEMOIRE ET L'EXPERIENCE HUMAINE

Depuis l'antiquité, la pierre était part de la vie sociale et d'histoire de l'humanité. La pierre a été utilisée comme un outil de manipulation, matériel de construction et décoration, medium de transmission de messages et comme objet de culte et d'adoration. Dès temps préhistoriques, à travers les différentes époques, et jusqu'à nos jours, la relations avec la pierre a été part de la culture et de la vie sociale. C'est la raison pourquoi, on peut considérer la pierre comme un élément très important de la mémoire et de l'expérience humaine. Au Kosovo, il y a des pierres qui portent dans leur dos, les messages gravés (art rupestre) depuis la préhistoire. Les pratiques rituelles (rites de passage) qui se déroulent là encore aujourd'hui, représentent pour les participants des expériences particulières. Le but de mon étude est de représenter et analyser les symboles, les cultes et les pratiques rituelles et religieuses reliées avec la pierre.

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Kreinath, Jens – Whichita State University, USA
jens.kreinath@wichita.edu

INTER-RELIGIOUS PILGRIMAGE SITES AS CHRONOTOPES: THE WORSHIP OF ST. GEORGE IN HATAY, TURKEY

This paper presents ethnographic findings on the worship of Saint George (Hizir or Khidr) in Hatay, Turkey. This figure is one of the major and reoccurring figures in many pilgrimage sites in the area. Throughout the year, members of various religious communities of Hatay consult these sites for purposes of sacrifice, healing, praying, and wish making. Among the pilgrims are the Nusayri, one of the most hybrid among the local religious communities of Hatay. They are a heterodox splitter group of extreme Shia Islam on the Syrian border of Turkey, who incorporate Jewish, Christian and Sunni, as well as pagan practices and beliefs with the worship of St. George as one of its central figures. The plural locality of these shrines (of about 400 alone in the Syrian borderland) and their frequent visits throughout the year, transform these sites a locality that emerges as

a space-time in its own right and follows its own temporal and spacial order. This paper demonstrates how the various ceremonies performed at these sites shape these places and reshape their reality through a ritual transformation of agency. By engaging in the work of Bahtin, Gell and Taussig, I ponder upon how theoretical concepts such as 'liminal', 'indexical' and 'mimetic' can allow one to analyze ethnographic data on pilgrimage sites in a new key. In conceptualizing the dynamic interrelatedness between the performance of pilgrimage and the sacred sites, I show how these sites become liminal and hybrid chronotopes.

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Kreinath, Jens – Whichita State University, USA
jens.kreinath@wichita.edu

RITUAL AS INDEX AND THE COMPLEXITY OF AGENCY: TRANSFORMING VISITS AT PILGRIMAGE SITES IN HATAY

In recent years, various registers of meaning and discourse have shaped the study of religion in general and of ritual in particular. This paper addresses the inherent problem in studying the efficacy that meanings and discourses place upon the religious practices as well as of that of ritual actions upon the symbolic representations of these actions. In order to conceptualize the transforming efficacy of such discourses and practices, as this paper argues, one has to account for the notion of causality and the physical presence of the here and now. Elaborating upon the semiotics as introduced by Pierce and using his threefold classification of signs, *i.e.*, index, icon, and symbol, I take index as foundational for understanding the efficacy of ritual action and religious discourse and thus privilege efficacy and transformation as forms of causality over symbolic or iconic representations or meanings. Taking my evidence from my ethnographic findings on the devotional visits of worship and wish making (*ziyaret*) in the Turkish province Hatay, I submit that one has to conceptualize religious practices, including ritual and pilgrimage, as indexes of agency in order to account more coherently for this transforming power. In this regard, the work of Alfred Gell is indicative as it proposes the most coherent approach to the study of material objects and practices by theorizing them as indexes of agency. Refining Gell's theoretical account of the relation between complexity and agency, this paper employs the semiotic distinction of type and token to account for the different level of abstraction in analyzing rituals as indexes, which derive their agency from the complexity of their performance.

Kreinath, Jens – Wichita State University, USA
jens.kreinath@wichita.edu

THE RITUALS OF INTERRELIGIOSITY IN HATAY: AESTHETICS, EXCHANGE, MIMESIS

This paper explores some theoretical possibilities of the aesthetics of religion as an original field of research. In light of ethnographic evidence collected during my fieldwork in Hatay, I discuss how ethnically and religiously diverse people of Antakya established a culture of interreligiosity that enabled them to mutually express and mediate different practices of religiosity through various devices such as song, prayer, pilgrimage as well as smell, food and dress. Key to the understanding of this aesthetics of culture is the mutual exchange of gesture of respect, friendship, and recognition. On various occasions, people in Hatay participate in the rituals, services and festivals, of other religious groups to strengthen their social ties. Problematising common notions of representation and meaning in the study of religion, I argue that one has to connect the different aesthetic devices of religious experience with the common features of cultural practice such as friendship and respect in order to understand how the people of Hatay practice their unique form of interreligiosity. Integrating different forms of sensual experience through sound, smell and taste, I submit that aesthetics is the key for the study of religion in general and the understanding the different forms of religious ritual in particular. In this respect, I take mimesis as a key concept to interpret the interplay between the different forms of bodily perception, experience, practice, and discourse enhancing different forms of religious experience in ritual.

Kubota, Hiroshi – Rikkyo University, Japan
frhkubota@rikkyo.ne.jp

THE VOELKISCH SPIRITISM IN RELIGIO-POLITICAL CONTEXTS

Artur Dinter (1876–1948) is one of the most prominent National Socialist ideologists active as an aggressive anti-Semitic author who partly contributed through his widely prevalent works to the legislation of the Nuremberg Law of Race. Despite his anti-Semitic conviction, however, he was expelled from the party because of his explicit hostility toward the established Christian churches, unable to be reconciled with the – although superficially – pro-Christian, or conciliatory ecclesiastical policies of the party. Nevertheless, he named his anti-clerical, and anti-doctrinal movement ‘Christianity’ because, according to him, it was the only authentic Christianity to be finally liberated from Judaized elements in the given churches, and uniquely represented the genuine teachings of the ‘Aryan Jesus’.

Dinter’s activities have often been discussed in regard to his prominent, and simultaneously precarious position within the anti-Semitic voelkisch-political movement and the National Socialist party. He has otherwise been referred to as one of the voelkisch-religious obscurants without any distinctive profile. In this paper, however, attention will be directed to his spiritist theories and practices in order to shed light on his specific strategies for salvaging ‘Christianity’ from its paralyzation, which was deemed to have resulted from the stiffening of the churches. While most of the other voelkisch-religious advocates sought to ‘modernize’, *i.e.*, actualize their religious significance by renouncing seemingly irrational elements, Dinter’s voelkisch spiritism represented another type of rehabilitating ‘religion’ in the form of “Spirit Christianity”, explicitly depending on the ‘modern’ heritage of the spiritism that had emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century

Kuikman, Jacoba H. – University of Regina, Canada

HAREDI OPPOSITION TO ZIONISM: LOCUS OF RESISTANCE TO ISRAELI COLONIZATION

This paper explores one of the movements in the history of Zionism which constitutes and embodies what some scholars consider classic Judaic opposition to Zionism, namely, the Haredim or literally, ‘God-fearing’, who live in religious enclaves such as Bnei Brak in Tel Aviv and Mea Shearim in Jerusalem. These religious Jews who publicly criticize Zionism by burning the Israeli flag, for example, have done so for primarily two reasons embedded in Jewish tradition: to prevent desecration in the name of God (the state of Israel does not speak for all Jews) and to preserve human life: concern for Palestinians’ wellbeing and for the outrage the state of Israel has generated around the world. I question to what extent this rather negligible but noisy and persistent religious body might be considered a locus for resistance against the colonizing tendencies of the Jewish state. I also examine why these Haredim seem to be progressively adopting more traditional, non-religious approaches to Zionism such as quiet diplomacy, and unlike some extreme Haredim such as Neturei Karta, not siding with enemies of the Jewish state.

Kull, Ann – Lund University, Sweden

GENDER-SENSITIVE INTERPRETATIONS OF ISLAM IN INDONESIA

The aim of this paper is to present and analyse gender sensitive interpretations of the Qur’an in Indonesia and a reform of fiqh from a gender perspective.

These endeavours can be seen as an expression of Islamic feminism, a discursive framework that has grown from the Islamisation processes of Muslim societies in the 1980s, be it a cultural Islamisation as in Indonesia or a political one as in many other societies. Another objective is to describe the specific Indonesian environment where these ideas have developed. The liberal approach in Islamic thinking and especially the emphasise on the importance of context in the endeavour of independent reasoning or interpretation of the Islamic scriptures (ijtihad), but also the increase and reform of higher Islamic education and not least the high percentage of female students. Still, these endeavours constitute a part of a larger international development of reform and modernist thinking in Islam that originated much earlier. I will therefore present and analyse these interpretations of Indonesian female and male scholars of Islam as a part of this discourse. The focus is on what they actually say and how they legitimise their ideas, but also on how these ideas are used in the struggle for women's human rights and how they are perceived in various spheres of Indonesian society. In conclusion, these interpretations can be regarded an Indonesian conceptualization of Islamic feminism, or to put it differently, interpretations of texts in context.

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Kumar, Anil – Visva Bharati, India
 anil.krin53@rediffmail.com

EMERGENCE OF TEMPLE CENTERED SOCIETY IN EARLY BIHAR: MUNDESVARI INSCRIPTION AS A CASE IN POINT

Post Mauryan historiography of ancient India suggests two important factors, *i.e.*, (i) foreign invasions and (ii) shift of the political and cultural centre from the lower Ganga valley to Central India as well as upper Ganga valley. This had effected the ancient glory of Pataliputra and its people a lot. Its whole gamut of economic as well as political dominance over other parts of the country started declining from the period of 2nd cent. B.C. onwards. Loss of its position as epicentre for political activities denied the mercantile community of Patliputra advantages which these people had enjoyed for not less than four – five centuries. State patronage for a long period made the business community of Patliputra more dependent on state power rather than trade or business equations. The people of Magadh were having one more advantage that was Patliputra's geographical location. Being situated on the bank of the Ganga and connected with the 'Uttarapatha' and 'Dakshinapath' was also very helpful for trading activities. However, the change of political fortune left its impact on this region. As a consequence of the loss of patronage from state the mercantile community of Bihar were less prepared to face stiff challenges posed by the mercantile communities from other regions.

In the post-Mauryan period there are stray references about traders of Magadh trading with the people of Banaras. In Milinda-panho there are references that traders from Magadh were carrying on business in far away Sialkot; but the volume of the trade started decreasing as compared to the earlier period. Faded references for trade are themselves indicative of the deterioration. The Kusana two gold coins and few copper coins from two or three places supplement the idea. The situation further deteriorated during the pre Gupta era. Frequent foreign invasions and decline in the Indo-Roman trade left the overall economic condition in a very miserable state. Political instability as well as economic insignificance seems to have compelled the people of Bihar to concentrate more on rural areas. The trade situation was not conducive as compared to the agrarian economy, which was yielding good results. The main reason for development in the field of agriculture was probably the fertility of the soil and the infrastructure provided by the Mauryan Empire. The horizontal expansion of rural settlements continued during the Sunga and Kanva rules. Political unrest and upheavals throughout the period were causing impediments for any sustained mercantile activity in this region. In these circumstances Brahmanical religious reform movement and the reaction against the dominant Buddhist ideas also flourished. Probably this was not confined to state politics only, but also spread among the masses and the aggressive form of Brahmanism found its route. Performance of yajnas (sacrifices) by the rulers was one of the obvious markers of the situation.

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Kundt, Radek – Masaryk University, Czech Republic
 radek.kundt@gmail.com

CAN COGNITIVE SCIENCE OF RELIGION HELP US TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE REASONS FOR NESTORIUS' DOWNFALL?

There are many reasons for Nestorius' personal downfall and this paper explores most of them. Both the main aim is to look at the possibility of employing cognitive science in this exploration. In other words: Is it possible that Nestorius was not successful, at least partially, because his "theological correctness" went against the "cognitive optimum"? One of the main reasons that influenced the result of the Nestorian controversy was the popular opinion of the masses ("vox populi"). This claim may sound as too big an exaggeration but if we take a better look we will find out that it is not. Could this opinion have been formed, among other things, because of natural unintentional human tendency to anthropomorphize god concepts?

I try to show that it is in fact not necessary to go into the analysis of theological concepts and debates to explain why this controversy ended as it did. Nestorius' unpopularity both in the eyes of aristocracy and the people of the city is sufficient for the understanding of Emperor's final decision. Might there have been a cognitive optimum involved, patterns of mental activity, rooted in the biology of brain functions with direct effect? Could we make a hypothesis where we would see the increasing devotion to Mary as an aspect of underlying cognitive anthropomorphism?

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Kurita, Hidehiko – Tohoku University, Japan

Japankurita@sal.tohoku.ac.jp

BEYOND RELIGION AND MEDICAL SCIENCE: KOBAYASHI SANZABURO'S IDEAS ON HEALING

After the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese government actively imported Western medicine, disfavoring the traditional healing methods used so far. For instance, knowledge about traditional Eastern medicine was not included in the newly created National Examination for Medical License. Likewise, rituals and prayers for healing were banned as hindrances to medical practice. Most medical doctors did not adopt religious healing as their treatments. However, Kobayashi Sanzaburo (1863–1926), a distinct surgeon and hospital director, might be considered an exception in the sense he combined modern Western medicine, faith healing, and non-Western physical exercises. In this presentation, I will analyze his reasons for combining “faith” and “science”, as well as his ideas on the effectiveness of faith healing in medical treatment. At first, Kobayashi believed that the mind required “faith healing” as the body demanded “scientific” treatment. However, after a few years as hospital director, his ideas on the subject changed, and he started to consider physical exercises and faith as the bases for improving one’s “natural healing abilities” (in his own words, “vis medicatrix naturæ”). Also, the source of one’s innate healing powers shifted from the “deep conscious” (jp. “shin ishiki”) to “life” (jp. “seimei”). This change was probably influenced by his studies of psychoanalysis, by his encounter with the method of “quiet-sitting” (jp. “seiza”) developed by Okada Torajiro (1872–1920), and by friends who were part of the Shin Buddhist clergy.

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Kuroki, Masako – Kyotogakuen University, Japan

THE SPIRITUAL QUEST OF A WOMAN PRIEST IN TENDAI BUDDHISM

In the past, and unfortunately also in the present, feminist studies have treated women’s social struggles and spiritual explorations as being two, mutually

exclusive spheres. There has also been a tendency to overlook the spiritual sphere. The separation of these two spheres has caused women to be estranged from the spiritual sphere. This paper is an examination of the unconventional spiritual explorations that one woman, who is a priest of the Tendai School, engaged in from her 20s into her 50s. It follows this woman’s conflicts regarding her spiritual quest and gender roles, and further through her encounters with Christianity, Shinto, and Buddhism. Throughout these encounters, she pressed ahead in her spiritual explorations while persistently refusing to make an either-or choice in her life, neither choosing between immersion in gender roles and pursuit of her quest, nor among the three religions. Neither rejecting nor choosing from these alternatives, she pursued her quest until it finally led her to find her “true station in life” in Buddhism. Until she reached that point, however, her path was not so much a trajectory through choices she made of her own volition as it was a process of rushing headlong, as though across an “invisible map,” and being guided to experience those encounters. Even since building her own temple, however, she has still held the multiple identities of priest, Japanese language teacher, wife, and mother while also continuing her spiritual quest in the very midst of the secular world.

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Kwantes, Gemma – University of Amsterdam, The

Netherlands · g.kwantes@uva.nl

SCIENCE IN YEHUDA ASHLAG’S THOUGHT

Only recently have scholars of religion begun to turn their attention to the many-faceted roles that kabbalistic doctrines and schools have played in twentieth-century culture. Foremost among figures to receive recognition has been Yehuda Ashlag (1885–1954). Previously known for his translation of the Zohar into Hebrew, his multi-volume commentaries on both Zohar and Isaac Luria’s Tree of Life have come to be integrally studied and appreciated not only for their explications of the texts, but as an original reframing of Lurianic theosophy. Ashlag’s concern for bringing Kabbalah to the masses, his communist bend and his interest in contemporary political events have all been noted and related to this reframing. References to science, however – found mostly in the articles meant for a non-initiated audience – have not received due attention. In this panel I will clarify Ashlag’s various uses of the term science. This will allow me to explain how it is possible that in his writings hostility towards, as well as fascination, and the forging of an alliance are each found and projected onto his Kabbalistic theosophy. I will also briefly indicate how his ambivalence has resulted in opposing strategies regarding science among Ashlag’s contemporary heirs.

Laack, Isabel – University of Heidelberg, Germany
isabel.laack@zegk.uni-heidelberg.de

EFFICACY, REFLEXIVITY AND REACTIVITY IN THE USE OF MUSIC IN BRITISH (NEO-)PAGANISM

Within the thriving and dynamic contemporary (Neo-) Pagan scene in Britain, music serves as a central means of constructing and negotiating personal and collective religious identities. This will be discussed by presenting an example taken from my recent field study in Glastonbury, a town commonly regarded as the epicentre of contemporary (alternative) spirituality in Britain. Most interestingly, complex transfer processes between the religious field and the academic History of Religions can be observed here, to be analysed under the key words of reflexivity and reactivity: One of the essential elements of Pagan identity is the reference to British pre-Christian cultures and spiritualities. Recent academic studies have questioned the historicity of the popular images of these traditions. However, religious agents have taken on this challenge very creatively. As a reaction to the fact that, based on academic methodology, we know very little about these past cultures, non-rational methods of approaching “ancient spirituality” have been favoured within the (Neo-) Paganism of the last years. In this context, (Neo-)Pagan musicians have developed elaborate theories about the effects and efficacy of music as a spiritual practice. Music is considered as a powerful medium establishing a sensual, emotional and intuitive link to the ancient past. Furthermore, it enables musicians and listeners to identify with it on a bodily level.

Labrador, Ana Maria Theresa P. – Ateneo de Manila University, The Philippines · alabrador@ateneo.edu

CATHARSIS IN RESEARCH: CREATIVE METHODOLOGIES, LIFE-EXPERIENCES & CHALLENGES TO DOCUMENTING RELIGION

For many anthropologists, the challenges to doing field research are numerous. Most often, even on the level of interpreting the data gathered, researchers may misread them for many reasons. This occurs more often in the study of religion as this is complicated by the researchers’ faith and moral background. The eminent anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss wrote in 1963 of his transformation as a result of his experience doing field research and the process of developing his theory on myth. Since then more recent approaches have questioned Levi-Strauss’ theories on myth as a result of more creative methodologies that are being developed while raptures and ruptures are taking place in religious practices, rituals and ideologies that are embedded in beliefs.

This paper will present a survey on the changes in anthropological methodologies on studying religious rituals as it is mediated by experience, epistemological concerns and conditions in the field. It will then focus on the new sensitivities in data gathering, framed by ethical considerations in the profession. Relationships in the field have shaped cultural research and the quality of data that I have gathered from the field. More importantly, the paper will demonstrate through case studies the demands of the people whose religion is being studied as it is articulated and more often with their explicit resistance to extractive approaches of researchers.

Lagarriga Attias, Isabel – Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico
ilagarriga@hotmail.com

ESPIRITUALISMO TRINITARIO MARIANO: HISTORICAL PROCESSES AND INNOVATIONS

As we all know, the burgeoning religious effervescence that appeared in the Western thought in the 70’s mainly among the middle and high classes has modified some popular religiosities. Therefore, the Espiritualismo Trinitario Mariano, a popular religiosity from Mexican origin that appeared in 1863 in Mexico City, has not escaped this process. This credo recruits thousands of adherents by means of the therapies that are offered, which are based in spiritual entities and, by the use of strong symbolic elements that are present in the rituals that are practiced in the temples all of which are spread all over the country and even in the United States, due to Mexican migrants. Its survival may be due to the innovations that it has experienced since its origin up to this day. Therefore, it can be said that first it appears with Judeo-Christian elements and in the 20’s it incorporates elements of the Kardecian spiritism. Later, in the 90’s it includes a ritual simplification in agreement with some aspects of the New Age movement and the practices of Santería. This process will be the focus of this paper.

Lai, Leikuan Rongdao – McGill University, Montreal, Canada

BUDDHIST WOMEN IN TAIWAN: A SUCCESS STORY?

In recent years, there has been much discussion surrounding bhiksuni ordination within the Buddhist practitioner and scholarly communities. Driven largely by Western Buddhist converts, the movement to revive the bhiksuni order often invokes the discourse of gender equality, rights, and female agency. The majority of scholarship on the subject focuses on Buddhist women in the Theravada and Tibetan traditions where the bhiksuni order does not exist or is not recognized by the Buddhist institution.

Alternatively, this paper focuses on Buddhist women in Taiwan, where high ordination for nuns is fully accessible and the bhiksuni sangha in operation is highly developed. Karma Lekshe Tsomo, one of the key figures in the revival movement, applauds the nuns' order in Taiwan as "the success story." Large scale, fully ordained bhiksuni orders did not exist in Taiwan until the mid-twentieth century. However, by the 1990s, it was estimated that approximately 75% of Buddhist monastics in Taiwan were nuns. Firstly, this paper illuminates the social, political, and economic factors contributing to this drastic shift in sangha composition. Secondly, taking Tzu Chi, the transnational Buddhist charitable organization founded by Buddhist nun Cheng Yen, as a case study, this paper examines the Taiwanese model for female empowerment and social involvement, which differs significantly from its Western counterpart. This unique appeal to women stems from Tzu Chi's core teaching which extends the ideal Confucian womanhood beyond the family. Through the Tzu Chi model, it is hope that this paper can shed some lights on the different forms of feminism in an Asian context.

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Lanman, Jonathan – University of Oxford, UK
 jonathan.lanman@anthro.ox.ac.uk

WHEN "FUNDIES" ATTACK: STRONG ATHEISM AS A RESPONSE TO THEOCRATIC THREAT

It is a common and not unsubstantiated claim that religion thrives in threatening environments. In this presentation, I will argue that a similar dynamic exists in relation to "strong atheism," the moral rejection of and active stance against religious beliefs, actions, and identities. Both cross-national and longitudinal evidence in several Western countries suggests that strong atheism surges and recedes in response to the perceived power of religion in public life. I will document this pattern and outline a potential explanation, based on moral psychology, social identity, and the use of new media to generate perceived threats to a modern secular identity.

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Lao, Newman – University of Lausanne
 Newman.Lao@unil.ch

THÉODORE FLOURNOY'S PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS PHENOMENA

In 2007 the Library of Geneva (BGE) gave access to Théodore Flournoy's manuscripts. Flournoy (1854–1920) was the first professor of Experimental Psychology at the University of Geneva in Switzerland. This chair, created in 1890, was founded especially for him and was the first one of this type to be registered in Faculty of Sciences. It was inside these institutional

conditions that Flournoy could formulate his first explanations about the psychology of religious phenomena. The series of courses (1901–1902, 1905 and 1906) that Flournoy gave about this subject can be found today under the form of manuscripts. Apart from the questions linked to the philological analysis of the manuscripts, the content of these courses can interest the sociologists as well as the historians and the psychologists because Flournoy formulates an extremely original methodology, which questions the sociologist's method of synchronic analysis and the historian's method of diachronic analysis, all based on a certain "neutrality" of the analyst: Max Weber's axiological neutrality or Edmund Husserl's transcendental ego. According to Flournoy, sociology and history are interested in external phenomena of religion, whereas psychology is focalised on internal phenomena. These approaches remain however complementary to understand religion as a human phenomenon because, when the sociologist and the historian analyse the religious phenomena as a human phenomenon, they cannot only use a strictly positivist approach without taking away what is really human inside the religious phenomena. It is against this temptation of a materialist reduction that Flournoy uses a methodology which search at first to restore what is human in the religious phenomena. Henceforth, our recent historical investigation into Flournoy's manuscripts allows us to discover again an original thinking which leaves the traditional approach of the different disciplines for a holistic and a pluridisciplinary approach of religion, as human phenomenon.

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Larsson, Göran – University of Gothenburg, Sweden
 goran.larsson@religion.gu.se

THE THEOLOGICAL, ETHICAL AND SEMANTIC FUNCTIONS OF WHISPERING (WASWAS) IN THE QURAN

The aim of my paper is to analyse and outline the theological, ethical and semantic importance and function of "whisper/whispering" in the Quran. By studying how classical and modern Muslim theologians have understood and used the Arabic onomatopoeic word waswas, "whispering" (synonym for Satan), it is possible to unfold an important theological and ethical concept in the Quran. Whispering is generally associated with lies, evildoers and temptations in both Islamic and Near Eastern contexts (see for example sura 7:20 when Satan whispers and tricks Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden). Whispering is also part of Satan's attributes. Besides whispering, Satan calls (31:21), speaks (14:22), uses words (81:25) and makes promises (2:268).

The fact that Satan having speech (6:112) is an example of how the body plays and important function in the Quran. Besides an outline of the theological, ethical and semantic clusters that can be associated with waswas and similar body attributes associated with Satan in Islamic traditions, my paper provides an outlook to how whispering could be understood in a broader Jewish, Christian and Near Easter context.

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Last, Richard – University of Toronto, Canada

RELIGION, FILM, AND FILM TECHNIQUE

Although Religion and Film is a relatively new field of inquiry, it has already gained an impressive level of representation in academic journals associated with the study of religious phenomena and in university classrooms. However, it still lacks methodological, and, therefore, – since the field is so tightly associated with undergraduate religion and film courses – pedagogical, sophistication. This paper proposes that existing approaches to the study of religion and film ought to encompass discussions of film technique (*i.e.*, cinematography, sound, lighting). By affording attention to the aspects of film that distinguish it from texts, critics and instructors will be able to better illuminate religious themes expressed within films – themes that are commonly identified without any consideration of the audio-visual aspects of the artistic medium.

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Last, Richard – University of Toronto, Canada

JOSEPHUS' ANTIQUITIES 13.387–88 AND PTOLEMAIC LAND TENURE

This study shows that Josephus' critique of Onias IV's Jewish temple (est. c. 164 – 145 BCE) in Heliopolis is more nuanced than previously thought. Intricate details of this narrative cannot be grasped without a proper consideration of land tenure in Ptolemaic Egypt. The paper further demonstrates that a basic comprehension of the manner in which land was classified and acquired in the Hellenistic world was fairly common knowledge in antiquity. Once the story is viewed with Ptolemaic land tenure in mind, it becomes apparent that Josephus is portraying Onias IV as a kleruch who was awarded kleruchic land in Alexandria that he then leased out. His temple land in Heliopolis, according to Josephus, was ownerless and thus should have been auctioned off to the highest bidder at the "Auction of Pharaoh," as was supposed to be done with all ownerless land in Ptolemaic Egypt, and as was customary throughout the Mediterranean. Rather than bid on this land, Onias requested it from Ptolemy, which was a deviation from the proper method of acquiring ownerless land. Evidence suggests that such a backdoor tactic would

have generally irritated people. Josephus' critique of Onias' temple is that it was built by someone who did not belong in Heliopolis. In this way, Josephus responds to Isaiah's prophecy that "a temple to the Most High God was surely to be built in Egypt by a Jew" (Ant. 13.64) by characterizing Onias as someone who did not belong in Heliopolis let alone have the authority to build a Jewish temple there.

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Last, Richard – University of Toronto, Canada

THE LETTER OF JAMES AND CONCEALMENT STRATEGIES IN ANTIQUITY

Recently, Dale C. Allison Jr. and John S. Kloppenborg have convincingly explained the relative absence of Jesus' sayings, teachings, ethical injunctions, and biographical information in the letter of James as part of a Jacobean concealment strategy. Both scholars cite 4QMMT as a parallel to the type of strategy that James seems to be carrying out. This paper draws attention to several other instances of strategic concealment attested within archaeological data, documentary papyri, and classical literature. This data offers a fuller demonstration of how and why individuals employed strategies of concealment in antiquity and further illuminates the mechanics of James' own concealment project.

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Legare, Cristine – The University of Texas at Austin, USA

EVIDENCE FROM THE SUPERNATURAL: REASONING ABOUT RITUAL EFFICACY

Despite the prevalence of ritual in all cultures and the use of ritual for protective or problem solving purposes, little is known about how people evaluate the efficacy of ritualized actions. Although the motivation to use ritual may be specified, a means-end connection or physical-causal explanation for the mechanism underlying the efficacy of a ritual is often unavailable. How then is ritualistic action evaluated and what kinds of information are used to reason about ritual efficacy? To investigate this question, a study was conducted in Brazil, a cultural context in which rituals – called *simpatias* – are widely used to solve a great variety of everyday and existential problems. Using content from existing *simpatias*, rituals were experimentally designed in order to manipulate and isolate particular implicit criteria (*i.e.*, specificity of procedural detail, frequency of repetition or number of procedural steps involved, and the kind of artifacts used) hypothesized to influence and inform evaluations of ritual efficacy.

The results provide evidence that in the absence of explicit physical-causal information, implicit criteria reflecting the structural characteristics of ritual (*i.e.*, repetition, stereotypy) are used to evaluate ritual efficacy. More specifically, although there is evidence that individuals have converging intuitions about the efficacy of rituals based on the involvement of a superhuman agent (Barrett & Lawson, 2001), our data indicate that the appeal to a supernatural agent is not the sole criteria that people use to reason about ritual efficacy. Overall, the results are consistent with the proposal that basic features of human cognition provide explanatory information for the evaluation and transmission of religious beliefs and behaviors.

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Lehmann, Karsten – University of Bayreuth,
Germany

RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATIVES INSIDE THE PUBLIC SPHERE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In recent publications and lectures, José Casanova increased his analyses on the development of ‘public religions’ under global conditions. In doing so, he introduced ideas that are, first, particularly prone to trigger further Religious Studies-analyses and, second, to question scientific as well as political convictions on the present-day role of religions.

Casanova underlines that public religions are multi-layered phenomena that are highly influenced by social, economic and political contexts. Following this line of thought, the paper focuses on a rather specific public arena, religions are increasingly active on: the arena of international political relations. It starts out with a sketch of the structures of this specific public space and the position of religions in this context. In a second step, it will analyze the interdependences between this context and present-day developments of religious organizations.

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Lehtonen, Ulla – University of Helsinki, Finland

HIDDEN IMMIGRANTS: THE ORIENTAL CULT COMMUNITIES IN ANCIENT ROME

It has been suggested by the previous research in the field of the history of ancient Roman religion that the religions of the Syro-Phoenician, Dolichenian and Palmyrene deities had been somehow ‘foreign’ and/or ‘Oriental’ in their cultural and social outlook in ancient neighbourhoods in imperial Rome. Based on the rereading of the ancient archaeological, sacral topographic and epigraphic sources, I will revise this view by suggesting in agreement with Franz Cumont and his ‘Religions orientales dans le paganisme romain’ that the members of the cult communities of the Syro-Phoenician, Dolichenian and Palmyrene deities introduced a variety

of integration strategies into Roman society instead of simply presenting the previously assumed identity choice of a ‘foreigner’ and/or an ‘Oriental’ to their social environment. I will, however, contradict Franz Cumont in his ‘Orientalism’ by arguing that many of these cult communities with their Latin dominating bi- and tri-lingual linguistic composition seem to have consisted mostly of people who were ‘Romans’ or well Romanized ‘hidden immigrants’. What I propose happened was intensified contacts between people of different cultural backgrounds in the process of which ‘new gods’ became recognized as ‘ours’, often through their non-culture-specific functions. Religion can often reach over cultural boundaries through its universally meaningful contents, providing a useful tool to immigrants in finding their place in a new environment. This was also the case in ancient Rome, the cultural particulars of these encounters being the object of my study.

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Levy, Gabriel – Aarhus University, Denmark

BLOOD AND WINE: NOTES ON THE ROLE OF THE HEART AND NOISE IN RITUAL PROCESSES

I first reconsider the role that the heart plays in cognition. Until quite recently many cultures considered the heart to be the “seat” of the mind. More recently, cognitive science has tended to see the brain as the seat of the mind. The mind, it is thought, is in the head. I argue that the mind is definitely not in the head, and if it is in the body, it is probably better to think of it as the heart. I thus challenge the dichotomy in cognitive science between heart and brain. Second, I explore the concept of noise in individual and social cognition. Neurological processes are noisy, chaotic processes; similarly, social cognitive processes are noisy and chaotic. Following Glass’ studies of normal vs. pathological bodily rhythms, I will investigate the analogy between bodily and social rhythms using heartbeat and noise as my two basic paradigms.

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Levy, Gabriel – Aarhus University, Denmark

WHY A MINYAN? SITUATED COGNITION IN THE TALMUD

As early as the Mishnah, a quorum of ten men, called a minyan, was required to fulfill some of the most important ritual obligations in Judaism, such as public worship and Torah reading, among others. The divine presence, or *shekinah*, is said to be involved whenever such a quorum is involved in prayer or study. Individual prayer and study, though not prohibited, are certainly not lauded in the history of Judaism. In general Judaism teaches that “Torah can only be acquired in fellowship/ friendship” bBer 63b.

In the study of Torah, the fellowship is achieved through argumentation, which became an end in itself by the end of the Talmudic period. I would like to explore the communal nature of Judaism, and religion in general, through the lens of situated cognition. I will argue that cognition is not only embodied and embedded, but external to individual heads. This is a controversial argument, but it is altogether necessary for understanding religious cognition. Understanding how religious actors think requires us to understand not only how they interact with external artifacts, such as Biblical scrolls and synagogues, but also the fact that neither we nor they have privileged access to the mental attitudes that make sense of religion. The mental content in propositional attitudes must be public if we are to make any sense of it, and it is external in its publicity. Religion is thus a specific form of communal thought entrenchment.

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Lewis, James R. – University of Tromsø

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

THE DEVIL'S DEMOGRAPHICS

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Liljefors-Persson, Bodil – Malmö University
Bodil.liljefors@gmail.com

COLONIALISM, EXOTICISM AND MARGINALIZATION – A STUDY OF REPRESENTATIONS OF AMERICAN INDIAN AND SAAMI RELIGIONS AND CULTURES IN SWEDISH NATIONAL CURRICULA AND TEXTBOOKS

This study focuses on Swedish National Curricula and Textbooks in religion and history in the public schools. The empirical material will be collected from the sections of these documents and book chapters that describe Indigenous Religions and cultures, with a special emphasis on the representations of American Indian Religions and Saami religion. What images and representations of the American Indian and Saami religions are found in the textbooks? Which narratives are told and from whose perspective?

The theoretical approach in this study takes two fields of research as its point of departure. One relates to discourses on globalization and focuses on questions of the Other and Otherness, connected to theoretical perspectives found *i.e.*, in Post-colonial theoretical discourse. The other area is research about citizenship education, intercultural encounters and identity formation as well as didactics. The ambition in this study is to develop theoretical tools for the critical examination of the representation of American Indian Religion and Saami religions in the Textbooks.

The main focus of this study is to apply a critical close reading parallel with analysis of the images and photos in the textbooks, in order to pinpoint a discussion of inclusion and identity formation, and didactic considerations of questions related to marginalization, exoticism and euro-centrism in textbooks in use in Swedish classrooms of today.

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Liljefors-Persson, Bodil – Malmö University
Bodil.liljefors@gmail.com

PLACE, MEMORY AND RITUAL: PROCESSES OF RELIGIOUS CHANGE AND GEOPOLITICAL NAVIGATION AMONG THE MAYA

Place, Memory and Ritual: Processes of Religious Change and Geo-Political Navigation among the Maya in Early Modern Yucatan – In this study central events that occur on some special places that have impacted the religious life on Yucatan in the long term will be highlighted. These places have had much importance; both as ritual place and as bearers of memories from central historical events. These places are bearers of meaning that still today communicate spirituality and ritual power and are important in the religious life on Yucatan. The empirical base for this study consists of Early Colonial documents and documents written by the Yucatec Maya themselves such as the Books of Chilam Balam, as well as experiences from recent fieldwork. Which processes of change and patterns of continuity are negotiated in these Maya (con-)texts? The main focus of this study is to analyse and interpret how Yucatec Maya religion have changed and what traces of continuity we may find in the Yucatec religious discourse over time. How did the Yucatec Maya religion interacted with Catholicism? In the Books of Chilam Balam we find texts that illuminate the process of how Christianity have merged with the traditional Yucatec Maya religion, and that allow for an interpretation of how Christianity influence and reshape the traditional Maya religion. paper The process of how places, memories, symbols and rituals continue to bear meaning and to be important is in focus. This paper will explore how these places and rituals are attributed with new meaning and how they continues to be political and religious places of power in the Yucatec landscape.

Lochan, Amarjiva – University of Delhi, India
amarjiva@email.com

FADING SOUNDS OF CONCH AND CHANTING: UNKNOWN BRAHMANAS IN SOUTHERN THAILAND

The region of Thailand has been not only central to the trade and early human intercourse between South Asia and Far East, but also a cradle of preserving Indic culture elements. With the advent of city-states or kingdom, the rulers in the coastal Thailand adopted the system of “sanctification” and “legalization” of their political control by “importing” the ancient Indian institution of brahmana, the highly educated priestly class. The brahmanas offered them the vestiges of “raja”, the powerful monarch, a divinely figure to be respected and followed by the local population. The numerous smaller rulers in the southern part of Thailand led to a large number of brahmanas coming there and settling down. The Chinese annals refer to such presence. With the emergence of a strong central power of Thai people, the southern Thailand lost such principalities. The royal seat of power also shifted to Bangkok in late Chakri dynasty. With their main jobs to serve the royal courts gone forever, the institution of brahmana and their utility has somehow continued due to their social acceptability among the common folks of the region. Interestingly, such brahmanas are living a life of oblivion with gradual decline of their demand for their magico-ritual powers. Except some traditional villages associated with the legacy of brahmanas since hoary past, they are forgotten vestige of the ancient past. The present paper attempts to show the struggle and survival of such brahmanas in the villages of southern Thailand.

López López, Pablo – Ateneo de Valladolid, Spain

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

THE THREE MAIN PHILOSOPHICAL AND RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEWS OF HISTORY

All past, present and future world views and religions, all existing or possible general philosophies, belong to one of these three models: *Naturalism*, *Supernaturalism* and *Denaturalism*. Each model involves a radically different interpretation of history and the human sense of life.

Naturalism is as old as humanity, but its development reached a culmination among ancient Greeks, thanks to their Intellectualism. According to Naturalism everything is given by birth or natural origin and therefore follows a circular track.

Supernaturalism, a Judeo-Christian contribution, reevaluates and extols nature in the light of the revolutionary distinction of the Supernatural: specifically in a unique God as the absolute out-of-nothing Creator, and consequently in every human person as open to supernaturality. History and human life become fully open and free.

Denaturalism was prepared in ancient Gnostic schools mixing Pagan and Jewish-Christian ideas, and definitively emerged with a part of Enlightened or Illuminists in the 18th c. It takes a detached view from whatever kind of Naturalism or natural law by repudiating nature as a theoretical humanist principle and by bringing about a massive destruction of nature. Denaturalism is Secularism and hence is in systematic opposition to Supernaturalism. Moreover, this implies not only an opposition to the Volitionist rationality of Supernaturalism, but also a breaking-off with the Intellectualist Greek and Roman rational tradition.

Even a minimal profound dialogue between people of the three world views is difficult. But *now the three main models coexist and we need their dialogue for our living together*. The first step is knowing deeply our own civilization.

López López, Pablo – Ateneo de Valladolid, Spain

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND RELIGIOUS UNIVERSALS

We all think of and speak about humanity as a whole, on the basis of general qualities shared by all human individuals. These general qualities are *anthropological universals*. They are of the utmost importance for a global and historical understanding and relationship between people and as real foundations for human rights.

One of these outstanding, universal and specific qualities is religion. Human race develops different cultures and every culture has as a relevant trait a general position regarding religion. At the same time, religion belongs to the wider human quality of deep and universal thinking: Philosophy. Aristotle himself regarded “Theology” as the peak of “Proté Philosophia” (“Metaphysics”). Therefore, *religion itself is an anthropological universal, within the framework of the anthropological universal which is Philosophy*.

In turn, *religion helps us understand a number of anthropological universals*, like the culture (whose core is “cult”, “worship”), transcendental faith and priesthood.

Lory, Josefina Mansilla – see Mansilla, Josefina

**THE POLITY OF THE PHILOSOPHER-BUREAUCRAT:
BRAHMANICAL VIRTUE AS A QUALIFICATION FOR
PUBLIC OFFICE**

One of the most striking features of Indian social history is the success of the Brahmin castes in promoting the ideal of the Brahmin as model candidates for appointment to ministerial or administrative office. The Brahmanical literature on personal virtue (dharmaśāstra) offers a systematic argument for the notion that Brahmanically defined virtues are inculcated and exhibited through observance of particular ritual norms, and ideally embodied in virtuous Brahmins. Scholastic discussions of political science (arthaśāstra, nītiśāstra) and kingly virtue (rājadharmā) further prescribe that Brahmins (or at least other “twice-born” castes, viz. those eligible to observe Brahmanical ritual norms) are best suited to high office, a policy amply (but not universally) reflected in inscriptional records. Beginning from the conceit that the Brahmanical tradition offers an interesting contrast to the Platonic ideal of the “philosopher-king,” this paper will analyze a selection of data drawn from Indian inscriptions, read in light of (or against) the scholastic literature, to show the ways in which Brahmanical norms are reflected in actual records of public administration and statecraft in medieval India.

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Lyle, Emily – University of Edinburgh, UK
e.lyle@ed.ac.uk

**DEFINING THE RELIGION THAT LAY BEHIND THE
SELF-COLONISATION OF EUROPE**

In many parts of the world an indigenous religion has been defined, and set in a theoretical framework in opposition to, the religion of an incoming colonial power in a period when historical documentation was available. I am not aware that the idea of self-colonisation has been found useful in this context or that it has been applied to the primary religion or religions in Europe that were designated as pagan or heathen in the opposition set up with Christianity. Whether or not this is the case, I would like to suggest that the application of the concept of self-colonisation may help to validate the branch of the European religious heritage which has been retained in some measure in folk tradition. My understanding is that we have the means to recover key structural elements of that religion as it existed in prehistory once we see it as part of a worldwide continuum of religions intertwined with social life.

MacDonald, Mary N. – Le Moyne College, USA
macdonal@lemoyne.edu

INDIGENEITY AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION

There is a reciprocity and a mutuality in the study of indigenous religions and the so-called world religions. What was once studied under the rubric of “primitive religion” is today studied as “indigenous religions” or “local religions.” In colonial encounters around the world the peoples who were “in place” when more militarily powerful settlers arrived fared badly. Foreign powers dispossessed them of their lands without their consent and without just compensation. Some intruders ridiculed their sacred beliefs and practices while others cast them as noble savages and original environmentalists living in harmony with nature and able to teach all of us to care for the Earth. This paper notes that as scholars approach the study of indigenous traditions and life ways using the rubric of religion they highlight the relational character of this human phenomenon and also its dark side. Indigenous peoples from Australia to Africa to the Americas vary immensely in their conceptualizations of the world and the human place in it. However, they hold in common that in myth and in ritual they provide ways for people to relate to the land and to the community. In addition, they hold in common the colonial experience by which their own understandings were challenged, disrupted, and in some cases destroyed. The study of the indigenous reveals not only how native peoples understand the world but also how, in the name of other peoples’ religion, their understandings have been undermined and how in innovative ways the indigenous has survived and even flourished.

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MacKendrick, Kenneth – University of Manitoba,
Canada · mackendr@ms.umanitoba.ca

**WE HAVE AN IMAGINARY FRIEND IN JESUS: WHAT
IMAGINARY COMPANIONS CAN TEACH US ABOUT
RELIGION**

This paper investigates the relation between imaginary companions and religious thought, using studies of imaginative play to illuminate and explain the prevalence and popularity of interior religious conversation. Emphasis is given to methodological and conceptual considerations arising from the application of developmental theories to the phenomenon of religion. It is argued that imaginative play and the creation of counterfactual realities have a larger role in the development of religious attitudes and practices than is usually assumed within cognitive theories of religion.

Mäder, Marie-Therese – University of Zurich,
Switzerland · mtm@access.uzh.ch

THE MOTIF OF JOURNEY IN FICTION FILM AS A TRANSFORMATION PROCESS: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE INTERFACE BETWEEN RELIGION AND FILM

The present paper is related to a broader interdisciplinary research project about the interface between fiction film and religion. The project is based on the study of religion with strong links to cinema and media studies. This presentation outlines the current results, and questions for further study, arising from work undertaken over the last three years.

The research project has been conducted on two levels. First, the relationship between film and contemporary religion has been investigated from a theoretical point of view, *i.e.*, a top down approach. Secondly, this study has been based on a film corpus, *i.e.*, employs a bottom up approach: the motif of journey in contemporary fiction film seen as a transformation process.

The project explores the motif of journey and its typical configurations on a narrative and aesthetic level and analyzes the resulting reception processes in selected films. Furthermore, it focuses on the extent to which the audience is involved in the enacted process of transformation. In this context, religion and fiction film are regarded as correlated systems of communication that may exhibit complex interdependencies.

Madsen, Lars – Aarhus University, Denmark
lma@teo.au.dk

RITUAL, RULES AND SOCIAL MEANING

In his reading of James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, the Austrian Philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein is commonly assumed to have launched an attack on the instrumental or intellectualist approach to religious rituals of magic. Instead Wittgenstein is said to endorse an "expressivist" approach that holds rituals to be an expressions of an attitude towards life. By bringing into play Wittgenstein's analyses of rule-following and private language, I want to argue that rituals primarily are neither instrumental nor expressive behavior. Rather, in light of Wittgenstein's philosophy, I want to suggest that the approach to rituals needs to be shifted from an individualistic to a social approach and that, as inherently social, ritual displays the bedrock for a social conception of meaning based on rule-governed behavior. Thus, I hope this analysis can help clear the philosophical grounds for a social cognitive science of religion.

Mahto, A K – Ranchi University, India

SACRED PERFORMANCES OF TRIBES OF INDIA AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR TRIBAL SOCIETY

Tribal world of India has a distinct religious and cultural feature even in the age of science and technology. They perform various sacred performances which shows wide implications on grassroot of the tribal society. Normally the following sacred performances are performed by tribes in India – 1) Sacred performances for fulfillment of the Vows, promises ordeals and deaths 2) Sacred performances for the ancestral worship – it is performed to invoke the spirit of the dead, to join the head of ancestral spirits and look after the welfare of the family and the clan. 3) Sacred performances done on the various tribal festivals like Sarhul, Karma, Maghi *etc* 4) Sacred performances performed on various occasions of rites, de passage of an individual on the axis of self, which start as soon as one comes to the womb of fetus and last till his death. The present paper covers the following areas of study about tribal world of India. 1) Theoretical study about the sacred performances of tribal society 2) Major festivals of the tribal men and its cultural impact on tribal society 3) Conflict between Traditionalism and Modernity while performing sacred performances by tribal society 4) The role of Pahan (A tribal priest) during sacred performances 5) The outcome of philosophy of tribal of India 6) Implications of sacred performances on the social organization of tribal society of India 7) Hypothesis 8) Result findings

Maiti, Sameera – University of Lucknow, India

CONFLICT AND CHANGE: A STUDY OF DYNAMICS IN POSITION OF THE BHARRA

The last few decades has witnessed several changes taking place in the religious scenario all over the world – some strengthening local religious beliefs, and others debasing them. In this backdrop, the present study is aimed at analysing the position of the Bharra, the priest-cum-exorcist and medicine man of an Indian tribal group – the Tharu. The Tharu reside in the sub-Himalayan belt bordering Nepal, and enjoy the status of a Scheduled Tribe in the state of Uttar-Pradesh where fieldwork was carried out. The Tharu, till around half a century ago, were a near animistic group, following their own religious beliefs and practices, having their own indigenous rituals, and were guided by their own religious head – the Bharra. The Bharra was responsible not only for initiating and heading all religious rituals, but also for propitiating offended spirits and supernatural forces during natural calamities. It was also among his tasks to help control trouble causing spirits and cure people with his supernatural powers and knowledge of various wild herbs.

He thus enjoyed an esteemed position in the tribe. In the last 50 years or so, however, contact with non-tribals; adoption of Hinduism; over all socio-economic development; and education have all brought about large-scale rapid changes in the lifestyle and perceptions of the Tharu. These changes have greatly effected the position and role of the Bharra, who today stands at a crossroad with differing views and attitudes among the tribals towards the very institution of the Bharra.

Makino, Kazuo – Jissen Women's University, Japan
makino-kazuo@jissen.ac.jp

TENDAI DANGISHO TEMPLES AND THE LATE 13TH CENTURY HIGASHIYAMA BYAKUGO-IN AREA

Surveys of the literature owned by the Kashiwabara Dangisho (seminary temple) are placed under heavy restrictions by the "here and now." There are few documents from which can be inferred vigorous exchanges of medieval documents prior to the activities of Joshun and Keishun. However, recent surveys (Reference 1) on the formation of the library at Kashiwabara-Jobodai-in have illustrated the movement of documents among Kongorin-ji on the east bank of Lake Biwa and Terado's Hobodai-in (Bukkerin) in Western Kyoto around the early Muromachi period. Furthermore, the frequent exchange of scholar-priests and documents between the two temples provides us with hazy but useful clues to understanding the flurry of academic exchange, which we should call the "Higashiyama Exchange Zone" – Ogawa, Byakugo-in, Agui, etc. – that occurred in the mid/late Kamakura period. Previously, the Byakugo-in "Risshu" zone was considered pivotal to the Higashiyama area. However, upon examination of Ogawa (Ryosen), the influence of Shochō and Ryogan Tendai within Byakugo-in becomes apparent. Furthermore, it has been recognized that Sojin participated in publishing ventures.

Makino, Kumi – Kamakura Women's University, Japan
kumi@kamakura-u.ac.jp

ORIENTATION OF THE SETTLEMENT PLAN AT THE HELLENISTIC EIN GEV

Designing settlement plan is one of the ways to realize the safe and comfortable life in it. The Hellenistic settlement excavated at Ein Gev on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee might offer one of such examples. Though the Hellenistic walls were built immediately on the earlier walls dating to the Iron Age, their orientation is essentially different from that of the Iron Age walls. This shows that the settlers in the Hellenistic period did not follow the earlier settlement orientation, though they used the earlier remains as foundation of their buildings. Instead, they designed a new settlement

according to their own idea of orientation. It might show, together with other sources, that the settlers in the Hellenistic period could have thought that their well-being should be based on the orientation of the settlement plan.

Maksutov, Ivar – Moscow State University, Russia

SUPERMAN AS A RELIGIOUS TYPE

The most outstanding among images, which were intervened in the postmodern culture in XX century was an icon of American dream – double-faced superhero with Clark Kent as a human face and Superman as a superhuman fold. This icon could be recognized as an symbolic answer of the postmodern culture to eternal anthropological questions: 'What is a human being?' and 'Is it religious by nature?' This answer as a myriad of different reincarnations of Superman – numerous generations of superheroes of all colors and tones. Each generation of superman absorb more and more of new images and symbols, which were offered by the market of ideas of postmodern culture. Today "to be a human begin" means simply "to be". In such a way, being is defined through "super-", which is based on the idea of transformed and modified human being, or more likely its transformation into "Other". The opposition between "human" and "super-" parts in superman is a distinguishing feature of this icon. And this opposition might be found in different ways and aspects in many religious traditions of the past, while in mass-culture of postmodern world we see brand new answer on this long-lived problem. Thus in the study of religions concept of superhuman being should be studied more carefully and precisely. It means that in contemporary images of mass-culture we may find answers to very deep religious questions in deconstructing anthropological lexicon and the concept of human being. In the paper I will provide an approach to this new field of study within the Religionswissenschaft and show how this approach could be developed further on.

Malik, Aditya – University of Canterbury, New Zealand

HAMMIRA OR THE (RE-)WRITING OF HISTORY AND RELIGION IN WESTERN INDIA

The 1500 verse Sanskrit poetical work, Hammira-Mahakavya (HM) was composed by the Jain poet Nayachand Suri in western India, according to some sources in 1383 CE or 1401 CE, i.e., exactly 100 years after the hero of the poem – Hammira's – death. Hammira was the ruler of the fortress of Ranthambore (Sanskrit: Ranasthambapura) in southern Rajasthan.

He ascended the throne in 1282 CE and died in 1301 CE after a momentous battle against Alauddin Khalji, the Sultan of Delhi. The Sanskrit poem is but one of an entire continuum of oral and written vernacular, Persian, Sanskrit and English works, that over centuries until the present day draw out the imaginative fabric of Hammira's life and heroic death, so much so that this becomes part of Hindu nationalist discourse on the protection of Hindu religion or dharma in the 20th century. Hammira has been described in the HM and in other sources in varying ways, not always positive. But one feature that does characterize him is his indomitable will to keep his word regardless of the circumstances. He is called Hatha-Hammira – stubborn, staunch, unbending Hammira. The purpose of the poem seems to be twofold: on the one hand it is about poetry – about rising to the challenge of writing great Sanskrit poetry with all its poetical embellishments and linguistic markers. On the other hand, the poem is commemorative. It commemorates and celebrates the deeds and death of Hammira, a flawed hero, who is unbending on his word. The poem is therefore both *kavya* or poetry and what we would call 'history', *i.e.*, it simultaneously contains the signifiers of a literary and a historical work. Two broad questions arise here. The first concerns the poem itself: Why does the poet choose to write a Sanskrit epic poem with a clearly historical content in order to prove that *kavya* or poetry of the quality of classical Sanskrit poets such as Kalidasa and Bilhana can still be written? Why hasn't he chosen a content that is non-historical, non-regional, non-religious something perhaps more 'imaginative' in the sense of not being localized? Secondly, what does it mean for a Jain poet to write about a Hindu dynasty and its clash with a Muslim dynasty and the accompanying description of gore, treason, violence, bloodshed, weaponry, war, *etc.*? What does the question of the author's identity tell us about the religious, cultural and literary milieu of the period? How are religious labels such 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' imagined in this context? Do they carry the same significance as they do in the contemporary discourse of 'essentialized', singular, bounded religious identities? If they do not, then how does Hammira wind up becoming central to the creation of 20th century scholarship propelled by Hindu nationalist discourse on the protection and sustenance of Hindu dharma? Further, how does the HM as a poetical-historical text dealing with religious and political power, define a region both in cultural and historical terms? How does a singular moment in time – the battle between Hammira and Alauddin Khalji – reverberate through centuries vertically to the point of creating 'history' through a crystallization of the event in different texts and languages: Persian chronicles, Sanskrit works, Hindi and Rajasthani poems and songs,

English translations, as well as 20th century scholarly analysis grounded in Hindu nationalist thought?

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Malik, Aditya – University of Canterbury, New Zealand

EMBODYING JUSTICE: HEALING, RITUAL, AND NARRATIVE IN THE 'COURT' OF GOLUDEV

In broad terms my paper investigates the critical encounter between religion and modernity in South Asia and its ramifications in the wider global context. Specifically it explores one of the most universal forms of religious expression in India: the manifestation of divine presence and power through human mediums. This phenomenon implies the existence of alternative systems of knowledge that deserve serious investigation. My paper critiques the category of 'possession' while exploring an alternative framework through ideas of transformation and embodiment from within a phenomenological as well as cognitive and neuro-scientific perspective. What are the philosophical and ontological implications of saying someone is possessed? Assuming the distinction between deity or divine being and human being is not, in fact, a firmly bounded one, and the boundaries between divine and human in the South Asian context are permeable – ultimately human and divine may be the same – is it possible then for someone to be 'possessed'? In my paper I offer a new theoretical framework that begins to adequately understand the pan-Indian phenomenon of divine embodiment in devotees across 'folk' or non-mainstream religion in India. I intend to pursue a phenomenological position that seeks to understand how – within the context of Indian philosophy and religion – consciousness is understood to be fundamentally manifested or rather embodied. Divine beings do not possess human beings, rather human mediums become or embody the divine that itself is seen not to be ontologically distinct from human subjects. Mind and Body are thus not separate entities as the Cartesian world-view suggests. In the paper I will examine through ethnographic research conducted between 2004–2009 how divine embodiment is performed in rituals of the Central Himalayan 'God of Justice' Goludev. I will be focusing on 'jagars' or intense oracular rituals of 'awakening' conducted for Goludev, who is perceived as a manifestation of the pan-Indian deity Shiva. In my attempt to create a hermeneutics of transformative embodiment for religious rituals that are commonly analyzed in terms of possession, I will draw on the notion of embodiment as being the existential ground of possibility for culture and self. I will also address the themes of memory and narrative in the constitution of social justice and healing during rituals of 'awakening' (jagars).

Mansilla, Josefina – Instituto Nacional de
Anthropologia e Historia, Mexico

Pijoan, Carmen – Instituto Nacional de
Anthropologia e Historia, Mexico
cmpijoan@yahoo.com.mx

MULTIPLE BURIAL NUM. 14 FROM THE RECINTO SAGRADO OF TLATELOLCO. AFTER DEATH TREATMENT OF MORE THAN 150 PERSONS In this paper we will talk of the archaeological discovery of a collective burial of more than 150 persons, in Tlatelolco. The more than 10,000 bones that conform this important discovery were analyzed by means of our own methodology that will be described and that let us establish the activities done on the bodies of these sacrificed persons.

In this way we were able to identify the following processes:

Death by means of heart extraction, similar to those represented in the Codex.

Careful separation of the head after death and use of it in different ceremonies, exhibition or the production of masks.

Dismemberment of the body by means of cutting and breaking of the articulations of the arms, legs, feet and vertebral column.

Defleshing of some of the muscles for their ritual consumption.

Deposition without any apparent order of the segments in different stages of decomposition, together with symbolic objects.

Remains of young persons of both sexes, some of them originating from the Gulf of Mexico perhaps related between them.

Mansilla, Josefina – Instituto Nacional de
Anthropologia e Historia, Mexico

Pijoan, Carmen – Instituto Nacional de
Anthropologia e Historia, Mexico

POSTSACRIFICIAL PROCESSES IN THE SACRED PRECINCT OF TLATELOLCO · Dra_mansilla@yahoo.com

The analysis of multiple variables, found in some human burials of body parts in the ceremonial precinct of Tlatelolco raise inferences about postsacrificial treatment and body deposition that were given to these individuals.

By studying the site and mode and characteristics of burial, age, sex, taphonomy and potential ethnicity as well as the possible presence or absence of different bone markers, in several burials, we considered the following elements:

The tzompantli (skull rack) shows the head as a key element within the Mesoamerican cosmology. The care in their postmortem treatment, their presence through time and space in ceremonial centers, as well as their display and decoration talk about their ritual meaning.

The burial of jaws also revealed its important value either as part of the head or as an isolated element.

The burial 14 in which over 150 dismembered individuals were deposited.

In Tlatelolco no hands and feet remains were found and, no group burial of sick infants, however, there is such evidence in other archaeological sites as in Templo Mayor.

The considerations in this case are that these are sacred human remains that belong to men and women who were selected to be sacrificed, either they were prisoners of warfare, or elite people, or with certain biological and health characteristics. They were chosen to be sacrificed in different yearbearer ceremonies, with multiple, distinct, complex rituals and, the final depository of these victims was the sacred precinct of Tlatelolco, place of gods and chosen people.

Manus, Chris Ukachukwu – University OAU, Nigeria
cumanus@yahoo.com

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

EHIN-IWA – AFTERLIFE IN YORUBA INDIGENOUS RELIGION AND IN PAUL (2 COR 4:16–5:10)

There is no doubt that death has remained a baffling and disturbing human experience; indeed an enigma of the first order in various religious traditions and cultures of the world. African scholars have duly applied their mental and critical prowess in the struggle to unravel the mystery of death, its origin and purpose (Idowu 1996:201). The ultimate question the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria usually raise about human mortality is: what becomes of the human person after death or roundly put; after death, what next or is there a continuation of life after death? Could there still be any interaction between the dead and their survivors? These questions and others that are associated with the eschaton have been posers which continued to haunt devotees of African Indigenous Religion and Cultures for ages. Both Yoruba Indigenous Religion (YIR) and Pauline Christian Tradition represented especially in the letters of Paul that were widely circulated in the Greco-Roman world proffer some answers to these perennial phenomenon. Surely the thought-forms of the Yoruba generally reflect most of those of the adherents of African Indigenous Religion (AIR) that has had such a ramifying influence on the life of African peoples (Anyanwu 2004:43). Africanists agree that AIR had informed essential aspects of African life, culture and the indigenous arts (Nabofa 1994).

While Paul, on the one hand, considers death as a “going home to the Lord”; a future life in the hereafter; the adherents of YIR, on the other hand, hold death as a ‘re-call home of the aged’ to the Ehin-Iwa, the ‘After Life’. Through employment of such concepts typical of African necrology, this paper will comparatively interpret Pauline narrative on the resurrection of the dead in 2 Cor 4:16–5:10 and the concept of Ehin-Iwa (Afterlife) in the Yoruba myth and cult of the dead to demonstrate the co-relation between African and Pauline traditions. Methodology Aware of the problems associated with interpreting a text from a print culture (2 Cor 4:16–5:10) in tandem with narratives that have originated from African oral culture (Yoruba myth on Death and the Afterlife) (Botha 2009), I will adopt the Inter-cultural Method (IM). Indeed IM is an hermeneutical approach within the ambit of “Cultural Studies” and Hermeneutics of Orality currently championed by me after many years of interpretative experience in contextual exegesis and hermeneutics in the African academy (Manus 2003). My method takes off from the principle: ‘from the known to the unknown’. The of my paper, shares in the increasing clamor for diversification of interpretative approaches in order to de-colonize and to globalize biblical studies in Africa. The method offers a critique and assessment of the contributing role of the interpreter’s context or her/his social location for a re-reading process, interpretative practices and mode of evaluation of both the Yoruba and Pauline traditions to prosper the comparison between the two traditions (Knight 2004:341). It will also present Afro-centric interpretative strategies on the subject-matter in order to lay bare the exegetical details of 2 Cor 4:16–5:10. From this vantage point, the paper asserts that African oral cultures and their mythic narratives constitute African critical resources that can proffer insightful contributions towards the understanding of the Bible. To press for comparable cultural elements, the narratological themes embedded in the Yoruba religio-cultural tradition is assessed to see how such themes can enrich the interpretation (Manus 2003). The inter-cultural approach assists me to dig into the socio-religious and cultural factors of Paul’s world that had nurtured the context and thought out of which the teaching in 2 Cor 4:16ff has been derived. It elucidates the extent such elements have determined the compositional traits, literary genres and structure of Paul’s argumentations that are blendable with the cultural thought-forms encapsulated in the oral narratives of the myth and legends about death and the hereafter in Yoruba Indigenous Religion. In its quest for the raw sense of the “resurrection” of the dead as ‘bringing back to life from the dead’, the method offers a flexible contextual focus as I delve into the social and literary history of Paul’s text in *pari passu* with the mythic narratives of the YIR. The purpose is to establish, at least, some “comparative

resources for recovering and reconstructing” Paul’s teaching and the Yoruba belief (West 1993:69). Eventually, the intercultural method helps me uncover some degree of a meaningful interface between the Yoruba Indigenous Religious mortuary creed and the Pauline necrological tradition that can point towards a credible common ground for interpretation of a common phenomenon that, at the end of the day, profit the inculturation of Christian Religion in contemporary Yorubaland. Besides, I consider the Intercultural Method quite *ad rem* for the paper since a growing opinion consensus among Pauline scholars is that Jewish and Hellenistic cultures had had no small impact on Paul’s theology. In sum, African indigenous worldviews which still generate invincible presuppositions, and ‘immaculate perceptions’ (Elliot 1986:5) that impose limits on the minds of today’s African Christians can provide ‘a new voice’ that will contribute another horizon in the discussions at the conference. My voice will articulate as much as possible lessons learned from the comparative analysis of motifs and ideas discovered from the Yoruba belief system, myths, folklore and legends on the dead and afterlife with the Pauline tradition.

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Marcos, Mars – University of Cantabria, Spain
 marcosm@unican.es

JUSTIFYING RELIGIOUS TOLERATION: ARGUMENTS FROM ANTIQUITY

It is generally supposed that the debate on tolerance arose out of modern political philosophy, as a product of political and ideological conflicts in post-Reformation Europe. While it is true that it was in liberal and enlightened milieus in the late 17th and in the 18th centuries where the modern concept of tolerance was shaped, the debate on the idea of religious freedom and the lawfulness or not of the use of coercion began much earlier, in Greco-Roman Antiquity. It was the Christians who, during the 2nd and 3rd century persecutions, were the first to reflect on the need for tolerance, and they were also the first to put forward a series of logical arguments in favour of it. However, the Christian discourse of tolerance, which emerged in very particular historical circumstances, was abandoned after Constantine, when Christianity, instead of being a persecuted religion, began to form part of the establishment in the Christian Empire. During the 4th and 5th centuries it would be the pagans and the heretics, persecuted by imperial legislation, who cried out for tolerance, with arguments that were partly new and partly inherited from the previous Christian apologetic tradition.

The aim of this paper is to study the construction of the discourse of religious tolerance in Antiquity, analysing the series of arguments wielded to justify it, both by Christians and, later, by pagans and heretics. These arguments lie at the foundations of the conceptual justification of tolerance in the modern age.

Marczewska-Rytka, Maria – Maria Curie Skłodowska University, Poland · marczewska@yahoo.com

PROCEESS OF SECULARISATION, PRIVATISATION AND DEPRIVATISATION OF RELIGION. THE CASE OF POLAND

The aim of the paper is to show religion in the process of transformation. The main processes shaping religion and religious systems will be analysed: secularisation, privatisation, deprivatization. The processes of secularisation mean that various areas of political and social life become independent from the influence of religion. The process of privatisation of religion seems to contradict the thesis of progressing secularisation. Institutionalised religiousness is substituted with one that is private in its nature. Such privatised religion is treated as dominant in the world of today. An increasing number of people search for their own place outside the acknowledged, traditional religious organisations. The process of deprivatization of religion takes three main forms: the increase in religious mobilisation to protect the traditional everyday world, religion entering the public sphere of modern societies, propagation of the rule of common good, as opposed to individualism proclaimed by liberal theories. In the case of Poland, the problems of employment of religion on the political arena prove significant, particularly in terms of religion's legitimizing function.

Markova, Natalia – Vladimir State University, Russia
natmarkova@list.ru

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF REALITY: VLADIMIR SOLOVIEV AND INTERPRETATION OF CATHOLICISM

The events of last century demonstrated the necessity of dialogue between different confessions. In this context Vladimir Soloviev's philosophy and his interpretation of Catholicism is very attractive. Before and after V. Soloviev (especially in Soviet Period) the critical and anti-Catholic papers predominated. Only V. Soloviev (being the Orthodoxy philosopher) could raise the problem of Catholicism's interpretation on the high level of considering of the problem of "our and other".

He found the universal content in Orthodoxy and Catholicism, this content is partly in historical churches and he thought it to be real in future. Now days the opposition between the Russian Orthodoxy Church and the Catholic Church is evident, however Soloviev's ideal are realized on the local, personal level.

Matsumoto, Koichi – Ikenobo Junior College, Japan
locutas1130@nifty.com

THE TRANSCRIPTION AND PROPAGATION OF ESOTERIC TENDAI TEXTS

In this presentation I shall examine the propagation of medieval Tendai esoteric texts, using one such text, Asaba-sho, as my subject matter. By analyzing its postscript, we will see where it was transcribed, and the manner of propagation from the priest to priest. Furthermore, analysis of the copy owned by Jobodai-in, which is a medieval transcript, have clarified the process of medieval transcription and propagation. I will show that the fact that the Asaba-sho was transcribed by priests from the Nishiyama school, that many of these priests were connected with the school by blood ties, and that the volume derived from Kancho was repeatedly transcribed, indicates strong demand, which was in turn related to the existence of a Nishiyama school Kancho hall (Kanshitsu) in Jobodai-in. Finally, we will see that the emergence of a new text at Jobodai-in, derived from a portion of the Asaba-sho related to methods of practice, called the Gyo-you-shou was the result of Dangisho temple activities.

Matsumura, Kikuku – Wako University, Japan

WESTERN IMPACT ON STUDY OF JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY

Many scholars abroad have been interested in Japanese mythology. Each one's specific way of interest and methodology may indicate what was at issue in each period and in each country. The first wave was those who came when Japan opened the country in the latter half of the nineteenth century. W. G. Aston and Basil Hall Chamberlain of Great Britain translated classic texts of Japanese mythology, the Kojiki and Nihongi.

These translations attracted the attention of western scholars of religion who were seeking the parallel religious ideas and rituals in other parts of the world in the first half of the twentieth century. Thus many German scholars of the Wiener School such as Alexander Slawik, Nelly Naumann, and Joseph Kleiner published on Japanese mythology.

Later, especially after the structural revolution of 1970's, scholars of France and the United States also joined in this field. For instance, François Macé of France introduced structural analysis; C. Scott Littleton of the US assumed the influence of the tripartite ideology of the Indo-Europeans upon the formation of Japanese mythology.

Finally, near the end of the twentieth century, a group of scholars led by Michael Witzel of Harvard started to locate Japanese mythology in the wider context of World Mythology. As they assume that mankind already possessed myths when they went out of Africa, the assumption is that same mythological ideas could be found regardless of language barriers. Since Japan was isolated by its geographical location, they think that in Japanese mythology traditional motifs of World Mythology were kept relatively intact. Thus their appreciation of Japanese mythology rests very high.

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McCauley, Robert – See *Plenary Presentations*, p6
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McCorkle, Jr., William W. – Tiffen University, USA
nappystar@hotmail.com

THE MENTAL CULTURE OF DEAD AGENTS

Humans throughout history and across culture have disposed of dead bodies in special ways. Many times these actions include ritualized gestures and rich counterintuitive inferences concerning the corpse to be generated in human minds. Not only have professional guilds of religious experts connected these ritualized actions by the use of complex scripts using “material anchors,” these same experts have utilized salient modes of ritualization in culture to take advantage of the evolved cognitive architecture of humans. In this paper I argue, using archival, ethnographic, and experimental research that individuals are compelled to perform ritualized behaviors to dead bodies based upon certain variable personality traits, which are biologically, developmentally, culturally, and environmentally driven and constrained. Moreover, evolved psychological precaution systems (that utilize ancestral biological warning devices) are triggered in the presence of dead bodies, to re-enforce specific actions to be performed on them ad infinitum, even though many doctrines (especially in Buddhist traditions) explicitly state the corpse is not to be treated in such ways. Finally, ritualized behaviors toward dead bodies are especially salient in modeling the cognitive architecture of humans, since corpses and their remains are mentally hard to ignore and physically hard to destroy, making them plentiful throughout cultural time and space for individuals and groups to perform actions to them.

McCorkle, Jr., William W. – Tiffen University, USA
Nappystar@hotmail.com

THE FATE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES: THE FUTURE OF AN ILLUSION

Over the course of the last hundred or more years, scholars have debated whether “religion” can be studied by scientific methods. More importantly recent theorists working within the discipline themselves have questioned the phenomena of religion as an actual category that can be studied. Many of the arguments against a “science of religion” call into question Judeo-Christian paradigms and a post-colonial bias for such an endeavor. While other cultural experts have claimed that there are multiple definitions used by scholars at any given time for religion. On the other side of the spectrum, cultural anthropologists, evolutionary psychologists, and cognitive scientists have recently started to develop their own “scientific” study of religious phenomena. Based upon archival, ethnographic, and especially experimental research, these scholars view the study of religion in naturalistic terms where religious ideas, practices, and artifacts are a product/by-product/spandrel of an evolved cognitive architecture spanning the last several hundred thousand years. In this paper, I will argue that the cognitive science of religion (and culture) is a necessary step in theorizing about the nature of religion scientifically and is a progressive movement toward fulfilling Friedrich Max Muller’s call for a religionswissenschaft. Furthermore, I will argue that it is not necessary to have a category like religion (outside of heuristics) to proffer explanatory theories that can be empirically tested concerning the vertical and horizontal transmission and distribution of human religiosity.

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McCorkle, Jr., William W. – Tiffen University, USA
Nappystar@hotmail.com

THE MEASUREMENT OF MEANING: EMOTIONAL CONTAGION, SOCIALIZATION, AND GENERATION OF CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS

In this paper, I will argue that due to the biological, psychological, and cultural evolution of humans (*H. sapiens sapiens*), meaning is a complex cognitive process that occurs in horizontal (peer to peer) space and time. By utilizing recent research in the Cognitive Science of Culture, specifically evolutionary psychology and anthropology, I will proffer that mental and material representations are semantically meaningless in their vertical (generation to generation) transmission, but generate meaning in specific localized contexts each and every transmission within culture. Collective representations occur due to the conspecific nature of the evolved cognitive architecture of human minds.

In other words, human minds generate the meaning horizontally, since there is no intrinsic meaning to the representations themselves semantically and externally to cognition. Although meaning is not entirely constrained by linguistic/semantic modes of communication, modern humans may utilize these modes more so as more efficient and effective means to communicate within culture. Furthermore, I will use examples from language and communication, music, primatology, and ritual to develop this hypothesis further.

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McGrath-Merkle, Clare – The Catholic University of America, USA · cmm4@verizon.net

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

NEGATIVE IDENTITY FORMATION IN U.S. ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Drawing from conclusions developed in her article published in the *Journal of Religion and Health* (online Sept. 25, 2009), “Generativity and the U.S. Roman Catholic Bishops’ Responses to Priests’ Sexual Abuse of Minors,” McGrath-Merkle explores the Eriksonian concept of negative identity formation as applicable to the documented 111 U.S. Roman Catholic Bishops who protected priests who were abusers of minors rather than the minors themselves. A case is made that deficits in psychological and moral development at certain stages of the life cycle, particularly related to negative identity formation, led to a crisis in clerical leadership, as well as an episcopal subculture characterized by pseudo-speciation and authoritarianism, which in turn proved dangerous to minors.

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McLaughlin, Levi – Wofford College, USA

SOKA GAKKAI’S IMAGE OF EAST ASIA AND ITS ACTIVITIES IN KOREA AND CHINA

In the decades following World War II, Sōka Gakkai (literally the “Value Creation Study Association”) emerged from persecution under Japan’s wartime government to transform itself from a small group of educators into the largest mass movement in Japanese history. Since 1960, Sōka Gakkai has propagated its mission overseas, and the group now claims over 1.5 million members in 192 countries under the umbrella organization Sōka Gakkai International (SGI). SGI’s membership in East Asia has surged since the 1960s; its membership has burgeoned in the Republic of Korea, and Sōka Gakkai even fosters a presence (as a primarily educational envoy) in the People’s Republic of China.

Sōka Gakkai is commonly understood solely as a lay Buddhist organization.

However, the Gakkai is itself an aggregate produced by a transregional flow of religion and culture; it comprises the twin legacies of 1) post-Enlightenment philosophical ideals introduced to Japan from Europe and the United States, conflated with 2) a Japanese Buddhist tradition that propagates the teachings of the medieval cleric Nichiren (1222–1282) and centers on reverence for the *Lotus Sūtra*, the historical Buddha Śākyamuni’s putative final teaching. Sōka Gakkai is now in the potentially ironic position of propagating its conflation of Euro-American and Asian Buddhist “enlightenment” ethics in the regions that produced its constituent elements. In doing so, the organization brings into sharp relief the inadequacy of pervasive regional and categorical divides (such as “East” versus “West,” or “religion” versus “culture”) and demands a reappraisal of the ways in which we characterize institutions and practices that bind people across national and conceptual boundaries.

In this presentation, I will consider ways in which Sōka Gakkai in Japan draws strategically on its component historical legacies to construct an idealized version of East Asia within its institutional framework, and I will describe how this ideal vision compares with how the organization operates in Korea and China. I will outline paradoxes occasioned by Sōka Gakkai’s selective self-presentation as a religious movement valorizing Romantic Euro-American ideals of liberty and transcendence (in Korea) and as an exponent of scholarship on historical Buddhism and promoter of high-level government ties (in the People’s Republic of China), and I will rely on primary sources and interviews with grassroots Gakkai practitioners to reveal tactics the organization employs to constantly reformulate its doctrines and practices in order to navigate regional politics. These case studies will also provide concrete examples for a broader discussion of globalization, transregionalism, and just what is involved when we talk about Buddhism in contemporary societies.

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McLaughlin, Levi – Wofford College, USA

THE ENLIGHTENMENT MEETS ENLIGHTENMENT: CONFLATIONS OF EURO-AMERICAN ROMANTICISM WITH JAPANESE BUDDHIST PRACTICES IN CONTEMPORARY NICHIREN-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

The religious organizations in contemporary Japan that claim the largest number of adherents maintain the teachings of the medieval Japanese Buddhist reformer Nichiren (1222–1282), who set himself apart from Japan’s inclusivist religious status quo by calling on all people to solely embrace the Lotus Sutra and reject all other teachings.

These groups include the massive lay organizations Soka Gakkai, Reiyukai, and Rissho Koseikai, which, along with several other Nichiren-based groups, have attracted millions of adherents over the last century. However, while they are commonly understood as Nichiren-based sects, these groups have expanded their institutional capacities to include a great deal more than Nichiren doctrine. For example, members of Soka Gakkai today are as likely to take part in a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony or read in a Gakkai publication about the life of Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. than they are to study the works of Nichiren or chant the Lotus. In this paper, I will describe how Nichiren-based new religious movements in Japan have attracted an unprecedented number of adherents through conflating Nichiren Buddhism with philosophy, art, music, and other traditions adopted from modern Europe and North America. This fusion has resulted in a specific aesthetic within these organizations that combines the rigor of Japanese Buddhist practices with aspirations for personal transformation and social improvement expressed in the idioms of Romantic art and literature. I will draw on my fieldwork-based research with practitioners to describe ways in which the quest for Buddhist enlightenment expressed through the oeuvre of the European Enlightenment shapes the lives of millions of adherents in contemporary Japan and continues to inspire their commitment to these organizations. In turn, these examples from Japan will serve as case studies that we can include in a broader conversation about comparable confluences in a shared global culture of religious movements in different parts of the world.

Meintel, Deirdre – University of Montreal, Canada
dmeintel@videotron.ca

RELIGIOUS SOCIALITY AND THE INTERNET

Many scholars have commented on the « individualization » of contemporary religious life. Based on research by a team of anthropologists on over 80 religious groups in Quebec, I argue that religious sociality remains important and is often supported by new information technologies. Groups studied include Neo-shamanic groups, Evangelical congregations, Buddhist temples, contemporary Catholic groups, Muslim mosques and many others. New technologies (Internet, chat rooms, email, websites...) are being used by different types of religious actors for different purposes and with varying degrees of reflexivity; e.g., Internet resources are widely utilized by potential converts for religious socialization, but are also used to create social support for religious disaffiliation. I conclude with some general reflections on how New Information Technologies are giving rise to new forms of religious communalization.

Meyer, Christian – University of Leipzig, Germany
cmeyer@gate.sinica.edu.tw

WESTERN PERSPECTIVES ON THE FIELD OF 'CHRISTIAN STUDIES' IN MAINLAND CHINESE ACADEMIA

This paper attempts to provide insights into the field of religious studies in contemporary Mainland China from a Western perspective. The study of religion in China in general has greatly evolved since the end of ideological domination (with a climax in the Cultural Revolution, 1966–1976) and the beginning of the reform period in 1978. Since then the government has given more and more freedom not only to economy, but also the religious field as well as Chinese academia; new positions and institutes for the research on religion have been established serving interests of the government on the one hand as well as those of researchers, students, and a wider public on the other. The general idea of this paper is that the Chinese field of religious studies can only be understood by considering its special place in the intersection of various interests. Its relevance for political decisions and public debates gives religious studies in China a much stronger general influence than it has in the West, but also shapes its partly politically influenced agendas and terminology. This shall be exemplified by Christian Studies and the field of so called "Sino-Christian Theology." A specialty of this particular case is not only its strong influence in academic and public debates on modernization, but also its especially strong exchange with the West.

Meyer, Christian – University of Leipzig, Germany
cmeyer@gate.sinica.edu.tw

THE EMERGING FIELD OF CHINESE RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND ITS ROOTS IN THE PUBLIC DISCOURSES ON RELIGION

This paper focuses on the emerging field of religious studies in Republican China (1912–1949). The period starting from the late 19th century into the first half of the 20th century has been an important transformative phase in which western knowledge and taxonomies entered China. This was also true for the discipline and particular concepts of religious studies which, however, reached China relatively late, in the 1920s. The paper sets out to explore the specific preconditions of this reception. These include channels of transfer as well as related discourses in the receiving Chinese society which opened a gateway for its influence in academia, but also in society and even politics. It will further show that these new forms of occupation with "religion" and its categorization were not just efforts carried out by only one party, but that critical as well as affirmative positions to religion led to a kind of 'transplantation' of arguments of western discourses on religion to China.

At the same time, however, arguments and ideas were not only simply applied, but also reshaped for their new discursive environments and used in new functions in domestic debates. Special characteristics of the field in this period were therefore a limited institutionalization of the discipline, but also an overlapping and strong mutual influences with the general public discourses on religion as well as with the religious field itself.

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Miczek, Nadja – University of Heidelberg, Germany

NEW AGE – NEW THEORY? DISCUSSING MODERN FIELD/DISCOURSE THEORIES AND SELECTED NARRATOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

In my paper I will present the main results of my PhD thesis, a qualitative study of 12 men and women describing themselves as belonging to the New Age and the Christian field. In narrative interviews they were asked about their religious biography and their usage of rituals and modern mass media. Because previous theories used in Religious Studies often failed to provide a framework for the explanation of the dynamic religiosity found among these people, I combined (post-)modern field and discourse theories (Bourdieu, Keller, Laclau) with contemporary narratology discussions. The application of this approach will be demonstrated on two examples: first, on the narrative construction of the categories “religion”, “spirituality” and “esotericism” (in Germany commonly used for “New Age”); secondly, on the dynamic development of healing rituals (Reiki) in relation to both the construction of religious identity and other fields like media and economics. The analysis of both examples points to the fact that we are in need of theoretical approaches which can handle complex religious fields. Therefore approaches that have been borrowed from Cultural Studies and Sociology can be seen as helpful analytic and theoretic tools also in Religious Studies. But further on, we will also have to draw our attention to diachronic perspectives: How can religious historiography be written when we are dealing with more or less dynamic religious fields which have no clearly definable borders? In concluding remarks this issue will be addressed by introducing some topics from recent narratology discussions.

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Miczek, Nadja – University of Heidelberg, Germany

WHO IS DR. USUI? MEDIAL TRACES OF THE LEGENDARY FOUNDER OF REIKI

In nearly all Western countries the ritual practice of Reiki is by now well known not only within ‘New Age’ circles but as an alternative healing method also in hospitals, by nurses and even veterinarians. Nevertheless its popularity the origins of Reiki still lay in the realm of

mythological and hagiographical construction and only few scholars of Religious Studies have yet picked up the traces of Dr. Mikao Usui, the legendary founder of Reiki. The construction of his biography can nowadays be followed through various media; books and the internet as the most important sources. In this paper the author will follow some of Dr. Usui's medial footprints providing a synoptic overview on different versions of his biography which can be found both in standard Reiki teaching books and on personal homepages of Reiki healers. It will be discussed to which extent the reception of a certain Usui-Narrative depends on the religious orientation of its provider. Additionally the focus will be drawn on the media itself: in what way does the growing media network form the reception, transformation and innovation of the Usui-Narrative? To answer this question current theories from media studies and from narratology will be discussed as concluding remarks.

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Mikaelsson, Lisbeth – University of Bergen, Norway
Lisbeth.Mikaelsson@ahkr.uib.no

THE SPIRIT OF NEW AGE CAPITALISM

In *The Protestant Ethic and the Rise of Capitalism* (1905) Max Weber proposed that the Puritan ideals of hard work, moral discipline, and frugality were determining elements in the successful rise of early capitalism. Basically supporting Weber's thesis, Peter Berger remarks in *Desecularization of the World* (1999) that values which function well in one period of economic development may not be functional in another period (p. 17). Berger's comment is the point of departure in this paper. In the consumer society of late modernity religiously motivated hedonism and self-absorption are better suited than frugality to keep up the lavish consumption which is the cornerstone in capitalist economies. In a similar way, the theological exclusivism of Puritanism and similar religious doctrines are unable to sustain or legitimate an expanding spiritual commodification of the kind displayed in New Age. Taking its starting point in discussions about religion and the consumer society, the argumentation in this paper centres on cognitive modes, concepts and values in New Age which are regarded as vital for its development into a commercial market. The New Age concept of energy will be highlighted, since ‘energy’ has become the common ideological currency, displaying layers of cosmic, physical, personal, magical, *etc.* meanings. Energy is both holistic, all-embracing, relativist and adaptable, carrying no inherent ethical values that could restrict economic interests or hedonism. Besides, energy has an important disembedding role, *i.e.*, it is able to “translate” disparate phenomena into the same code.

This function is similar to how money behaves, and vital for the constitution of the New Age market. When money becomes a spiritual entity, which has happened in the prosperity branch of New Age, the marriage of spirituality and capitalism is consummated, one could say.

Miller, Monica R. – University of Pennsylvania, USA

DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER: REDESCRIBING THE RELIGIOUS IN HIP HOP CULTURE

In 2009, rap artists Fifty Cent (The 50th Law), KRS-One (The Gospel of Hip Hop: First Instrument), and RZA of Wu-Tang Clan (Tao of the Wu) published books that many are dubbing as “religious.” Agreeable that each book uses religious signifiers and themes as an entry into authorizing the power of Hip Hop culture – what such uses in fact do and accomplish is debatable. The content of these works make use of religious capital to authorize particular social and cultural interests. Signifying power and authority, Fifty’s book is fashioned after a black King James Version of the bible; RZA’s book markets a Zen like quality; and lastly KRS’s book is marketed as the new Hip Hop bible. What’s religion got to do with it? Don’t judge these books by their covers. The dominant approach to the category of “religion” within African American religious studies is methodologically limited to phenomenological analysis and a sui generis framing of religion, seeking to explore what “is” religious about Hip Hop. This approach assumes Hip Hop culture to be a modality by which artists express intentional religious beliefs and convictions. Beyond perpetual hermeneutical quests for meaning and presence figured as religious, this paper takes a new approach. Relying upon critical approaches to the study of religion this paper attempts to redescribe the religious in Hip Hop culture by examining what such uses and effects of religion within this cultural modality accomplish for various interests within Hip Hop culture.

Minnema, Lourens – VU University, The Netherlands
l.minnema@th.vu.nl

SPATIAL IMAGERY AS KEY TO TWO MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES OF TRANSFORMATION

The mystical writings of Teresa of Avila and those of John of the Cross can be compared in many ways. The comparative approaches discussed in this paper focus on the use of spatial imagery. Both mystical authors express their transformative experiences in a variety of metaphors. Their choice of these metaphors is not arbitrary. On the contrary, it is very revealing. Several core metaphors display spatial patterns which will be compared and understood in terms of their cultural commonalities and psychological differences. Cultural-historical (Von Balthasar), Jungian (Welch, Maas as

opposed to Howe), Freudian (Erikson, Riemann), self-psychological (Julian, Frohlich) and object-relational (Barron) explanations will be discussed. It will be argued that psychological differences between the two mystics explain their different use of spatial imagery.

Mishra, Rashmi – University of Lucknow, India

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION AMONG BHOKSA TRIBAL GROUP OF UTTRANCHAL, INDIA: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY

Anthropology has tended to be chiefly concerned with nonliterate and technologically primitive culture, and thus has stressed a certain range of many techniques which helps a complete study of any society. Many anthropological investigations however have been carried out recently in more complex or primitive societies. All mankind believes in god, anthropology is studied of man in all variety of social, cultural and physical milieux. For an anthropologist the importance of religion lies in its capacity to serve for an individual or for a group, as a source of general, yet distinctive conception of the world the self and the relation between them on the one hand – its model of aspect – and of roots, no less distinctive ‘mental’ disposition – its model for aspect – on the other from these cultural flow in turn its social and psychological ones. Religious concepts spread beyond their specifically metaphysical context to provide a framework of general ideas in terms of which a wide range of experiences intellectual emotional and meaningful form. Bhoksa mainly schedule tribe of India inhabiting Himalayas foothill bhabar and tarai area of uttranchal. The Bhoksa are one of the most Hindu tribe in India, they call themselves Hindu. They worship some deities of Hindu Gods like Rama, Sita, Krishna. In this paper we discuss the role of ancestor worship in regulating, political succession, of sacrificial feasts in defining kinship obligations, of worship in scheduling agricultural practices and also study what ancestral worship they follow, their magical practices, etc.

Mitkidis, Panagiotis – Aarhus University, Denmark
mitkidispan@hotmail.com

RITUALISTIC ACTIONS AND SOCIAL COHESION: A GAME THEORETICAL APPROACH

The goal of this paper is to develop a model that relates and evaluates the power of ritualistic action and the power of ordinary action in relation to group cohesion and social solidarity, namely to find a way to analyze the relationship between religious or non-religious ritualistic actions, ordinary instrumental actions, and intra-group or extra-group cohesion, cooperation, and trust.

Using Game Theory, I will build a data set by recruiting participants from different contemporary religious systems in Denmark to participate in a series of experiments. Their decisions will be used to demonstrate that ritual's information channel is not as strong as it has been suggested by several researchers, but on the contrary ordinary action offers a better communication channel, and therefore stronger group cohesion. Since the project is work in progress, there is no actual experiment yet. Therefore the presentation will be in three parts: first on the importance of the method itself, second on the practical details of the project, and third future plans and considerations. In viewing ritual as a "memory-free" mechanism, in combination with Game Theory, developmental psychology, and social decision making, the results should have important implications for modeling cooperation, team-building, and group solidarity.

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Mobarak, Syed – Ranchi College, India
 abbas_mabarak@yahoo.com

CHANGING SOCIAL VALUES, PRIORITIES AND RELIGIOUS ETHOS: A REFLECTION OF KHETAURI AMBITION

Khetauris are the natives of Santhal Pargana of Jharkhand state. The community has witnessed great upheavals but politically evolved to meet the demand of changing times. Khetauri history of power sharing during medieval period and later day loss of the same revealed cultural agenda of different historical phases. Religious manifestations as most identifiable cultural thrust occupied centre stage of Khetauri focus, with which repeated experimentation were under taken. Thus Khetauri religious life as well as belief has been accordingly re-oriented for the sake of political expediency. The present study discusses how a journey of Khetauri transformation from Mughal day ruler-warrior to special tribe of British Raj and later day Backward class of Independent India clamoring for Scheduled tribal status has been accordingly backed by suitable shift in religious ethos and practices. Confusion, ambiguity and identity overlapping have nonetheless run all along. Taking cue from Khetauris, inter-linkage between social structure and religion has also been explored.

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Moberg, Jessica – Södertörn University, Sweden
 jessica.moberg@sh.se

CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY IN PRESENT-DAY STOCKHOLM: CHANGING RITUAL PRACTICE

Contemporary Stockholm is a late modern urban setting, characterized by global mobility and increasing religious diversity. These trends doubtlessly impact the

various religious traditions, older ones as well as newly established ones, which are present in the city. Among the Christian traditions, churches and denominations as well as individual practitioners are submitted to change when it comes to both beliefs and practice. In this paper, I scrutinize some of the contemporary changes on Stockholm's charismatic Christian scene, with a special focus on everyday ritualization among individual Christians. The paper is based on observations in different charismatic churches as well as interviews and conversations with practitioners and churchgoers, which took place over the last year. As the material suggest, especially younger practitioners tend to pick and choose among ritualized practices retrieved from the Catholic Church, different Orthodox traditions as well as charismatic practices from other parts of the world. For example, it happens that charismatic's make use of incense during prayer at home. Others use icons as a way of focusing during their prayers, or they pray according to Catholic liturgical calendars. However, there are also limitations of the practices that are employed. Practices that are considered to break too much with theological standpoints of the practitioners are often left out.

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Moreno, Gilda Cubillo – Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico
 Gcubillo_etnohistoria@yahoo.com.mx

THE ARCHBROTHERHOOD OF THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF COYOACÁN AND ITS FUNCTIONS IN THE REPRODUCTION OF THE SPANISH SOCIAL GROUP

Through the example of the spanish family that was in the lead of Frnacisco Xavier Adalid, belonging to the local elite of Coyoacán at the end of the 18th century, I will show the kind of relationships among the members of its social group. Linkend them mainly by the archbrotherhood (archicifradía) – a religious, social and political institution – they succeded to concentrate their social capital and the local power. The support that this archbrotherhood of spanish and creoles meant by each one of the members, it could be taken as a way of salvation or ruin by them. An institution like this, in certain way, replaced the lack of family links in all those who, like Adalid, only had a pretty limited group of relatives and did not enjoy good inheritances, as well as the ways in order to ensure their living. Though an archbrotherhood like Coyoacán never goy the point of view of the high novohispanic elite, it was a way that increased the power of the group and the social reproduction.

Morishita, Nobuko – University of Tokyo, Japan
nobuska@gmail.com

A CRITICAL STUDY ON THE ARABIC MANUSCRIPTS OF THE TALES OF SALAMAN AND IBSAL (ABSAL)

There are two known narratives in Arabic called The Tale of Salaman and Ibsal. One is from the Hermetic wisdom literature allegedly translated from Greek by Hunayn Ibn Ishaq and the other is the philosophical allegory of the philosopher Ibn Sina. The former is in two forms, the original version, presumably, and the elaborated one. Both are published in lithograph and print, however, no critical editions exist thus far. The latter Ibn Sina's version, in western scholarship, has long been supposed to be lost despite the existence of three available manuscripts. Thus, most research is based on the concise summary noted in Chapter 9 of Nasir al-Din al-Tusi's commentary on Ibn Sina's al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat. To address this situation, I collected all the manuscripts and the published editions that could be found expect one missing Mashhad manuscript. I, then, prepared the critical editions of the above mentioned three works, namely, two Hermetic versions and Ibn Sina's version. I also gathered the considerable number of manuscripts of Nasir al-Din al-Tusi's commentary and proceeded to establish the Urtext of Chapter 9 that could account for the variants. In this process, there were a number of findings, not confined to detailed textual issues, but general philological issues. They include the probable origin of the names Salaman and Ibsal, and how and which Hermetic version was known to Ibn Sina. In this presentation, I will speak comprehensively about the problems of these tales and also about new connections and relationships that my research has uncovered.

Morris, Jon – Tohoku University, Japan
Jp8975@hotmail.com

PURE LAND THOUGHT AND THE LEGEND OF THE ETERNAL MEDITATION OF KUKAI

The legend of the eternal meditation of Kukai, involving the discovery of his warm and incorrupt body, is important to the development of Kobo Daishi related beliefs and practices. This presentation offers a reassessment of the source materials for this legend from a history of ideas perspective. It seeks to demonstrate that this legend, first found in material written well over a century after Kukai's death in 835ce, draws heavily on the key ideas and form of Pure Land hagiography typical of the late 10th and 11th centuries. The legend seems to have emerged in the 10th century against a background of efforts to restore Mt Koya after a period of decline and disuse. The notion of incorruptibility as a sign of holy and auspicious death,

while fully compatible with Shingon thought, was typical of the Pure Land hagiography of that time. I will introduce materials from the Ojoden collections of late-Heian period Pure Land hagiography which are highly comparable with the Kukai texts. Considering the significance of Pure Land hagiography at that time, and the use by monks from the esoteric traditions of Pure Land practices for the dying, the question of the extent of Pure Land influence would seem a valid focus for reassessment of the existing scholarship on the legend. However, this influence has been generally overlooked in the light of the legend's later significance in the Shingon sect and for the "Sokushinbutsu" practitioners who attempted to achieve buddhahood through a process of self-mummification.

Mukherjee, Asha – Visva-Bharati University, India
ashamukh@gmail.com

STUDY, TEACHING AND RESEARCH ON WOMEN AND RELIGION AS DONE WITHIN INDIAN ACADEMIA

Though women constitute the majority of humankind and their involvement in religious practices usually is much more than men's, their bodies typically are considered impure and a hindrance to emancipation. In India in particular a woman symbolizes *vasana* (desire) and *kamana* (lust); her mundane life circumscribes her spiritual life; she is hardly permitted entry into the realm of ritual purity. In academic study of religion, whether in the West or in Asia, women's involvement in religion does not get its due attention. This paper explores such restrictions of women in religion in their historical contexts and cites as illustrations feticide, ordination, salvation, divinity and children of mixed parentage. Marriage reform laws, exclusion of females from important decision-making bodies and the politics of conversion are also important gender-related issues which need to be investigated from the perspective of religion, especially in the Indian context. This is necessitated by the complexity of Indian religious traditions, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, Islamic, Zoroastrian and tribal.

This paper also argues, however, that in India, despite the general tendency to impose limitations on women in and through religion, certain religious traditions at certain times and contexts in their history have held both comparatively liberal and comparatively conservative views toward women. But historical, anthropological and cultural studies of such variations are still very limited and hence more research is needed. The academic study of religion within Indian universities can serve as both catalyst and integrating platform for such multi-disciplinary research on women and religion.

Mukherji, Bikash – Visra Bharati, India

THE SOCIAL DIASPORA OF BUDDHISM IN EASTERN INDIA

The religion after the name of Buddha (the Sakya Prince Siddhartha Gautama), Buddha Dharma, is a path, a way of life for the evolution of society in general. Buddha's approach to existence was uniquely rational and he followed a scientific discipline in viewing life and the world. It was from the platform of detached, objective and diagnostic observations of the realities of the life that the Buddha discovered and expounded the Dharma. The Dharma was not handed down to the Buddha by some unknown force or Supreme Being. It is dispensed for the welfare of humankind and it was the outcome of a culmination of personal spiritual experiences and resolute self-effort. The evolution of the Buddha Dharma made an imprint in the society right from its inception but it touched the supreme point at the time of the Pala rulers of eastern India when Buddha Dharma expounded with most illuminating ways and practiced under the name and doctrine of Vajrayana or Tantrayana. Keeping this concept of Buddha-Dharma the paper highlights the distinctive feature of the Vajrayana or Tantrayana form of Buddhism, a religious practice for all human being, irrespective of any caste, colour or gender differences in order to develop their mundane and spiritual mind. The system probably came into existence with its clear exposition in the eighth century AD. The distinctive features of Vajrayana Buddhism are the ritual and practices which used as substitute or alternative for the earlier abstract meditation. Nalanda University became a center for the development of Vajrayana theory and continued as the source of leading-edge Vajrayana practices up through the 11th cent. A.D. The Buddha Dharma without bearing any dogmatic view and rigid practice was acceptable to the common milieu of India and it even transmitted to China, Tibet, Maldives, Indo-China and South-East Asia, etc.

Mukhopadhyaya, Ranjana – University of Delhi,
Indiar · anjanayaya@gmail.com

TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS OF DHARMA AND DEVELOPMENT: ENGAGED BUDDHISM IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

The various Buddhist social reformation and liberation movements, broadly referred to as Engaged Buddhist movements, while addressing issues concerning their communities, have acquired global dimensions as evident from the transnational networking among Buddhists/Buddhist organizations in Asia as well as in the West, and the multiethnic and multinational following that has come to characterize these contemporary Buddhist social movements. This paper,

through an analysis of emerging patterns in Engaged Buddhist movements in Japan, particularly the transnational volunteerism of Japanese Buddhists and the interactions among Buddhists of Japan (Mahayana schools of Buddhism) and other Asian countries as well as with Western Buddhists (Mahayana as well as Theravada Buddhism), will highlight the transformations in Engaged Buddhist movements, particularly the changes in Buddhist missionary and philanthropic activities, under the impact of globalization. This paper, based on author's fieldwork on Buddhist peace and development activities in Japan and Cambodia, will illustrate how international aid and voluntary activities by Japanese Buddhist organizations in Cambodia, is shaping the Engaged Buddhist movements in both these countries. The paper has the following three areas of discussions: 1.) the "glocal" i.e., global-local interactions in Engaged Buddhist movements; 2.) transnational voluntary activities by Buddhist organizations and their impact on social and economic development of Asian countries; 3.) multiculturalism and trans-national networks of spirituality in Engaged Buddhist movements and its impact on Buddhist revival movements in Asia.

Mulhern, Aldea – University of Toronto, Canada
aldea.mulhern@utoronto.ca

RELATIONAL SPACE AND MEANINGFUL FOOD

Religion and Space panel Recent anthropological studies signal the presence of communities (environmental activists, homesteaders, Catholic eco-nuns) who are religiously or spiritually motivated to modify their eating habits in relation to their environment, nature, and/or creation. On a more diffuse level in southern Ontario, Mennonite farmers supply new locavore butcher shops with grass-fed, corn-finished pigs, and some Muslims favour organic over Halal beef. What is the substance and nature of the decision to restrict or alter one's diet in these ways? What common threads, if any, unite an activist's vegetarianism, a nun's culinary Eucharist, a Mennonite pork sausage, and a Reform Jew's CSA box? In this paper I use theories of space to think about contemporary religiously- or spiritually-motivated food practices, particularly those that focus on local sustainable or community-supported agricultures as a means to live the Good Life, achieve harmony, or save the world. My paper seeks to deepen the understanding of contemporary food performances by teasing out the repercussions of conceptions of space, where there is a shift of focus from the individual to networks of relations. This new understanding is evident in choices to purchase and eat local foods and is particularly revelatory in the case of meat and the question of the relationship between animal and human.

Theories of space help show that practices of cultivation, acquiring, preparation, and consumption, are mediated by religio-spatial concerns. While religiously-motivated food practices are certainly not new, in this paper I hope to shed light on the particularities of changing foodways in the modern context.

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Muralidhar, B.V. – Andhra University, India

RELIGION AS A SOURCE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is understood in varying contexts. Both social and economic entrepreneurship is being promoted by religion in the form of norms for individuals. The studies by various scholars like Milton, Singer, Weber and Das Gupta show that certain religions provide for entrepreneurship more than other religions the present study highlights close relationship between economic activity and the religious convictions of the people.

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Murken, Sebastian – University of Marburg,
Germany · smurken@mainz-online.de

HEAVENLY SERVICES: PSYCHOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON TODAY'S ATTRACTIVENESS OF ANGELS

Since more than a decade, angels seem to be omnipresent in many countries of the modern Western world. They have not only become a very popular decoration object and motive, we also encounter them in films, novels, objects of art, *etc.*; even sales promoters have discovered their heavenly power. Moreover, one could even get the impression that angels start to replace God. A recent survey in Germany yielded that 66% of Germans believe in guardian angels whereas only 64% believe in God (forsa, 2005). Thus, it can hardly be neglected that angels are of major relevance to many individuals. However, the question remains open, why they are so popular? The angel boom has repeatedly been explained as an expression of postmodern religiosity/spirituality and a new need for transcendence (*e.g.*, Geuter, 2003; Wolff, 1991). However, it seems that angels serve more than a human need for religion. A look at popular angel self-help books, seminars, *etc.* suggests that angels offer a variety of resources for coping with life's demands in modern societies and promise the fulfillment of a variety of central psychological needs. Angels not only protect humans, they also help them in many ways, heal and give comfort and meaning. They accompany a person through all his or her life, from birth to death, they see and mirror the individual in a unique way.

It seems that the diversity of angels and angelic functions which is offered as well as the idea of an individual guardian angel allow angels to conquer the hearts and minds of large numbers of individuals. In this presentation, the psychological relevance of angels for the fulfillment of human needs and coping with life will be reflected. The functionality of the angelic offers will be discussed critically from a psychological perspective.

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Murzac, Adrian – Oxford University, Centre for
Anthropology & Mind, UK
adrian.murzac@anthro.ox.ac.uk

THE ROLE OF ANALOGY IN CULTURAL TRANSMISSION OF ABSTRACT RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS

Authors: Claudia Murzac, Boicho Kokinov, Adrian Murzac, Harvey Whitehouse (murzacc@nbu.bg; bkokinov@nbu.bg; adrian.murzac@anthro.ox.ac.uk; harvey.whitehouse@anthro.ox.ac.uk)

Analogies abound in religious texts, while at the same time many religious concepts are quite abstract. This paper explores the influence of analogy on the retention of information related to abstract concepts. While the role of analogy in understanding abstract concepts is quite well understood, it was not clear how analogy-making contributes to stabilized memory for abstract religious concepts. A series of psychological experiments was conducted to mimic cultural transmission of ideas in written and oral form. We investigated recall rates for features of an abstract concept (soul) that was presented in an explanatory text by means of an analogy with a well known source domain (*e.g.*, the soul is like a butterfly) or without an analogy (simply presenting the features of the concept). Our results show that participants recalled roughly the same number of ideas from the text, regardless of the presence or absence of the analogy in the text. However, the presence of analogy increases significantly the retention of information related to the abstract religious concept. Finally, we examined whether increasing the number of source-domains used in the analogy has an impact on the recall rates for the abstract concept and show that this does not lead to a memory improvement. In conclusion, we can say that the use of analogy in religious discourse is a factor that contributes significantly to a better preservation of religious concepts in the cultural transmission process.

Mutiti, Waithanji – University of Science and Technology, Kenya

RELIGIOUS MORALITY AND THE MARKET ECONOMY IN AFRICA: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

Religion is a phenomenon that has been highly influential in the development of human morality. Thus, religious morality has been a catalyst for the socio-economic development of society. Based on structuralist thinking, and specifically on the Max Weber theory in the protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, this paper seeks to underscore the intersection between religious morality and the market economy in Africa. It will seek to demonstrate that the richness of the African religious heritage and later Christianity, have been seminal in the evolution of a moral economy that in one way or the other affects the African way of doing business. This paper will also enumerate the global economic challenges that Africa as a continent encounters, and make suggestions from a religio-moral point of view.

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Nag, Ashok Kumar – Ranchi College, India
nagaskok193@rediffmail.com

STUDIES ON PLANTS WORSHIPPED IN SARNA AND HINDU RELIGION OF JHARKHAND, INDIA

The paper deals with about 100 plants, the way, the parts or the whole plant used/worshipped by the tribals and Inhabitants of Jharkhand State, having a huge population belonging to Sarna and Hindu Religion of Jharkhand, India. This paper establishes a relationship between Religion and Biology of the densely populated State having literacy rate of 54% and is among the backward States of India.

Nagel, Alexander – Ruhr University, Denmark
Alexander-kenneth@reub.de

PUBLIC RELIGION IN THE WELFARE STATE – THE CASE OF CHARITABLE CHOICE

In his famous thesis of religious deprivatization José Casanova held that Public Religions would increasingly refuse the niche of privacy assigned to them by modern states. Yet, religion going public is not only a matter of emancipation. While religious communities have to struggle for legitimacy and recognition to join political decision making, they are ardently courted to compensate for the shortcomings and cutbacks of some modern welfare states. In my talk I make use of the American Faith-Based Initiative and Charitable Choice legislation to show that religious deprivatization is just as much connected to an exogenous general transformation of the modern state as to the endogenous public self-consciousness and soteriological motivation of religious communities.

Nakatomi, Kiyokazu – Chiba prefectural Togane Commercial High School, Japan
k-nakatomi@proof.ocn.ne.jp

A CONCEPT OF GOD BY EINSTEIN – FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF JAPANESE PHILOSOPHY

Three years ago, I argued in my essay that the concept of energy by Bergson and Einstein is common, though there is a big difference in the way the two thought about our world. The concept of energy by Bergson is reality as a stream of life. It becomes God in the course of time. The reality is the stream of life in ancient China and it was called Prana in India. In China and Japan, as the stream of life is beyond the expression by words, it is called nothingness. Well, what is a concept of God by Einstein? At first, Einstein denied the personal God and preached the cosmic religion.

Therefore, he did not support the specific religion. Through the research of his God who is the core of religious belief, I want to ascertain his view of the universe. As he denied the personal God (Jesus Christ), his theory on God is condemned as pantheism or atheism in the Christian world. But from my philosophical standpoint, from a Japanese perspective, as his concept of God is energy that is common with the reality of Bergson, it is classified as reality. It means that the concept of Einstein as energy and reality of the stream of life is common with the concept of Asian nothingness. I want to prove that the concept of God by Einstein becomes the bridge between European and Asian philosophies similar to the philosophy of Bergson.

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Nanda, Meera – See *Plenary Presentations*, p7

Ndegwah, David – Kenyotta University, Kenya
 ndegwadavid@yahoo.com

"AFRICANS ARE NOTORIOUSLY RELIGIOUS...": MYTH AND REALITY

It was John Mbiti (1969: 1), who observed that "Africans are notoriously religious," and went ahead to describe the nature of this 'notoriety': "...each people has its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it." Long before Mbiti made his remarks, Delafosse had made a similar observation of African religiosity. "There exists no institutions in Africa, whether in the social, political or economic field, which would not be based on a religious conception. The African peoples are among the most religious in the world" (Quoted in Pavan: 1967:5). But as Plavoet and Van Rinsum observe, Mbiti only modified a pre-existing phrase 'Africans are incurably religious' to 'Africans are notoriously religious' (Plavoet & Van Rinsum 2003: 127). They also admit that they could not establish which scholar of religions of Africa was the first to formulate the view that Africans are incurably religious, but just notes with Parrinder that 'Africans have been said to be incurably religious' (Parrinder, 1969: 235). Quoting extensively from African and non-African scholars they elaborate on this view by surveying the preceding events that, according to them, led to "a unitary view of the pervasive religiosity of 'African traditional society' (Parrinder, 1969: 127)." The notable thing is that they regard this as 'a myth' that 'fits the terms of the theory of the inventions of tradition.' "More precisely," they argue, "it is a masterful counter-invention against the numerous European 'inventions of Africa', from classical times till now (Parrinder, 1969: 127)."

To render credence to their dismissive attitude they use African names like Okot p'Bitek and V.Y. Mudimbe, the former being "the first African scholar of religion to challenge the myth that Africans are incurably religious," while the latter complained loudly over what he saw as the invention of Africa by non-African scholars (Mudimbe, 1988: 69–72).

I would like to say that human life is extremely volatile to explain or even categorise theoretically. Logic, for instance, deals with the either/or concepts and black and white expressions, but this hardly the case with human life. There is always a grey line that does not even befit the expression 'paradox.' This does not mean that we cannot say, or even understand something about our own lives: of course we can, but we need to be extra careful, particularly when dealing with stereotypes and ideologies. Aware of this caution, I will continue to show that the notion of African religiosity is both a myth and a reality that cannot be wished away and that these writers committed a 'category mistake' in trying to dismiss the religiosity of Africans as a mere invention and referring to it as just a myth.

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Ndlovu, Lovemore – University of South Africa,
 South Africa

THE DEVIL IS ON FIRE: ANALYSING RESURGENT RELIGIOSITY IN PENTECOSTALISM IN ZIMBABWE

This paper seeks to explore the revival of religiosity evident in Pentecostalism and heavily relies on empirical evidence collected among Pentecostal believers in Zimbabwe. First, the paper critiques the secularization thesis that understands religion to be a relic of the past and soon to be replaced by a post-religious secular order. With the advent of industrialization and growth in scientific thinking, sociologists thought that religion will decline or even disappear. However, in Zimbabwe, as it happens elsewhere in other parts of the world, Pentecostals are the fastest-growing contemporary 'branch' of evangelical Christianity. Consequently, the paper explores the return of religion evident in Pentecostalism. Second, the paper aims to focus on the role of religion with emphasis on its social dimensions and its impact on civil society – how it constructs various forms of social identity. Finally, the paper examines the major attraction of Pentecostalism in contemporary Zimbabwe society.

Nielbo, Kristoffe Laigaard – Aarhus University,
Denmark · nielbo23@gmail.com

PREDICTION ERRORS AND ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATING IN RITUALIZED ACTION – A COMPUTATIONAL APPROACH TO COGNITIVE PROCESSING OF DIFFERENT BEHAVIOURAL FORMS

The majority of ritual models and theories share the assumption that ritualized actions can be distinguished from instrumental actions according to an opaque contra clear relation between the temporal sequence and the goal structure of the action. However, most of these models lack a proper understanding of: a) How actions in general are processed by cognitive systems, and b) how different forms of action constrain human information processing. To remedy this, two in progress computational models are presented, based on the concepts of prediction error and rapid environmental updating in action processing, that will be used to simulate earlier experimental results concerning causal under-determination in ritual action, strengthen our current model of ritualized behavior, and explore different theoretical trajectories for future research in the area of action cognition.

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Nilsson, Staffan – Södertörn University, Sweden
staffan.nilsson@sh.se

THE REPRODUCTION OF A SECULARISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGION IN SWEDISH SPORTS MEDIA.

The majority of the people in the world could be described as religious believers. Against this background it is not at all surprising that many of the world's athletes is or understands themselves as religious believers. In this paper I will investigate how religion and religious beliefs among athletes is represented in Swedish sports media. I will argue that religious beliefs among athletes are generally understood as something rare and peculiar, and not at least as something noteworthy. This representation of religion, I will argue, could partly be understood as depending on a secularized or even secularistic understanding of religion. It could also be explained as depending on an understanding of both sport and religion as belonging to two totally different spheres in life. These kinds of understandings of religion are also something that will be reproduced in this discourse, I will argue.

Nishimura, Naoko – Tohoku University, Japan
gharma@sal.tohoku.ac.jp

AMIKA AND PAYASYA – FERMENTED MILK IN ANCIENT INDIA

This paper examines some ritual procedures and materials related to processing fresh milk into five kinds of fermented milk product in the oldest religious texts in India known as “Veda”. It focuses on *dadhi*, *ātañcana*, *sāmnāyā*, *āmikṣā*, and *payasyā* in the Brāhmaṇas (B.C. 800–600) and Śrautasūtras (B.C. 500–).

The ancient Āryas made their living by raising cattle. We can find references to various dairy products in their religious texts. Those products were not only everyday foodstuffs but also principal oblations. The descriptions of them, if not always clear, provide information about the methods used to process them.

The most typical fermented milk is *dadhi* (in Hindi, *dahi*), which we meet not only in the Veda but also in many later texts: the two epics, the Buddhist scriptures, etc. *dadhi* is the first product made in the processing of milk. The stock phrase in the Buddhist literature tells us that *dadhi* is processed into the two kinds of butterfat and then finally into *sappimaṇḍa* (*sarpirmaṇḍa*, 醍醐): *khīra* (*kṣīra*) → *dadhi* → *navanīta* → *sappi* (*sarpiṣ*) → *sappimaṇḍa*.

Both the Veda and the Buddhist literature describe *dadhi* as made without additives. However, some Vedic texts explain also other methods which use a starter and ingredients taken from several species of plant. The making of *dadhi* is often referred to in the context of Soma sacrifice. Soma is one of the most important plant substances used in the Vedic rituals. We might infer that the *dadhis* processed with different plant material are different kinds of product. The main aim of this paper is to identify these products exactly and to elucidate their religious meaning.

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Nordin, Andreas – University of Gothenburg,
Sweden · andreas.nordin@globalstudies.gu.se

DREAMING IN RELIGION AND PILGRIMAGE

Dreaming is a universal human experience and a cultural theme that appears in folk traditions and religious rituals. Religious dreams and dream beliefs often contain representation of supernatural agents who have access to information that may be of strategic importance to humans. In religious dream representations supernatural agents may communicate “inside” the dreamer or else the dreamer’s soul may venture “out” to communicate with the agent. Dreaming has rarely been the object of theoretical reflection in cognitive anthropology or the cognitive science of religion.

This presentation offers some suggestions regarding social cognition about agents and also about how other systems may exert selective pressure in the cultural formation of religious dream representations. The presentation draws upon findings from Hindu pilgrimage ethnography and fieldwork in Nepalese and Tibetan Himalaya. Here dreams may be used in rituals such as dream incubation. This practice consists of a ritual agent dreaming of a supernatural agent while sleeping at a sacred site. Ethnographic records indicate that the purpose of dream incubation is to help with the dreamer's health problems or life dilemmas. Ideally, a supernatural agent appears in a dream during the incubation and provides a remedy. Dream reports are often bizarre in that they describe peculiar supernatural agents (gigantic heads, talking pigs), rule transgressions and exposure to pollution or contagion. The prescribed purity concerns of these ritual episodes draw upon cognitive hazard precaution systems and action representations in terms of which the faith healing of incubation may be described as a special patient/instrument ritual.

Norris, Rebecca Sachs – Merrimack College, USA
norrisr@merrimack.edu

"IN MY FLESH I WILL SEE GOD": NEUROSCIENTIFIC AND EXPERIENTIAL PERSPECTIVES ON EMBODIED TRANSMISSION

Body understood as a biochemical, medicalized organism is a concept deeply embedded in contemporary Western culture, and is a perspective seemingly incommensurable with experiential modes of religious inquiry. This presentation considers how religious experiences such as states of prayer or meditation are learned, demonstrating that both neurobiology and religious experience can be included without losing their distinctive contributions; the role of the body in the transmission of religious states can be explored through the study of both the body's modes of perception and the neurological foundations of certain types of experience. The body and feelings have their own intelligence, which is immediate and polysemic. Our sense organs and emotions function without verbal description or mediation from the intellect, and are attuned to take in types of impressions to which they are specifically adapted. Another characteristic, one that is necessary for worship and ritual to be effective, is that recalled emotions are "refelt" in the present. One consequence of this characteristic is the possibility of evolving emotions, thus the human senses and feelings can be refined and developed intentionally through discipline and training, and are capable of gradations of experience. This development is culturally specific, and is one of the ways in which culture, particularly religious culture, is handed down. Both "refeeling" and enculturation are reflected (or generated) at the neurological level, giving a contemporary perspective to ancient religious understandings that the body must be educated and trained in order to be capable of certain spiritual experiences.

Obuse, Kieko – Oxford University, UK
kieko426@hotmail.com

JAPANESE MUSLIM VIEWS OF BUDDHISM: CONVERTS' DILEMMA

From early in their history, Muslim scholars have regarded the historical Buddha as a prophet, despite the lack of any direct reference to Buddhists in the Qur'an. Today, the idea that the historical Buddha is a prophet is found widely among Muslims from South and Southeast Asia, where Buddhist-Muslim relations have been in progress for a long time. Yet, the doctrine of prophethood is also starting to be applied to Buddhism by Muslims from other parts of the world. The present paper examines the views of representative figures from Japan's Muslim community regarding the historical Buddha. It is based on the results of a small survey conducted with Muslims in Japan, a generally Buddhist country with a small growing Muslim population. While non-Japanese Muslims tend to recognize the Buddha's prophethood on the basis of a sense of shared ethical values between Islam and Buddhism, Japanese Muslims do not accept him as a prophet since they do not feel he taught tawhid (monotheism). This latter view suggests that Japanese Muslims, as committed converts, attempt to be as doctrinally 'upright' as possible. However, they also have some attachment to Buddhism, expressing desire to see more doctrinal connections established between the two traditions. Thus, when evaluating Buddhist teachings from an Islamic perspective, these Japanese Muslims experience a dilemma specific to converts, that is, having to reconcile doctrinal beliefs rather than making pragmatic decisions based on shared values or a sense of relevance.

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Ochiai, Hitoshi – Doshisha University, Japan
5n2n83@bma.biglobe.ne.jp

THEOLOGY OF SUFFERING AND TOPOLOGY AS METAPHOR

Mathematical theology is one of the methods of systematic theology. It interprets a theological proposition based on the Bible in the words of mathematics, in particular, topology, and makes an apology for that validity.

For example, the Bible can be interpreted as propounding the proposition that humans are saved through the fact that God was hung upon the cross and suffered. The suffering – the passion – of God is human salvation.

We could say that when people are suffering, if they can share that suffering with others, then even though there is no change in their own suffering per se, they do feel some sort of salvation from suffering. When one person shares the suffering of another, this is nothing less than the love of others regarding that person. In other words, humans can perhaps find salvation through the love of another who shares their suffering. The idea that God shares in the suffering of humans is shown here.

However, was not God an all-powerful being, or in other words, one with infinite power? Is it possible for a being with infinite power to suffer? The reason this must be asked is that suffering is due to some form of limitations in power: illness, for example, is the limitation of the flesh, poverty is the limitation of wealth, and disregard is the limit of social influence. As a result, God, with infinite power, can not possibly be able to suffer through limitations in his power. God cannot suffer. This was the conclusion of the medieval theologians who used the methods of the ancient Greek philosophers.

God cannot suffer. Therefore God cannot share the suffering of humans. And thus God cannot love humans. This means that Christianity would be impossible. Modern Protestant theology rejects the Greek philosophy and method, and considers that God can chose to suffer. The idea was that God abandons his infinite power through his own choice, and accepts suffering through the limitations to his power.

So we see that God, by abandoning his infinite power, can suffer the limitations of power along with we humans. God becomes Man. So there where is the being with infinite power? If the being with infinite power is nowhere, then the creation of the world, which continues without end, cannot be maintained. As long as God has become a man and is accepting suffering, is there no being with infinite power? So then how can God on the cross and suffering then rise from the dead? In the end Christianity has to respond to this question. How can a God with infinite power become a human who suffers with limited power?

There is no contradiction in thinking of a God that abandons his own infinite power through his own will. This only means that there is one more human suffering through limitations. It must be possible for God to be at once a being with infinite power and to be able to suffer through the limitation of power. God must be God and yet at the same time must accept human suffering. This requirement sounds like we are saying that God must be both infinite in his power, and limited in it, at the same time. This looks to be a logical contradiction where the infinite is finite.

But this is where mathematical theology comes in. We can liken God to topological space. Topological space is space where there is no contradiction in something infinite also having bounds. For example, let us take a look at the three-dimensional Euclidean space R^3 that surrounds us above and below, to the left and right, and in front and behind. Three-dimensional Euclidean space R^3 expands out infinitely as the real numbers R increase to infinity. In other words, R^3 is infinite. This is something people often get deluded about, but the space – the universe – we live in is not three-dimensional Euclidean space R^3 at all. The reason this is so that it is not thought that our universe does not expand infinitely, but has some form of bounds. As a result, R^3 is not actually possible in our actual space. We are considering an infinite space through R^3 that does not actually exist.

God is infinite. Therefore there should be no problem with considering Euclidean space as a model of God. However, there are probably a number of people who would have a considerable degree of hesitation in doing so. I would like to crave a little reprieve. It depends on whether or not the conclusion we draw from considering a given model of something can allow us to further understand the success or failure of that model. The model of God is no exception. It is not too late to judge the success or failure of model of starting from Euclidean space as a model of God, likening God to topological space, once we have looked at the conclusion.

So, three-dimensional Euclidean space R^3 is infinite. However, when an external point added to this R^3 , then we can create a space that has bounds and includes the infinite R^3 inside itself. We call this operation an *Alexandroff compactification* or a *one-point compactification*, and call the added external point the *point at infinity*. A space which has bounds that encompass the infinite R^3 in its interior is a three-dimensional sphere, S^3 . (The word “sphere” usually means the normal everyday two-dimensional sphere S^2 . Incidentally, the one-dimensional sphere S^1 is a circle. The three-dimensional sphere S^3 is not something we can conceive of in daily life.) In other words, the infinite space R^3 becomes the compact space S^3 through an Alexandroff compactification that adds a single point, a point at infinity, to the outside.

The word “compact” is a fundamental and essential word, but it is not such a simple one. We can think of it as a given space, or a sphere, being filled or being covered with an infinite number of blocks. We say that that space or sphere is “compact” when that space or sphere is covered with a finite number of those blocks. For example, three-dimensional Euclidean space R^3 has an infinite expanse, so even if it can be filled with an

infinite number of blocks, it may not be able to be filled with the limited number within that infinite number, and so it is not compact. In contrast to this, the three-dimensional sphere S^3 may not have any boundaries anywhere, but in the sense that inside it has a point corresponding to the point at infinity, it possesses bounds, so it can be covered with a finite number of blocks, and is compact ⁽ⁱ⁾.

A sphere as a compactification of Euclidean space is not at its heart a simple infinite space that has been chopped into a finite sphere. All points in three-dimensional Euclidean space R^3 correspond one to one with the points of sphere S^3 . That is to say, the infinite space is entirely confined within the compact sphere. The only point of S^3 that does not correspond with the points of R^3 is the point that corresponds to the point at infinity. (This is saying that the three-dimensional sphere S^3 is homeomorphic to the space which adds a point at infinity to the three-dimensional Euclidean space R^3 .)⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ As a result, the sphere as the compactification of Euclidean space becomes a model for something that is both infinite and yet at the same time, has bounds.

God must have had bounds at the same time as being infinite. That is how God was able to share our suffering at the same time as being God. If we consider the model of God as a compactified Euclidean space, or in other words, a sphere, then we can get a non-contradictory model of God that fulfills the apparently contradictory requirements of God to be both infinite and to have bounds.

As was noted in the “Death Notice” of Bourbaki, “God is the Alexandroff compactification of Euclidean space.”⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ In other words, God can be likened to the topological space of the sphere. This is the point the author reached in his book, *For Those Learning Mathematical Theology* (Sekaishiso-sha, 2009) and article, “Theology of the Cross and General Topology” (*Studies in the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. 27, 2010).

i. For the definition of compact space, see YANO, Koichi, Kyori Kuukan to Isou Kouzou (Distance Space and Topological Structures), Kyouritsu Shuppan, 1997, p.123.

ii. For spheres as the Alexandroff compactification of Euclidean space, see Yano, *ibid*, pp. 158–161.

iii. Maurice Mashaal BOURBAKI Éditions Pour la Science, 2002. The author referenced the Japanese translation by Takahashi Reiji, Burubaki (Springer Japan KK, 2002), p. 185.

O'Connell, Joseph T. – University of Toronto, Canada
joconnel@chass.utoronto.ca

RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN SOUTH ASIA CONSTRAINED BY SECULARIST-COMMUNALIST TENSIONS: FOCUS ON BANGLADESH

This paper has a dual objective: to introduce a two-session panel on academic study of religion in South Asian universities and to assess in particular the constraints and character of such study, especially in Bangladesh, with special attention to the impact of the tension between secularist and religio-political communalist interests prevailing in the respective countries.

The paper begins by considering several proposed explanations for the extreme paucity of academic study of religion in South Asian universities despite the prominence of major religious traditions throughout the region. It then focuses on one particular explanation: the generally inhibiting impact on religious studies of polarized tension between secularist and religio-political communalist interests in several South Asian countries. In India, where secularist interests have been dominant at public policy levels including education (though less dominant in recent decades), barely a handful of university departments or centres for religious studies exist. In Pakistan Islamic communalist, especially fundamentalist, interests have been overwhelmingly dominant and virtually no academic study of religion takes place in its universities.

In the case of Bangladesh secularist and fundamentalist Islamic communal interests have oscillated, but overall have been relatively evenly, if precariously, balanced. There the Department of World Religions and Culture in the University of Dhaka (the country's only department for academic study of religion) justifies its existence (and that of a recently attached Centre for Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue) by claiming to elucidate and accentuate the tolerant and peace-loving principles alleged to be at the core of all religious traditions.

Odey, Onah Augustine – University of Uyo, Nigeria
onaustenodey2008@yahoo.com

EMBATTLED GODS OF THE NORTHERN CROSS RIVERIANS AND CHRISTIANS IN THE EVANGELIZATION OF NORTHERN CROSS RIVER STATE, 1849–2009

For the disparate peoples of the former Ogoja Province or Northern Cross River State, the colonial period and Christianity brought with it many far-reaching changes.

The battle between the gods of the Christians and the peoples of Northern Cross River State were in the areas of beliefs, worship, practices, channels of communications, institutions, and local authorities. Christianity tended to make Christians profoundly un-African and the school became the most important mechanism for detaching the young from their roots.

Up until 1849, the Northern Cross River State or Old Ogoja Province was home to a self-reliant, self-contained, incorrigibly insular, independent, and blissfully tradition-entrusted people. This paper will argue that the history of Christianity in Northern Cross River State is not merely what missionaries did or failed to do. Rather, the role of the history of Christianity in Africa is to study how and why communities which had their own religions and viable instruments of social order came into contact with a new religious form and the varieties of ways in which they reacted to this external agent of change. There are a number of intriguing issues which interplay in the interpretations of the data, missiological (how the exigencies of the mission field forced enormous changes on the goals and structures of the missionary), sociological (an explanation of the present structure of Christian denominations operating in Northern Cross River State), and political (the dominance of people from the Boki section of Northern Cross River State in the civil service and professions). Micro-studies of this nature, however incomplete, provide glimpses into wider issues of the history of Christianity in Nigeria and Africa.

Ogungbile, David O. – Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria

SOUND AND MOVEMENT: CULTURAL HERMENEUTICS OF PERFORMANCE

The paper examines the intrinsic and extrinsic meanings produced in the sounds from drumming and songs, and in the movements on the sacred journey rehearsed and reenacted in Osun festival of Osogbo, one major annual festival in Nigeria which now gains national and international prominence, recognition and patronage. It identifies the historical, social, cultural, ethical and political meanings in the cultural performance. This cultural performance includes songs from different categories of priests and priestesses, devotees of such deities and singers drawn from participants including Osun, Ogun, Ifa, Obataala, Egungun who are usually actively involved during annual Osun Osogbo festival. The study employs a combination of phenomenological, historical and hermeneutical approaches in analyzing the data collected from participant-observation and interviews which covers a period of about a decade.

Oguntola-Laguda, Danoye – Lagos State University,
Nigeria · danoyeoguntola@yahoo.com

AN ANALYTIC STUDY OF THE TEACHING OF RELIGIONS IN UNIVERSITIES SOUTH WEST NIGERIA

Religion as academic discipline has suffered neglect in the hand of policy makers and designers of education curriculum in Nigeria. The teachers and researchers in the field are part of the problems plaguing its study. At the primary and secondary schools religion has been reduced to optional subject to promote science subjects (until 2000 it used to be a core subject that teaches morality). The situations seem to make the study of religion an exclusive preserve of seminaries and theological colleges that are abound in the country. In the University where religions are offered as degree or diploma courses, student enrolment has been on the decline in the last decade. This is due mainly to political and educational policy of government. There is also the problem of approaches and methodologies deployed in the study and teaching of religions. Preliminary observations have shown that in the Universities south west Nigeria, where religions are mounted as academic discipline(s), two approaches: academic and theological are(sometimes fused together)adopted. The former expresses religion within the orbit of faith, while the latter seeks to educate (teach) religion through a systematic and logical reflection spiced with suppositions and assumptions. Also the former is parochial with the latter critical and objective. Further scholars involved in the academic study of religion find it difficult to detached their faith from their academic pursuit and sometime turn the classroom into ritual centres where tenets, doctrines as well as rituals of religions are taught. The scholars do not often adopt critical and objective methodologies that will afford him latitude for critical study of the subject. In fact Russell McCutchen (2001) and Rosalind Hackett (2004) rejected a situation where scholars of religions display religious emotion in their vocation thereby tinting the analysis, interpretations and presentation of religious precepts, phenomena and data. I have argued that the value free zone suggested by these scholars can be achieved in cultural situations, as prevalent in the West where religion can be separated from the social and economic activities of the people. In Nigeria, like other African countries, the fusion between religion and socio-cultural activities of the people it may be difficult to maintain a balance between the academic and theological teachings of religions.

This paper is an attempt to analyze the teaching and study of religions in some Nigerian universities by appraising the approaches and methodologies often adopted by scholars of religions in our selected institutions in the South west region of Nigeria. I also

intend to determine how functional and effective these modes (style) provide a platform for a critical and objective study of religions in Nigerian universities. I intend to adopt a critical and historical methodologies in pursuit of the thesis that academic study of religions in Nigerian universities need to be re-evaluated especially in terms of methodologies and approaches. The three religions often taught in these institutions shall be our tool of analysis.

Okano, Ayako – Osaka University, Japan
Fuchan88jp@yahoo.co.jp

BONHOEFFER'S UNDERSTANDING OF SUFFERING

While he was in a Nazi prison cell, Dietrich Bonhoeffer reflected that "only the suffering God can help." This presentation aims to clarify the meaning of this remark and to seek the meaning of human suffering in relation to God's suffering. Bonhoeffer called our attention to the God who is revealed on the cross of Christ through his unique theology of the cross. This is interpreted in the context of "the world that has come of age," where a metaphysical God, a deus ex machina, is needed by fewer and fewer. According to Bonhoeffer, although Christ, a God-human who has taken on sinful flesh and bears the sufferings of all humanity, is capable of having "true compassion," human beings are not. This capability originates from Christ's love and leads one to act with responsibility in "freedom." This freedom is not freedom from any particular set of restrictions, but is "freedom for others." In Bonhoeffer's anthropology, human beings are like the Creator in that they are "free for others." Therefore, Bonhoeffer maintained that one becomes a human being by participating in the sufferings of Jesus, whose "being there for others" is the ground of his omnipotence. Hence, Bonhoeffer regarded the experience of conversion, in which one who suffers abandons oneself to God totally and achieves freedom, to be of incomparable value. In a strong solidarity with God, one's suffering is overcome through the divine suffering, is transformed from passivity into active passivity, and is metamorphosed into a higher significance.

Okawa, Reiko – Meijigakuin University, Japan
okawa@k.meijigakuin.ac.jp

THE JAPANESE TRANSLATIONS OF THE QUR'AN: TRANSITIONS IN STYLE AND STANCE

The history of the reception of Islam in Japan began in earnest in 1868 after the Meiji Restoration (Meiji Ishin). In 1920, the first Japanese translation of the Qur'an appeared, and up till now there have been five more including the translations by the right wing activist and thinker,

Shumei Okawa who made the third one in 1950 and the famous scholar of Islamic Studies, Toshihiko Izutsu who made the fourth one in 1957, which was revised in 1964. Using these six works, this paper will examine the kinds of transitions the history of the translation went through, focusing on style and stance and discussing the background of the transitions. After World War II, the translation changed greatly due to drastic changes in Japanese society due to the defeat in the war, and the great advances in Islamic and Arabic studies. As for the style, in order to avoid the influence of the Japanese religious culture, neutral and specific terms came to be used. In addition, Izutsu introduced the spoken language in a unique way. And as for the stance, the strong feeling of expectation for Islam disappeared and an objective and scholastic tone appeared.

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Okinaga, Takako – Teikyo University, Japan
 sho-oki@d6.dion.ne.jp

EDUCATION ON LIFE AND DEATH AT JAPANESE UNIVERSITIES

People of times past had handled most of the areas of life and death in religious functions that lied beneath their respective traditional cultures. In the domain of drastically progressing “advanced biosciences / advanced medicine (life manipulation),” however, it is now time for us to rethink the new, unprecedented meaning of life and death. Advanced medical technologies have satisfied people’s desires to live even by receiving another person’s organs, and to have a baby even by using another person’s eggs or sperm or by borrowing another woman’s uterus. However, these medical technologies have raised ethical questions, such as “Are people allowed to manipulate life?” and “What does dignity of life really mean?” In addition, they have also presented an essential religious question: “To whom does life belong?” In this presentation, I discuss the outlook of “education on life and death” at Japanese universities, with attention to the value of life, which has been questioned by the study of religion. It will be centered on the ethical dilemma in the clinical field that involves “life,” which has been discussed in conventional bioethics education. On July 13, 2009, the organ transplant bill stating, “brain death means the person’s death” was passed by both houses of the Diet. Considering the present situation, I discuss the following two cases: the ethical issue related to transplant of an organ from a brain-dead person; and then the ethical issue related to surrogate pregnancy, based on the background in which the report of “Prohibition of Surrogate Birth” was compiled in 2003 by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. Regarding issues related to “the right of self-determination of life” in the clinical field of life and death, I would like to consider “education on life and death.”

Okinaga, Takashi – Teikyo University, Japan
 upae@h9.dion.ne.jp

IS RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE A MATTER OF BRAIN?

This presentation is from the standpoint that not only the brain and matter, but also the mind itself, are not realities in themselves but are merely concepts composed according to the needs within each context. Also we will assert that the religious experiences as those of the brain are not mistakes in an empirical knowledge, but logical, categorical mistakes? The incomprehensibility of the existence of the mind originates from the thinking that, although the universe is made up of matter which is nothing but the accumulation of atoms, there must be something more than such matter. This incomprehensibility arises, not because the mind cannot be experientially observed, but because there are other things in logical contradiction. But if there is nothing other than atoms, we cannot explain the origin of the mind. However, if we can view atoms as a concept which is only one aspect of reality, we are able to make room for the mind to also be a part of such reality. At the root of our knowledge, there is a hidden part which rejects any explanation other than saying “because it is so.” Knowledge essentially must “be useful” to its holder, and no ultimate reason beyond this is required. In this sense, knowledge can be explained as the correspondence between events ultimately. Thus, although we cannot explain more than the correspondence between the events of the brain and the mind, this indicates the fundamental nature of knowledge symbolically. In contrast, since experience itself does not require such ultimate reason, the absence of such reason can never be a void, which does not exist in the first place. From this ontological characteristic of experience, this presentation would like to address the impossibility of religious experience as knowledge.

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Okunade, Atinuke Olubukola – Adeniran
 Ogunsanya College of Education, Nigeria
 bukosyn@yahoo.com

VALUE AND CHALLENGES OF HERBAL MEDICINE AMONG CHRISTIANS IN NIGERIA

The advent of Christianity in Nigeria through the European missionaries played some adverse role in the life of the converts. Just like any other African countries that went through colonization, most of the pre-existing cultural materials and phenomena that did not have any western resemblance were branded idolatry. Prominent among these was use of herbs both as preventive and curative meant towards sustainable healthy living. The fact that the method of education of the old Africans was not the same method with that of the Europeans made the ‘tenants’ to dictate to the ‘landlord’.

They (Europeans) described the use of herbs as barbaric and primitive. This notion imbibed by the early converts ate so deep into all like cancer. It has become difficult to re-orientate the psychic of these converts on values entrenched in herbal medicine, even when the modern world is embracing nature via alternative medicine in health issues, some Nigerian Christians still braggadociously sing 'give me that old religion, it is good for me and you', claiming what the missionaries left for them remains a valued legacy and that they shall cling to it. The focus of this paper therefore is to exhibit the challenges Nigerian Christians are facing on health care system vis. a vis, the values they will get if herbal medicine is appropriately embraced as orthodox medicines as against alternative synthetic medicine. Evidences are drawn from both bibliographic material and field experience, via the use of Focus Group Discussion, In-Depth Interview, and Questionnaire.

Okyerefo, Michael Perry Kweku – University of Ghana, Ghana

RELIGION AS A TOOL IN STRENGTHENING THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN GHANA

Recent elections in Ghana bear witness to the extraordinary power of religion to affect social and political change. This paper illustrates a few varieties of this power through case studies examining the role of religious leaders in promoting peaceful elections; how inter-faith dialogue enhances civic duties and fosters peace by bolstering values of justice, forgiveness and cooperation; and the State's active use of religion to promote domestic agendas and international relations.

Olademo, Oyeronke – University of Ilorin, Nigeria

THE ROLE OF GENDER IN THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

The study of Gender in the academy in Nigeria could be described as a contemporary development. In the study of religions in the academy, Gender remains at the margin of theory in teaching. This is in direct opposition to the African Gender classification prior to culture contact; which was complementary. In other words, the inculturation and contextualization of Christianity with the African culture has yet to include the issue of Gender sensitivity. If Christianity could take African culture serious and is the better for it in the propagation of the gospel in Africa, then it worth it to peruse reasons why the same is yet to happen as concerns gender. My aims in this paper is to present the current situation of the teaching of religions in Nigerian Universities. I will also attempt to interrogate why Gender remains at the margin of theory development in the study of religions in Nigerian Universities. A third agenda would be to

proffer possible remedies to the situation whereby gender could become an integral aspect of theories in the study of religions in Nigerian Universities.

Olsson, Susanne – Södertörn University, Sweden
susanne.olsson@sh.se

PIETY AND POLITICS – AMR KHALED AND THE STRUGGLE FOR ISLAM

Amr Khaled is a globally known Egyptian preacher/lecturer who has televised lectures on Sattelite channels and his Ramadan-episodes are very popular, among the youth in particular. His interpretation of Islam could be described as promoting a personal piety and an individualistic understanding of responsibilities and duties. This has made him a potential threat to both the Egyptian regime as well as representatives of the so-called Establishment Islam. Finding himself, and his audience, in the context of demands stemming from Islamic traditions as well as "the global world" facing aspects of modernity and secularisation, he is forced to accommodate his reinterpretation of Islam in a particular manner in order to be regarded as authentically Islamic and avoiding being accused of innovation and Westernisation, for example. This paper will explore some of the main topics he elaborates, such as gender and the view on "the Other" and what methods he utilises in order to accommodate to the conflictual interpretative setting. The paper will also explore to what extent his interpretation differs from Establishment Islam and whether there are signs of him having political ambitions with his interpretation.

Omotoye, Rotimi – University of Ilorin, Nigeria
graquarters@yahoo.com

AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION IN THE AGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: WHICH WAY FORWARD?

African traditional religion has been defined by Awolalu and Dopamu "as the religion of our fore-fathers transmitted from generation unto generation". However, Islam and Christianity were introduced to Nigeria in the 17th and 19th Centuries respectively. The two foreign religions subsumed African traditional religion in course of time. The Missionaries adopted different strategies and methods in converting the adherents of African traditional religion to either Islam or Christianity. Coupled with the "baits" that were introduced was the advancement in science and technology which the two foreign religions are now using to further propagate the religions at the detriment of African traditional religion. However, efforts are being made towards cultural rejuvenation and revival of cultural heritage in the face of science and technology.

The paper, therefore, examines the efforts of the Federal and State Governments, Cultural groups, and Universities in encouraging the survival of traditional religion in the face of science and technology.

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Onozuka, Takuzo – University of Tsukuba, Japan
taku@tcat.ne.jp

THE NEW MODE OF OIL PRODUCTION IN THE GALILEE DURING THE LATE BRONZE AND IRON AGES

Olive oil was an essential product in the ancient Mediterranean world. It was used for various purposes. The biblical text, for example, shows that oil played an important role in rituals of the ancient Israel. This study aims to shed a light on the new mode of oil production that should be important as a background of rituals in the ancient Israel. It was seen in the Galilee and its neighboring regions from Late Bronze Age II to the Iron Age IIA (ca.1300–850 B.C.E). This new mode of oil production is characterized by oil press installations in round or rectangular shape which are built inside the living quarters. Recent excavations at Tel Rekhesh located in the Lower Galilee provide good examples of these installations. According to my archaeological investigations, it is suggested that the introduction of such installations reflected the growing demand for oil, part of which was logically related to the use in rituals. In fact, one of oil press installations excavated at Tel Rekhesh seems to be suitable to produce high quality oil and it also has a possible connection to “associated cultic finds”.

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Oraon, Ashok – Ranchi University, India
prof.ashokoraon@rediffmail.com

CULTURAL PROJECTION OF TRIBES OF INDIA THROUGH THEIR FESTIVALS AND SOCIAL CEREMONIES

Jharkhand a new state in Indian union is basically a tribal dominated state where various tribal groups dwell. Oraon, Munda and Santhals are some of major tribes under Jharkhand state who have distinct cultural and religious traits and behaviors. Most of the festivals of tribes like Karma, Sarhul and Sohrai are very much related with the nature. In all festivals tribes adore trees, water, rivers, and fountains. “Hariya” a unique local wine of tribal community is used in almost all festivals for appeasing spirits and departed souls. The present paper attempts to focus the major cultural features of tribes of Jharkhand. On the eve of festivals tribal boys and girls take “Hariya” and dance with branches of trees. Anthropologists and Researchers from whole world occasionally visit Jharkhand and study the cultural and religious traits and behaviors of tribal community.

The paper focuses the following issues and themes. 1. The concept of cultural and religious behavior of tribal community of Jharkhand 2. Multicultural dimension of Karma and Sarhul festivals of tribes of Jharkhand. 3. Cultural change and impact on modern Indian society. 4. The impact of modern polity on the tribal festivals and ceremonies.

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Oraon, Hari – Ranchi University, India

ANCESTOR WORSHIP: THE BEGINNING OF TRIBAL RELIGION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ORAON TRIBE OF INDIA

Various theories have been developed for the origin of tribal religion, among them theories that concentrate on the survival of the soul after death. Among the Oraon there is a belief that the soul of the dead person is included in the other souls of the persons died earlier. They think that souls of the departed guide the destiny of living persons descended from them. The souls the dead are considered to be Pachbalar (Ancestors) and are worshiped on the ceremonial and festive occasions such as Nawakhane (the ceremony of eating newly harvested grain) and Khunt puja (ancestor worship) at the time of Phagun (Holi) and Hariari (July–August). The souls of the dead are also worshiped as ancestors on all occasions of daily life, such as after taking a bath or before a meal. The offering of some cooked grain or rice to share with their ancestors before a meal is a general phenomenon among family members and descendents. Thus, belief in this category of spiritual being can be considered the source of religious attainment as developed in their community life also.

Besides the worship of above spiritual beings, the Oraon worship numerous other spirits, major and minor, in the family as well as in the community in a variety rituals. The major supernatural being is called Dharmes , who is the Almighty, and the presiding female deity is Chala Ayang (Sarna Mai), who is believed to control the course of nature and human beings. But ancestor worship appears to be the source of religious practice in the Oraon community.

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Oshima, Kaoru – Kansai University, Japan

PREACHING MATERIALS AT JOBODAI

Over the ages, Buddhist teachings spread, via ceremonies and sermons, to the aristocracy and residents of Kyoto, and then finally to the common people of the region. Performing Seppou (sermons that explained the teachings in a comprehensible manner using beautiful language) was one of the priest's most important tasks.

From the 11th century onward, the most famous Seppou organization in Japanese Buddhism was the Agui School, founded by the Tendai priest Choken (1126–1203). The texts produced by this sect became a kind of brand name, and were frequently copied and repurposed; as a result, it is not easy to discern the original texts. In past research on Seppou materials, there has been a tendency to facilely inflate the image of the Agui School. Today I will address the Kachoshu and Gosho materials; these were recently discovered at Jobodai-in and enable a reexamination of the course of Seppou research. From these two Seppou texts we can learn about the movement of texts around the eastern part of Lake Biwa. They have also allowed us to reconsider texts until now believed to belong to the Agui School. Reconsidering the overall picture of Japanese medieval Seppou materials is synonymous with considering the Buddhism that was accepted by the people who actually lived in medieval times. I wish to address these topics by examining the materials that were particularly cherished at Dangisho temples.

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Østergaard, Jesper – Aarhus University, Denmark

THE TOPICGRAPHIC MIND: A COGNITIVE APPROACH TO PILGRIMAGE

The theory of externalism is a promising approach in the cognitive science of religion. Externalism claims that important aspects of human cognition are situated in an intersubjective, symbolic and material world. One particular idea is that material objects can become epistemic tools through which cognition is augmented in different ways. I propose that the landscape is just such an epistemic tool, and, furthermore, that the mind is a topographic mind. Landscape is also an important aspect in certain religious rituals: through ritual interaction with the physical landscape, the otherwise unapproachable, transempirical cosmos can be approached and interacted with. In this paper, I shall illustrate how the landscape at a Buddhist pilgrimage site in Nepal is in different ways an integral part of the cognitive processes involved in pilgrimage and why a cognitive approach to religious ritual will benefit from a topographic turn in the study of religion.

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Owen, Suzanne – Leeds Trinity University College, UK
 s.owen@leedstrinity.ac.uk

DRUIDRY AND THE DEFINITION OF INDIGENOUS RELIGION

Indigenous peoples are usually defined as the colonised, or formerly colonised, first inhabitants who are marginalised in their own land, whether or not they practise a form of 'indigenous religion'.

The central question this paper will address is whether an 'indigenous religion' is the religion (or lifeway) of indigenous peoples or a religion that relates to the land, the people (inclusively) and that which has gone before. Contemporary Druids are reconnecting to the land and its heritage through story, ceremony and other means. Druidry raises questions about how indigenous religions are defined and by whose criteria, often overlooking that contemporary indigenous religions have both local and global connections. Recent fieldwork in Northern Ireland has also raised the question of whether an 'indigenous' way of relating to the land can provide a path toward peace and reconciliation.

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Owen, Suzanne – Leeds Trinity University College, UK
 s.owen@leedstrinity.ac.uk

TIME TO DISCARD THE WORLD RELIGIONS PARADIGM IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The teaching of religions has long relied on the World Religions paradigm to guide curricula throughout education, which has led to a widening gap between what is taught in schools and in universities. While the World Religions paradigm has allowed the inclusion of non-Christian religions in education, it has also remodelled them according to liberal Western Christian values, influencing the conception of 'religion' beyond educational and Western cultural contexts.

Some understanding of the nature of RE can highlight problems with the World Religions paradigm and its hidden agenda. In England, guidance on the teaching of religion in schools and in the wider community is provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's national framework. It is less concerned with 'religions' than with moral education. The confusion in the aims of RE stems from its themes: 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion, indicating that there are two different tasks in RE with the first relying on the World Religions paradigm and the latter a form of moral philosophy.

This paper argues that it is time to discard the World Religions paradigm altogether in favour of a more critical and contextual approach to the study of religion. Religious Studies needs to participate more fully in the Humanities project as cultural critics, which means shattering worldviews, not creating them, which is arguably the agenda of Religious Education in schools and one reason why there is a gulf between school and university education.

Ozaki, Makoto – Sanyo Gakuen University, Japan
ozaki@sguc.ac.jp

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN TERMS OF TANABE'S DIALECTIC OF SPECIES

Religion and Politics in terms of Tanabe's Dialectic of Species Makoto Ozaki Tanabe Hajime, the Kyoto School philosopher of modern Japan, proposes a new idea of the relationship between religion and politics in terms of the triadic logic of species that is motivated by the religious moment of repentance. Even the state existence has the inherently radical evil as in the case of the individual person, due to its duality of the species level of being. This means that the state existence is on the way of actualization of the genus-like universality, while always involving in the regression into the past substrative being which prevents it from realizing its own universality. In other words, the state existence is not absolute as such but rather a balanced being between ideality and reality, absolute and relative. This entails that politics is in need of perpetual reformation in connection with the religious act of repentance for sin and evil deeply lurked in human beings from time immemorial. Tanabe's Logic of Species as the dialectic elucidates the negative mediation of politics and religion from the metanoetic perspective and sheds a new light on the relation of world religion and politics today. The state can transcend its own peculiar definiteness on the level of species and go a step further to participate in the universality of humankind, as long as it is a being as mediated by the religious principle of Nothingness, *i.e.*, a negative existence in the form of being qua nothingness. In other words, it is the expedient or balanced being between the genus-like universality and individuality. The state is not merely an assembly of an infinite number of individual persons. But it aims at unification of the states, *i.e.*, a worldly unity, as the self-manifestation of the religious principle of Nothingness through the practice of absolute negation of the state particularity. In concreto, whereas space is always a limited area, time refers to unification through conversion in history, brought about by the political constructive practice of the state or a union of states, mediated by the limited space. A union of plural states is to be directed towards a unification of the world from the religious standpoint of Absolute Negation. This represents the concrete practice by which politics and religion are to be unified through conversion in negation in a higher dimension. In the end, Tanabe asserts that today's politics on a worldwide scale should participate in the salvation of humankind through the mediation of the rewarding love of the world religion that is to be ideally realized as a result of a mutual transformation of Buddhism and Christianity.

Ozervarli, M. Sait – Yildiz Technical University, Turkey

THE APPLICATION OF DURKHEIMIAN SOCIAL THEORY TO RELIGIOUS THOUGHT BY MODERN TURKISH THINKERS

This paper will examine the impact of the late nineteenth century Durkheimian theory on modern Turkish thought in relation with culture and modernization. Regarding cultural evolutions as historical facts, the French sociologist Durkheim was one of the sources of Turkish intellectuals, who aimed to theorize the transformation of the Ottoman Turkish society into a modern national state. My paper will focus on the case of the modernist school of Ziya Gökalp in the first half of the twentieth century and their reinterpretation of traditional Muslim theological theories in a positivistic approach in the light of Durkheimian sociology. They regarded Durkheimian methodology as the most convenient tool to build a programmed social unity and a self-imposed modernity. Their references to classical Muslim thought and culture did not aim at a traditional revivalism, but rather were for taking advantage of its authority in society in order to implement the ideas of Durkheim more widely with a broader public acceptance. In the paper I will analyze this interpretation in a critical approach and will look into its impact on contemporary Turkish thought.

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Özkan, Ali Rafet – Ataturk University, Turkey
arozkan@atauni.edu.tr

PARADOXES OF GENDER AND RITUAL AMONG TURKISH GYPSIES

The place of women among the gypsies in Turkey has many interesting characteristics. Because women are breadwinner of the families. They play important roles in well being of the family as well as household jobs. Gypsy women in Turkey shoulder the economic burden of family by doing jobs of daily works, cleaning, begging, fortune teller, sorcery, flower marketing, *etc.* In spite of important roles they play, women are regarded inferiors due to patriarchal nature of the family. She is regarded as property as she can be purchased by money. She cannot be even entitled for being womanhood (romni) unless she deliver a son baby. Therefore, most important role of women is delivering babies and being mothers. Mother hood is regarded in gypsy groups that mother takes care of everything and sticks firmly to old sacred rituals being "puri dai". She bears babies especially sons to her husband and shoulders the burden of the group. Women hood is a duty burdened to girls from childhood. Although they play with boys at young ages, they separate their with boys at later ages. They are taught heavy burden of being women in the coming years and cultural responsibilities.

They start to be interested in women activities and prepare themselves for their prospective marriages. Young girls are tightly protected until they get married. They can not go anywhere alone, work and talk to strange males. They can only work, beg or sell flowers in the company of their brothers. This way they are protected in the watchful presence of family and brothers. This study reviews rituals of gypsy with regard to women and wedlock in Turkey.

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Pacey, Scott – Australian National University, Australia
scottpacey@emailcorner.net

SHENTONG, SCIENCE AND THE EVERYDAY: SUPERNORMAL ABILITIES IN MODERN CHINESE BUDDHISM

Buddhism describes six supernormal abilities (Sk. abhijñā . Ch. shentong) possessed by buddhas. These are available to advanced practitioners through meditative practice, and (in the case of the sixth), Buddhist insight. In China , notions of shentong have sat alongside other autochthonous practices aimed at gaining supernormal powers. The twentieth century, however, saw religion criticized by Chinese modernizers and Communists who considered it superstitious and unscientific. During this period, Buddhists supported their doctrine through claims that it did not conflict with science, and indeed surpassed it. One of the principal architects of this approach was the monastic Taixu (1890–1947), who developed a modernist articulation of the Dharma he called “Buddhism for the human world” (renjian Fojiao). This paper will examine twentieth century Buddhist discussions of shentong in China and Taiwan , including those of Taixu, and others who uphold Buddhism for the human world, such as Shengyan (1930–2009) and Xingyun (b. 1927). Each of these figures portrayed shentong as aligned with scientific knowledge, or in terms of everyday experience, thereby removing it from the realm of the extraordinary. The paper will also note the contributions of other contemporary figures, connected with these monastics, to discussions of shentong . It will finally situate twentieth century discussions of shentong in the broader context of the Buddhist engagement with science, and discuss the implications this has for the continued development of Chinese Buddhism.

Pachis, Panayotis – Aristotle University of
Thessaloniki, Greece · pachisp@otenet.gr

DATA FROM DEAD MINDS? : DREAM AND HEALING IN THE ISIS /SARAPIS CULT DURING THE GRAECO- ROMAN AGE

During the Graeco-Roman Age there were a great many testimonies from sick and physically disabled people; those used seek healing in the sanctuaries of the Egyptian deities. The most popular kind of healing which was practiced in those sanctuaries was that of incubation (*incubatio*), during which the adherents – after following certain rules of diet, hygiene and purification – entered the temple and slept in it until they would receive a therapeutic dream or vision from the god(s).

The above practice is evidenced by hundreds of dedications (*ex votos*) in many sanctuaries; Those represent anatomical parts of the human body that were healed by these gods. Those dedications together with the several texts and inscriptions of this period, comprise the most important testimonies regarding on the illnesses and the miraculous treatments of the adherents were claiming they had received in those gods' sanctuaries. This paper will be based, mainly, on the text of *P. Oxy 1380*, col. V = M. Totti, 1985. *Ausgewählte Texte der Isis – Sarapis-Religion*. Hildesheim – Zürich – New York: Georg Olms, 40.

The research frame of this paper will be on the one hand the study of specific historical, cultural and social context of the cult of the Egyptian deities (Isis and Sarapis), and on the other the cognitive structures and abilities that characterize the human species rendering it capable of understanding and assimilating conceptually particular conditions of life, such as disease, pain, emotions, participation in specific practices (*e.g.*, incubation) through their convention that affect the way in which the human beings understand themselves and form their identity.

Palma, Anthony – University of Toronto, Canada

MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE 2007 FAITH-BASED SCHOOLING DEBATE IN ONTARIO

From September to October, 2007, the Province of Ontario witnessed an important debate about the future of Religious Education (R.E.) in public and private schools. The debate involved a political election campaign, heavily influenced by the media, in which 'faith-based schooling' emerged as the leading policy issue. The debate influenced perceptions of Religious Education across Canada. This paper examines the form and content of the debate in retrospect, with a view toward explaining why Religious Education is a contentious issue for both secular and religious Ontarians.

Papousek, Dalibor – Masaryk University, Czech Republic · papousek@phil.muni.cz

PAUL'S CONFLICT WITH THE JERUSALEM JUDAIZERS IN A NORM-DEVIATION SCALE

The paper reconsiders the conflict between Paul of Tarsus and the Judaizing Christians which is evidenced primarily in Galatians 1–2. Regarding methodological difficulties in a "demarcation" of the first-century Judaism and/or Christianity, the centrality of Jerusalem is proposed as a fundamental "norming feature" instead of more usual "covenantal nomism". The main attention is concentrated on Paul's approach to Jerusalem and the Temple as a case which might test the norm-deviation model via reconsideration of locative and utopian aspects in earliest Christianities.

Parsitau, Damaris Seleina – Egerton University, Kenya

DAUGHTERS OF GOD, WIVES OF JESUS AND COMPANIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: REINVENTING CHRISTIAN SINGLE-HOOD

Pentecostalism has the dubious and paradoxical character of possessing both liberating and disempowering qualities for women in search for equality and liberation. This is particularly the case in heavily patriarchal societies where research has yielded tremendous data and information on this critical field. However, few studies have examined how minority, disadvantaged and vulnerable single women from patriarchal societies have used religion to reinvent Christian single-hood and woman-hood. This paper examines how vulnerable single women have successfully reinvented and redefined what it means to be a single Christian woman in contemporary Kenya. I suggest that these vulnerable women have used biblical text and voice to re-invent critical tools, resources and metaphors for empowerment to reclaim their place in the church and society. By use of Christian text these women are re-examining the bible and creating resources from the texts to affirm, empower, build self esteem and confidence and in the process reinvented new understandings and meanings of themselves as Christian women in a society that frowns on single women. Based on ethnographic research on two women led charismatic church movements: (Single Ladies Interdenominational Ministry (SLIM) and Faith Evangelistic Ministry (FEM) in Kenya, the study attempts to understand how these two ministries both founded by single women have rallied women together and tapped their collective energies and forge links with one another to improve their place in their homes, society and in public spaces.

Pasche Guignard, Florence – Lausanne University, Switzerland · florence.pascheguignard@unil.ch

VULNERABILITY, HONOR AND DEFENSE STRATEGIES OF FEMALE BODIES AS REPRESENTED IN RELIGIOUS CONTEXTS

This contribution is part of a larger on-going PhD research focusing on the representation of female bodies in devotional, poetic and ritual contexts of ancient Greece and medieval India. Focusing on the question of the vulnerability of the female body and the preservation of its honor (physical and sexual integrity and moral norms imposed on women), this paper will detail which strategies of protection and prevention are adopted by communities or by the female figures themselves in order to defend their honor when threatened, in particular when these female bodies are used in rituals or when an alternative lifestyle and behavior are adopted for religious purposes.

These latter often include a use of the body in public which transgress socio-cultural norms. Asceticism, de-feminization of the sexually attractive female body, trickery, call to a divinity, female solidarity, suicide, and metamorphosis into other types of bodies are among the ways used to protect the female body perceived as vulnerable and subject to threats from men and gods. This will be illustrated with a few examples of both contexts, taken from the poetic songs attributed to the 16th century Indian bhakti poetess Mirabai and from various historiographical and mythological narratives from ancient Greece (Plutarchus, Pausanias, Antoninus Liberalis, Diodorus of Sicily, *etc.*). This paper is part of the panel “Religion and the Body: Gender Issues and Comparative Perspectives”

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Pasi, Marco – University of Amsterdam,
 The Netherlands · m.pasi@uva.nl

THE ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPT OF ‘WESTERN ESOTERICISM’ IN THE CONTEXT OF 19TH CENTURY OCCULTISM

This paper builds up on an article I have recently devoted to the role of Jewish kabbalah in the early Theosophical Society, more particularly in the writings of H.P. Blavatsky (1831–1891). My focus was on the use of kabbalah as a foil in the creation of specific boundaries between a “western” and an “eastern” esoteric tradition. Whereas H.P. Blavatsky, who gave preeminence to the East as source of all esoteric wisdom, had an ambivalent attitude towards kabbalah, because it could be perceived as either eastern or western depending on the circumstances, other occultists posited that westerners should be concerned with western esoteric doctrines and practices alone. Jewish kabbalah would then be included in a western esoteric “canon” that would be systematized by a series of authors. This paper will focus on some of these authors, in order to understand how the very concept of “western esotericism”, today widely used as an etic term by scholars, had its origins in their discourses. Special attention will be given to A.E. Waite (1857–1942), whose work is particularly significant in this respect.

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Pasi, Marco – University of Amsterdam,
 The Netherlands · m.pasi@uva.nl

VARIETIES OF MAGICAL EXPERIENCE: ALEISTER CROWLEY’S VIEWS ON OCCULT PRACTICE

Aleister Crowley’s special place in the history of occultism is determined not only by the significant influence that he and his works have had on the development of esoteric and new religious movements in the 20th century, but also by the originality and creativity of his thought, which positively tries to renew and reinterpret the meaning of occult practices in a modern framework. He represents and

encapsulates, almost paradigmatically, the attempts made by occultism as a whole to come to terms with traditional esoteric concepts in a world that has been deeply transformed culturally and socially by the impact of secularisation and modernity. In my paper I will first discuss Crowley’s attitudes towards paranormal phenomena in general, particularly in relation psychical research and to spiritualism. Then, I will focus on two particular aspects of Crowley’s attempts at elaborating new interpretations of occult practices, namely his attitudes towards yoga and towards magic. The aim is to highlight certain aspects of them that will – I hope – illustrate the ways in which Crowley transformed the epistemological approach towards occult practices. It will be clear then that this transformation should be understood in the wider context of the psychologisation and naturalisation of esotericism, which took place during the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th.

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Penny, Benjamin – The Australian National
 University, Australia · Benjamin.penny@anu.edu.au

PERFECTABILITY AND THE PARANORMAL IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA

In the 1980s and 1990s China experienced a genuine mass enthusiasm for qigong, an umbrella term referring to all kinds of practices involving the manipulation of qi (breath, pneuma, life energy). The motivations for engaging in qigong were varied: different forms claimed to heal diseases, especially chronic and life-threatening ones, others asserted that practitioners could acquire supernormal powers: immense strength, clairvoyance, telekinesis, flight, *etc.* Some movements that originated during the qigong boom also developed into fully-fledged new religions. The term used for supernormal powers in Chinese was *teyi gongneng*, a modern phrase that describes many of the same powers as *shentong* did in pre-modern and modern Buddhist circles.

This paper will discuss the broad outlines of *teyi gongneng* theory in contemporary China along a continuum from highly spiritualized accounts to studies of paranormal powers in academic journals in the hard sciences. It will focus, in particular, on the figure of Zhang Baosheng (1958–), proclaimed to be one of China’s “great qigong masters”: healer to the elite, research subject for the military, celebrity to the general public and arch-charlatan to the sceptic. Thus, the topic of *teyi gongneng* in general, and the way the Zhang Baosheng phenomenon was reported in the mainstream and the qigong press, illuminates the ways traditional Chinese religious discourses have thrived and been transformed in contemporary times. It sheds light, specifically, on the age-old Chinese idea that humans and the human body are perfectable through the performance of spiritual disciplines.

Perera, Ana Celia – Center for Psychological and Sociological Research, Cuba · ana@cips.cu

RELIGIOUS NEW ACTORS IN THE CURRENT DYNAMICS OF DEEP SOCIAL HETEROGENEOUSNESS

Since the 1990s, as part of the crisis readjustment policies, the market began to play a greater role in the Cuban economy, in a limited manner under state control, which unleashed, among its effects, an increase of social inequalities and a deep heterogeneousness. Social polarization stresses religious polarization. Among the most vulnerable sectors, more religious options are developed which emphasize the immediate solution of problems (religions of African origin and devotions to miraculous figures), as well as those of Pentecostal-like or Neopentecostal-like with messages specially directed to those sectors. On the other hand, there are some specific elitist religions or religious groups, and a religious elite is being shaped.

Linked to this religious re-configuration, new religious actors and discourses begin to play an increasingly more outstanding role. This paper aims at addressing this emergent religious scenario showing, from a territorial approach, its connections with the polarization and diversity of Cuban society in the last 20 years. It is of special interest to show the impact of some of the discourses of these actors and of their projections, considering that many of their proposals are geared mainly to the vulnerable sectors of the population and to impoverished territories with marked social contrasts.

Pérez, Ofelia – Center for Psychological and Sociological Research, Cuba
ofeliacips@ceniai.inf.cu

POPULAR RELIGIOSITY AT THE “PLURI-RE – EVANGELIZING” CROSSROAD

It is nothing new to address the practice known as popular religiosity which is significantly spreading and proliferating in the Latin American context. It is a religious manifestation that, from the standpoint of individualities or generalizations, particularizations of each one of its practices or the homogeneity in which it is seemingly diluted, is sign of a multifaceted phenomenon that resists and imposes itself on the basis of a new logics; at the same time, it is spreading and establishing different relationships from those that originated it, strengthening itself as a multiple incidence actor in social relationships.

In Cuba, the so-called “popular religiosity” is the most widespread religious practice, and its presence, increased evidently in the sharpest moments of the crisis of the country, shows quantitative and qualitative modifications that reinforce the idea of its renovation and suggests inquiries.

Popular religion, in the world and in the Island, could also be a privileged field, for re-thinking the theological exclusion and exclusion paradigms that have prevailed in our societies and to approach more plural counter-hegemonic perspectives.

Perlini-Pfister, Fabian – University of Zurich, Switzerland

GAME WORLDS AS MODERN MYTHS: THE INTERRELATION BETWEEN FANTASTIC FAN WORLDS IN GAMES AND OTHER MEDIAS.

Many computer games are located in utopic or dystopic worlds inspired by fantastic movies, literature, or ancient myths. Both merchandising and fandom create many other objects and activities related to such fictional worlds as other games, costumes and accessories. As religion can be understood as a communication system which uses different media to connect in different ways to transcendent worlds, computer gaming and other associated activities can be seen as important contemporary possibilities that allow a connection to modern mythical Worlds. The research project focuses such intermedial approaches to the game world, while asking what particular experiences the different medias enable, and how their interlinking with other medias supports this experience.

Pesonen, Heikki – University of Helsinki, Finland
heikki.pesonen@helsinki.fi

THE RELIGIOUS RHETORIC OF CLIMATE CHANGE – THE CASE OF THE EVANGELICAL-LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND

During the last twenty years or so climate change has become one of the key environmental challenges. This is also reflected in how religious actors are focusing their environmental pursuits. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland has activated as an environmental actor especially in this millennium, when it has created its own environmental program called “Environmental Diploma System”, which aims to involve local parishes in practical environmental activities at all levels. During the last couple of years the Church has signaled both in the media and in its own internal communication the importance of urgent action in combating climate change. This is demonstrated by the “Climate Program” that the Church published in 2008. This program sets out concrete recommendations for action to help the Church members, congregations, and Church administration to mitigate climate change. This paper examines the ways the Church argues for climate action: on what religious premises it bases its arguments, and how? What kind of rhetorical identifications and divisions can be located in the argumentation?

Further, this paper examines, more generally, how does the environmental action of the Church reflect the relationship between the Church and the society? The aim of this paper is also to build foundation for future research, which examines the ways in which the recommendations and proposals of the Church administration for environmental action have been realized in practice in the local parish level.

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Pezzoli-Olgiati, Daria – University of Zurich,
Switzerland

RELIGION AND VISUAL MEDIA – AN INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on the research area “religion and visual media” by discussing different approaches to the field within the study of religion. It provides a general framework into which the further contributions of the panel are embedded.

In the first part, a select range of approaches to the area of religion and media are presented and critically discussed. In the second part, attention is drawn to different communication models that have been very influential for analysing and interpreting the role of media in traditional and contemporary religious discourse. By contrasting the positions of de Saussure and McLuhan as extreme poles, some sensitive aspects within the approach to religion as a communication system will be outlined. In the third part, relevant aspects will be elucidated and applied to a particular case study of visual media. Here the approach to visual media – as an essential part of a religious symbols system – will be articulated with particular regard to the hermeneutical and inter-media challenges we have to afford in this field of research.

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Pfändtner, Willy – Södertörn University, Sweden
willy.pfandtner@sh.se

CONCEPTUALIZING RELIGIOUSNESS

This paper is set primarily in the context of interreligious relations and interreligious dialogue. It belongs to the academic discipline of Philosophy of Religion, where this is understood as a theoretical quest of bringing understanding to, and contributing to solving problems within, the human phenomenon of religion. Part of this quest is to question outdated concepts and categories and develop new ones that better correspond to the phenomena under investigation in a changing world. Although it has become increasingly recognized in recent years by scholars of religion that the modern concept of religion itself is a problem, this very concept is still a source of confusion in a wider context, politically and socially.

The paper investigates the possibility of focusing on religious subjects and their various existential dispositions when developing concepts of religiousness and categorizing different ways of being religious. This would contribute to the observation of differences and similarities within and between traditions, as well as bringing to light non-tradition-specific ways of being religious.

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Phochanthilath, Champathong – Mahidol
University, Bangkok, Thailand

“LONG SIENG KHONG” A RITUAL OF TAI NYO IN BOLIKHAMXAY, LAOS

This paper aims to describe a ritual which will focus on the religious belief of Nyo people in Bolikhamxay province, the ritual namely “Long Sieng Khong” (long sieng means doing prediction, khong is a fishtrap). The information was gathered through the oral historical interview and field visited. The paper will provide the historical background, process of the ritual and what it was changed compare to the past. The study has found that the Nyo people in Ban Nongbua believe in “Op Pa Khout”, ‘Op Pa Khout’ is neither animism nor Buddhism; it was defined by Nyo themselves. But the Nyo claim it is “Tham” and all villagers have to respect and to practice the rules strictly, for instance, do not kill any animal, do not bring raw meat to the village and do not work in the Buddhist days (vanh sin) which the 8th and the 15th days of the month in Lao Luna calendar. At that day, the villagers must do the worship with five or eight pairs flower and candle. In the past, every 15th (the full moon day) of 6th monthly of Buddhist calendar of each year they must do a ceremony called “Long Xieng Khong” (fishtrap consult the oracle). This ritual should be held in the small hut, which is not a house for ghost (hor phii) but it is called “hor tham” and it is located close to the temple wall in the Eastern. This was a story case, example; this belief was also explained through the story of Bounma monk’s journey. It was said that one time when Bounma monk was passing the area, monk Bounma found and understood immediately that the place was plenty of the bad spirit, he knew that one day the villagers would need him to go back for making a mediation for chasing the bad spirit; that was the reason the monk traveled back from Phra That Phra Nom through Nong Boua village to the other side of the village then stopped at Nam Deua village where he stayed overnight. While the monk was staying at Nam Deua village; the monk had discussed about what he knew from his travel about the spirit, he explained his purpose to the villagers that he wanted to help Nong Boua villagers; through the discussion a relative of Nong Boua lived in Nam Deua village sent a message to Nong Boua. Then the Nong Boua people made a discussion and they eventually decided accept the monk idea which reflected the beginning of the belief in ‘Op Pa Khout’.

Pi Joan, Carmen – see *Mansilla, Josefina*

Plasquy, Eddy – University of Leuven, Belgium
Eddy.plasquy@telenet.be

AGAINST ALL ODDS. VIOLENCE, EMOTIONS AND AESTHETICS DURING THE PROCESSION OF THE ROMERIA IN EL ROCÍO

The unusual behavior of the local men during the procession is undoubtedly the highlight of the infamous romeria of El Rocío (Almonte, Southern Spain). In the early hours of Pentecost, a turbulent assault of the altar marks the beginning of it. Once the heavy stretcher with the image of the Virgen Mary is brought outside the chapel, it is carried around on the shoulders of at least 30 men. While moving through the immense crowd for more than 12 hours, the Almontese men incessantly fight to get under it. In the meantime, folks from abroad are brutally kept away. The paper discusses the meaning of this violence as it is perceived by the Almontese and commented by the other pilgrims and tourists. Relying on extended fieldwork in Almonte, the attractiveness of the event is framed as a complex performance in which a spectacular form of localism keeps pace with the release of deeply moving emotions. As such, it can be argued that the exhibited violence forms a core element in the aesthetic dimension of the procession.

Plasquy, Eddy – University of Leuven, Belgium
Eddy.plasquy@telenet.be

A BUMPY ROAD FROM LOCAL TRADITION TO EMBLEMATIC REPRESENTATION: THE CASE OF THE ROMERIA IN EL ROCÍO

The yearly pilgrimage at the shrine of the Virgen del Rocío in Southern Spain, is often presented as an emblematic expression of Andalusian popular religion. Although the popularity of the famous romeria can hardly be overestimated, it is also true that the often presented picture of authenticity largely thrives on recent invented traditions. While this observation resonates with already well known theoretical approaches (Hobsbawm and Ranger for example), the peculiarity of the actual celebration can gain more depth when the focus is brought towards a threefold of changes which took place over the last fifty years. Firstly, a mayor rebellious upheaval brought not only the local village folks as protagonists to the foreground of the procession, but in doing so also redefined the meaning of locality within the expanding celebration. Secondly, the founding of a brotherhood in Brussels, viewed as the capital of Europe, and the establishment of a European pilgrimage trail between Brussels and El Rocío, launched the celebration in an European orbit.

Thirdly, several Spanish migrant communities started to use elements of the specific celebration in El Rocío to reestablish their identity in the host country and in doing so reinterpreted the existing meaning of the ritual. Using a dissipative system approach, these events come to the fore as emergent phenomena at crucial moments in the history of the ritual. They illustrate not only the growing complexity of the meaning of this specific ritual but also the increasing dimensionality of the celebration. While the former hampers a direct control from the organizing brotherhood, the latter seems to facilitate its appropriation beyond the traditional ritual context. The more emblematic – the less traditional, so to speak.

Plessentin, Ulf – Free University of Berlin, Germany
ulf.plessentin@fu-berlin.de

“RELIGION POISONS EVERYTHING” – THE POLITICAL AGENDAS OF THE “NEW ATHEISTS”

In the last decade, the “return of religion” was a permanent topic. Even though this catchword remains fuzzy, vivid and complex discussions of the appropriate relation between religion and politics can be found on both sides of the Atlantic. Closely connected with this debate is the question whether religion effects society in a positive way, or not. It is interesting to notice, that in recent times more and more non-believers and atheists participate in this societal discussion. Most prominently, the so-called “New Atheists” – such as Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and Sam Harris – offer strong political claims on how the relation between politics and religion ought to be: In their bestsellers, they advocate a distinctive separation between state and religious groups and attest religion to “poison everything” (Hitchens) in society. Similar arguments and positions are also brought forward by German-speaking atheist writers such as Michael Schmidt-Salomon and Robert Misik. Given this, I would like to focus on the nexus between criticism of religion and criticism of society: What kind of societies do atheist writers on both sides of the Atlantic opt for? On what kind of societal theory (Marxist/socialist, laicism, open society) do they base their arguments? How strong are the similarities between their positions, especially in a comparative view of the Central European and Anglo-American background? Are those criticisms mere rhetoric or do these authors want to put their claims into practice? And if so: how?

Prakash, Ratan – Ranchi University, India
ratanwriter@hotmail.com

RELIGIOUS FACE OF THE CHHOU DANCE IN TRIBAL INDIA

Chhou Dance is an important artistic dance traditionally owned by the people wearing the mask of ancient and legendary characters of their fore fathers or ancestors, now they attend the category of god and goddess whom they worship. The Chhou Dance is actually a legendary event which had happened in the olden age. The role of Lord Rama, Sita, Lakshman, Bali, Sugriva, Hanuman, Ravana, Vibishana and their associates, who took part in the great holy battle of Ram with Ravana. Actually wearing the mask which resembles the face of above characters with the masked face of the people who dramatically participate in the holy battle in the area which is predominated tribal area viz. Saraikela, Mayurbhanj, Dhalbhumgarh, Purulia, the adjoining parts of provinces Jharkhand, West Bengal & Orissa. During performing the legendary event of that battle, the characters audience enjoy the performance with adhering notion of respect to the legendary characters and event which is based on myths. The participant of the event in Chhou Dance and the audience seems to be bewitched as they feel it that the historical event and the characters are real characters of the holy battle whom they worship as the god, goddess & deities. The audience comprises of both tribals and non tribals leaving in that area pay full devotion with religious attainment.

Similarly, in other events also when performance is made the devotion is alike, for example if performance of great legendary battle fought between Pandavas and Kauravas which is known as Mahabharata and other historical events. The study of these historical & legendary events performed in the form of Chhou Dance is very essential because it has great importance in the area if we see it as the cultural and social congregation and criticism among the people living in that area where Chhou Dance is commonly performed. Chhou Dance is not only performed in that area but Chhou Dance has got importance to be performed at national and international level. Many events of Chhou Dance have been performed in Indonesia, Java, Sumatra, America & most of the Asian and European countries.

Prasad, Birendra Nath – BB Ambedkar Central University, India

NALANDA MAHAVIHARA IN ITS ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

An archaeological study of an individual Buddhist monastery in its spatial context offers an important method to understand the socialisation strategies and

localisation processes of Buddhism in a particular area. But the need is to study the socialisation strategies of monasteries by looking beyond the monastic walls; by examining the monastic patterns of interaction with the smaller, non-monastic archaeological sites that surround the monastery. In this paper, I have attempted a study of Nalanda monastic complex from this perspective. This study is based on a combined analysis of epigraphic data associated with Nalanda monastic complex and the result of my intensive archaeological exploration in the 10 kilometre radius of the same. The core question, which I have analysed, is: what kind of socio-economic and cultic situation prevailed in the immediate vicinity of the Mahavihara and how did it affect the monastic pattern of socialisation. I have argued that the landscape was poly-religious in nature and religious boundaries were quite permeable for the common masses. Buddhism was living in the shadow of a well-entrenched Brahmanism in general and Saivism in particular. Yet Brahmanism survived in the long run, and Buddhism could not. This is due to a pronounced centrality of monasteries in the survival of Indian Buddhism. Till the Mahavihara was active, Buddhism was able to retain its institutional distinctiveness. With the collapse of the Mahavihara, nothing was there to resist the irreversible slide of Buddhism into various folk and Brahmanical cults.

Prasad, Hari Shankar – University of Delhi, India
prof.hsprasad@gmail.com

HOW TO RESTRUCTURE THE RELIGIOUS FOCUS?: EXPLAINING THE BUDDHIST METHOD

The present paper proposes to discuss the Buddha's attempt to restructure the very focus of religion in a methodological way. His whole attempt is to ethicize the human mind and conduct through self-effort without the support of any external agency like God. In the process he shifts the focus of religion from ritualism and dogmatism to ethical perfection which he equates with religion and the summum bonum, i.e., Nirvana.

Prasad, P. Krishna – Andhra University, India

RELIGION AS A SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MECHANISM FOR HUMANISM

Religion as a matter of faith is being least disputed and most extracted. There is no dimension of society or sphere of activity which does not involve the religion either for conditioning the human conduct or for regulating the groups in the desired direction or towards a set goal. This phenomenon is noticed to be perhaps more rampant in countries committed for secularism. Studies on Indian society have lent support for the hypotheses: 1. That 'despite compartmentalization of behavior, religion plays a dominant role in correcting

and conditioning the personal and social behaviors of both individuals and groups. 2. Religion is an important variable that can influence both the electoral and policy outcomes even in secular states like India. 3. Religion as a personal faith facilitate for many humanitarian and charitable tasks which in turn found promoting inter-religious harmony. 4. Religion as an outlook implying differently for different people provide for entrepreneurship in a manner that questions certain western conceptualizations about oriental religions. All the four hypotheses have been examined in different contexts by four different scholars. There is overwhelming empirical evidence that would ultimately support the maxim that 'Religion is a Human Phenomenon'.

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Priede, Janis – University of Latvia, Latvia
 jaanisriede@inbox.lv

BUDDHISM IN THE LATVIAN CULTURAL LANDSCAPE IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD (1918–1939)

The paper analyzes the publications in the interwar period newspapers to measure the presence of Buddhism in the cultural landscape of Latvia. The growing interest into Buddhism in this period can be explained by co-influence of three factors. The political situation in the world represents the first and most important of them. Diagrams on the quantity of publications show that the interest on Buddhism was constantly low till the year 1936 when in Latvian newspapers there appeared about three times more publications in comparison to the previous years. The culmination was reached in 1937 after which the interest on Buddhism went on decline. Such a trend coincides with the general interest of Latvian public into the political situation in the East where the military conflicts between the Republic of China and the Empire of Japan escalated into the Second Sino-Japanese War on July 7, 1937. The second important factor which helps to explain the growing interest into Buddhism may be traced to the activities of Theosophical movement which interpreted but at the same time greatly popularized Eastern religions. The efforts of Latvian enthusiasts constitute the third factor. An essential figure in the history of Buddhism in Latvia was Karlis Tennisons (1873–1962). The paper also deals with various topics in the interwar period press on Buddhism including its comparison with other religions, its presence in novels and travel diaries and misrepresentations of Buddhist practices.

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Puttaiah, E. T. – see *Babu, Umesh*

– Q –

Quack, Johannes – University of Hidelberg, Germany
 j.quack@asia-europe.uniheidelberg.de

ASYMMETRICAL TRANSLATIONS: CLINICAL ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN RELIGION AND PSYCHIATRY IN NORTH INDIA

This paper draws on an ongoing fieldwork (“clinical ethnography”) researching clinical encounters between psychiatrists and their clients (their care takers and their communities) in North India . In a first step the medical perspectives of Western-trained health professionals are contrasted with the religious experiences and explanatory models of their local clients. In a second step this schematic opposition is substantiated, qualified, and questioned by two ethnographic case studies. The aim of this paper is to illustrate the complex and diverse roles played by “religion” in different ways of dealing with mental health problems. The case studies are theorized by a discussion of the concept of “translation”, which is understood to include not only linguistic translations, but also therapeutic inter^actions.

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Radde-Antweiler, Kerstin – University of Bremen, Germany · radde@uni-bremen.de

“I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU EDUCATED PEOPLE IN THE WEST HAVE MADE THIS WOMAN INTO SUCH A GODDESS!” THE DISCUSSION ON MOTHER TERESA AS A MODERN SAINT ON THE INTERNET

Due to its ability to display numerous statements of individual believers, the Internet represents a new and incomparable source for religious studies. Recent studies confirm that lively and dynamic debates about religion and rituals are not restricted to religious institutions and religious experts. Religious groups and individual actors as well increasingly use these new forms of media and are part of religious discussions on religious authority, dogmatic doctrine, and belief itself. These discussions also debate and negotiate diverse construction processes of religious authority as well as religious figures. An example of such discussion and construction processes on the relevance of religious figures, precisely the meaning of saints, presents the negotiation of the figure Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu better known as Mother Teresa. She presents one of the popular saints in recent times – in spite of the fact that she is not even declared as an official Saint from the Catholic Church. Regardless to her popularity at the same time critical thoughts and discussions increase especially in and via the Internet.

For example her faithful habitus to the church like her denial of abortion, contraception but also the postulated cooperation with dictators are highly criticized

in various discussion forums, homepages, *etc.* The prominent publication "The final verdict" by Aroup Chatterjee can be seen as one of the primal trigger. In 2007, with the publication of various letters of Mother Teresa to her confessor the discussion reached a current culmination. Until then Mother Teresa was seen as a woman without doubts in god and without fear. The publication and the discussion of Mother Teresa was intensified and – so the thesis – even not possible without the Internet. But also the followers use this medium to construct a modified picture of Mother Teresa which is in line with her revealed doubtful side.

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Radde-Antweiler, Kerstin – University of Bremen, Germany · radde@uni-bremen.de

"OUR VISION IS TO SEE THE NAME OF JESUS GLORIFIED IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD." RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN SECOND LIFE AND THE FORMATION OF NEW FORMS OF PUBLIC SPHERES

Religions were discussed on the Internet right from the emergence of this medium. Due to the rapid development of new Internet technologies causing the Internet to become faster, bigger, cheaper and thus better accessible for average users than ever before, new spaces for religious action have been opening up. One of the most prominent example which will be addressed in the paper is Second Life, one of so-called virtual 3D environments. In these virtual worlds the users are able to interact by means of an avatar, a 3D representation of him or herself, navigated by keyboard and computer mouse. In these new forms of public spheres, a large variety of religious action can be observed, ranging from weddings, mourning ceremonies like death wakes, initiation rituals, church services, pilgrimages, *etc.* The paper will present two examples of Christian communities within Second Life which use this new technology to create religious and public space.

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Radford, Evan – York University, Canada

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RITUALIZED DISCOURSES OF COMING OUT CEREMONIES IN CONTEMPORARY JUDAISM

In this paper I take as my starting point the issue of agency as it pertains to religion. I focus on how religion perpetuates particular gender norms and roles while at the same time, the people of a particular religion engage with and thus manipulate those same gender norms.

That is to say that through an analysis of coming out ceremonies performed by LGBTQ-identified Jews in contemporary Judaism, I take up the issue of agency and make the following argument: through their performances of coming out ceremonies, LGBTQ-identified Jews engage with, deconstruct, and reconstruct particular historical gender norms of Judaism in order to create spaces where they can consolidate their subject positions within their context-specific social locations, thus signifying agency. In analyzing particular coming out ceremonies in Judaism, I draw on arguments made by Louis Althusser, Catherine Bell, Judith Butler, and Bruce Lincoln so to treat these ceremonies as rituals, and thus, following arguments made by Lincoln, treat ritual as a mode of discourse. Consequently, in my synthesis of these scholars' works, I make the case that synthesizing their arguments allows for a more rigorous analysis of ritual. That is, an analysis that not only deconstructs the subject positions of ritual (coming out ceremonies, in the context of this paper), but also reveals the agency that the actors of a ritual have while performing it and consolidating their subject positions within it. I conclude the paper with some cautionary notes about analyzing ritual and the subject positions consolidated therein.

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Rai, Shri – Lucknow University, India

INDIAN TRIBES: INDIAN RELIGIONS TRIBAL

Indian Tribes : Among the 68 million citizens of India who are members of tribal groups, the Indian tribal religious concepts, terminologies, and practices are as varied as the hundreds of tribes, but members of these groups have one thing in common: they are under constant pressure from the major organized religions. Some of this pressure is intentional, as outside missionaries work among tribal groups to gain converts. Most of the pressure, however, comes from the process of integration within a national political and economic system that brings tribes into increasing contact with other groups and different, prestigious belief systems. In general, those tribes that remain geographically isolated in desert, hill, and forest regions or on islands are able to retain their traditional cultures and religions longer. Those tribes that make the transition away from hunting and gathering and toward sedentary agriculture, usually as low-status laborers, find their ancient religious forms in decay and their place filled by practices of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, or Buddhism. One of the most studied tribal religions is that of the Santal of Orissa, Bihar, and West Bengal, one of the largest tribes in India, having a population estimated at 4.2 million. According to the 1991 census, however, only 23,645 people listed Santal as their religious belief.

Rakow, Katja – University of Heidelberg , Germany
katja.rakow@zegk.uni-heidelberg.de

TRANSCENDING OR CONSUMING THE SELF? THE WESTERN HEGEMONIC DISCOURSE ON THE SELF AND ITS IMPACT ON CONCEPTS AND RITUAL PRACTICES IN BUDDHIST MODERNISM

This paper will examine the influence of the Western hegemonic discourse on the self on the transformation of Buddhism in a modern transcultural context. The analysis is exemplified on a case study of “Rigpa”, an international network of meditation centers in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition founded by Sogyal Rinpoche in the 1970s. Sogyal Rinpoche is widely known as the author of the best-selling publication *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* (1992). The Rigpa network aims to present the Buddhist tradition of Tibet in a way that is both “authentic, and as relevant as possible to the lives and needs of modern men and women.” The case study is based on ethnographic data ascertained during a yearlong participant observation in the Rigpa Center Berlin, Germany.

First, the paper will provide an analysis of conceptualizations of the self in language and ritual practice in the Rigpa community. The analysis will focus on the Rigpa Course “Loving Kindness – Discovering Love in Our Selves” and the rhetoric and narrative as well as the ritual strategies employed in presenting and teaching the course as well as in the corresponding course materials (course manual, script, mp3s, DVDs).

Second, the paper will give a brief outline of the modern discourse on the autonomous self, which is based on studies of the British sociologist Nikolas Rose (1996). The modern discourse on the self produces and installs a conception of the individual as the sole ontological pivot of experience. Further, the self is conceived as a regulative ideal, possessing an inner reservoir of power that can be accessed. This suggests an intense accountability, responsibility, and sense of obligation that can be enlisted for choices and decisions. The language of free will and choice reinforces the idea that the individual is solely responsible for his or her own suffering resp. success. Assumptions like those, as Jeremy Carrette and Richard King (2005) and Paul Heelas (2008) have shown, function as interfaces to the contemporary discourse on religion and spirituality on the market.

Finally, the paper will discuss to what extent the effects of the modern discourse on the self are prevalent in the presentation of Tibetan Buddhist concepts and practices in the Rigpa community and in the reception of the participants and practitioners. Here I will argue, that Tibetan Buddhist experts in cooperation with Westerners (co-authors, senior-students, course

instructors) adopt the rhetorical and narrative strategies, which are characteristic for the contemporary discourses on the self, religion, and spirituality. Furthermore I will demonstrate that participants and practitioners perceive Tibetan Buddhist concepts and ritual practices on the basis of their knowledge shaped by those very discourses.

Ramaswamy, Balambal V. – University of Madras,
India · Drbala50@hotmail.com

PROTEST MOVEMENT FOR THE REVIVAL OF SAIVISM IN TAMILNADU

Protest movements are common in all spheres. Hinduism, the earliest and the popular one in India faced many onslaughts. The birth of Buddhism and Jainism and later split in Hinduism into Saivism (worship of Siva) and Vaishnavism (worship of Vishnu) curtailed the progress of Hinduism to a great extent. Caste system and Vedic sacrifices followed by Hindus affected Hinduism . In Tamilnadu, a southern state of India, the Kalabhras, an external force ,became powerful causing the fall of the Chera, Chola and Pandyas in the 4th century .They favoured Buddhism and Jainism up to 6th century AD. Hinduism lost its glory during this period.

Bhakthi movement of the Alvars(Vaishnavites) and Nayanmars (Saivites) and Adi Sankara caused a great change in the religious history of Tamilnadu .The revival of the Pallava, Chola and Pandya power gave a boon to Hinduism The Tevaram Trio-Appar ,Sambandar and Sundarar contributed to the revival of Saivism through Bhakthi (devotion).Their Bhakthi concept was revealed through their deep faith in God, miracles, non violence and propagation of Saivism in the Tamil country protesting against the Jains and Buddhists.The Tamil rulers' contribution to temple building and donation for various religious and social purposes was supportive to the protest movement of the Saivites.. Saivism recovered from the onslaughts of the Jains and Buddhists and was well re established in the Tamil country till date.

Ramelli, Ilaria L.E. – Catholic University, Italy

ORIGEN AND AUGUSTINE: A PARADOXICAL RECEPTION

I shall argue that, paradoxically enough, Augustine actually embraced much of Origen's system, which he used especially in his anti-Manichean polemic, exactly when he was convinced that he did not know his thought. The most remarkable point in his initial adhesion to Origen's ideas surely regards the doctrine of apokatastasis, which he too, later, condemned as heretical and felt the need to recant in his Retractationes.

But I shall point out many other points of contact concerning both philosophical arguments and Biblical exegesis, which the early Augustine drew from Origen and have escaped scholars. I shall thus explain how Augustine used Origen's thought in defense of Christian orthodoxy against the "heresy" of Manichaeism, whereas later on, after he was informed about Origen's thought by Hosius and Jerome, he began to find it heretical, and he repeatedly condemned it, especially in his *De civitate Dei* and *De haeresibus*, where he also shows that he was rather misinformed about it. I shall thus explore the dynamics of such a transformation of Origen into a "heretic" in Augustine's view. I shall argue that a remarkable role in this transformation was played by Augustine's polemic against Pelagianism; indeed, several of his expressions of blame for Origen's ideas are found in his anti-Pelagian works. Another notable factor that I shall point out was the ignorance of the important semantic distinction, in Greek, between *aionios* and *aidios*, which was often lost in imprecise Latin translations of both adjectives with *aeternus*. Moreover, I shall investigate and endeavor to clarify the ways and sources through which Augustine first came to know Origen's true thought when he did adhere to it, probably without being aware that it was Origen's.

Ramp, William – The University of Lethbridge
ramp@uleth.ca

TRACES AND TRUTHS: SCIENCE AND REVELATION IN THE EDWARDIAN CULT OF ART

A 'religion of art' is said to have been a prominent feature of late nineteenth-century intellectual culture. If so, did its reach extend to the broader middle and professional classes? Did its concerns extend beyond the worship of beauty to issues of reality, knowledge, revelation, and truth? Did these issues resonate with questions raised in some contemporary scientific circles? Was the practice of art-connoisseurship also a sort of religio-scientific quest after the ineffable? This paper will employ an implicit-religion approach to these questions, focusing on three specific aspects of Edwardian-era art connoisseurship. First, what elements of a quest after a higher reality or truth might have found expression in the activities of middle-class connoisseurs? Second, how did the emerging discourse of professional connoisseurship draw upon or emulate contemporary scientific ideas or practices? Third, did the discourse of connoisseurship bring together the scientific and the aesthetic in a manner similar to any contemporaneous attempts to bring science and religion into engagement? In engaging the intersecting concerns and practices of art-connoisseurship and investigative science, this paper will suggest similarities in their approaches to issues of authenticity, integrity and origin,

and ask if both might have involved a sort of quasi-sacramental pursuit: a quest after something intangible through the tangible, to identify 'outward and visible signs' of an elusive authenticity, a mysterious creative process, or a lost aesthetic sensibility.

Ramsay, Zara – School of Oriental and African Studies, UK

RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL CAPITAL IN BUDDHIST FAITH-BASED DEVELOPMENT: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

Since Robert Putnam popularised the concept in the 1990s, social capital theory has been the subject of intense debate in both national and international politics. The theory has been incorporated into World Bank policy with particular enthusiasm, thereby impacting upon innumerable developing communities around the world. This paper contends that despite criticisms of the theory's excessive elasticity, social capital can provide a useful medium through which to study faith-based development organisations (FBOs). However the paper also argues for some alterations of the ways in which development agencies understand non-economic forms of capital.

During the last decade there have been a small number of attempts to extend social and cultural capital theories in order to more cogently address issues of religiosity/spirituality, terms which have generally been used interchangeably. With reference to data gathered in 2008/9 amongst Buddhist FBOs in northern and central India however, this paper aims to draw a clear distinction between concepts of religious and spiritual capital. Defined in accordance with Indian informants' narratives, these categories are linked separately to cognition and affect. Drawing upon the work of Pierre Bourdieu, it is argued that each interacts differently with the World Bank's social capital framework, and moreover that religious capital and spiritual capital provide different benefits in relation to FBOs' employee motivation, determination and collaboration, and in relation to intra-organisational dynamics, funding and interaction with local beneficiary communities.

Ranjan, Purnendu – Government College for Girls, India

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HISTORY OF THE KABIRPANTH, A DEVOTIONAL MEDIEVAL SECT ACTIVE IN NORTH INDIA

Kabirpanth, a nirgun devotional sect named after the great Indian sant Kabir, has been in existence, at least, in some parts of North India roughly since the seventeenth century.

.As per a conservative estimate by some scholars and eminent sect followers, the sect presently has not less than 3 million lay followers in India alone. Certain other Asian and African countries ; such as, Nepal, Pakistan, Mauritius, Trinidad, Surinam, and some other Caribbean countries are also said to have a sizeable follower of Kabirpanth, who had begun to settle in African countries as indentured labourers during the early years of the British rule. Till date its history is shrouded in mystery as no scholar has shown serious interest in the subject at academic level, primarily because its followers mostly come from the down trodden sections of the Indian society, who have been, for millennia, lagging behind the privileged castes/classes in economic and intellectual pursuits. The 19th century in India had been a period during which a number of modern reform movements appeared in addition to these pre-colonial religious orders; such as Kabirpanth. During the same period Kabirpanth emerged as one of the favourite religious groups for some of the European Protestant missionary scholars; such as G.H.Westcott and F. E. Keay who grew interest in its tradition particularly to prove the point that the bearer of such grand system of religious ideas as embedded in the Kabirpanth could not be initiated but by the Christianity; in other words, Kabirpanth was initiated in India by the Jesuits active in various parts of India. During the post colonial period, we have some interesting papers on the social, economic, political and belief systems of the panth; for example the works of David N Lorenzen, Charlotte Vaudeville, David Scott, Linda Hess, Uma Thukral, and my own among some others, but we are yet to have a systematic historical study of the growth of the Kabirpanth as a religious movement. In the proposed paper, I would like to delineate the history of the Kabirpanth, a research project which I am yet to complete. At the present stage however I am definitely in a comfortable position to describe its foundation and spread in different parts of north India and thereby enrich my study by the valuable comments I would receive in the XXth IAHA . In course of its growth, Kabirpanth seems to have undergone interesting changes in its beliefs and practices, organizational structure and its overall identity. The available evidences with me – both oral and textual – go contrary to the assertions of the European Protestant scholars suggesting its origin to the Christian traditions. These also indicate Kabirpanth's non-sectarian outlook, at least, well maintained by its followers till the end of the 19th century. I have also found certain reliable evidences which show the origin of the Sikhs closely linked to the Kabirpanth traditions. However in course, it has presently taken on more of the Hindu character than the Islam and is also distinct from the Sikhs. Yet it has been one of the religious sects in India which has stood for the practice of secular policy in the post colonial period till date.

Rashkow, Ilona N. – New York University, USA
Rashkowin@yahoo.com

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE BIBLE: WHAT HATH FREUD WROUGHT?

Until recently, reading the Bible was thought to be a rather straightforward procedure. The goal was to respond “properly” by trying to “understand” the text and grasp the “meaning.” This changed once psychology became a more accepted form of biblical exegesis. Now shifts in the discipline of biblical studies, along with the increasing influence of psychological perspectives on the culture in general have made psychological approaches to the Bible more visible and as a result including the application of feminist theory to psychological approaches. The use of psychology in interpreting biblical texts is no more a conceptually unified critical position in biblical studies than in literary studies generally. The term is associated with scholars who examine the writer, the biblical characters, or the reader. Further, the approaches are neither monolithic nor mutually exclusive. But biblical scholars who use psychology seem to agree that “meaning” does not inhere completely and exclusively in the text and that the “effects” of reading Scripture, psychological and otherwise, are essential to its “meaning.” Ultimately, this type of literary criticism yields in biblical studies a way of looking at biblical narratives and readers which reorganizes both their interrelationships and the distinctions between them. As a result, recognizing the relationship of a reader to the biblical text leads to a more profound awareness that no one interpretation is intrinsically “true:” the “meaning” of biblical narratives is not waiting to be uncovered but evolves, actualized by readers. Although this paper looks at various psychological approaches to biblical study I focus most heavily on psychoanalysis and the bible from the perspective of psychoanalytic literary theory, particularly that of Freud and Lacan.

Reddish, Paul – see *Bulbulia, Joseph*

Reddy, A.K. and D. Sarkar – Ambedkar. Open,
University and NV College, India
yours.reddy@gmail.com

THE BODY POLITIC: POSTCOLONIALISING GANDHI'S ASCETICISM

Mohandas Gandhi, the most visible figure of Indian nationalism is often hailed as a saint in the political arena. Richard G Fox comments “Gandhi was perceived as powerful for his ability to hold back threatened violence from the Indian masses. That power was taken as spiritual.”

In this paper we propose to argue that this ‘controlling’ dimension to Gandhi’s character has several ramifications in the religio-political history of India. Gandhi categorically denied of becoming an ascetic, but he introduced and valorized several ascetic practices like fasting and sense-mortification. By reading his extensive discourses on brahmacharya that he wanted to apply on the life of the householder satyagrahis including himself, we propose to show that at the heart of Gandhi’s mechanism to restrain and deprave the individual body is a micro-politics of control. We contend that, Gandhi’s selection of ascetic practices without becoming one is a political action that manipulated to wrestle the controlling power in the public sphere of British India. India has a long history of warrior ascetics. Warrior ascetics traversed a strange territory. Being ascetics they were supposed to be beyond the pale of the mundane affairs, but they participated at the highest level of statecraft. Gandhi as a charismatic champion of non-violence is apparently the farthest person from the ideal of a warrior ascetic. However, in this paper we contend that there are certain important similarities between the two that are worth revisiting in post-colonial India’s religious history.

Reichelmann, Ashley V. – The College of New Jersey, USA

A MICRO-SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF “WOMAN” AND “WITCH AS A FLUID IDENTITY IN EVERYDAY LIFE

The paper explores how the categories of “witch” and “woman” interact as a fluid identity. Specifically, the dissertation looks at how self-defining as a “witch” impacts “women’s” lives. The interaction is observed and analyzed through interview narratives of females who self-define as “witches.” The paper analyzes the interaction in three areas of daily life: family life, sexuality and appearance. “The fluidity of this identity argues to identity’s complexity and calls into question the socialized category of “woman” as a methodological study of inquiry. According to the participants’ narratives and theories of individualism, the participants broke the confines of gender solely by their interpretations of their actions. However, Witchcraft also encourages the embracement of certain “feminine aspects” such as mothering and nurturing roles; since a tenuous relationship exists between feminist theory, “women’s” lived realities and notions of gender, feminist ideology does not appear to support the claim that the participants broke the gender boundaries. Due to the inability of a theory to address both the role of the individual and the role of the social in the development of “gender” as a category of identification, the researcher began to question how fluid identities pose a problem to

thoughts of freedom from stereotypes. The research follows the original question in an attempt to expose its flaws and is mirrored by a researcher’s reflexivity as a feminist sociologist.

Reichl, Timon – University Muenster, Denmark

USING THE BODY: HESYCHAST AND YOGIC APPROACHES TO “PRAYER”

This paper will explore the understanding of the body in the context of hesychast prayer theory and yoga darsana, concentrating on two prominent exponents (and their texts) of the respective traditions – Gregory Palamas’ (1296–1359) apologetic presentation of the hesychast method and Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras, using an edition with the earliest commentary, the Yogabhasya of Vyasa (7th to 8th century CE). The immediate relevance for the methodological discussion lies in the explicit nature of these explications concerning the methodic involvement of the body in yogic and hesychast “prayer”-theory. Furthermore, a comparative stance will help to delineate the specific characteristics and also differences between the two traditions. Beyond the general ascetic context with its overt outlook of controlling diverse aspects of bodily life (gr. *áskesis* and skt. *yama*) with the tendency of identifying salvific hindrances with bodily characteristics, it might be surprising to find that the apologetic argumentation of Palamas concentrates on the theological and religious appreciation of the body. Although this legitimizes and results in integrating the body (gr. *soma*, skt. *angam*) and bodily processes (e.g., *pranayama*) in both traditions, the overall outlook of the traditional Samkhya philosophy in its synthesis with yogic practices, contrary to modern Western interpretations and refigurations of yoga, ideally aims at an inhibition of any mental and physical activity (skt. *citta vritti nirodha*) with the metaphysical goal of *kaivalya* (“alone”, “Isolation”). This has of course been differentiated into “abstract” and “concrete” *kaivalya*, the latter being defined by the remaining *sattva* aspect of *citta* (“mind”), which allows for the conscious experience of *purusa* by the Yogin. This already hints at the many levels on which explicit body references in religious traditions might be looked at, here suggesting at least three dimensions: the involvement of bodily processes in religious practice (e.g., breath, body postures, etc.), the theological or cosmological understanding of the body (e.g., the body and its relation to *purusa-prakṛti*/ theological interpretation of *soma*) and also its overall soteriological assessment. This paper is a contribution to the methodological discussion by differentiating the epistemological or heuristic usage of the body as an implicit element of religious activity from explicit explications of the body in religious normative text.

As the body is always implicitly involved in any cultural or religious activity, an inquiry into the use of the body in prayer will not only add to our understanding of the “the body” as embedded in the symbolic systems of the religions but might even stimulate current methodological discussions to take the fundamental importance of the body as “bearer of religion” seriously.

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Renger, Almut-Barbara – Free University of Berlin,
Germany · renger@zedat.fu-berlin.de

FROM PYTHAGORAS TO CHRIST: THE CONSTRUCTION OF A “GREAT MASTER”. APOLLONIUS OF TYANA, “TRUE FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY”

Little is certainly known about Apollonius of Tyana, the Pythagorean of the 1st century AD who is represented in the Internet in many ways. In addition to sites of individual actors that are dedicated exclusively to Apollonius, there are sites of religious communities within western esoteric subcultures. Some of them are discussion forums, others attempt to provide advice concerning a better way of living, or aim to provide a religious experience facilitating prayer, meditation, or pilgrimages. All of these websites construct and functionalize Apollonius in their own way claiming to display information, which is subversive or at least in stark contrast to knowledge being well-known, public, or perceived as informally canonic in society at large. Apollonius is defined as “courageous humanitarian and social revolutionist,” “mystic and sage,” “wandering spiritual alchemist,” and last not least “the TRUE FOUNDER of early Christianity.” This paper considers a selection of websites against the background of ancient and modern texts. Apollonius seems to have portrayed and sustained an ideal of the charismatic teacher Pythagoras as a holy man purified by asceticism, giving him deep insight into the godly origin of things as well as wondrous force and power. Soon Apollonius himself acquired the reputation of a wonder-worker, a cult developed, and the lengthy “Vita Apollonii” was commissioned which shows Apollonius as a genuinely godly man. Later comparisons between Apollonius and Jesus Christ became commonplace, also in modern times. In several novels and films of the 20th century Apollonius appears as a fictional character. Some Theosophists, notably C.W. Leadbeater, Alice A. Bailey, and Benjamin Creme, have maintained that Apollonius was the reincarnation of the being they call the Master Jesus.

Rennie, Bryan – Westminster College, USA
brennie@westminster.edu

THE HISTORY (AND PHILOSOPHY) OF RELIGIONS

In a paper given at a Roundtable at the American Academy of Religion National Annual Conference in Montréal in November of 2009, jointly organized by the North American Association for the Study of Religion and the Critical Theory and Discourses in Religion Group of the AAR, I argued for the ineluctably philosophical nature of what is most commonly called Method and Theory in the Study of Religion. That paper, forthcoming in the August issue of Method and Theory in the Study of Religion, also argues that what is conventionally referred to as “Philosophy of Religion” does not, strictly speaking, warrant that name since it is in fact a form of theology that utilizes philosophical methodologies to consider principally, if not exclusively, Christian concerns. I also argued that a Philosophy of Religion(s) constituted along the lines of the Philosophy of Science would be a potential improvement in both fields (Theory and Method and the Philosophy of Religion). In the current paper I would like to consider – with the help of a closer look at contemporary Philosophy of Science – precisely what a reconstituted History (and Philosophy) of Religions might look like, how it might differ from current scholarship, and what it might achieve.

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Repphun, Eric – University of Otago, New Zealand
erepphun@xtra.co.nz

GENRE IN TRANSLATION: IMAGES OF THE CROSS IN EVANGELION: 1.0 YOU ARE (NOT) ALONE

This paper explores the ways in which the animated Japanese film Evangelion: 1.0 You Are (Not) Alone (Evangelion shin gekijôban: Jo) employs Christian ideas and imagery, particularly images of crosses, a repeated visual trope in the film and the anime television series on which it is based. Using the film as a foundation from which to explore the ways that science fiction genre conventions are deployed differently across national and religious contexts, this paper places the film in relation to a larger discussion about religion, the media, and the problems of translation. Genre conventions, as an integral part of the language of the science fiction film, require translation in their own right.

This paper not only offers a tentative interpretation of the meaning of the images themselves; it also explores the many elements that feed into such cross-cultural processes of meaning making. Any attempt to answer the essential hermeneutic question – what do these repeated cruciform images mean? – presents the astute viewer with a considerable challenge.

To even approach an answer to this question, we must consider the specific conventions of the mecha subgenre of anime, the religious and historical context of apocalyptic narrative in Japan, the cultural and narrative differences between Japanese and Euro-American science fiction, and finally the ways in which Christian themes play into the film's particular vision of almost nihilistic world-ending destruction. The cross in Evangelion 1.0 symbolizes many things but, because they must be translated, not all of these things are readily apparent.

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Richardson, Edana – Trinity College, University of Dublin, Ireland · erichar@tcd.ie

ISLAM IN IRELAND'S CONSTITUTION

In a recent Select Committee debate in Ireland's Oireachtas, Deputy Joan Burton noted that 'the [Irish] Constitution does not recognise Shari'ah law'. While this statement does not explicitly exclude Islam from the Constitution's ambit, its rebuff of such a core aspect of the Muslim religion nevertheless highlights possible uncertainty over Islam's true place within the Irish constitutional order. Ireland's Constitution is arguably not a strictly secular instrument and respect for religion can be found throughout its provisions. However, referring to 'the Most Holy Trinity' and 'our obligations to our Divine Lord, Jesus Christ' this respect potentially extends not to all religions but only to mainstream Christian beliefs. Judicial consideration of the Constitution's provisions has done little to dispel concern of a preference for Christian teaching. Where then does Islam fit in and, more pressingly, are there sufficient reasons in favour of Ireland recognising Islam as a religion worthy of equal protection by the Constitution? This paper will consider the text of the Constitution and its interpretation in light of an increasingly multicultural Ireland. It will also assess the right to religious freedom at domestic, European and international level outlining the importance of protecting rights beyond those enjoyed by the majority of the population.

Riekert, Stephanus – University of the Free State, South Africa · riekerts@ufs.ac.za

THE HUMAN SIDE OF ANCIENT SACRED LOVE SONGS: COMPARING THE ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIAN SACRED LOVE SONGS WITH THE SYRIAN MARRIAGE SONGS

A review of the Mesopotamian sacred love songs will be given and an attempt at arriving to the kernel characteristics will be done. Then the paper would compare that with the characteristics of the Syrian marriage songs. The conclusion would be in the field whether the sacred love songs reflects ordinary human aspects or not.

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Roberts, Christopher – Reed College, USA

INDEXICALITY AND THE SEMIOTICS OF EQUIPMENT IN THE AMERICAN PREMILLENIALIST IMAGINARY

This presentation will counter one charge against the semiotic analysis of religious phenomena – that it remains confined within the "prison-house of language" – by developing two of Peirce's innovations: the intrinsically social notion of signification embedded in Peirce's triadic notion of the sign, and the extension of signification to include, not only the epistemological framework of the icon and the symbol, but also the ontological purchase of the index. To demonstrate the necessity of indexicality for understanding religious practices, my talk will focus on the semiotics of "equipment" in the contemporary American premillennialist imaginary. First, drawing on the global best-selling Left Behind series and the website of the Hutaree militia who were recently raided by the FBI, I will discuss how in both cases "equipment" is the primary category of objects that premillennialists prize both leading up to the tribulation and during the reign of the Anti-Christ. Contrasting with the Heideggerian semiotic of equipment, I will show how premillennialists depart from Heidegger's famous "broken-hammer" scenario, where the tool, embedded within the phenomenological experience of "tool-being", rarely becomes significant until it malfunctions. Instead, for these premillennialists, it is precisely the indexical purchase of their gear, of each item's place in a broader nexus of "equipment," that constitutes its semiotic-surplus value. On the basis of the indexicality of equipment, I will then explore the multiple semiotic registers (military, market, apocalyptic, etc) in which the gear-fetish of these premillennialists reverberates, and thus the contribution that semiotics can make to understanding this religious phenomena.

Standard historical narratives of early Christianity typically revolve around conceptions of orthodoxy, heresy, and the formation of a canon. It is the contention of this paper that a close analysis of Marcion – the enigmatic thinker and leader branded as a heretic and active in the early second century CE – shows that the ideas of orthodoxy, heresy, and canon not only lack explanatory power but impede responsible historical research. These three terms are all products of later mythmaking on the part of other early Christian writers. Modern scholarship has tended to appropriate for historical reconstructions these very terms used in early religious polemics. By jettisoning these terms, we are able to more accurately conceive of Marcion, his followers, and the complex religious and social dynamics of the first centuries. This re-reading of the evidence results in a far messier, but far more nuanced and plausible picture that is supported by other evidence, such as archaeological finds, epigraphy, and the manuscript tradition. In addition, this project's conclusions imply broader challenges to historical studies of religion. Scholars of religion must be aware of the origins and functions of emic concepts, which are often polemically motivated and frequently misleading. This paper, then, is an example of religious-historical study with an awareness of the importance of modern theoretical concerns.

Sabath, Arpita – Sambalpur University, India
arpita.sabath@hotmail.com

HISTORICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL BASES OF THE RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS OF WESTERN ORISSA: A CASE STUDY ON SITA

The finding of the study shows that Western Orissa is the land of tribal and common people. So seasonal festivals are locally celebrated there. As India is agricultural base country, so local festivals like Akshaya Trutiya, Gahma Purnima, Nuakhai are specially organised in Western Orissa to start sowing agriculture as well as to pay respect to Bullocks. Sithal Sasthi in Western Orissa, especially in Sambalpur is a gala marriage festive occasion. 'Sital Sasthi' is an indigenous festival almost aboriginal as the tribes of the Western Orissa. 'Bhima' which tribal culture refers to 'Bhamka' – a male god without any shape and definite attributes. Gradually that 'Bhima' came to be worshipped by the non-tribals as "Sital Sasthi", or the marriage of Lord Siva and Parvati. The relevance of the study will strengthen the great almighty power of Siva and Shakti when joined in marital bliss followed by peace on the earth. Indian Epic and puranas till the tell the miraculas strength and power of Siva. He is called Siva, Satya and Sundara. The objective of the present study is to make empirical study through interview, observation and group discussion in order to find out the historical and sociological background of local religious festivals of Western Orissa in general and Sithal Sasthi in particular. The ultimate objectives are to discuss the historical background of Sithal Sasthi, to justify festival Sithal Sasthi as the image of Indian marriage culture, to highlight Sithal Sasthi's significance. Data are collected through interview, observation method and group discussion. Observation and interview schedule are administered at different levels to collect data. Discussion at different level also carried out to find the relevance of data. Key words – (Rudra) Lord Siva, Goddess Parvati Marital bliss (peace), fresh life, Communal harmony, social integration.

Sakamoto, Naoko – Kokugakuin University, Japan
snb36387@nifty.com

THE HORSE IN JAPANESE RITES

In Japanese religious ceremonies, especially in Shinto rites, the horse has been viewed as the animal who has a deep relationship with kami (deities). In these rites the horse is often called Shin-me. For example, the classical equestrian archery ceremony of Yabusame uses Shin-me in telling the fortune of the year or offering prayers for peace and good harvest.

Today some shrines hold the ceremony once a year as their main rite or festival. Here their important annual prayers are offered. The ceremonies using horses have been maintained in the classical styles and followed according to tradition in contrast with modern Japanese society where horses are scarcely seen. This paper first provides a brief overview of the history of religious ceremonies using horses in Japan. Next, it will explore the styles of the ceremonies with horses held in various shrines at present. Finally, it categorizes the ceremonies according to the different styles of the rites.

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Sakaranaho, Tuula – University of Helsinki, Finland
 tuula.sakaranaho@helsinki.fi

MUSLIM NATIONAL SCHOOLS IN A SECULARIZING AND PLURALIZING IRELAND

The aim of this paper is to reflect on the role of Muslim national schools in Ireland against the background of recent theoretical discussion on secular / post-secular Europe. European societies, Ireland included, are presently facing a serious challenge as to how to incorporate religious diversity and immigrant religions in particular. One of the most important questions in the process of the incorporation of immigrant religions, such as Islam, concerns school education. In addition to simply spreading knowledge, schools also aim at socializing children and the young in accordance with the main societal values. Therefore, school education, which is at the cross-roads of the public and private spheres, is one of the main fields of contestation in a multicultural society. José Casanova has recently argued that in order to understand the difficulties that European societies face in trying to incorporate immigrant religions, one should look at the long-lasting European pattern of confessionalization of state, people and territories. In this paper, I will use Casanova's argument as a starting point and will assess it in light of the establishment and functioning of Muslim national schools in Ireland. PANEL: Islam in Ireland – Issues and Challenges in Researching on a Muslim Community in Europe

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Sakurai, Yoshihide – Hokkaido University, Japan
 saku@let.hokudai.ac.jp

MISSION STRATEGIES AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF AN EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN JAPAN

The purpose of this research is to examine the mission strategy and organizational structure of a particular evangelical church that evoked cult controversy. Since the mid 1980s Japanese Christianity has been strongly influenced by Korean Full Gospel churches and American Pentecostal/ Evangelical churches. They insist on the power of Holy Spirit (against demons), discipleship training, and

explosive missionary, and then their mission sometimes causes conflicts with liberal churches. Although sexual and power harassments are not rare in religious institutions, those of evangelical churches are more often reported by mass media. On April 25th, 2005 a pastor, 61 years of age, was arrested for allegedly raping seven junior high school girls and molesting other women in his church, "Seishin Tchu Kyokai (Sacred Central Church)." On February 21st, 2006, he received a sentence of 20 years imprisonment and his conviction was fixed. This pastor studied theology with Pentecostal church in Korea and founded his independent church in 1986, then expanded his mission to include 22 branch churches, 57 vice pastors, and 1,300 believers. Since this incident, most of the embarrassed members have defected, yet a few branches still hold faith with him. This paper studies the following points: 1) content of their teaching and its function in the relationship between the pastor and the disciple, 2) the case of physical and spiritual abuse in cultic churches, and 3) the hierarchical and efficient organizational structure adapted to missionary. Some of these features were originated at the Great Awakening in Korea in the beginning of 20th century and transcendent to the present. However, Japanese are unaccustomed to those missionary churches and therefore extravagant behaviors are considered as cultic issues.

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Salas, Sergio Francisco Rosas – El Colegio de Michocán, Mexico

LA DIÓCESIS DE PUEBLA, MÉXICO, Y LAS NUEVAS DEVOCIONES MARIANAS, 1850–1910

La ponencia que se propone tiene como objeto de estudio el proceso por el cual se introdujeron nuevas devociones marianas a la diócesis de Puebla, México, en el periodo comprendido entre 1850 y 1910. El objetivo es mostrar cómo las nuevas devociones marianas fueron impulsadas por el alto clero poblano, a partir de políticas promovidas desde la Santa Sede. Intento demostrar que estas devociones, en específico el Sagrado Corazón de María y las vírgenes de Lourdes y Pontmain, sirvieron para actualizar la práctica religiosa católica, y con ello renovar el catolicismo ante una sociedad y un Estado marcadamente liberal. Al mismo tiempo, pretendo contribuir con ello al estudio de la transición del catolicismo mexicano entre los siglos XIX y XX desde la historia religiosa. En la ponencia considero que esta transición cultural no sólo respondió a intereses pastorales, sino a motivos políticos y de control social. Durante el periodo de estudio, la Iglesia de Puebla pasó de la separación de la vida pública a un papel activo en materia de política y participación social. Las fuentes serán el Archivo del Cabildo Catedral de Puebla, la hemerografía de la época, las bibliotecas de fondo antiguo de la ciudad de Puebla y bibliografía complementaria.

Salazar, Carles – Lleida, Spain

MEANINGFUL MINDS: ETHNOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS INTO REASON, MORALITY AND BELIEF

The purpose of this paper is to address the need for an integrated symbolic-cognitive framework for the analysis of religious action. Ethnographic case-studies taken from an Irish catholic community will substantiate the paper's main theoretical points. A central theme in the argument to be unfolded will be the process of symbolisation, which is the process in terms of which objects, actions and events refer to things different from themselves. Symbolization originates, it is argued, in the attribution of mental states to intentional agents and it pervades the expression of all forms of cultural knowledge. The paper attempts to demonstrate that religious ideas are not only parasitic upon evolved human cognitive abilities, as mainstream cognitive approaches have claimed, but also on human symbolic languages, which in turn should be seen as a by-product of those evolved cognitive abilities.

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Sander, Åke – University of Gothenburg, Sweden
aake.sander@lir.gu.se

ARE ISLAM AND MUSLIMS TAKING OVER EUROPE? SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE CLAIMS OF THE EURABIA LITERATURE

This paper will first review the claims of the so-called Euroabia literature about the place, role, duty, intentions, and future of Islam and Muslims vis-à-vis Europe. It will then summarize and compare these claims with what some Muslim scholars'/jurists ('Ulama'), situated in the Muslim world and in Europe respectively, have to say to say about these issues. Similarities and differences will be pointed out and discussed. Finally it will be discussed to what extent "the Islam" and "the Muslim" as they are described in these two discourses correspond to "the real Islam" and "the real Muslims" actually existing in Europe, and the likelihood that the future reality of Islam and Muslims in Europe will converge with or diverge from the claims of the Euroabia literature.

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Sander, Åke – University of Gothenburg, Sweden
aake.sander@lir.gu.se

EXPERIENCES AND INTERACTIONS OF SWEDISH SCHOLARS WITH BANARAS HINDU, JADAVPUR AND OTHER UNIVERSITIES IN INDIA

This presentation gives an account of many years of experience in developing academic interactions and cooperation with Banaras Hindu University and bringing students from Sweden to Banaras for field studies. It explores challenges of cultural differences, students' reaction and negotiation with various cultural

and religious settings and suggests ways to develop and consolidate interactions between Indian and Western Universities.

Among these ways is a recently concluded agreement for long-term cooperation between the Department of Literature, Ideas and Religion (LIR), Göteborg University, Sweden, represented by Professors Aake Sander and Ferdinando Sardella, and the Department of Sociology, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India, in collaboration with Professor Ruby Sain. This cooperative venture was planned to be done in three steps. Step one: an international conference ("Interface Between East and West: Multiculturalism and Identity", December 2009) at Jadavpur University; step two: to assist in the establishment of a Center for the Study of Religion and Society at Jadavpur University; step three: establishment of the International Forum for the Study of Society and Religion (IFSSR).

Subsequent initiatives may include bringing together people from different universities in India to further develop the area of religious studies, particularly with a social science approach (in a wide sense), including exchange of students and staff (teachers and researchers) and the development of joint research projects.

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Santos, David Gerales – University of Beira Interior
david.g.santos@gmail.com

FROM PHILOSOPHY TO RELIGION: A CONTRIBUTION TO A HISTORY OF THE CATEGORY "SACRED"

In this paper I argue that the history of religion, as a study of the religious phenomena, sooner or later will have to integrate an issue that up till now has been only a matter for philosophical thought. The current perspective in force – introduced by F. M. Cornford in his seminal work *From Religion to Philosophy* – is that Philosophy, though owing a lot to religious speculation in its genesis, became manumitted from it. In this article I argue that the categories often used by contemporaneous philosophical thought as "being", and several subterraneous metaphysical logics which are unsuspectedly articulated in such thought, are the legacy of a silent and undeniable work of universal religious consciousness currently materialized in regular paths of rationality. With a brief analysis of the main movements of some of the more or less unsuspected philosophical moments – as, for instance, in the field of atheist existentialism, and even in some more contemporaneous authors, such as Derrida or Deleuze – I try to build a genealogy of the philosophical category "being", which, I argue, is possible to trace back to the most central category in the history of religions: the "sacred".

In this essay, I do not question the value and the relative or universal identity of a category which is so central to the study of the religious phenomenon as the “sacred”, but I do defend that, fulfilling most of the qualities as established by classical studies in the history of religions, the philosophical category of the “being” is the latest development of the central category of the “sacred” within Western speculation.

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Saralidze, Anzor – Vladimir State University, Russia
unlami@yandex.ru

**PROJECT “ISTOKI” (“SOURCES”) “RELIGION,
EDUCATION AND RUSSIAN POST-SOVIET
DEVELOPMENT” (1995–2010)**

1. The project «Istoki» aimed at working out new educational course, and publishing of the study-books «Istoki» («Sources») for school and university students, along with additional literature. The study-books is an introduction to the young people of the Russian Central Region to the ecological basis of traditional culture and religion for Russia and European Countries with its local varieties in Germany, Russia, Italy and Norway. It gives the young generation an opportunity for better understanding of the common features and the peculiarities of each culture. The course also serves the purpose of creating new ways of teaching, and is aimed at social, intellectual, spiritual, moral, aesthetic and ecological development of the school and university students. It is also planned to have this course in the elementary, middle and upper school levels in the future. 2. There has been a successful cooperation in the sphere of education among the Vladimir State University, Center of Ortodoxy Culture and the Department of Education of the Vladimir County. It is also greatly supported by the Ministry of Education RF and the colleagues from the European Countries. In the year of 2001 the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies was founded at the University as well as the section of Religious Studies at the Faculty of the Humanities. There has also been broadening of cooperation with the Department of Religious Education and Catechisms of Vladimir and Suzdal Diocese.

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Sardella, Ferdinando – University of Gothenburg,
Sweden • ferdinando.sardella@lir.gu.se

**THE PLACE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF A MODERN
HINDU PERSONALIST: BHAKTISIDDHANTA
SARASVATI**

This paper introduces the work of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati (1874–1937), a Vaishnava guru of the school of Chaitanya (1486–1534), who, at a time that Hindu non-dualism was most prominent, managed to establish

a pan-Indian movement for the modern revival of traditional personalist bhakti that today encompasses both Indian and non-Indian populations throughout the world. To most historians, the period between 1815 and 1914 is known as Britain's Imperial Century, when the power of British cultural influence was at its height, most especially in Calcutta, India, the jewel of the British crown. Here the profound ad-mixture of Western and Indic social structures, values and ideas gave rise to a new indigenous middle-class known as the bhadralok: the class responsible for what has come to be known as the Bengali Renaissance, and for producing such transformative figures as Rammohun Roy and Swami Vivekananda, both of whom believed non-dualism to be the fundamental expression of Indic thought. As a result of their efforts (especially those of Vivekananda), modern Hinduism gradually came to be identified with Vedantic non-dualism (advaita) in both India and the West – an outcome that has historically obscured modern personalist bhakti strands. To redress this imbalance, the papers explores Bhaktisiddhanta's background, motivation and thought, especially as it relates to his forging of a modern traditionalist institution for the successful revival of Chaitanya Vaishnava bhakti. That institution, originally known as the Gaudiya Math, has a number of contemporary global off-shoots, the best known of which is the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

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Saritoprak, Zeki – John Carroll University, USA

**MUSLIMS' PERCEPTION OF THE GÜLEN
MOVEMENT: ACCOMMODATING OR HINDERING
TO MODERN TURKEY**

Named after a prominent Islamic scholar and former preacher Fethullah Gülen, the Gülen movement is one of the largest civic movements that has a variety of endeavors from education to aid initiatives. The founder of the movement, Fethullah Gülen, now 72, lives an ascetic lifestyle in a rural area in the United States. Emerging from Turkey, this movement has gathered momentum through the world. The focus of this paper will be the movement's perception in Turkey, a country with strict secularist rules which ironically has a governmental institution that oversees all religious institutions and provides a salary from the state budget for more than 80,000 Imam, muezzins, and preachers. This paper, aimed to shed light on the nature of the movement, the environment which the movement grew, perspectives from those who consider the movement as a threat, and those who consider the movement as a contribution and an opportunity. There will be a special emphasis on the most recent claims of the “crisis in Turkey” and the role of the Gülen movement in regard to this crisis.

While recent Le Monde articles describe the movement as the largest Islamic movement in the world, Today's Zaman articles describe the movement as a great contributor to strengthening democracy in Turkey. Newsweek, Foreign Policy, and Middle East Forum in their most recent articles present the movement as a threat to Turkish secularism. This paper, after a thorough examination of these claims, will attempt to present a more balanced approach to the movement.

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Sarkar, D. See Reddy, A.K.

Sawai, Jiro – Tohoku University, Japan
 janberujan@yahoo.co.jp

THE "DIMENSION OF DEPTH" IN REINHOLD NIEBUHR AND PAUL TILlich

Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich were representative Christian theologians in U.S. in the 20th Century. It is well known that both of them were in close contact both publicly and personally. In this presentation, while dealing with the views of religion in the religious thoughts of Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, I attempt to analyze their interaction, especially focusing on the concept of "dimension of depth," which is one of the key terms of their religious thoughts. In his religious thought, Niebuhr began using this concept in order to describe the characteristic of religion in the mid-1930s, while Tillich also used this concept as an important term in his philosophy of religion. Therefore, it may be significant to demonstrate how they developed this concept respectively. Thus, I would like to clarify similarities and differences between these two theologians in the implication of this concept and then to examine their mutual connection in regard to this concept.

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Sawai, Makoto – Tohoku University, Japan
 makoto-s@sal.tohoku.ac.jp

THE CONCEPT "DĪN" AND ITS MEANING IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES: TOSHIHIKO IZUTSU'S QUR'ĀNIC INTERPRETATION

The aim of this paper is to clarify the characteristics of the Qur'ānic interpretation by Toshihiko Izutsu (1914–1993) and to consider the issues of textual and contextual translation in Religious Studies. In many works and translations of the Qur'ān, "dīn" is translated as "religion," which has been critically reconsidered in recent years. Focusing on "dīn" in the context of the Arabic language, Izutsu adopted the framework of Wilfred Cantwell Smith's *The Meaning and End of Religion* (1962).

In his book, Smith problematized and argued for the significance of the Western and Christian background of the term "religion." In this sense, he has been often regarded as a forerunner of scholarly criticism of such key concepts in religion. Given this point, it may be significant to investigate Izutsu's method of Qur'ānic interpretation and his treatment of "dīn."

In his linguistic approach, Izutsu shed light on the concept "dīn" semantically. His "semantic analysis" aims at depicting the Qur'ānic "horizon" by examining the relationship of key terms in the Qur'ān. He raised the usage of "dīn" both in "Jāhiliya" (pre-Qur'ān) literature and in the Qur'ānic texts. In his analysis with reference to Smith's work, Izutsu finds the transition from a "non-reified personal faith" to a "reified religion" in the historical development of the concept of "dīn."

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Sawai, Tsutomu – Kyoto University, Japan
 tsutomu.s@at4.ecs.kyoto-u.ac.jp

"HABITS OF THE HEART" IN SEKIMON-SHINGAKU: ISHIDA BAIGAN'S RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

The aim of this paper is to reconsider the philosophical reflection of Ishida Baigan (1685–1744), understanding it as being based on his own religious experience called "self-awakening" (kaigo), with main reference to Robert N. Bellah's theory of "habits of the heart." When he was still a child, Ishida Baigan, born in Kyoto, was sent out to an apprenticeship from a farm family to a merchant family. From the age of around 35, he spent years for the enlightenment while studying under Oguri Ryoun (1668–1729), who was familiar with Zen Buddhist thought. Baigan called the cultivation of human nature "knowing one's nature" (sei o shiru) with a Confucian concept of human nature (sei). By applying Bellah's concept as a method of my analysis, I would like to elucidate the structure of Baigan's philosophical speculation. On the basis of his "self-awakening," Baigan constructed his philosophical speculation while invoking Shinto, Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist thoughts. His speculation was theoretically characterized by such terms as "furugality" (kenyaku), the characteristics of which arose through his religious experience spontaneously. In short, this paper aims at clarifying the nature of Baigan's philosophical reflection, based upon his religious experience as "habits of the heart."

Sawai, Yoshitsugu – Tenri University, Japan
sawai-yt@sta.tenri-u.ac.jp

HINDU RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND DISCOURSE: VEDĀNTA PHILOSOPHY AS SCRIPTURAL HERMENEUTICS

In the Hindu religious tradition, Vedānta philosophy represents a philosophical reflection traditionally constructed through the interpretations of such scriptures as the Upanisads. The philosophical reflections of Vedānta philosophy, which were developed out of the religious experiences of Vedānta philosophers, cannot be separated from these experiences. Thus, among Vedānta philosophers, interpretations in regard to the meanings of scriptural passages are quite different; for example, from his advaita (non-dual) viewpoint, Śāṅkara interprets the same Upanisadic passages in ways quite different from the scriptural interpretations of Rāmānuja or Madhva. This fact suggests that Vedānta philosophical reflections are discourses of their metaphysical visions of their religious experiences. Thus, one may say that the scriptural interpretations of Upanisadic texts consist of a “creative reading” of the Upanisads. In this presentation, while paying attention to the depth of religious experiences, I would like to clarify the structure of philosophical reflection in such Vedānta philosophical traditions as Śāṅkara’s advaita Vedānta and Rāmānuja’s viśiṣṭādvaita (qualified non-dual) Vedānta.

Saxena, Neela Bhattacharya – Nassau Community
College Garden City, USA • saxenan@ncc.edu

NEITHER THEOS NOR LOGOS: INDIC MOTHER GOD BEYOND ‘ONTOTHEOLOGY’

The term plane of immanence has taken up quite a lot of philosophical space via Deleuze and more recently through Agamben’s commentaries that revive a Spinozan understanding of a divine reality that is deeply embedded in the world. Yet, since the ghostlike presence of the Name of the Father informs and influences most ideas in the western world, the gender implications of the idea of immanence which has traditionally been associated with Nature and the feminine from which the transcendental patriarchal God rescues the rational man, are never made quite clear. Notions of both Theos and Logos, at least in their exoteric presentation, imply a creator God, quite decidedly masculine and outside creation. India is probably the only civilization that resisted the one-sided theology of the Father God and retained multiple faces of the divine feminine in myriad manifestations; she who is at once immanent and transcendent cannot be contained within these binary categories; likewise philosophical musings on Being cannot hint at her presence as she is also absent from the frame of ontotheological discourse.

In this essay I present the Great Goddess of India as neither Theos nor Logos who upholds and nourishes women’s spiritual identity and severs with her sword all imaginary attachments to our phenomenal ego, opening us to the infinite potential and real possibility of a radical transformation. I invoke here the paradox of a so called “violent” Goddess to behold the reality of violence within and propose a difficult but real transformation of being that may be strategically utilized by women, feminists, and others who are committed to sustainable transformation and radical social justice.

Schäfer, Heinrich Wilhelm – University of Bielefeld,
Germany

HABITUS-ANALYSIS: HOW TO EXTRACT BASIC PATTERNS OF PRACTICAL LOGIC OUT OF DISCOURSE

Beyond structural, functional and rational action theories, the general social theory of Pierre Bourdieu – not so much his writings on religion itself – conveys a huge potential for understanding the specific dynamics of religious praxis within the context of society. The present paper will outline this potential focusing on the ‘triangulation’ of three models, one for qualitative analysis of habitus, the other two for the quantitative analysis of the religious field and the social space of religious styles. Thus, subjective habitus and practical logics (Verstehen, Weber) on the individual and collective level can be combined with the dynamics of functionally differentiated fields and the relations of inequality in the social space. The present paper is based upon 25 years empirical research and methodological as well as theoretical development of the praxeological approach. It sketches three important lines of research followed in Religious Studies at the University of Bielefeld in empirical studies on religious movements in Latin America (mostly Pentecostals) and religious peace-builders in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Scharbrodt, Oliver – University College Cork, Ireland
o.scharbrodt@ucc.ie

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN RESEARCHING ON A MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN EUROPE – THE CASE OF IRELAND

The Muslim population of Ireland has grown rapidly in the last twenty years reaching a number of more than 32,000, according to the 2006 national census, with current estimates suggesting a number of around 40,000. Muslims thereby constitute the largest non-Christian religious community in Ireland. Despite the rising numbers and an increased public profile, not much attention has been given to the Irish Muslim community in academic scholarship.

This paper serves as an opening to the panel on Islam in Ireland, introducing the Muslim community in Ireland in both historical and contemporary terms. It also addresses various methodological challenges and problems in academic research on Islam in Europe and problematises assumptions and research findings of other studies on Western European Muslim communities, using the Irish case as an example. Two elements of the Muslim experience in Ireland distinguish it from other European countries; one is the very recent nature of Muslim migration to Ireland which began in the 1950s but has only gained major momentum in the last 20 years. Hence, the vast majority of Muslims has only recently settled in Ireland. In addition, Ireland has not enjoyed historical or colonial links with particular countries or regions in the Muslim world. Therefore, Muslim immigration to Ireland has been extremely diverse and has not been dominated by Muslims from a particular ethnic or cultural background. While the first wave of Muslim migration to Ireland was constituted of Muslim students from South Africa and the Middle East, a recent rise of South Asian communities can be observed as well as an influx of refugees from former Yugoslavia and various Sub-Saharan African countries. Hence, the Muslim community in Ireland is not only one of the youngest but also one of the most diverse in Europe. The papers included in this panel address the consequences and repercussions of these particularities of Islam in Ireland both in terms of the internal dynamics of the Muslim community and its place within the broader socio-political and cultural context of contemporary Ireland and its very recent experience of religious pluralisation and multiculturalism.

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Schilbrack, Kevin – Western Carolina University, USA
 DO RELIGIONS INCLUDE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS?

Several scholars in the study of religions have argued that the concept of belief is problematic. One criticism is that “belief,” understood as an inner mental state, is private and therefore inaccessible to the scholar of religions. I have two goals in this paper. First, I aim at a minimum to introduce the current philosophical debates about the inaccessibility of belief to scholars of religion. Towards this end, my paper sorts the spectrum of contemporary philosophical positions on belief into what I see as three emblematic views: the first set of positions seeks to understand belief in terms of private or “inner” representations; the second set keeps the concept of belief but seeks to understand it as public or “outer” behavior; and the third eschews talk of belief altogether. My second goal is more constructive: I want to make a recommendation for an inclusive theoretical view that sees the value of all three positions. To make this case, I need to demonstrate the relevance and legitimacy of the representationalist view.

Schjødt, Uffe – Aarhus University, Denmark
 us@teo.au.dk

A SOCIAL COGNITIVE ACCOUNT OF CHARISMATIC AUTHORITY

In this paper, I present a recent neuroimaging study on charismatic authority. In many religious practices, it is not the direct relation between subject and supernatural entity which is the most central relation. In fact the majority of practices around the world are communal events, and in most instances, subjects participate as passive spectators or as recipients of actions performed by a religious authority. In such practices, it is the participants’ representation of the supernatural competencies entertained by priests, shamans, healers and witches that separate effective rituals from meaningless actions. In contemporary Christianity, this phenomenon is clearly exemplified in the context of the Charismatic healing practices. In the study, we used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to investigate how assumptions about speakers’ abilities changed the neural response in secular and Christian participants who received intercessory prayer. We found that recipients’ assumptions about senders’ charismatic abilities had important effects on their executive network. Most notably, the Christian participants deactivated the frontal network consisting of the medial and the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex bilaterally in response to speakers who they believed had healing abilities. An independent analysis across subjects revealed that this deactivation predicted the Christian participants’ subsequent ratings of the speakers’ charisma and experience of God’s presence during prayer. These observations point to an important mechanism of authority that may facilitate charismatic influence, a mechanism which is likely to be present in other interpersonal interactions as well.

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Schloss, Jeffrey P. – Westmont College, USA and
 St. Anne’s College, Oxford, UK

OXYTOCIN, RELIGIOUS BELIEF, AND HARD-TO-FAKE SIGNALS OF COMMITMENT

Although evolutionary accounts of religion are currently characterized by debates over whether religious belief is an adaptation or a spandrel (byproduct) of other selected traits, framing the question in this dichotomizes the issue in a way that overlooks a) the possibility that religious dispositions may have arisen as spandrels but have been exapted under certain conditions and b) the important issue of identifying which (frequency dependent) conditions might confer adaptive or non-adaptive to religion. Two current proposals for the adaptive function of religion in fostering cooperation involve religious beliefs as supernatural sanctions and religious practices as costly signals.

Both proposals are amenable to (but have not been employed in) frequency dependent analysis. However, neither engages the crucial issue of religious experience or attribution of the sacred, and both can be shown to generate the kinds of defection they are suggested to solve, thus resulted in an “evolutionary arms race” of measures and counter-measures. We propose that religious belief and practice do in fact function adaptively as cognized sanctions and visible signals – but do so effectively in virtue of their genuine internalization via autonomically-mediated affect and attendant commitment. Manifest types of religious experience – like laughter and other types of semi-involuntary human responses – may function not as costly, but as “hard-to-fake,” reliable indicators of interiority or dispositional intent. Moreover, if mediated by oxytocin, this would help account for the observed impacts on both trust and well-being. We present preliminary data suggesting that both religious involvement and laughter are concordant with this proposal.

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Schmidt, Bettina – Bangor University, UK
 b.schmidt@bangor.ac.uk

SPirit POSSESSION AND TRANCE IN AFRO-AMERICAN RELIGIONS: DIFFERENT STATES OR ONE CONDITION?

Spirit possession, the core religious practise in most Afro-American religions, is usually described as ‘mounting’; the spirit ‘rides’ the body of the devotee as a horseman a horse. The spirits takes control over the body of the medium and ‘uses’ the human medium. Generally, the person is regarded as passive and submissive while the spirit is seen as the active, dominant one. However, as others have already pointed out before, the possessed body should not be viewed as passive victims. This paper looks at the body of a possessed human in relation to ‘control’, control over the body as well as control of the spirits. Starting point will be the gender connotation of the possessing as well as the possessed agent. During spirit possession, the relationship between medium and spirit is often described in gender terms: the human medium takes the ‘feminine’ role while the spirit is the ‘male’ counterpart. This characterization plays with the implication that the male role during intercourse is ‘active’ while women are ‘passive’ recipients. The gender metaphors, however, describe only the power relation between the two agencies involved and not the actual sex of the entities, human or spirit. When a human man becomes possessed, his role will be described as ‘female’ while spirits who are usually characterised as either ‘male’ or ‘female’ gain always a ‘male’ role as possessing agent. This discussion about the relationship between

possessing and possessed agencies has further significance for the academic debate because it will be used as a critique against the academic division between trance and spirit possession. While scholars have used the degree of control over the body and control of the spirits as a way to distinguish between trance and spirit possession, recent studies have shown a wide range of variations and interconnections between the two (academically divided) states. Instead of differentiating between degrees of trance possession the paper argues to bring both conditions together in order to deepen our understanding of what is going on in the body.

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Schmidt, Gilya – University of Tennessee, USA
 gschmidt@utk.edu

SUEZZA – NO GRAZING LAND FOR JEWS

Economics are far from neutral. In the Middle Ages in Germany, most professions established guilds that required being Christian as the most important criteria. Hence Jews, who lived in German lands as subjects since the second century CE, were excluded from almost all ways of earning a living. Exceptions were money-lending, cattle dealing, peddling, and later weaving. Economics, tied intimately to the state religion, discriminated on the basis of the religion of the residents. In 1806 guilds were abolished in the newly minted kingdom of Wuerttemberg, so that Jews, though still not citizens, could finally learn one of the professions of the average burgher. This was encouraged by the government, who again singled out the subjects of the Jewish faith who were living in the kingdom by insisting that they give up demeaning professions such as peddling and take on middle-class employment. Germans of the Christian faith were not required to make such changes in their lives. Those who used to peddle tried to scratch together enough money to open a store with their wares, and cattle dealing became even more attractive in rural areas where it was difficult to find work for anyone who was not a farmer and not Christian. Jews could not own land, hence could not be farmers, so it is not surprising that horse and cattle dealing presented a natural complement. Although the competition for territory between Christian and Jewish cattle dealers was strong, there was also much cooperation between representatives of these two groups. They helped each other with their businesses, and their religious differences were forgotten. During the nineteen twenties elaborate governmental oversight created numerous rules for running a cattle business, and specifically, for keeping meticulous books. The correspondence concerning these rules still exists. This paper will explore how the Jews of Suessen – a village in southern Germany east of Stuttgart, managed to operate a sizeable horse and cattle business from 1902 to their deportation in 1941.

Because of their religion (although the Nazis called it their race) Jews were gradually eliminated from the German economy after 1933. Such was the fate of the Lang family, subject of a book-length study I am conducting, whose cattle dealership was closed down on July 1, 1938. Thereafter they continued to clandestinely keep two more cows until their deportation in November 1941. After the end of World War II, a Christian family filled the void and began a cattle-dealership in the town that exists to this day.

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Schoener, Gustav-Adolf – Leibniz University of
Hannover, Germany · gaschoener@t-online.de

THE HUMAN BEING AND SOCIETY IN THE MIRROR OF THE DIVINE PLANETS

The “western” astrology is an esoteric discipline that has its origins in the context of antique oriental polytheism. In the 8th and 9th century Islamic scholars created from this tradition a particular shape to this tradition through an astrological interpretation of history which was taken up and transformed by Christian scholars in the 12th century. In particular, the followers of the Reformation made use of the astrological interpretation of history. They saw a cosmic legitimization in it to their political and religious purposes. The opponents, on the contrary, used the same astrology to declare the Reformation as heresy. In the Theosophical Society and other esoteric circles the astrology arose again, yet outside traditional Christianity and beyond natural-scientific interests. Thus today astrology has got individual and psychological-esoteric aims. In the perspective of religious studies astrology is an independent field in the context of religions against a natural-religious background. Although there is a traditional line from Mesopotamian origins to Europe its doctrine is neither geographically nor culturally determined but it switch’ between antique polytheisms and monotheisms such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam – on the one hand took up, on the other hand rejected. Astrology serves in any case to underline religious and social identity or the difference from it. Since the 19th century astrology has become an independent discipline outside the frame of traditional religions, but in loose connection with other esoteric disciplines. In my lecture I intend to draw the attention to three important steps in the development of “western” astrology: 1. Astrology in Sumerian and Babylonian society as self-assurance for social conditions and developments. 2. Astrology in Early Modern Times as self-assurance for the confessional position of one’s own group and its distinction from the “false” Christian (and other religious) positions. 3. Astrology in modern times (since the 19th century) as a psychological self-assurance for the individual in the context of the “reenchantment” of the world.

Schonhoffer, T. Nicholas – University of Toronto,
Canada · nicholas.schonhoffer@gmail.com

THOMAS’ KINGDOM: REEMPLACEMENT INTO THIRD SPACE

The Kingdom is a central concept in the Gospel of Thomas. Scholarly treatments that naturalize the religious discussion of other-worldly kingdoms often overlook the extent to which Thomas is situated within a tradition highly focused on the discussion of actual political spaces. In a partial break from this tradition, Thomas’ Kingdom does not belong to the world’s current rulers, nor does the Kingdom obviously manifest in the world, which is a corpse. Nonetheless, this Kingdom still remains spread out on the world, hidden within the greater decay, but able to be found by the wise person. This paper will use the spatial theories of Jonathan Z. Smith and Homi Bhabha to redescribe the location of Thomas’ Kingdom in terms of its political motivations and implications. Smith has proposed a model for the movement from religions of “there” to religions of “anywhere” in late antiquity. This model provides the basis for situating Thomas’ reemplacement of the Kingdom from a well defined site of political praxis to something dispersed and hidden. Further, a playful adaptation of the relationship that Homi Bhabha creates between Third Space and Hybridity will be used to supplement and expand Smith’s model. Thomas’ reemplacement of the Kingdom simultaneously denies the Kingdom’s legitimacy to the current world rulers, while also moving the Kingdom out of a space where it would be in direct conflict with these rulers; thus creating a space for living in the Roman Empire without surrendering attachments to older cultural traditions.

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Schrimpf, Monika – University of Bayreuth, Germany
monika.schrimpf@uni-bayreuth.de

THE MAGIC OF CONTEMPORARY RELIGIONS IN JAPAN – SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE USE OF THE TERM ‘MAGIC’ IN JAPAN

In my paper I want to reflect upon the Japanese academic discussion of magic as a feature of contemporary religious life in Japan. Especially scholars of New Religions comparatively often describe or explain the significance of magical practices in these religions. This observation stands in contrast to research on New Religious Movements in Europe or the US in which the notion of ‘magic’ is largely absent. By applying the notion of magic to characterise New Religions, they are situated in the religious field by drawing borders to non-magical religious communities, networks or trends. One intention of my paper is to reconstruct the borders and contra images implied in the present use of the term ‘magic’.

Besides, I will discuss a recent research project in which representatives of various Japanese universities investigated the “significance and function” of magic in contemporary Japanese society. How does the definition of magic, as well as the underlying interest of this study affect the researchers’ typology or categorisation of contemporary religious life? In sum, my paper will describe academic notions of ‘magic’ in Japanese research on contemporary religions; discuss the impact of this research perspective on structuring the field of religions; and explain the popularity of this approach by turning to the history of the study of religions in Japan.

Schrimpf, Monika – University of Bayreuth ,
Germany · monika.schrimpf@uni-bayreuth.de

REFLECTIONS ON THE AMBIGUITY OF NOTIONS OF SELF AND SELF-IMPROVEMENT IN JAPANESE NEW RELIGIONS

My paper deals with the question why Japanese new religions can be viewed as sharing some of the universal characteristics assigned to so called New Religious Movements or ‘the New Age Movement, while at the same time they are clearly situated in the religious traditions of Japan or East Asia. Why is it that Japanese new religions are dealt with as a local manifestation of the global phenomenon of New Religious Movements, and as a unique development in Japanese religious history? Religious activities focusing on the individual and its well-being such as counselling, healing or re-narrating life histories put Japanese new religions in line with other NRM. Yet I argue that these practices and their underlying concepts often have an ambiguous character that allows for diverse interpretations. By picking up notions of self and self-improvement in the new religions Perfect Liberty Kyodan and Shinnyo-en I illustrate ways in which this ambiguity is constituted. One strategy is the deliberate use of terminology that can connect to different religious semantics: to historical concepts of self-cultivation in Japan, as well as to ‘modern’ and universal notions of self-empowerment. By analysing concrete examples of supposedly universal new religious practices in their local context, I want to re-formulate the question “Is there a global culture of contemporary religious movements?” as “What are the means by which contemporary religious movements connect to local and global contexts?”

Schroeder, Anna-Konstanze – Universitaet
Greifswald/Universitaet Leipzig

WITHOUT COMPROMISE AND REDUCTION?! anna-k.schroeder@uni-greifswald.de

How is it possible for a psychologist of religion to stick to a psychologist’s view – to explain what psychologists can explain – but to take into account sociological and cultural and whatever perspectives?

Drawing on the example of conversion theories the relationship between sociological und psychological perspectives in the study of religion is discussed. Sometimes scientists explain conversion solely either from a psychological or a sociological view. More often you can find sociologist explain the phenomenon in a reductionst manner by refering to psychological theories; and vice versa. Integrative perspectives can be identified in convert-religion-fit-models – which often do not fit for empirical data – and in process models – which are mere heuristical descriptions than refutable theories. The viability of the Multi-Level Interdisciplinary Paradigm (Paloutzian and Park, 2005) is discussed in the context of research on conversion.

Schueler, Sebastian – University of Muenster,
Germany · sebastianschueler@gmx.de

MIND THE BODY! – RITUAL SYNCHRONIZATION AND THE EMBODIMENT OF THE SACRED

Recent theorizing in the evolutionary and cognitive study of religion has reduced religion to merely mental representations whereas the body’s role in religion was neglected by and large. For evolutionary psychologists of religion cognitive processes were shaped by embodied adaptations only during the Stone Age. In my presentation I will critically examine those entirely naturalistic assumptions on religion and ask how embodiment is understood under these conditions. Furthermore, I will introduce alternative approaches from social and embodied cognition which see embodiment as an ongoing, fluid and dynamical process that constantly shapes and incorporates the social and cultural environment. Under this perspective embodiment and its underlying cognitive processes play a vital role in religious behavior such as religious rituals. Ritual synchronization, I will hypothesize, is a dynamic bio-social process through which collective representations of the “sacred” become embodied.

Scott, Rachelle – University of Tennessee, USA
rscott@utk.edu

GODDESS, SPIRIT, OR PEASANT GIRL?: THE CURIOUS CASE OF NANG KWAK

The story of Nang Kwak is becoming increasingly popular in Thailand. Statues and figurines of Nang Kwak, with her beckoning hand gesture and beautiful Thai clothing, can be found in businesses, restaurants, markets, and Buddhist temples throughout the country. My paper will examine several different versions of the story of Nang Kwak, from its purported origins in the Hindu epic, the Ramayana, to the tale of a generous girl during the life of the Buddha.

My paper will argue that despite the contested origins and content of the Nang Kwak story there is remarkable uniformity in the association of Nang Kwak with the acquisition of wealth, power, and personal success. This association explains her current popularity in contemporary Thailand, which has seen the emergence of many “cults of prosperity” during an era of unprecedented economic growth. My paper will also explore how the various stories of Nang Kwak reflect different aspects of contemporary Thai religion, from the continued significance of Buddhist goddesses and female spirits (including Mae Thorani, Mae Pasop, and Mae Takien) to the myriad forms of “this-worldly” religiosity that promise a range of practical benefits, such as financial success, happiness, and beauty. The “cult of Nang Kwak” offers new insights into the role of powerful goddesses and female spirits in Thai Buddhism and the diversity of Thai Buddhist practice.

Sered, Susan – Suffolk University, US
 Assered@suffolk.edu

WHOSE HIGHER POWER? CRIMINALIZED WOMEN CONFRONT THE “TWELVE STEPS”

Criminalized women in the United States are heavily recruited by Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotic Anonymous. Twelve Step meetings are held in rehabilitation and detoxification programs and inside prisons; Courts often mandate Twelve Step participation for parolees; and criminalized women may need to show proof of attending Twelve Step meetings in order to regain custody of their children. Notwithstanding claims made by Twelve Step leaders and by some representatives of the U.S. correctional system, Twelve Step programs are religious in nature. Meetings incorporate rituals, liturgy, spirituality, ethical teachings, ideas regarding the ‘ultimate conditions of existence,’ a path to redemption, and a language for talking about transcendence (“Higher Power”). With few exceptions, there has been little research into the significance of an essentially religious program having become mainstream and even mandated within the U.S. correctional system. What little research has been done focuses on men: Historically, Alcoholics Anonymous was founded by men, for men. Still today, men greatly outnumber women at most AA and NA meetings. For the past two years we have been conducting fieldwork with a community of criminalized women in Massachusetts. This paper explores how these women make sense of Twelve Step programs: what they embrace, what they reject, what they ignore, and what they re-interpret. What does it mean for women who have experienced extensive physical and sexual violence (the norm for incarcerated U.S. women) to be asked to turn themselves over to one’s “Higher Power”?

What are the broader social implications for women to be mandated by the Courts to participate in a male-oriented religious practice in order, ostensibly, to be cured? Our hope is that this paper will contribute to scholarly discussions of religion and the law as well as to feminist theological theory.

Serikov, Vladislav – Goethe University, Germany
 vladserikov@hotmail.com

TOWARDS METALANGUAGE IN PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION

Phenomenology of religion had its ups and downs and is today clearly out of fashion in Europe and elsewhere, being largely replaced with cultural anthropology of religion. However there are some prominent voices who try to transform the old style phenomenology of Otto and Eliade, combining it with historicism (Dhavamony, Smart) and reflective hermeneutics (Colpe, Goldammer, Lanczkowski, Waardenburg). Some twenty years ago Carsten Colpe saw one big challenge for phenomenology in developing its own technical descriptive metalanguage – a language different from the object languages of particular religions. The challenge is important for both theoretical and practical reasons. How can we compare theoretically different religious concepts intraculturally, across ages and epoches and across cultures? And how can we practically tell people with different cultural backgrounds of remote and alien concepts in such a way that a mutual understanding and respect be made possible (e.g., try to compare nirvana and salvation, ishvara and God, or ishta devata and angel). This paper tries to address the issue with the metalanguage in the phenomenology of religion. The metalanguage should be able to adequately reflect the following features of religious phenomena: their universality (Otto, Eliade, Mensching), their empirical and historical character (Bianchi, Dhavamony, Smart, W.C.Smith), their subjective intentional character (Waardenburg). The metalanguage concepts should be built from universally understandable concepts, that are intuitively comprehended by all speakers (1: requirement of universality), it should be able to adequately interpret temporally and culturally local concepts using these universal concepts (2: requirement of historicity), it should be able to semantically explicate the subjective intentional experiential character of religious concepts using these universal concepts (3: requirement of retaining of subjective intentionality), so that it be possible to test the explication empirically against the intuitions of insiders and/or insider experts (e.g., theologians) dealing professionally with the past traditions (4: requirement of adequacy to insider perspective).

As a first step I introduce the natural semantic metalanguage (NSM) worked out by Anna Wierzbicka (Canberra University) and her colleagues. Secondly, I take some examples from Wierzbicka's recent work on Christian concepts, and make some explications of religious concepts from religious traditions of South Asia. Finally, I make some suggestions on what concepts should be part of the metalanguage of the phenomenology of religion. Colpe, C.: *Zur Neubegründung einer Phänomenologie der religionen und der Religion*. In: Zinser, H. (Hg.): *Religionswissenschaft. Eine Einführung*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag 1988, 131–154. Wierzbicka, A.: *Semantics. Primes and Universals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996. Wierzbicka, A.: *What Did Jesus Mean? Explaining the Sermon on the Mount and the Parables in Simple and Universal Human Concepts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001.

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Shahram, Nahidi – see *Gubbay Helfner, Sharon*

Shanneik, Yafa – University College Cork, Ireland
 y.shanneik@ucc.ie

'WHITE MUSLIMS' IN IRELAND: CONSTRUCTING AND RECONSTRUCTING WOMEN CONVERTS' IDENTITIES

There has been an increasing interest in the presence of Muslims in Europe and a significant political, social and cultural engagement with identity issues of Muslims who struggle over the preservation and protection of their religious identity in a European secular space. This engagement has been concerned with Muslim migrants and their children primarily. However, Muslim presence in Europe is also manifest in a growing number of European converts, especially women. This paper will look at Irish and other European women living in Ireland who converted to Islam in the last twenty years. The process of identity construction and reconstruction, the framing of one's identification in order to fit into a specific group and to have a sense of belonging are not only concerns of Muslim migrants and their children but also central to European converts to Islam, as the Irish case will illustrate. Since the 'Celtic Tiger' years Ireland has attracted a large number of Eastern European migrants, in particular from Poland and the Baltic states such as Lithuania. This paper will look at Irish and Eastern European women converts to Islam since one has been noticing an increasing number of converts from Eastern European countries. What are the reasons for born Irish Catholic women to convert to Islam? Why do Eastern European migrant women convert to a religion they have hardly heard of before? What are the different stages of the converts' identity crisis and do they find a solution in adopting a specific kind of Islam? What kind of Islam do

these converts affiliate to? Can one talk about a particular understanding of Islam being dominant among converts in Ireland? Based on several interviews with female converts in different Irish cities, including Dublin and Cork, this paper will engage with these questions.

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Shantz, Colleen – University of St. Michael's College, Canada

ECSTATIC MINDS

One of the distinctive characteristics of the formative period of Christianity is the significance of ecstatic religious practices. Some of the surviving descriptions these practices are difficult to interpret; furthermore, many explanations have ignored the physical phenomena of the experiences, relying on solely on textual evidence and genealogical explanations.

In keeping with the twofold focus of this session, this paper discusses first how recent studies of brain functioning during altered states of consciousness and religiously construed events shed light on this aspect of early Christianity. Studies of the brain and cognition provide a degree of insight into ancient minds without recourse to strained appeals to cultural influence. Second, the paper suggests that these early Christian groups offer historians compelling case studies of non-elite religion and some of the social contexts that are hospitable to ecstatic worship.

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Sharma, Anita – University of Delhi, India

BUDDHIST ECONOMICS IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN LIFE

This paper is intended as an overview of early Indian Buddhist attitudes towards wealth. Buddhist economy in the context of the environmental crisis will be discussed. Air, soil, and water pollution are the result of modernization and industrialization. This paper will deal with the ways to solve these problems by implementing Buddhist economic principles.

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Sharma, Sanchita – University Kanpur

THE CONCEPT OF KARMA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Karma is one of those words which we do not translate; It's basic meaning is simple enough – action – but because of the weight. The teachings of Buddhism say that Karma is a role of actions. Sanskrit word "Karma" implies with past deeds and English word action. Thus due to its diversified implications, the religions have simply airlifted the original word into their own vocabulary.

When we try to unpack the connotation, the word carries now that it has arrived in every day usage; we find that most of its luggage has got mixed up in transit. According to the western Philosophers, “Karma” functions like fate – bad fate, at that an explicable, unchangeable force coming out of our fast for which we are some how vaguely responsible and powerless to fight. I have heard people sigh when bad fortunes with such force that they see no alternative than to resigned acceptance. The fatalism implicit in this statement is one reason why so many of us are repelled by the concept of Karma, for it sounds like the kind of callous myth-making that can justify almost any kind of suffering or injustice in the status-quo. Hinayan’s believes, “Karma” was non-linear, other Indian school of Philosophy believed that Karma operated in a straight line with actions for the past influencing the present and present influencing the future as a result they saw little room for free will. West school had to say that karma is sometimes a casual process of input and output which is being shaped both by past and present. This constant opening of past and present deeds makes free will possible. Instead of promoting resigned powerlessness, the early Buddhist notion of Karma focus on the liberating potential of what the mind is doing every moment. The believe that one’s dignity is measured not by one’s past but by one’s present action as in Buddhism, weere – as in western and other Indian Philosophies – dignity is measured by Heritage and Socio-economic background. Thus Karma, far from being a quaint relic from past, a direct challenge to basic thrust and basic flaw in our culture.

Sheedy, Matt – University of Manitoba, Canada
matt_sheedy@umanitoba.ca

“BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE: THE PROBLEM OF ETHICS IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION”

My paper will explore what role ethics might play in debates over method and theory in the study of religion. Looking at two critical theorists, Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida, I aim to justify my appropriation of their work within the discipline and to demonstrate the value of such work for debates within the field. Following Habermas’s theory of knowledge and human interests, where the former is seen as not merely contingent on the instrumental application of knowledge but also on modes of human understanding and the maximization of freedom from oppression, I argue that his discourse ethics, as a normative framework for deliberation, has value as a model for debating the legitimacy of various methods and theories in the study of religion, a ground upon which it is necessary to forge greater unity in the field.

Furthermore, and more controversially, I argue that Derrida’s ontological philosophy (in particular his later work on ethics and politics) is neither obscurantist nor a form of crypto-theology (as some have claimed), but rather a critical analysis on how relations of power, whether reflecting on questions of religion, technology, or sovereignty, undermine the very prospects for a rational discourse. In this way, critical theory is not a form of “humanism” or theology in secular robes, nor a mode of deconstruction leading to some “postmodern” uncertainty or relativism, but rather a necessary procedure of evaluation so that a rational reconstruction of method and theory can build itself on firmer foundations.

Sheriff, Vaffi. F. – Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Nigeria

THE ROLE OF FEMALE MUSLIM SCHOLARS IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE (A CASE STUDY OF NANA ASMAU)

The development of Islamic scholarship cannot be complete without underscoring the gigantic roles played by female scholars both in the early and present days. Of significance however, is the foundation laid by earlier female Muslim scholars to the advancement of Islamic scholarship. What is often ignored is their contribution in arts, humanities, social sciences and even the natural sciences. This paper attempts to survey their “marginalised” contributions with a view to articulating its relevance to modern day Islamic scholarship. Importantly, it will also outline their modelling roles on future women scholars in Islam. The paper will conclude by examining ways of constantly making their contribution relevant to the development of a balanced Islamic society.

Shigenori, Terazawa – Hokkaido University, Japan
shterazawa@yahoo.co.jp

RELIGION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL IN MODERN JAPAN ? FROM THE ANALYSIS OF WORLD VALUES SURVEY?

The purpose of my presentation is to examine the influence of religion on social capital in modern Japan. Recently, some researchers in Japan are interested in whether or not religions in Japan function as social capital. However, most of their researches are case studies based on qualitative research. In my presentation I analyze the data of World Values Survey 4th Wave. I analyze the effects of “frequency of religious attendance” and “spent time with people at religious groups” on the membership in Non-Religious-Voluntary-Organization, civic attitude and political activism.

The study of Norris and Inglehart is referenced in my analysis. My findings are as follows.(1) While the effects of “frequency of religious attendance” were weak, that of “spent time with people at religious groups”are strong.(2) Religion has effects on the membership in Non-Religious-Voluntary-Organization, especially has a strong effect on the membership in political group and peace movement.(3)As for civic attitude, religion has effects on political interest, the frequency of political discussion, general trust, institutional confidence and political position.(4)Religion has no effects on political activism. Based on these results, I consider following two points.(1)Religion's effects are restricted to specific domains of membership in institutions(political groups and peace movement)(2)While religion promotes social attitudes, it does not promote political actions.

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Shimazono, Susumu – The University of Tokyo,
Japan · s-siso@mbd.ocn.ne.jp

RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN JAPAN

Japanese Association of Religious Studies have more than two thousand members. The number of the members is fairly big compared with many of the other countries except for the United States. But there are not many departments of religious studies in the universities in Jpan. There are less than ten universities which have the department of religious studies. In spite of this fact many scholars have been joining JARS because of several reasons. First, scholars are acutely aware that there are religious diversity in Japan and that people want to know about various religions at the same time as about a particular religion. Second, scholars are very often conscious that they need some comparative perspective because of the strong influence of Western scholarship in religions. Thus religious studies in Japan reflect the diversity of religious and academic traditions and have been playing the role of mediating various cultural traditions and academic disciplines.

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Shimoda, Masahiro – The University of Tokyo, Japan
shimoda@l.u-tokyo.ac.jp

THE HISTORY OF BUDDHISM AS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT: THE CHANGING POSSIBILITIES OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Most of the traditional historical studies of scriptures have consisted of attempts to trace the transition of the contents of scriptures, with relatively little attention being paid to the changes in media and technologies through which scriptural content has been transmitted. However, media and technologies exercise a predominating influence on both the form and content of scriptural transmissions.

And since the development of technologies is never-ending, scriptures cannot but continue to transform along with technological developments. Linked to the changes of technologies and media in the succession of traditions, those religions that are scripturally-based have undergone at least three major transitions from ancient times until today. First was the transition from memory to transcription using alphabets and characters; second was the mass-duplication or documentation of copied materials based on the development of printing, using woodblocks and types; third is the digitization of scriptures based on the permeation of personal computers and the Internet. Nowadays, the scriptures, commentaries, and other related documents of various religions are being converted to digital data. This brings a dramatic change to the forms of accumulating, delivering, and exchanging scriptural knowledge. The various problems that arise due to the conversion of media from written documents to digital data in building and exchanging knowledge offer an unprecedented challenge to academics. This conversion implies the possibility – or perhaps necessity – of making drastic changes in academic research methods. This presentation first reviews the history of the formation of the Buddhist scriptures from the perspective of media transformation. It then examines the significance of the Buddhist scripture corpus that became the corpus known as the “Taisho Shinshu Daizokyo” created in modern Japan. Finally, it looks at the future of the meanings of scriptures that are changing in the process of digitization and of being moved to the Internet. The attempt to look at Buddhist history from the perspective of media development will indicate new possibilities within religious studies, while setting out a path toward the future of humanities.

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Shukla, Renu – Kanya Gurukul P. G. College, India
renu_s_1970@yahoo.co.in

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

THE PROBLEM OF DATING: A STUDY OF MILINDAPAÑHA

Milindapañha, which is preserved in the Pali language, is considered as the most important non canonical work of the Theravada and has received a warm welcome from the academic circle as well. To reconstruct the historical context surrounding the composition of the Milindapañha it becomes necessary to examine its date of composition which is uncertain but we can draw some conclusion with the help of internal and external evidences. The Paper intends to find out a solution of the problem of dating of the prominent Buddhist text.

On the strength of numerous internal and external evidences it seems that the book is written to answer the questions of the people and to serve as a propaganda text for the conversion of the Greeks in North West India. The choice of Milinda (corroborated with Greek invader Menander) as one of its characters, and the story of his conversion and attaining 'arhatship' proves that the text is composed after but not long after his death. Many evidences indicate towards the emergence of Sarvastivadin ideology. Many controversies regarding the teachings of Buddha can be seen in various references found almost everywhere in the book. Questions and answers regarding the teachings of Buddha and Buddhist philosophy shows that the work was written at the time when Buddhism was passing through a crucial time. On the basis of these arguments we feel that the date of the composition of Milindapañha can be traced in between during the later half of the first century BCE to the beginning of the first century CE.

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Siddiquee, Abdur Rahman – University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh

RELIGIO-SPIRITUAL CHANGES AND ITS REFLECTION ON SOCIAL LIFE: AN OBSERVATION ON THE ORAONS OF BANGLADESH

The objective of this article is to portray the religious changes and its reflections on the social life of the Oraon community in Bangladesh. The ancestors of these Oraon left their home in east-central India (Chhota Nagpur, *etc.*) and settled in the Northern plains of Bangladesh by the early decades of 20th century. Being in a different geo-physical environment and a new social settings some notable changes have undergone in the religious beliefs, rights and ceremonies of the Oraons of the recent generations. They have given up many of their traditional rights and ceremonies like Sarhul, Hariari, *etc.* Similarly some social organizations like the Dhumkuria have disappeared from the scene. Many of them have been converted to Christianity and developed a different way of life. Although they don't like to be converted to Islam, they have day to day contact with Muslim neighbors, employers and co-workers, *etc.* This has got reflection on their social life. Moreover, they are assimilating many aspects of Hindu Society and culture around. Hence, it goes beyond saying that, some vital changes have already occurred in their religious arena and that resulted in their social transformation interesting enough for Anthropologists and Sociologists. To understand the width and breadth of such changes, data from selected Oraon localities have been collected and analyzed in due manner for this paper.

Sierra Carrillo, Dora – Dirección de Etnohistoria, INAH, México · dora_sierra@inah.gob.mx

PLANTAS ALUCINÓGENAS Y SACRIFICIO HUMANO EN MESOAMÉRICA

El interés por el estudio de las plantas y los hongos alucinógenos, en el pasado y en el presente, se basa en la amplitud de sus implicaciones en el ámbito biológico y cultural de las sociedades que los consumen. En México, el uso ritual y terapéutico de estos psicotrópicos es un punto de anclaje de la cultura mesoamericana que se niega a morir, de ahí que haya trascendido en el tiempo hasta llegar al siglo XXI.

Los registros que hicieron los cronistas sobre esta cuestión, su alusión en los códices, en las pinturas murales y las evidencias arqueológicas, muestran la enorme importancia que tuvieron los alucinógenos en la cosmovisión y en la intensa religiosidad de los habitantes del México antiguo.

El sacrificio humano fue una de las expresiones más impactantes de estos pueblos, su profunda preocupación por conocer los designios divinos, por halagar, ofrendar y nutrir a los dioses con la sangre vertida en este tipo de muertes rituales, se vio reflejada en una serie de abrumadoras ceremonias y rituales según la deidad a la que se ofrecían.

En los participantes en estos actos se observaban estados alterados de conciencia, de trance. Estrechamente vinculados a estas celebraciones estuvo el uso de psicotrópicos.

Basándome en los estudios farmacológicos actuales sobre las sustancias que contienen los alucinógenos y sus efectos en el organismo humano y en los testimonios de los grupos indígenas contemporáneos de nuestro país, propongo el uso de determinados alucinógenos en los asistentes a los rituales del sacrificio humano en Mesoamérica.

HALLUCINOGENIC PLANTS AND HUMAN SACRIFICE IN MESOAMERICA

The interest by the hallucinogenic study of the plants and sacred mushroom, on the past and the present, is based on the amplitude of its implications in the biological and cultural scope of the societies consumes that them. In Mexico, the ritual and therapeutic use of these psychotropic is a point of anchorage of the Mesoamerican culture that refuses to die, for that reason it has extended in the time until arriving at the 21st century.

The registries that made the chronicler on this question, its reference in the codices, paintings murals and the archaeological evidences, show the enormous importance that had hallucinogens in the cosmovision and the intense religiousness of the inhabitants of old Mexico.

The human sacrifice was one of the most impressive expressions of these towns, its deep preoccupation to know the aims divine, to flatter, to offering and to nourish to the Gods with the blood spilled in this type of ritual deaths, was reflected in a series of overwhelming ceremonies and rituals according to the deity to which they were offered.

In the participants of these acts one observed faded states of conscience, of trance. Closely related to these conclusions it was the use of psychotropic.

By basing me current pharmacological studies on the substances which contain the hallucinogens and his effects in human organism and on testimonies of the contemporary indigenous groups of our country, I propose the use of given hallucinogens to the collaborators with the ceremonials of the human sacrifice in Mesoamérica.

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Silva, Francisco Santos – Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal · francisco.silva@gmail.com

CROWLEY AND THE UNCONSCIOUS

In Aleister Crowley's 1903 edition of the Goetia: The Lesser Key of Solomon the King, he prefaces the text with an essay entitled The Initiated Interpretation of Ceremonial Magic. Here Crowley defends what would have been, at the time he was writing, a controversial theory on the existence of Magical beings; controversial, at least, to an audience of fellow Ceremonial magicians. In this essay, Crowley detaches the existence or non-existence of supernatural beings from the effectiveness of magic by using notions of the unconscious which were cutting edge at the time of writing. Crowley is one of the first to put forward the idea that ritual magic might not work as stated in the ritual but on a non-conscious level. When talking about a ritual on the invocation of Cimieries, a spirit which is purported to teach logic, Crowley says: Those portions of my brain which subserve the logical faculty may be stimulated and developed by following the processes called "The Invocation of Cimieries" [Crowley 1997: 17]. In this essay, Crowley goes as far as presenting a psychological theory for the workings of the "names of God" in the psyche, as vibrations used to focus certain parts of the brain. Crowley also justifies ritual implements from Ceremonial Magic in terms of their effects on the psyche of the magician, stating that the use of perfumes is also an aid to psychological action. As such, Crowley comes to the conclusion that: There is no effect which is truly and necessarily miraculous [Crowley 1997:18]. This essay is, therefore, a prime example of an attempt to reconcile science and magic in the occultist revival of the late 19th and early 20th century. Through the title of the essay, Crowley states that this is the "initiated interpretation",

leading the reader to think that this is what a truly enlightened magician believes. While this would be an exaggerated statement both then and now, it shows how there was a necessity in the ceremonial magic milieu to find a scientific respectability to the rituals performed. This essay was written in 1903, four years after Freud's Interpretation of Dreams. Much as Freud suggests that dreams might be a door to the understanding of the unconscious mind, Crowley suggests ritual magic as a way of harnessing the power of that unconscious. I will aim in this presentation to present parallels between the current psychological theories in 1903 and Crowley's view of the unconscious mind.

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Singh, Asha – Ranchi University, India
prof.ashasingh@rediffmail.com

RELIGIOUS TRAITS OF TRIBES OF INDIA – A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY IN VEDIC AND POST VEDIC INDIA

From the very ancient period, tribals have been an integral part of Indian Civilization. In the ancient epic literatures, the Vedas, The Purans, The Ramayana, and Mahabharata, a lot of description about tribes of India is found. From the ancient period, the tribes use to worship all prominent Hindu God and Goddesses. In ancient Vedic and post Vedic period the tribal religion was described as animistic. The tribal world of ancient India believed in the existence of supernatural powers. They believed that Supreme Being or Sing Bonga or the God or Dharmesh is the creator of the earth and of the man kind. Myths and popular Legends of tribal world have a wider impact on the religious traits of tribes of India. The Myths and Legends for the tribes are like the Vedas and Purans for the Hindus. The present paper discusses the following issues and themes – 1) A portrayal of ancient Vedic and post Vedic Indian civilization 2) Impact of Aryan civilization on the religious life of tribes of India 3) Salient features of religious life of tribal society in ancient India. 4) Popular Myths and Legends of tribal people in vedic and post vedic ancient India. 5) Result findings 6) Conclusion

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Singh, Arora Daljeet – Black Minority Ethnic Community Organisations Network, UK

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

NOTION OF RELIGION AND JUSTICE IN A SIKH VILLAGE

Anthropology's interest in religion emerges from its quest to find meaning of human actions through its enquiry in belief systems. In this tradition of anthropology, I explore notions of justice and religion in a Sikh village I call Raigarh.

My paper is based on my doctoral fieldwork that I undertook in a village in Indian Punjab in 2001–2. I have continued to maintain a relationship with some of my respondents and have visited Raigarh for small durations at least once a year. This relationship with people in Raigarh has demonstrated a widely acknowledged limitation of fieldwork. Importantly, fieldwork effectively remains an event in the continuous flow of time, restricting an anthropologist's understanding and interpretation of specific instances. This methodological limitation has implications on the instance that I discuss in this paper from Raigarh. Manan Singh in 2000–1 was implicated in a criminal case that he claimed was instigated on behalf of Raigarh's ex-Sarpanch (headman) Ratan Singh and the case was embedded in the village's factional politics. I soon realised that the factional politics in Raigarh was intertwined with religion-based identity politics within the Sikh community in Raigarh and provincial politics in Punjab. Manan Singh was eventually acquitted by the court in 2008. In my paper I contend that capability of secular institutions to deliver justice was not accepted as given by my respondents. Nevertheless, an accommodation was sought with secular, modern state institutions, courts in this instance, through a discourse and political action underpinned by religious belief.

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Singh, Indera P. – University of Delhi, India

WORSHIP OF MUSLIM PIRS AND FAQIRS IN DALEKE – A SIKH VILLAGE IN PUNJAB, INDIA

Daleke, in district Taran-Taran, near Amritsar, located in the Majha area of Punjab known as the cradle of Sikhism was studied in late 50's by the author and his students. The study was supported by a grant from Prof Robert Redfield and Prof Milton Singer, University of Chicago, under Worldwide Inter-Cultural Studies Project. Arising out of the study, a paper 'A Sikh Village' was published in the special volume of the Journal American Folklore, 'Traditional India' in 1958 (ed. Milton Singer). Another paper, 'A Sikh village', was published in 'Aspects of Religion in Indian Society', edited by L.P Vidyarthi. I have recently restudied the same village (2008–2010), and the primary objective was to understand the different socio-cultural changes as well as changes in religious practices. Different triggers that translated the change were also studied. Today, the number of families in Daleke is 319 with a population of 1727 people. 318 families profess Sikhism and only one Brahman family has claimed to profess Hinduism. In comparison in 1958, 131 families were reported to be residing in the village. Four of them were Brahmin Hindus, and five Mazhabi Christians, the rest professed Sikhism. Four of the five Hindu families have left the village for better pastures to Amritsar and Delhi.

The Mazhabi Christian families continue to stay in the village, call themselves Sikhs to avail the privileges and benefits of the Scheduled Castes. On further enquiry, one head of the erstwhile Christian family told us that he and his wife go to Taran-Taran and attend Church sometimes, but none of his children go to Church today. There are four Sikh shrines called Gurudwaras in the village compared to two in 1958. Two gurudwaras are in the area where Mazhabi Sikhs live and are mainly patronised by them. The main gurudwara known as Shiddi sahib is visited by all the villagers on Sundays and festival days and managed by a committee constituting of all castes. In 1958, it was observed that the Daleke villagers also continue to perform certain Hindu rituals and worship Muslim Pirs, like Rodde Shah, Fatte Shah, Jogi Pir. Though they had changed their names to Rodde Singh, Fatte Singh, and Jogi Bir. Mazhabi caretakers had taken over the management. Today, we observed that though there are no Muslims in Daleke, or adjoining villages (all Muslims left for Pakistan in 1947), the shrines of the pirs are still being worshipped by the villagers, favours (mannats) are asked for and special foods and langars are distributed on completion of their wishes, annual and monthly fairs are held in their honour. In fact the shrines have become bigger and their caretakers are prospering. They have also reverted to their original names, though calendars depicting Lord Shiva and Parvati are also being displayed. Sikhism is the dominant religion in the village, but Sikh symbols of unshorn hair and beards are fast disappearing, especially among the younger generations. However, a trend towards fundamentalism and strict adherence to Sikh symbols has also been noticed among some families. An attempt has been made in the paper to describe the changes in the religious practices of the Daleke villagers during the last 50 years, and to identify the forces responsible for them.

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Singh, Kameshwar Prasad – Ranchi University, India
 prof.kpsingh@rediffmail.com

WOMEN RENUNCIATION IN ANCIENT INDIAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY – AN APPRAISAL

The religious history of women in ancient India has so far been a history of their portrayal as victims of oppression, oppressed and victimized. Although women occupy important position both as divinities and as individually central to religious ceremonies, very little has been written about their functions in the male defined world, on their own terms. One such autonomous realms of women's religious presence in their role as women renunciation as early as 6th BC. A study of women renunciation in ancient times, their role in society, their access to education and their power and control over their lives also require their social milieu.

While discussing the role of women renunciation in ancient Indian religious history, one wonders at the richness of the tradition that one has the existing paper had vividly elaborated the lot of extremely strong, scholarly and spiritually enlightened who at different points in history contributed to the cause of humanity in their own way. The aim and objective of this paper is to highlight and explore the role of women in ancient Indian Religious history. In this paper presentation the following ideas and views are to be incorporated and analyzed :- 1) A study about women renunciation in ancient Indian religious history 2) Religious and spiritual revival of women in ancient period and its impact on socio-religious Indian life at that time. 3) Major religious performances of women in ancient period 4) The role of women saints in nation building 5) To elaborate the present religious status of Indian women and its impact on national polity.

Singh, Kameshwar Prasad – Ranchi University, India
prof.kpsingh@rediffmail.com

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF INDIVIDUAL'S FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN INDIAN CONTEXT – AN APPRAISAL

The necessary corollary to the absence of any state religion is the freedom of religion to all. It is generally considered and accepted as one of the essential ingredients of a secular state. Most of the constitutions of the world that provide freedom of religion, do not explicitly guarantee right to propagate religion as a justifiable fundamental right. The individual right of freedom of religion as amplified in Indian constitution is of far greater importance, particularly for the religious minorities for their smooth development, it is further in consonance with the provision of united nations declaration of human right . Article 25 of Indian Constitution declares “freedom of religion.” It guarantees freedom not only to the citizens of India but, also persons including aliens. It deals with particularly the individual aspect of religious liberty, which consists of freedom to choose a particular faith he likes, to believe in and to manifest his belief in such overt acts as are prescribed by religion. The right is further supplemented by the freedom to practice and propagate religion. In theory citizens of India have obtained individual's freedom of religion but in practice there are certain limitations and trammels on the that particular freedom of religion. The paper intends to explore such ideas and views which have promoted freedom of religion to the citizens of India. India in recent years has been witnessing an escalation of religious revivalism, fundamentalism and religious communal identification. The paper also focuses such issues and aspects which are hindering the communal harmony in India due to

upsurge of religious terrorism. The following areas of study are to be covered in this paper ; 1) Theory and practice of secularism and religion in Indian context. 2) Limitations on individual's Freedom of Religion in India 3) Freedom of religion in the frame work of Indian constitution 4) Factors responsible for the growth of religious fundamentalism in India 5) Reconciliation and conflicts of various religious groups in India

Singh, Pradip Kumar – Ranchi University, India
adipks@gmail.com

RELIGION AND TECHNOLOGY: A CASE STUDY OF TRIBAL JHARKHAND

Religion is one of the oldest of Anthropological concerns. At least in the first six or seven decades of existence of Anthropology, the theoreticians and practitioners of Anthropology found the study of religion, particularly the religion of the tribals, of their major interest. Almost every early anthropologist tried his hand in enunciating a theory of origin of religion and almost limitless variations it manifests in different societies.

This paper tries to understand religious beliefs and practices in terms of the technology, ecology, economy and social system of a society, particularly tribal society. It shows that religion is a part of overall adaptive strategy a society employs in adaptation to the environment. As the economy undergoes changes, or the ecology is modified, or a social system is transformed, there is change in the belief system also. The paper also shows that though there appears to be great variation in religious beliefs and practices the world over, the religious beliefs can be divided into only two types – belief in supernatural forces and belief in anthropomorphized spiritual beings. It shows that as the techno-economic features of a culture become more complex and the society advances, there is a corresponding change in the religious beliefs and practices also. The evolution of religion shows a progression from belief in supernatural forces to belief in anthropomorphized spiritual beings .

Singh, Prabhat K. – Ranchi University, India

TRIBAL RELIGION OF JHARKHAND : PERSISTENCE AND CHANGE

The tribal religion is variously known as animism, animistic religion, primitivism, primitive religion, aboriginal religion, nature religion, adivasi or janjati dharma, bongaism, sarana, and so on. In Jharkhand tribal religion is popularly known “sarana dharam.”

Though, tribals of Jharkhand have a deep rooted traditional belief but they have started showing their attraction towards classical religions such as Hinduism and Christianity. In North east India tribals have accepted faith in Christianity where as in West they are being Hinduised. However, the people are not willing to admit of being Hinduised , atleast external influence can be observed. It is observed that in Central India , particularly in Jharkhand the impact of the other religions or the classical religions are comparatively less, but it does not mean that the tribals of Jharkhand have not accepted the other religions. They have accepted in large numbers. A large number are also very much fascinated with the Hinduism for many reasons, and such put an impact on the tribals forming several sects of various religions. Nevertheless, the Jharkhand and its neighbouring area still preserve the characteristics of tribalness as it is the centre of the Adivasi region extending from Gujrat to Arunanchal Pradesh .It is a core region of tribalness. In this paper an attempt has been made to depict the persistence and change of tribal religion in Jharkhand state of India where Sanskritisation and conversion , both the process are in operation.

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Singh, Sunita – Lucknow University, India

GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL: A STUDY OF A BACKWARD DISTRICT OF U.P., INDIA.

India is a vast country with the second highest population in the world. Nearly half its population lives below the poverty line and slightly more than half illiterate. Four northern states of India, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan are educationally backward in terms of gender development. The girl-child remains highly deprived in every sphere of social life as her position is greatly devalued in comparison to the male child. People see the birth of the daughter as a curse, a burden and a liability. It is a widely known fact that compared to men, Indian women have lower literacy rates, lower enrollment rates, higher non-enrollment rates and drop-out rates. The gender discrimination deprives half the Indian population of the right to education, knowledge, vocational skills and formal education. The present study, based on the rural population of Rampur district in the backward Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, focuses on the problems of excess and retention among girls at the primary level. Seven recognized schools from rural areas were selected for the study. School records and registers were used to get the number of enrollment, the failure and the dropout rate of girl students. The reasons of non-enrollment and drop out were also found out. Results indicate that the percentage of enrollment among girls is less than half of boys, and the percentage of drop

out of girls is much more than boys'. The main reasons of non-enrollment and drop out of girls in primary schools are poor economic conditions of their families, old social values, traditions, negative attitude towards girls' education, domestic chores, non approachability of schools, etc. In this context, the present paper also suggests solutions to the problems of non-enrollment and drop out among girls.

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Slingerland, Edward – University of British Columbia, Canada

FOLK DUALISM AND RELIGIOUS AND MORAL COGNITION IN EARLY CHINA

Early China has traditionally served in Western comparative studies as “the Other” par excellence. One frequently cited feature of Chinese thought – or “Eastern” thought more generally – is its supposedly “holistic” conception of the self, in contrast to the dualist West. Such claims have deep roots in Western anthropology and religious studies, and also feature prominently in recent work on cognitive science and culture that portrays the traditional Chinese view of body and mind as somehow qualitatively different from Western conceptions. If such claims are true, early Chinese holism would represent a significant challenge to arguments concerning the innateness and universality of folk dualism, as well as hypotheses concerning possible connection between folk dualism, religious belief, and prosociality. This paper reviews the case for a link between “sloppy” folk dualism and religious and moral cognition as a human cognitive universal, and then describes how these features of human cognition can be clearly seen at work in early Chinese thought.

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Solberg, Anne Ross – Södertörn University, Sweden
 anne.ross.solberg@sh.se

HARUN YAHYA'S ANTIEVOLUTIONISM AND ALTERNATIVE ISLAMIC ESCHATOLOGY

Writing under the pen name of Harun Yahya, the Turkish author and preacher Adnan Oktar is receiving increasing international attention as the world's leading Muslim proponent of creationism. Assisted by his followers, Harun Yahya has built up a prodigious internet publishing enterprise devoted to debunking Darwin's theory of evolution and calling for Islamic unity under the leadership of Turkey. He contends that Darwinism serves as the chief ideological basis for philosophical materialism and atheism, which according to Yahya are the causes of most evils of the modern world. He claims further that although evolution is defunct as a scientific theory, powerful Masonic forces are striving to uphold its influence in order to reach their aim of rooting out religion from the world.

Yahya has also developed an alternative Islamic eschatology which places his own anti-evolution campaign and Turkey at the center of a premillennialist narrative. In his books and online material, signs of the times are interpreted in the light of selected Quranic verses and hadiths to suggest that we are currently living in the Last Days, that the Mahdi has already arrived, and that the Mahdi will “call humanity to the true path” from Istanbul, Turkey, where he according to Yahya’s interpretation will appear.

Harun Yahya can be viewed as part of a new Muslim intelligentsia which challenge the authority of “Establishment Islam”. He is reinterpreting selected hadiths in such a way as to support his messianic vision of a global struggle against disbelief and Turkey as a religio-political leader. His claim to interpretive legitimacy is based on personal charisma rather than formal credentials as an Islamic scholar. Through effective use of new media, marketing campaigns and a popular and easily accessible style of writing, he strives to build up his profile as a leading authority on Islam.

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Sonehara, Satoshi – Tohoku University, Japan
sonehara@library.tohoku.ac.jp

THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF DANGISHO TEMPLES IN THE TENDAI SECT

Research into the Dangisho temples (‘seminary’ temples for monastic instruction) of Japan’s medieval period began with Ogami Kanchu (1912–1984). As the resident priest of Jobodai-in, a representative Dangisho temple, he clarified many basic facts. Later, researchers of Japanese literature performed productive surveys of the historical materials produced by Dangisho temples. However, most of these activities were concerned with tracing eminent priests, discovering valuable manuscripts, and analyzing narratives and classical poetry; little attempt was made to understand Dangisho temple activities as a whole. In contrast to this, historians of Japan are beginning to clarify the context and foundations created by the Dangisho temples. In this presentation, I will discuss the results of this latest research. In addition, I will explain the historical conditions surrounding two features, which I have newly identified: Soden (succession of teachings) and Ruiju (the collecting of various materials). I wish to propose an answer to the question: “why did Dangisho temples appear during the medieval period?”

Sonntag, Mira – Rikkyo University, Japan
mirasonntag@web.de

DIVINE HEALING IN THE EARLY HOLINESS MOVEMENT OF JAPAN

The paper will explore the dogmatic understanding of divine healing as one of the constituting elements of the “Fourfold Gospel” in its relation to evolutionary theory during the two first decades of the 20th century Japan. In doing so it draws on sources from within the Holiness movement itself as well as on argumentative reactions towards its doctrines from outside. Subsequently, this understanding will be compared to the findings of abundant research literature on divine healing / faith cure in the American traditions of radical holiness and Pentecostalism, thereby shedding light on continuities as well as adjustments to local conditions.

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Sørensen, Jesper – Aarhus University, Denmark
jsn@teo.au.dk

ACTION PARSING IN RITUAL AND NON-RITUAL BEHAVIOUR

In this paper I will present a theoretical model as well as preliminary results from a number of experiments on the fundamental cognitive processing of ritual action sequences. It has been an old tradition in the scientific study of religion and anthropology that ritual actions are distinct from instrumental actions in a number of ways (Boyer & Liénard 2006; Humphrey & Laidlaw 1994; Staal 1979). They expose an opaque relationship between cause and purported effect; they are stipulated and thus not intentionally specified by the agents; and they contain a number of non-instrumental features such as extreme iteration, redundancy, and exaggeration. Building on the theoretical model of Sørensen (2007), I will argue that in ritual actions two basic cognitive systems used to understand instrumental actions are disconnected: (a) a system that perceives and classifies actions based on recognition of basic action gestalts specified by local causal and intentional structures; (b) a system that organizes such basic representations into more comprehensive schematic action representations defined by comprehensive causal frameworks as well higher-level intentional specifications. This will be discussed based on experiments on the difference between action parsing in instrumental and non-instrumental actions.

Souza, Andre Luiz – The University of Texas at Austin, USA

THE ROLE OF TESTIMONY AND CONSENSUS INFORMATION IN THE EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS EXPERTISE

People learn about the efficacy of cultural practices from input based on the testimony and expertise of others. Although some religious practices are part of highly controlled religious organizations that legitimate religious experts and others require no particular specialized expertise to engage in them (Legare & Souza, under review), many religious beliefs are associated with loosely organized traditions that involve a variety of supernatural healing practices and remedies. How is religious expertise evaluated in these contexts? What kind of information is used to evaluate the efficacy of supernatural healers and experts? One possibility is that consensual information about a religious expert has a cogent role in the evaluation of his/her efficacy – higher levels of agreement about efficacy may be more convincing than lower levels of agreement. Another possibility is that the expertise of the informant influences efficacy judgments. Finally, the distance from the source of the information may be important in evaluating the efficacy of a religious expert; first-hand testimony may therefore be more convincing than second or third hand testimony. In a series of studies, we investigated how consensual information, the expertise of informants, and the kind of testimony influence how people evaluate the efficacy of supernatural healers in Brazil. Preliminary analyses indicate that consensus information influences perceived efficacy, but that this is overridden when consensus information conflicts with the opinion of another expert. Additionally, first-hand testimony is considered to be more reliable than second or third-hand testimony, overriding consensus information, but not the expertise of the informant.

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Spurr, Geoff – Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada

THE INTERSECTION OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY AND MASCULINE SELF-IMPROVEMENT IN THE BRITISH YMCA

“The Intersection of Evangelical Theology and Masculine Self-Improvement in the Early History of the YMCA in Britain” Founded in London in June 1844 by a group of young Evangelical drapers’ assistants, the YMCA was formed as an Evangelical missionary association to provide for the salvation of young lower middle class commercial men. The YMCAs founders insisted that its members be converted men who displayed a strict devotion to Christ through prayer meetings, Bible classes, devotional work and Evangelical tract distribution. It was believed that an organization

devoted entirely to Christian brotherhood in its activities would be an example of proper Christian behaviour to urban young men whose salvations were under constant assault by the vices found in their home, work and recreational environments. Agencies of a secular forms, even those of a self-improving nature, were initially viewed by the YMCA founding members as, at best, potential distractions from the spiritual work of the YMCA and, at worst, a threat to the salvation of the young men that the YMCA had been founded to protect. However, young YMCA men could not simply disengage from the world of leisure, socialization or work. The pressures to construct a meaningful masculine identity required young lower middle class Evangelical men to find a locale where both their spiritual and earthly masculine needs were nourished. Historians examining the British YMCA have labeled the YMCAs shift from an entirely spiritual organization to one with extensive secular activities by the 1880s as the triumph of “play over prayer.” This supposed triumph has been almost entirely attributed to the influences of muscular Christianity in YMCA circles and the emerging games and athletics movements of the mid-Victorian era. What have been neglected in these studies were the early attempts by the YMCA to meet the non-physical masculine developmental requirements of young commercial men. By the end of the 1840s YMCA officials began meeting some of these requirements through the careful adoption of programs in mental culture that intersected with both Evangelical theology and the earthly self-improving aspirations of young lower middle class men. For the next two decades these programs were expanded, although many British YMCA officials withstood any large-scale attempt to introduce entirely secular agencies into the work of British YMCAs. By the 1860s and 1870s, however, almost all YMCA officials were now convinced that these programs, which included YMCA reading rooms and libraries and educational classes in general and commercial subjects, did not interfere with their spiritual work. They were viewed as important to the masculine growth of young men and could serve to attract new members. This not only served to pave the way for the adoption of far less spiritually based YMCA activities, such as physical recreations, but produced an increased effort on the part of the YMCA to meet the distinct lower middle class social and material needs of its members.

Srichampa, Sophana – Mahidol University, Thailand
sophana@gmail.com

THAI-VIETNAMESE BELIEFS FOR THEIR WELL-BEING

The Thai-Vietnamese live in many provinces in the Northeast of Thailand for more than 50 years since the Indochinese War in Vietnam and Laos. They migrated from Vietnam through Laos crossing Khong River to Thailand. They are Buddhist but mix the spiritual beliefs which is reflected in their identity. There are some groups of the Thai-Vietnamese who perform the ritual called len dong (to be incarcerated with spirits). They worship the Vietnamese heroes and kings as gods who have taken care of the country and people. When their life, health and family members are not well, they need other ways of help by participating the len dong ritual which is done 5 times a year. There is a Committee who takes care and serves for the ritual. Participants have to pay some money to cover the cost of offering materials to gods in the shrine. There is an old lady who is incarcerated by changing 5 colors of clothes: red for all gods, green for God of dragon, white for Goddess Ganga and Ocean gods, yellow for all gods on heaven and blue for Forest god. These gods are inside her when she changes each color of cloth. The beliefs and ritual are not only to bless the people for their wellness, it is also the social unity of the Thai-Vietnamese community in that area.

Ståhle, Göran – Södertörn University, Sweden
goran.stahle@sh.se

THE BODY AS A "VEHICLE OF HEALING": THE LIFE STORIES OF NORTH INDIAN FOLK-HEALERS (OJHA)

The view that spirits attack, possess and hurt human beings are a common folk belief in northern India. Ritual specialists, called "ojha", are counselled for coming to terms with the human suffering that are attributed to these kinds of causes. The healer communicates with the extra human world by an induced state of trance. The same healer is often devoted to both local Hindu goddesses and local Muslim saints (pir) from which he has his spiritual powers (siddhi). This is a case study of five ojha in Varanasi (Banaras) conducted through life story interviews. The healer is typically male and belonging to a group of low social status (i e jati). In common parlance these healers are also often called "tantriks" because they use rituals that are not seen as originating from the Vedic tradition. This indicates a marginal position in the society, but also veneration and fear because of the supposed extraordinary powers. An ojha learns the practices from another ojha in the analogy of a guru-disciple

relationship. The most important part is to attain siddhi from one or more godheads or spiritual beings. A recurrent theme in the narratives is that problematics of life is overcome through worship and a quest for siddhi. By correctly performed ritual actions extra human forces are mastered. The life stories are interpreted from the perspective of embodiment and ritual theory. Bodily practices and psycho-physiological metaphors are central. Aesthetic qualities are emphasized according to a culturally grounded sensibility.

Stasulane, Anita – Daugavpils University, Latvia
anita.stasulane@du.lv

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW THEOSOPHICAL IDENTITY: THE ROERICH MOVEMENT

Agni Yoga/Living Ethics, founded by Nicholas and Helena Roerich represents an essential part of the contemporary theosophical network. The Roerichs' letters and diaries, previously inaccessible to the public, provide us with important information on the construction of a new theosophical identity. The differences among the second generation of theosophists (the Theosophical Society based in Adyar, lead by Annie Besant; the Temple of the People founded by Francia La Due and William Dower; the Arcane School created by Alice A. Bailey, and the Agni Yoga movement) were partly based on the particular interplay of Eastern and Western cultural elements.

While the teaching of the Roerichs was of Western origin, rooted in Spiritualism, it widely incorporated ideas derived from Eastern traditions. Agni Yoga's developments included a qualitative new approach in application of the elements of Eastern philosophies/religions. The Roerichs' quest to combine Eastern and Western secret knowledge resulted (1) in a particular veneration of the Mother of the World, identified with the Mother of Agni Yoga, *i.e.*, Helena Roerich, depicted as an Eastern woman; (2) in the special emphasis on the fulfillment of Buddhist prophecies on the messianic advent of the King of Shambhala, identified as Nicholas Roerich, the theocratic ruler of the prospected Union of Oriental Republics.

Having observed the intricate connections between Eastern and Western elements in Agni Yoga/Living Ethics, the paper will show that the Roerichs' teaching can be hardly categorized as either Western or Eastern esotericism.

Strenski, Ivan – University of California Riverside,
USA · strenski@ucr.edu

**"STRANGE BEDFELLOWS? A RADICAL
EXAMINATION OF THE COHABITATION OF
PHILOSOPHY AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION**

The cohabitation of philosophy with the study of religion has such a long history that we have not been motivated to consider the terms of that relationship. We propose that this relationship needs to be examined radically. That is to say that we propose to query the nature, or possible natures, of the relationship of philosophy to the study of religion by posing such questions as the following: What kind of philosophy belongs in the study of religion? Constructive? Critical? Does philosophy have an independent role in the study of religion or does it rather best play the role of 'handmaiden'? To the extent that philosophy plays an integral part in the study of religion, how should philosophy reflect the global and cross-cultural nature of the study of religion? To what extent, does a philosophy that is integral to the study of religion need to change in order to reflect the philosophical agendas integral to other religions than Christianity?

Strijdom, Johannes – Religious Studies, University of
South Africa, South Africa · strijdm@hotmail.com

**TOWARDS A CRITIQUE OF INDIGENOUS AFRICAN
RELIGION**

The question of a critique of Indigenous African Religion will be framed by the debate between universalists and relativists. It will be argued that if Christianity and Hinduism have been subjected to radical critiques, Indigenous African Religion should not be exempted from critique. The dehumanizing history of colonialism and the imperialist academic study of religion should not prevent us from developing a critique of the role of Indigenous African Religion during the precolonial, colonial or postcolonial eras. Laurenti Magesa's idealized view of Indigenous African Religion will be compared with more critical recent approaches to Indigenous African Religion.

Suárez Díez, María de Lourdes – National Institute
of Anthropology and History, Mexico
leticia_villanueva@inah.gob.mx

**THE PECTORAL OF SHELL IN DEITIES OF
TONALPOHUALLI OF THE VATICAN A CODEX IN
ABSTRACT: SHELL PECTORALS IN DEITIES OF THE
TONALPOHUALLI OF THE VATICAN A CODEX**

Shell is a raw material that many cultures have used as symbol of a religious conception and mystical thoughts thanks of its connection with water, vital liquid for life. The presence of these shell ornaments on the divinities painted in the nahuas codex show the symbolic importance in the Mexican religion. Therefore we are realizing a big study of these objects and their symbolism in documents painted in XVI Century in the Mexican culture.

One of these documents is the Vatican A Codex, so in this work we are going to study one of these ornaments: The Shell Pectorals that accompany some deities drawn in the Ritual Calendar known as Tonalpohualli.

Subhani, S.R. – Andhra University, India

RELIGION AND ELECTORAL POLITICS IN INDIA

Religion and Politics may be considered as siblings. The debate about their relationship is unending. Many a time, many a people perceived contradiction between them. However, only the people who perceived them complementarily triumphed in their mission. The story of religion and politics goes beyond comprehension in view of their origin, growth and existence. The old debate about the primacy is no longer valid. The distinction between the theocratic and the secular states is one of variation rather than an absolute. The growth of city states into the nation states and subsequently into even multi-national (federal) states has their roots also in the origin and growth of religions. The rise of Democratic institutions did not progress beyond the religion. No state can really claim today as secularist unqualified. The studies on electoral process in India reveal that religion is a predominant factor influencing the political process including the public policy. The concept of religious minorities, their rights and security emerged as the primary concern of all the secular states. Perhaps, religion as a particular faith for particular sections of the population is demanding humanism implying acceptance and accommodation. The concept of social justice and protective discrimination along with the Right to Religion as a fundamental right, an inherent part of the Indian Constitution, is fully realized through an institutionalized election process. This paper presents data based upon the outcome of the general elections in support of the above contention that Religion is a political mechanism for Humanism in secular countries.

Sullivan, Winnifred – SUNY at Buffalo, USA
wfs2@buffalo.edu

SPIRITUAL GOVERNANCE

This presentation will make the argument that a new phenomenology of religion is emerging in U.S. legal and governmental contexts. Not just constitutionally speaking, although there has been a real shift in judicial interpretation of the religion clauses in the last thirty years, but in all areas of American legal administration. Religion is being naturalized. Even revealed religion is understood to be natural. American law and legal institutions – federal, state, and local – are increasingly recognizing Americans, indeed all persons, as essentially religious – or “spiritual.” In myriad standards, rules, regulations, and proceedings, religion is being defined, standardized, homogenized, and made acceptable for government support. The new religious phenomenology is one of sameness rather than difference, of immanence rather than transcendence. Being religious is now understood to be part of being human, not something that sets you apart. That recognition increasingly authorizes responses across the domains of legal regulation.

Sultana, Aneela – Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan
aneela@qau.edu.pk

BEYOND THE ONTOLOGY OF ‘DANCE’ AS AN ART

The proposed paper focuses on Art as a form of cultural expression and it presents data based on ethnographic information of famous Pakistani musical theatres in Lahore city, province of Punjab. Most description of the performing arts is written by men with an exclusive male perspective. Little or no attempt has been made to explore women lives in performing theatre apart from their assigned role as physical crowd-pullers. This study presents how symbols are used to communicate, as each member of theatre community uses entire repertoire to convey messages, manual gesticulations, body gestures, facial expressions, dance patterns, a particular dress etc at the cultural level. The central idea of this study is how artists use the body in performance to imagine and enact culture, values, humor, selfhood, and the complex relations among them? It discusses their real backstage life experiences and problems faced as well the how and what type of contact they maintain with their audience and admirers. What are their moral values and what kind of social dilemmas they face, how the sexuality of theatre women is being controlled, their fears emotions, distress of theatre women etc are the major research questions. In short, this anthropological inquiry takes into account all relevant social, cultural, political, economic, and religious dimensions of performing art.

Sultana, Aneela – Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan
aneela@qau.edu.pk

TRIBE OR TERROR: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF MURGHAKARAYZAI TRIBE WITH ESPECIAL EMPHASIS ON PERCEPTION AND PRACTICE OF JIHAD

The proposed paper presents data based on six months extensive research which was carried out in Murghakarayzai tribe located in District Pashin, province of Baluchistan. This study focuses on the interplay of tribal culture and Madrassa education and its impact on the perception and practice of jihad. Geographically this area holds immense importance as it is just 53 kilometers away from the Afghanistan borders. The principal objective of this research was to understand how tribal law locally known as Pushtun Wali creates temptation for religious education and jihad. It incorporates views of practicing talibans who went to Afghanistan to participate in jihad and also from those talibs who are currently enrolled in Madrassas. To cover all dimensions, additional information was obtained from those respondents who were receiving secular or modern education. To obtain qualitative information, anthropological techniques were employed and data was collected from 64 respondents. The study helps to analyze socio-cultural factors to dig out ethnic roots of jihad. It unveils contours of tribal culture which determines their understanding of the religion, jihad and human rights. It explains why rigidity is still a hallmark of tribal society despite the fact that 73 percent of the local population is literate? It answers whether it is religious ideology being imparted in Madrassas or the tribal code which persuades them to practice jihad against un-Islamic elements? In Short, this anthropological study highlights role of cultural and religious factors which promote talibanization.

Sultana, Samina – Jagannath University, Bangladesh
sultana.samina@gmail.com

RELIGION AND WOMEN IN ANCIENT AND EARLY MEDIEVAL BENGAL

The aim of the paper is to examine the position of women in the Buddhist and Brahmanical religion in Ancient and Early Medieval Bengal. At first women were not allowed to enter the Buddhist religious Samgha. Gradually the religion was opened to the nuns with strict rules and regulations. As a result the nuns or Bhiksunis left a mark in religion with their works and devotion. In Hinduism also women were allowed to participate in different rituals with some restrictions. Even Kautya and Baisya, and in case of emergency a Sudra wife of a Brahmin could perform religious rites with her husband.

In religions, Buddhism and Brahmanical, the presence and worship of many female deities and Goddesses shows that women had some respect in society as a whole. Many of these Goddesses were considered extremely powerful and drew a lot of respect. Another important aspect which comes out is the role of women in bringing about changes in the religion. Women were responsible in bringing about the worship of Manasha, Dharma and Sasthi into the Aryan Brahmanical religion from the aboriginal people of Bengal. Therefore women were held in respect and played an important role in the evolution of religion in Ancient and Early Medieval Bengal.

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Sutcliffe, Steven – Edinburgh University, UK
 s.sutcliffe@ed.ac.uk

THEORISING 'NEW AGE' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES AS 'ELEMENTARY FORMS OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE'

This paper argues that recurrent uncertainties in demarcating 'new age' phenomena are an effect of conceptual constraints imposed by the existing taxonomy of religious formations derived from the prototype 'world religion'. The introduction from the early 1970s of adjunct terms such as 'new religion' and 'new religious movement', while appearing to differentiate and pluralise the taxonomy, left the basic prototype undisturbed. Under its terms, the popular practices and beliefs which circulate under 'new age' (and related rubrics) can only register as a minority or residual category. The widely-remarked problem of defining 'new age' is therefore better understood as another (and this time 'western') example of the conceptual distortion of local data wrought by the 'world religions' paradigm. Read against the grain of this taxonomy, 'new age' phenomena show continuities with existing formations of popular beliefs and practices across a range of religious traditions. These popular formations call into question existing historical-conceptual distinctions between 'old', 'new' and 'traditional' forms of 'religion'. This approach steers the study of 'new age' away from constructing marginalia and exotica and towards the recovery of an under-theorised data set. This can contribute neglected 'western' data to the common task of reconstructing the 'elementary forms of the religious life' (Durkheim) after a long period of domination by the 'world religion' prototype. I will discuss the nature of the data into which 'new age' formations can be fractionated, illustrating my argument with reference to analyses of 'new age' and 'Christian' formations in the UK by Sutcliffe (2003) and Stringer (2008). References: Stringer, M. 2008, *Contemporary Western Ethnography and the Definition of Religion*; Sutcliffe, S. 2003, *Children of the New Age: A History of Spiritual Practices*

Sweetman, Will – University of Otago, New Zealand
 will.sweetman@otago.ac.nz

A SATIRE ON MISSIONARY DIALOGUES WITH HINDUS

The first two decades of the nineteenth century witnessed a vigorous debate over Christian missionary activity in India, and particularly over the inclusion of a 'pious clause' in the East India Company's charter, requiring the Company to sponsor missions. The debate created unlikely allies on both sides. Proponents of mission included both evangelicals and the Company's commercial rivals. In the wake of the Vellore Mutiny of 1806, missionary activity was strongly opposed by the Company and their position found support from a diverse group ranging from the Abbé Dubois (a missionary in India for over 30 years) to General Charles 'Hindoo' Stuart (perhaps the first European convert to Hinduism). This paper will examine an anonymous work which appeared in 1812, at the height of the controversy, but which has not hitherto been discussed in relation to the debate on missions. The work purports to be a translation of 'conferences' between missionaries and Hindus first published in German in 1718, but is in fact a skilful satire on them. The satirical intent of this work was evident to its first audience, but recent scholars have missed this dimension of the work. The paper will discuss the work in the context both of its purported source and of related works, including Herder's *Gespräche über die Bekehrung der Indier durch unsere europäischen Christen* (1802) and the anonymous, but probably Jesuit, *Ezour-Vedam* (printed in 1778).

Tabaka, Nataliya – Ukrainian Association of Religious Studies, Ukraine · tabaka75@mail.ru

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT IN THE UKRAINE

The Peculiarity of Ukraine is that its protestant life is determined not by the classic Protestant Churches of Western Europe, but the charismatic movement. The emergence and the rise of charismatic movement in Ukraine occurred at the turn of 1980th – 1990th. Very important factor that shaped native charismatic movement became the influence of foreign centers and influential Western preachers. The principal result identified the presence of Charismatic denominations in all spheres of socio-political, socio-economic and cultural life of country. Since then, they create significant social capital: the network of churches, missions, educational institutions, enterprises, public institutions and entrenched influence in medical and educational institutions. The charismatic movement became considerable religious element and the appreciable phenomenon of social and political sphere in life of country. Talking about the future of the charismatic movement in Ukraine, it should be accepted that there are no definite answers for several fundamental questions as for understanding of future of Ukrainian Charismatism: how closely the growth of Charismatism or the suspending its growth has concerned with the economic situation in Ukraine? How the fact of formation at least two from among the most successful charismatic churches in Ukraine by Africans correlated with the general trend of displacement of Christianity to the South in the southern hemisphere? Which character will have a business environment in Ukraine if the presence of evangelical Christians in it will reach a meaningful level? How can change shapes of Ukrainian politics? These are just some of questions that provide answers to serious and systematic researches of Charismatism phenomenon.

Taira, Teemu – University of Leeds, UK · teetai@utu.fi

PORTRAYALS OF RELIGION IN BRITISH MEDIA: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

Discourse on Religion in British Media: Summary of Findings and Methodological Reflections

The paper has two parts. The first part summarizes findings of the project examining portrayals of religion in British media. Selection of newspapers and television (2008/9) are compared to the results of similar study of early 1980s. The main question is how portrayals have changed in almost 30 years. Despite many continuing themes the paper will argue that enormous quantitative

and qualitative changes have taken place. The references to religion in newspapers have more than doubled in 30 years, but in television the increase is more modest. Portrayals of religion have become more heterogeneous, religion has become a visible part of public discussion and the debate is currently organized around three poles which are both converging and challenging each other: multiculturalism, Christian heritage and secularism. Second part of the paper deals with methodological reflections as well as implications for further studies. The project has employed mixed methods in longitudinal study based on the replication of earlier study. It has used quantitative content analysis and qualitative discourse analysis supplemented with focus group analysis and event analysis. Whilst seeking to replicate the methods of earlier study to enable a comparative analysis the project has been confronted with issues raised by changes in the media. This paper clarifies briefly how these methods have been triangulated and will reflect on these challenges, discuss the implications followed and consider issues raised by undertaking a variety of research methods.

Takahashi, Hara – The University of Tokyo, Japan
ht726@l.u-tokyo.ac.jp

PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO JAPANESE MYTH AND NIHONJINRON

Jungian psychologist, Hayao Kawai (1928–2007) pointed out that there appear characteristic triads in the Japanese myth; in the three triads in Kojiki, the god who does nothing is in the center. He called this pattern „hollow center structure.” Kawai viewed this as the reflection of Japanese psychic structure, which has no strong ego in the center. And he suggested this is the basic pattern in the structure of Japanese culture and society. Freudian psychiatrist, Osamu Kitayama (1946–) took up the motif of “Don’t look” in Kojiki and Japanese folk tales as an archetype of Japanese sense of sin and guilt. A female “masochistic Caretaker” orbid her husband to look at her in painful labour. When he breaks the promise and sees her wounded and ugly, she will leave him.

These approaches have some characteristics in common; they are based on the clinical observation of Japanese patients and applied to the ancient literature. Therefore this type of theories tends to function as a kind of Nihonjinron, which are applicable to Japanese culture in general, sometimes emphasizing a sharp contrast between Japanese and Western culture.

Interestingly, both Kawai and Kitayama stated that Japanese myth used to be a tabooed subject in the post war period because it had played a political role in the imperial nationalism of the Japanese Empire.

Japanese mythology was, to them, something they had to rediscover. Psychological approach to Japanese myth could be read as an attempt to search for the lost origin of Japanese culture.

Japanese Jungian psychologist, Hayao Kawai (1928–2007) pointed out that there appear characteristic triads in the Japanese myth; in the three triads in Kojiki, the god who does nothing is in the center. He called this pattern „hollow center structure.” Kawai viewed this as the reflection of Japanese psychic structure, which has no strong ego in the center. And he suggested this is the basic pattern in the structure of Japanese culture and society.

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Takahashi, Sanami – Hokkaido University

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

WE MUST KILL GOD: THE RUSSIAN RELIGIOUS MENTALITY IN ATHEISTIC

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Takahashi, Yuko – Rikkyo University, Japan
yukotakahashi@kjf.biglobe.ne.jp

APPLYING SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

Methodological presuppositions for analyzing social phenomena, including religious phenomena, can be classified in two types: inward-oriented, “ideas make societies” and outward-oriented, “social conditions make ideas.” Max Weber clearly states, both are possible, yet both are unsuitable as a “conclusion.” Then, how can we examine two-way causation or multi-causation in religious history? I suggest that “social identity theory” and its sophisticated version, “self-categorization theory” can contribute to clarifying causation. Especially, when reconstructing ancient history, “model” use is required, even though it seems to be an “anachronism,” because historical and/or archaeological sources to reconstruct ancient phenomena always lack in quantity, and sometimes in quality. I will demonstrate the use of social identity theory applied to ancient Israelite society in the late seventh century B. C. E., that is, King Josiah’s period in Kingdom of Judah.

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Takahashi, Wataru – The University of Tokyo, Japan
wataruwill@u01.gate01.com

ON HIERARCHY IN PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS AREOPAGITE

Although “hierarchy” generally means an order of positions and authorities in an organization or a top-down relationship, it is originally a term which derives from a religion. This term was used in the world of Christianity in the 6th century for the first time, and

it indicated not only the organization of the priesthood, but also the Church itself. Until it was partly denied by the Protestantism which advocates “the universal priesthood”, “hierarchia” (ancient Greek for “hierarchy”) had been the word which describes the characteristics of Christian organizations. And it was in the series of works by Dionysius Areopagite (c.500), *Corpus Dionysiacum*, that this word “hierarchia” was used for the first time in the world of Christianity. In this presentation, we would like to observe the point that the word, “hierarchia”, not only indicates the orders of the priesthood, but also includes the meaning which differs from them. At first, focusing on the first example of usage of this word by Dionysius Areopagite, I will show the concept of “hierarchia”, which generally tends to be understood as a top-down structure of the oppressive orders, rather as a concept which consists in the mutual character between the superior and the subordinate. Then, I will move on to *De coelesti hierarchia* (chap. 3) from the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, which discusses mainly on “hierarchia” and gives the definition of this word. Surveying how this word is used in the texts, I would like to consider the fundamental meaning of “hierarchia”.

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Takao, Kenichiro – Doshisha University, Japan
takaoken@aol.com

SUFI IMPLICATIONS IN THE WEST TODAY: SPECULATING OTHERNESS AND SAMENESS

The paper tries to explore certain discourses on Sufism in the west today. Discourses on Sufism in the recent western Islamic studies tend to revalue Sufism as “secularized” Islam, which overcomes “fundamental” Islam. So Sufism is often valued as the “bridge” between the west and Islam. However, epistemologically, we should explore why Sufism is not classified today into “fundamental” Islam in today’s western discourses, regardless of that Sufis and the orders come out with their orthodox Scripturalism attitudes and institutional membership as other Islamic organizations called “fundamental” have. The paper picks up the case of Ahmad Kuftaru (1915–2004), a Syrian Sufi of Naqshbandi order. He was a prominent figure as a Sufi master and Sunni hard-liner in modern Syria. And, in world wide religious circles, he is known for his activism on religious dialogues with Christianity and other new religions. In response to this, the western discourses often assert that Sufism is a spiritual alternative of “fundamental” Islam. However, Kuftaru himself as a Sufi master tried to spend his lifetime for situating Sufism as the highest ranked Islamic orthodoxy in today’s “Ummah (Islamic world),” then his religious dialogues were called even “da’wah (mission, Islamic calling)” by his followers.

If the Sufi “fundamental” orientation is ignored, we would say, Sufism would not be the bridge between the west and Islam, but the insurance for satisfying both anti-fundamentalism and the religious tolerance.

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Takeda, Shinichi – Tokai University, Japan
stakeda@ktmail.tokai-u.jp

HOMO CREDENS – AN APPROACH TO RELIGION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY

Desire drives human behavior. It gives rise to market fundamentalism as well as crime, but human beings also have a “desire for self-annihilation” according to Hase. Satisfying this desire is more gratifying as human beings cannot satisfy it themselves. Religion is one desire that certainly destroys egoism, moves people at the foundation of their being, and prompts an awakening from the depths of life. In religion, the core beliefs of a cognitive system result in drastic changes. However, this is not simply a paradigm shift, but a Copernican revolution. Put more strongly still, it could be described as surrendering the independence of the self. Furthermore, regardless of how unique or sophisticated we may be, humans are still animals, and as such, we must be strong. Unlike animals, what makes people strong is the time spent holding clear targets for the future, and expecting those targets to come to fruition. When such expectations have been realized, a person is satisfied and feels a sense of exultation. Faith precedes joy and always transcends reality and the self. In the final analysis, religion is not a special phenomenon, but it is an evolutionary strategy used by the most highly-civilized people to achieve internal resolution and streamline their energy consumption.

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Takim, Liyakat – McMaster University, Canada
REVIVAL OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT: IJTihad AND THE RE-EVALUATION OF CLASSICAL TEXTS IN MODERN TIMES

The paper will examine the arguments of various contemporary Muslim reformers who call for a re-evaluation of traditional juridical institutions. Many contemporary jurists have argued that the juridical decisions in the past were interwoven to the political, cultural, or historical circumstances in the eighth century. They further argue while the Qur'an is a fixed text, the interpretive applications of its revelations can vary with the changing realities of history. My paper will examine the arguments of various contemporary Shi'i reformers who call for a re-evaluation of traditional juridical texts. Such voices have come from religious intellectuals like 'Abdolkarim Soroush, but importantly, others emanate from within the religious seminaries

itself. Scholars like Ayatullah Sanei, Ayatullah Jannati, Ayatullah Mohagheg Damad, Hujjatul-Islam Muhsin Sa'idzadeh and Mohsen Kadivar have called for a reevaluation of traditional juridical pronouncements on many issues, especially those which pertain to women. As a matter of fact, in my discussions with some scholars, I detected a distinct revolution within in the seminaries in Qum. I interviewed many of these jurists during my research in Iran. The paper will focus on how this call for a re-evaluation of Islamic law impacts issues of human rights and freedom of expression in Islamic law. My study will examine the current discourse on these topics as scholars and jurists are engaged in hermeneutic and interpretive exercises to provide a coherent re-evaluation of classical formulations and to assert a theory of international relations that will incorporate notions of dignity, freedom of conscience, and rights of minorities based on the notion of universal moral values.

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Tanaka, Kumiko – Fukuoka Institute of Technology, Japan · ku.tanaka@fit.ac.uk

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN NICHIREN BUDDHIST IDEOLOGY AND THE REALITY OF EVERYDAY LIFE

The Fuju-Fuse sect of Nichiren Buddhism is a religious group that was banned by the Tokugawa Shogunate in the Edo period and reestablished during the Meiji era in Japan. Fuju-Fuse doctrine states that Buddhist monks should not accept alms from people who do not believe in the words of the Lotus Sutra (fuju) and Buddhists should not offer alms to Shinto priests or Buddhist monks who belong to other sects (fuse). I will deal with the Buddhists at one Fuju-Fuse temple and examine how they perceive Fuju-Fuse ideology. Scholars were once interested in the Fuju-Fuse sect because of its unique character. However there are no Buddhist monks in the sect any more. So the temple is managed by the Buddhists themselves and some of these Buddhists fill in for Buddhist monks at the temple; for example during the traditional rituals and funerals. Moreover, comprehension of and attitude to the doctrine and ideology of this sect has been changing among Buddhists. This situation reflects two things. First, Buddhists are eager to know what they should do because of the unique history or experience and doctrine of the sect. Second, however, there is significant crossover between Buddhist organization and community life and Buddhists recognize their differences. Therefore this study seeks to clarify the struggle of Buddhism to transcend a Buddhist's daily life.

Tanaseanu-Döbler, Ilinca – Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

CONSTRUCTING IMPIETY: 'ATHEISM' IN THE LATER ROMAN EMPIRE

The Roman Empire was a stage for religious controversies of an intensity and scope radically different from earlier times. These controversies involving Jews, Christians and the bewildering variety of groups which for brevity's sake can be called pagans, eventually shaped the religious landscape of later European cultures. They also bequeathed to them basic rhetorical mechanisms to engage with the "other", the religious rival, many of which are still actively used well into the post-modern society. The paper will focus on a notion that played a great role in these controversies, namely 'atheism'. This term was used on the one hand in the struggle between pagans, Jews and Christians to articulate the criticism of rival groups; on the other hand, these groups shared a common tradition of identifying paradigmatical "atheists" like Epicurus. I will look at how the concept was reshaped in late antique polemic and discuss the implications of this refashioning for its subsequent history and, not least, for the conceptual framework of the academic study of religion.

Tavakkoli, Tahereh – Islamic Azad University, Iran
tavakkolit@gmail.com

NON-ACTION (WU WEI), FROM LAO ZI TO MOULAWI (A PARADOXICAL CONCEPT)

One of the most significant concepts in Daoism is wú wéi. It can be translated as "without", or "does not exist." Wei may be translated as "do", "act", or "effort". Literally, this paradoxical term means "non-action" or "without action". This concept is one of the fundamental tenets in Dao de jing. The aim of wu wei is to achieve a state of perfect equilibrium, or alignment with Dao. It is very interesting that in Iran and between Muslim mystics, we can find this particular concept too. The famous sage, Jalal Al-Din Mohammad Balkhi called Moulawi has applied this concept in another term but very similar to that of Lao zi. His term is "Honar-e Bi-honari" which can be translated as "art of non-art". "Honar" as a Persian word denotes any kind of techniques, skill and proficiency; but Moulawi also uses it for education, science, and everything which is teachable. His intention of this idea is avoiding from any kind of sleight and ameliorating, or getting proud of one's skill and knowledge. Both lao zi and Moulawi, suggest "little child" as the best symbol for those who are artless and without action. Moulawi names this stage "the bliss foolishness". In this stage, man throws away both knowledge and action, since both of them may lead man

to crag of damnation. But If Dao means "way", so how can Daoism throw away action? Finding solution of this interesting contradiction and analyzing different aspects of this concept in their two Chinese and Iranian grounds are reflected in this article.

Tayob, Abdulkader – University of Cape Town, South Africa · Abdulkader.tayob@uct.ac.za

AL FARUQI (D. 1886) BETWEEN ISLAMISM AND THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

Ismail Raji al Faruqi (1921–1986) has been justly recognized for the considerable role that he played in religious dialogue from the 1960s until the day he was tragically murdered. Dialogue was not his only field of activity, however. He also played a considerable role in the academic study of Islam within the history of religions as it was developing in North America in the 1960s and 1970s. He founded the Islamic Studies Group within the American Academy of Religion, and chaired it from 1976 to 1982. This paper is a critical reflection of his work from within the history of religions. It examines how Al Faruqi employed the categories of religion and religious studies. He developed his reflections between contemporary Islamic trends on the one hand, and Christian theologians working within the history of religions on the other. The paper follows his principle ideas of religious traditions, their truth claims, and ethical engagement in the world. For Al Faruqi, these constituted the main foundations of all religions, on the basis of which an approach to the study of religion may be established. In the process, however, he also presented an idiosyncratic approach to Islam that may be compared with other Muslim modernists since the end of the 19th century.

Teja, Ramon – University of Cantabria, Spain
tejar@unican.es

"CHRISTIANITY" AND "CHRISTENDOM": THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF TWO NON-EQUIVALENT TERMS

The distinction between "Christianity" and "Christendom" has been established by some religious thinkers and historians to express the defining characteristics of the way of conceiving and living Christian faith at the present time (modern and post-modern times). This distinction arose out of the historical process that Christian religion and Western culture have undergone, and should therefore be interpreted from the viewpoint of History. "Christendom" was introduced to Europe by the Emperor Constantine.

This term referred to a society whose laws were based on supposedly Christian principles and whose religious and civil leaders were closely connected. The secularisation of society which began in the Enlightenment has resulted in a situation where in the modern world it is not possible to talk of "Christendom" but of "Christianities"; larger or smaller groups of people who believe in the Christian faith. This means that, to a certain extent, modern society reproduces the prevailing situation in the period before the time of Constantine. Even so, religious fundamentalisms, of both Protestant and Catholic sources, appear to aspire to the introduction of new "Christendoms" in the modern world.

Terado, Junko – Sensyu University, Japan
jdotera@hotmail.com

JUSTICE AND CARE: DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICAL ACTIONS IN THE MODERN FRENCH CATHOLIC WORLD

In post-revolutionary French society, both territorial societies and functional corporations were broken up, and the emergence of the proletariat provoked social problems. While the Republicans tried to solve the problems by public assistance or solidarity, the Catholic people resorted to the labor union movement (social Catholicism) for men or traditional charitable works by women. The Lourdes pilgrimage began with this historical background, at first as an attempt to unify the poor in society, but the discursive tendency of social Catholicism and the factional tendency of charitable works gradually weakened, eventually forming "the space of appearance" (cf. Hannah Arendt) of the sick, where care for others is the priority. In this paper referring to the argument by Carol Gilligan on the gender bias in ethics, where she aims to rehabilitate an "ethic of care and responsibilities (women's morality)," in contrast to an "ethic of rights and justice (men's morality)", we will look at the significance and potentiality of disponibilité, a norm for "yielding one's initiative to others," which arose from practices of caring for the sick through the Lourdes pilgrimage.

Thagard, Paul – University of Waterloo, Canada
MAPPING RELIGIOUS MINDS

Religious thinking is both cognitive (with beliefs and concepts) and affective (with values and emotional reactions). This talk will describe the application to religious thought of a new technique for analyzing mental structures: cognitive-affective mapping. A cognitive-affective map is a diagram that displays not only the conceptual structure of people's views but also their emotional nature, showing the positive and

negative values attached to concepts and goals. This technique is based on HOTCO, a model of how people make decisions and other inferences through emotional coherence. Hence cognitive-affective maps can be used not only to describe religious thought but also to explain resulting actions.

Thant, Mo Mo – Yangon University of Distance
Education, Myanmar · dr.momothant@gmail.com

THE PONNA OF MANDALAY: THE FADING AWAY OF THE BRAHMINS IN MYANMAR

Commonly known as The Ponna, an ancient Hindu group in the country of Myanmar, are well known religious group in the country. Almost everyone in the country knows the word Ponna and its existence. The Ponnas were close to the Myanmar Court and accustomed to the Myanmar culture and tradition. Being the only persons carrying the ancient Brahmanic tradition throughout Myanmar, they have been a perfect case of socio-religious adjustment in the Buddhist world of the country. Changing socio-political scenario in Myanmar has however affected them and now the Ponnas are struggling to retain their ethnic identity in this age where no kingdoms remain and the modern fast changing society pushes them out of their required service in the houses of the laity. The paper deals with the subject, not yet touched upon by anybody in non-Burmese language.

Thayanithy, Maithili – University of Toronto, Canada
Maithili_thayanithy@yahoo.ca

MEANING OF RITUAL IN DIASPORIC CONTEXTS: A STUDY OF FEMALE PUBERTY RITUAL IN HINDU DIASPORA

This paper is concerned with the female puberty ritual performed by the Sri Lankan Tamil Hindu diaspora in the Greater Toronto area, Canada. This topic, which has thus far received little scholarly attention, gains momentum in the context of ensuing debates on, and an elusive search for the meanings of the ritual among the Tamil diaspora itself. In Tamil diasporic writings, the puberty ceremony is denounced as one that debases the value of the woman as it is oriented to perceiving her only as a child-bearer, and the parents who arrange the ceremony for their daughters are considered backward and superstitious. Though the contention that the Tamil immigrants participate in caste/family competition by conducting the ritual on a lavish scale seems valid, this does not fully explain the purpose of its re-enactment in Canada. In this paper, I seek to explain the rationale behind the conduct of ritual in diasporic contexts, based on the distinctive role of the woman as a transmitter of religio-social values in the Sri Lankan Tamil society.

I argue that the puberty ritual provides to parents a temporary power over and a relief from the uncertainties and anxieties connected to their daughters' future in the new country, as the daughters are ritually inducted into the Sri Lankan Tamil-Hindu cultural universe, which they (parents) tirelessly strive to create and maintain in Canada.

Thomassen, Einar – University of Bergen, Norway
einar.thomassen@ahkr.uib.no

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF HERESY

Historically, the concept of “heresy” was invented by ancient Christian theology. However, the term is not infrequently used in studies of other religious traditions as well, and it has more recently been taken up by sociologists to describe social mechanisms outside the religious sphere. The paper will critically assess the relatively few contributions that have until now been made towards establishing “heresy” as a useful comparative category in religious studies and sociology, to see if the category can be developed further. It will also be asked whether “heresy” is best regarded as a religious or as a fundamentally social/institutional phenomenon.

Thomsen, Søren Feldtfos – Aarhus University,
Denmarkst@teo.au.dk

REPRESENTING THE ESOTERIC: PROBLEMS AND POTENTIALS OF CURRENT APPROACHES IN THE STUDY OF ESOTERICISM

For the past decades, the study of esotericism has been in a process of demarcating itself from religiously motivated approaches to esoteric currents and traditions in order to establish itself as a purely academic, critically engaged scientific field. This paper investigates to what extent this goal has been achieved by looking at how scholars construct the concept of esotericism and how they apply it. I aim to show that our field is still marked by what has been termed ‘religionist’ approaches, and that even where such approaches are explicitly criticised, there still remains a problem of essentialism, and thus a risk of limiting the theoretical scope and institutional legitimacy of the study of esotericism. I will focus on the work of two prominent scholars in the field, Wouter Hanegraaff and Arthur Versluis, particularly the former’s concept of a ‘Grand Polemical Narrative’ as constitutive for the field of Western esotericism, and the latter’s focus upon ‘gnosis’ as the basic feature of esotericism. Drawing upon the work of Gayatri C. Spivak and other scholars, I shall critically analyze how Versluis and Hanegraaff represent esoteric groupings and individuals in their work, and discuss the problems, limits and potentials of these representations with

regard to the construction of the geographical and ideological boundaries of esotericism by Western scholars. (This paper belongs to the panel ‘Western esotericism and its boundaries: Between discourses of identity and difference’ organized by Allison Coudert, Cathy Gutierrez and Marco Pasi)

Thurfjell, David – Södertörn University, Sweden

PENTECOSTALISM AND ETHNOGENESIS AMONG GYPSIES, ROMA AND TRAVELLERS IN EUROPE

Gypsies, Roma and Travellers in Europe are going through a process of ethnogenesis. In response to the difficult social situation that these groups suffer across the continent, human rights activists have sought to battle discrimination and marginalisation by articulating a common ethnic identity for all Romani communities. Intimately connected to this process is the Pentecostal revivalism that, since the 1950’s, has swept through these groups. This paper discusses the role that religion plays in the political empowerment of European Gypsies, Roma and Travellers. Pentecostalism, it is argued, provides a language, which allows for adjustments to the hegemonial discourses of the majority societies while still maintaining cultural autonomy and self-respect.

Tiilikainen, Marja – University of Helsinki, Finland
marja.tiilikainen@helsinki.fi

SOMALI SAAR IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CHANGE

The aim of this presentation is to provide new perspectives on Somali saar, which mainly has been described and understood through the analysis of I.M. Lewis. The impact of changing social, religious and political conditions, in particular the civil war in Somalia and the flow of refugees, on the spirit possession cult saar has rarely been discussed. First, I argue that Somalis both in the diaspora and the Horn of Africa discontinue the practice of saar due to Islamization of the Somalis at large. Past twenty years the influence of new Islamic movements in Somalia has increased. As a consequence, Sufism seems to be giving way to more puritanical interpretations of Islam, and cultural and religious practices are changing. Second, I suggest, however, that Somali women do not stop practicing saar altogether, but saar takes new forms and becomes visible through alternative ritual contexts such as women’s Sufist sitaat rituals in Somalia and wedding parties in the diaspora. The presentation is based on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in Northwestern Somalia, Somaliland, in years 2005–2007, total 4 months, as well as data collected among Somali migrants in Helsinki and Toronto.

Tofa, Eliot – University of Swaziland, Swaziland

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

RELIGION AND THE BODY: ASPECTS OF PURITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT WORLD AND AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

Most religions in the world have a strong sense of religious purity. Adherents of particular faiths are forbidden from engaging in those acts that are regarded as defiling the body, or in other words as rendering one religiously unclean. A reading of the New Testament informs us of those things/acts which were regarded by the first century Jews as religiously unclean. Among other things, for example, it was not allowed to touch a leper, touch a dead body, 'work' on the Sabbath or to eat animals offered to idols or proscribed in the Mosaic Laws. The present paper appreciated concepts of purity in the New Testament world and African indigenous religious traditions. Specifically, the paper focused at purity codes and myths governing key rites of passage such as birth (kuzvarwa/kutala), naming (kupa zita/ibizo), initiation into adulthood (kurumurwa), death (kufa), mourning (kuchema/kulila) and burial (kuviga/kungwala). In addition to this, proscriptions governing sex (kurarana/ kulala), foods (kudya) and sacred days (chisi/incwala) were also discussed at length. Drawing examples from selected religious traditions among the Shona and the Swazi peoples, the paper demonstrated affinities between concepts of purity in first century Palestine and the Bantu peoples in Southern Africa. The paper concluded by exploring how the concepts of purity promote right conduct, social cohesion, solidarity and identity.

Togarasei, Lovemore – University of Botswana

RETHINKING CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS IN POST-COLONIAL AFRICA

The Bible played an important role in the process of the decolonization of most African states especially in the sub-Saharan region. The Exodus story, for example was central in influencing Africans' call for freedom. Writing about the influence of the Exodus story, John de Gruchy in *Christianity and Democracy* (1995:230) says, "... human emancipation has its roots in the biblical Exodus." Reading the Bible, many Christian churches in Africa found themselves in support of the liberation struggles. In Zimbabwe, for example, the Catholic Church strongly supported the 1970s liberation struggle. Patrick Mutume, in an article in *Religion and Politics in Southern Africa* (1991:143–149) states how the church condemned the colonial state's racist policies through its pastoral letters and even direct support of the liberation fighters. In South Africa the churches' 1985 Kairos

Document marked the churches' direct attack of the apartheid government. In both these two cases and many more, the Bible provided the basis for the church's call for justice and democracy. It is important to consider how the church is reading the same Bible in this postcolonial era in her dealings with the state. A number of works have been published on the role of the African churches in the process of democratization in postcolonial Africa (De Gruchy 1995, Hallencreutz and Palmberg 1991, Gifford 1998, Phiri 2001, Ranger 2007). These works, however, focus on what the churches are doing. They fail to interrogate the source of Christian action or inaction, the Bible. This paper will discuss how biblical interpretation influences church-state relations in postcolonial Africa and then suggest a postcolonial reading of the Bible for the church's contribution to democracy in postcolonial Africa.

Togowa, Masahiko – Hiroshima University, Japan
fakir@mu.h.biglobe.ne.jp

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF CAITANY IN THE GAUDIYA VAISNAVA LITERATURE

This study analyzes the usage of the term Hindu in various contexts in the Gauriya Vaisnava literature, which is a series of hagiographies of the saint Caitanya (1486–1533). In particular, the term Hindu appeared on two masterpieces of the hagiographies, namely the *Sri Caitanya Bhagavata* (completed around 1545) and the *Sri Sri Caitanya Caritamrita* (around 1612–15). It is well known that Joseph T. O'Connell has discussed the term Hindu in these texts, and several scholars have referred to his pioneering study for their arguments over the modern construction of the concept of 'Hinduism'. The author categorises the meanings of the term Hindu in each sentence, and points out the transition of the usages in both texts. This analysis sheds light on the process of the formation of 'self-conscious religious identity', to borrow David Lorenzen's phrase, in which the native people of India became aware of a religious community, who suppose to share the same norms and values as the Muslims. In particular, the usage of the term Hindu-dharma indicates that the Hindu people recognised their beliefs and practices as a 'religion' (dharma), in contrast to the different beliefs and practices of the Muslims, who were dominated the Bengal region of those days.

Tolonen, Pekka – University of Turku, Finland
pekka.tolonen@utu.fi

NOISE AND COMMUNICATION: PERSPECTIVES ON THE MEDIEVAL SOCIAL ORDER

The paper is based on the concept 'noise' introduced by the French erudite Jacques Attali in his *Bruits : essai sur*

l'économie politique de la musique (2nd ed. 2001). According to him 'noise does not exist itself, but in relation to the system it itself belongs to'. 'Noise' can become a message. It can distort old communication and create a new and give birth to a community. Thus 'noise' can be seen in connection with the norm-deviation model. The context where the concept is tried is the religious movements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Europe.

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Tomalin, Emma – University of Leeds, UK

MAPPING THE WORK OF FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS IN INDIA, PAKISTAN, TANZANIA AND NIGERIA

Over the past decade or so, there has been an increasing interest in the role of faith-based organisations in development. On the one hand, the academic literature (including from within development studies) is bringing to light case studies on the work of FBOs reflecting an understanding of them as important players in civil society with respect to the pursuit of various development activities. On the other hand, donor agencies and development organisations themselves realise that they often know little about FBOs in different contexts. One reason that has been suggested for increased interest in FBOs is an assumption that they have certain advantages in particular circumstances and are closer to the poor, with the result that their development activities have more positive outcomes than those of secular NGOs. Reflecting the lack of national overviews, we undertook a 'mapping' exercise to capture information about the nature, scale and activities of FBOs in development in India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania. The aim was to produce an 'impressionistic overview', based on a synthesis of existing secondary material, combined with interviews with a number of key informants. While the reports for each of these have already been published as working papers (www.rad.bham.ac.uk), the aim of this paper is to carry out a 'comparative' analysis of the findings in order to begin to identify possible trends and patterns in the ways that particular religious traditions organise themselves to carry out different sorts of development activity.

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Tomlins, Steven – University of Ottawa, Canada
stom301@uottawa.ca

PUSHING UP DAISIES: THE DEATH OF NEW ATHEISM

New Atheism is explicitly linked to four public intellectuals: Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, Daniel Dennett, and Sam Harris. At the heart of this so-called 'movement' are the five books these four men have written specifically on the topic of religion. New

Atheism is a neologism that was born from media interest of these bestselling books, the fact that they arrived on the scene at roughly the same time, and the willingness of the authors to maintain a united front in order to increase public space for atheism. The perimeters of New Atheism, while never clearly defined, are directly linked to the four mentioned authors and the timing of their pro-atheist anti-theist literature. Of these four individuals, Dawkins is the most accepting of the 'atheist' label as a signifier of his beliefs, or lack thereof, yet he does not refer to his atheism as 'new'. Hitchens prefers to be called an anti-theist; Dennett identifies himself as a Bright; and Harris objects to the need for a label in the first place. The authors have moved on to other projects, do not refer to themselves as New Atheists, and do not speak with a unified voice on behalf of a singular or specific New Atheist movement. While the phenomenon known as New Atheism has been influential, and will no doubt continue to inspire potential and current atheists, this paper will argue that it is best understood as a phenomenon of our recent past. Atheism itself is alive and well, but 'New Atheism' is dead.

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Torres, Juana – University of Cantabria, Spain
Torresj@unican.es

CHRISTIANS AGAINST PAGANS: THE RHETORIC OF PERSUASION IN 4TH CENTURY POLEMIC DISCOURSES

The victims of persecution by political authorities, and of degrading accusations by pagan intellectuals, Christians resorted to literature as a way to defend themselves. They cultivated several literary genres, such as treatises, letters, discourses, dialogues and homilies. With the acknowledgement of freedom of worship by Constantine and successive pro-Christian measures, the persecutions ceased and consequently, the works aimed at the authorities and public opinion, to defend Christians and avoid their death sentence, became irrelevant. Only the apologetic works could still be justified. These were written in reply to the polemic texts of certain pagan intellectuals, opposed to the prerogatives that Christian religion had begun to enjoy. Such texts were *Against the Christians* by the pagan philosopher Porphyry and *Against the Galileans* by the Emperor Julian. We shall study here three discourses written in the 4th century which aimed at refuting this kind of text: *Against the Pagans* by Athanasius of Alexandria, the invectives *Against Julian* by Gregory of Nazianzus and the *Discourse on Babylas* by John Chrysostom. Our objective is to show the rhetorical resources and the arguments used by Christian writers in the genre of discourses, to refute the attacks of their pagan adversaries and to persuade them of the superiority of their religion above all others.

Travagnin, Stefania – University of Saskatchewan,
Canada · travagnins@gmail.com

MEDIA GAMES: PROJECTING FAITH IN SPACE AND IN TIME

This paper explores the presence of religious elements in the Chinese media, questioning the social and historical roots of media evangelism, and assessing the reasons (religious as well as political) of this recent but remarkable phenomenon. This study covers the so-called Chinese religions, namely Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, and folk beliefs, as well as Christianity, which is understood as the Western religion, and draws a comparative analysis of the cultural patterns of their media translations in the three regions of Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The paper commences with a cross-research on the legislation on media and religion in the three areas listed above, underlining genealogies of censorship, as well as reasons and modalities in the changes of ordinances. A comparison shows how, for instance, several legal restrictions on religion and/or through media were removed in Taiwan with the end of the Martial Law in 1987, but only in the early twenty-first century in Mainland China.

Through the analysis of a series of case-studies, the paper argues that the projection of Chinese traditional faiths has served mostly to promote patriotism, and has been used as a flag of cultural and national identity in opposition to the invasion of Western culture. The paper continues by assessing the agency of local religious organizations in the making of a “religious media”, as well as defining the role of Christian TV programs in the Chinese broadcasting.

Travagnin, Stefania – University of Saskatchewan,
Canada · travagnins@gmail.com

ALL YOU NEED IS SHENTONG: ASSESSING TRADITIONAL “SUPERNORMAL” PRACTICES IN CHINESE BUDDHISM

This paper aims at reconstructing the discourse of conservative views on shentong in Chinese Buddhism through the analysis of a series of case-studies dating from the pre-modern to the modern period, with an emphasis on the perspectives of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhists. The sources consulted for this research include scriptures from the Chinese Buddhist Canon, monks’ and nuns’ biographies and autobiographies, writings of twentieth-century Chinese and Taiwanese monastics, visual culture, and sources from the news media.

This paper will study the conservative understanding and practice of shentong diachronically and synchronically. A diachronic analysis of these case-studies will highlight changes in the orthodox adoption of shentong, and show them to be a reflection of social-historical patterns. On the other hand, synchronic research of various “supernormal” episodes in modern China and Taiwan reveals the multivocality of the conservative hermeneutics and practice of shentong today. An analysis of the scholar-monk Yinshun’s (1906–2005) discussions of shentong will show how traditional views have persisted even in modern reformist figures. Then, a discussion of the political use of shentong by the monk Weijue (b.1928) during the 2004 presidential campaign in Taiwan, and the following debate on TV and in newspapers about the meaning and relevance of shentong in “true” Buddhism, will provide further evidence of the clash between orthodoxy and modernity in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.

Finally, this paper also aims to question the definitions of “conservatism” and “orthodoxy” in Chinese Buddhism in the context provided by discussions of shentong.

Triplett, Katja – University of Marburg, Germany
triplett@staff.uni-marburg.de

MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE AND RITUAL INSTRUCTION FOR HEALING THE PHYSICAL BODY FOUND IN EAST ASIAN BUDDHIST TEXTS

Buddhist canonical literature contains numerous references to diseases and medical treatments, usually in connection to eligibility of receiving ordination as a monk or nun. In addition to these passages in the scriptures, we also find related themes in Buddhist legends. Some sūtra and especially tantric texts provide – in addition to the liturgy – detailed instructions for the preparation and administration of medicine within the context of rituals. Studying Chinese translations of these Buddhist texts historians of medicine usually look at processes of medical knowledge transmission between India and China and to other regions in East Asia. Others view the stories of miracle healers such as the “Medicine king” Jīvaka and legends of miraculous cures that feature so greatly in canonical Buddhist texts, as providing material for proselytizing rather than for educating about medical technology. The presentation considers both views – seeing Buddhist texts with references to Indian medicine and surgery as evidence of Indo-Sinitic scientific exchange, and considering these texts as strategic in the struggle for hegemony in a new cultural context.

The question remains whether Buddhists in East Asia worked as healers and physicians in their own right. It may seem hard to think of East Asian Buddhism as partaking in medical practices since the domain of a religion is often thought to be restricted to prayer for divine intervention and healing through faith. However, a closer look at selected texts and their reception in Asuka and Nara period Japan reveals that medical and ritual knowledge was actively produced and circulated by Buddhist monastics and powerful Buddhist lay patrons.

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Tsai, Yuan-lin – National Chengchi University, Taiwan

A NEO-CONFUCIAN INTERPRETATION OF THE RAMADAN FASTING IN THE CLASSICAL CHINESE FIQH LITERATURE

The widespread of Islam in China was caused by the Mongol conquest in the 13th century. But not until the end of the 16th century was the Islamic intellectual tradition deeply rooted in the Chinese soil by the Hui (Sinicized Muslim) 'ulama of the jing-tang, the Chinese counterpart of madrasa. Like high educational institutes in the rest of the Islamic world, fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) was one of the main curricula of the jing-tang, which belonged to the Hanafi madhhab of Sunnism. The eclectic Hui 'ulama had written a group of the fiqh literature in Chinese and interpreted Shari'ah in the Neo-Confucian terms. This was a significant step toward the indigenization of Islam in China and the harmonization between Shari'ah and Li-ritual. My paper focuses on one of the five pillars of Islam, Sawm (the Ramadan fasting), presented in the Chinese fiqh literature by the Hui 'ulama, among which Liu Zhi's Tianfang Dianli Zeyaojie (An Important Selection of the Explanations of Islamic Laws and Ceremonies, 1709) was the most important work. The Hui 'ulama adopted a more inclusive view to the three Chinese teachings, particularly Confucianism, and tended to synthesize both of Islam and the three Chinese traditions within the framework of Islamic metaphysics and cosmology in the Neo-Confucian terminology. This intellectual effort was unprecedented in the Muslim history. It is worthwhile to take Sawm as an excellent example to see how the Hui 'ulama reconciled the enormous difference between Shari'ah and Li-ritual and made Sawm an Islamic way of physical and spiritual cultivation. I divide my discussion into the following three parts based upon the critical analysis of the original literature: (1) the metaphysical foundation of Shari'ah elaborated in terms of the Neo-Confucian li-qi (principle-energy) philosophy; (2) the relationship between the 'ibadat practice of Shari'ah and the Neo-Confucian theory of xin-xing (mind-nature) cultivation; (3) the Sufi spiritual epistemology of the Hui 'ulama in relation to their

interpretation of Neo-Confucian "union between the Heaven and humankind." My interpretative method combines the comparative philosophy of religion with critical textual-contextual analysis in order to explore the creative intellectual work of the Hui 'ulama for a genuine cross-cultural understanding between Islam and the Chinese religions.

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Tsujimura, Masahide – Koyansan University, Japan
 Tsunke0211@yahoo.co.jp

SUFFERING AS A GIFT: COMPASSION IN THE 14th DALAI LAMA

The Dalai Lama highlights the problems facing our society not only as a Tibetan or a Buddhist monk, but also as a human being. According to him, one of the many problems of our modern society is the feeling of isolation and loneliness. His answer to this matter is to approach one's fellow beings with compassion. Compassion is defined as the wish that sentient beings may be free from suffering and the causes of suffering, or the inability to bear the sight of another's suffering.

The Dalai Lama says that suffering helps develop the capacity for empathy, which allows one to relate to other people's feeling and suffering. Therefore, as an aid in helping one connect with others, suffering can be seen as having value.

However, why is compassion suitable as one of the ways to deal with isolation or loneliness?

In this presentation, the answer to this question is sought using the similarity between the structure of reciprocity and the structure of compassion. Further suffering will be shown to have a new meaning as a gift.

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Tsuruoka, Yoshio – University of Tokyo, Japan
 tsuruoka@l.u-tokyo.ac.jp

CONSTRUCTION OF "MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE" IN EARLY MODERN CHRISTIANITY

In recent study of religion it is widely acknowledged that the (concept of) religion is a modern Western construction. Can we argue in the same way about the concept of mysticism? Although there seems to have never been any consensus on the definition of mysticism, the mainstream understanding supposes at its core the notion of "mystical experience". However the meaning of the term "experience" and its epistemological status are, in my view, far from clear. In this presentation I will take up the case of Teresa de Ávila, one of the most salient describers of mystical experience in Christianity.

Investigating the style of discourse that she invented, under the requirements from her confessors, in order to narrate her visions and ecstasies as accurately as possible, I would like to throw some light on the way how her “experiences” were “consecrated” and accepted by her audience as the foundation that authorizes the value of her teaching. This “consecration” of mystical experience opened up a new – “modern” – possibility for religious discourse, but it inevitably entailed a kind of its psychologization: the reality the modern discourse of religious experience primarily refers to became more psychological, individual, and in this sense “immanent” than metaphysical, universal, and “transcendent”. By revisioning this psychologizing construction of mystical experience in early modern Christianity I intend to suggest a more creative hermeneutics of religious languages.

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Turner, Alicia – York University, Canada
 turnera@yorku.ca

THE IRISH PONGYI: THE CONFRONTATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF U DHAMMALOKA IN BURMA

This paper will chart U Dhammaloka’s time in colonial Burma, from his ordination at the Tavoy monastery in Rangoon through his preaching tours, the creation of Buddhist associations, schools and publication up to his final conflict with colonial authorities in 1911. In his time in Burma, U Dhammaloka thrived on confrontation; he first gained notoriety for confronting a police officer wearing shoes on a Buddhist pagoda and never relented in his polemics against Christian missionaries. For all the challenges he mounted to the colonial state he poses an equal challenge to contemporary scholars, forcing us to reconsider the motivations and meanings of European Buddhist converts at the turn of the twentieth century. He asks us to consider multiple modes of perceiving Buddhism and interacting with Buddhists in Asia to rethink about how the colonial divide might have been reconceived or bridged by these interactions.

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Ukah, Asonzeh – University of Bayreuth, Germany
 asonzeh.ukah@uni-bayreuth.de

JESUS JIVE: SOUND, NOISE AND MUSIC IN NIGERIAN CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Boisterous music and rhythmic body movement are some of the hallmarks of Pentecostal liturgical celebrations. This is particularly so in Africa where indigenous songs and musical instruments have been combined with European-type drum-sets, electric guitars and keyboards to produce an innovative blend of heavy and loud music during Pentecostal “Praise and Worship sessions”. Since 1996 when the first Nigerian Pentecostal church was established in South Africa, Nigerian migrant religious organisations have proliferated rapidly to number more than three hundred at the end of 2009. For these churches, music of a particular tempo, pitch and loudness play many different roles in the self-representation and strategies of self-insertion within the post-apartheid Pentecostal economy of South Africa. Music, sound, and noise all function for Nigerian Pentecostal churches as strategies or techniques of performing faith and making believe. Sound and music constitute a capital, like money, technology and power; they are deployed in a variety of ways to contest and (re)inscribe the social soundscape. As well, noise plays a strategic function in rituals of deliverance. Using data from an ethnography of Nigerian-founded Pentecostal churches in South Africa, this paper describes and discusses the multiple “sound worlds” of these churches in their bid to entertain, inspire, manipulate but also proselytize the music- and dance-loving people of urban South Africa.

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Ukah, Asonzeh – University of Bayreuth, Germany
 REIMAGINING THE RELIGIOUS FIELD: THE RHETORICS OF NIGERIAN PENTECOSTAL PASTORS IN SOUTH AFRICA

One of the increasingly visible exports of Nigeria in the 21st century is religion, specifically a brand of evangelicalism sometimes called Pentecostal/charismatic Christianity. With well over a million Nigerian nationals (both documented and undocumented) living in South Africa in 2010, the Nigerian diaspora in post-apartheid South Africa represents a significant proportion of the overall immigrant population in the country. A remarkable feature of the Nigerian community in South Africa – as is the case elsewhere – is the ease and resolve with which its members establish their own worship communities, strongly asserting their religious sensibilities and dynamics as well as at the same time altering the socio-religious ecology of the host society.

There are well over 300 pentecostal-charismatic formations and ministries – as some are called – founded and headed by Nigerians in South Africa, 80 percent of which are concentrated in Johannesburg. Using Bourdieu's concept of the field – with its obvious limitations – and data from an ongoing research project involving interviews with more than fifty Nigerian church founder-leaders, this paper exams the rhetorics of legitimacy and arguments which these church founders deploy in justifying their presence in South Africa as deliberate, even if pragmatic, attempts to reimagining and redefining the local religious field and ecology.

Upal, Afzal – Defence Research and Development
Canada

THE CONTEXT-BASED VIEW OF THE MINIMAL COUNTERINTUITIVENESS EFFECT

The finding that minimally counterintuitive concepts are better remembered than intuitive and maximally counterintuitive concepts has been important to many cognitive scientists of religion who have used it to explain the pervasiveness of minimally counterintuitive concepts in the religious beliefs around the world. Attempts to account for memorability advantages for minimally counterintuitive concepts can be divided into two classes. The first approach advocated in (J. Barrett & Nyhof, 2001; Boyer, 1994; Boyer & Ramble, 2001) and most clearly articulated by Barrett in (J. L. Barrett, 2008) emphasizes unique psychological aspects of minimally counterintuitive concepts and is couched in terms of a modular view of the mind. The second approach presented in (Upal, 2005; Upal, Gonce, Tweney, & Slone, 2007) views minimally counterintuitive concepts as ideas that violate people's expectations and emphasizes the role that context plays in making them memorable. Since the second approach emphasizes the role played by the context, I will refer it to as the context-based approach and the first approach as the concept-based approach. The two approaches are similar in a number of ways. Both approaches lie within the general epidemiology of beliefs framework developed by (Sperber, 1996) which focuses on exploring competition between ideas to understand why certain representations become widespread and cultural. Both approaches also assume that better recall for minimally counterintuitive concepts is a result of evolutionary processes that result in people having a memory architecture that causes minimally counterintuitive concepts to be better remembered than other types of concepts. Both approaches also share the goal of developing an information processing oriented cognitive model of human concept learning and memory that can account for the MC-effect.

I will develop the two approaches by point out the numerous similarities and differences between them and discuss a number of experimental studies that have a bearing on these issues.

Utriainen, Terhi – University of Helsinki, Finland
terhi.utriainen@helsinki.fi

AGENTS OF NEW AGE PRACTICES – A PRAGMATIC APPROACH?

Agency is a pivotal question concerning religion and, consequently, new age or alternative spirituality. What kinds of religious agents are constructed within heterogeneous religious practices in the midst of contemporary life? What do these agents do with religion and the 'Other' constructed in these practices? In order to answer these questions we need to reconsider religious agency. Do we mean by religious agent merely an actor in the religious field, or something else? My paper experiments by borrowing Meyer and Jepperson's sociological theory where the key dimensions of agency are its executive and principal functions. In short, an agent has capacity to execute, *i.e.*, to make happen, and she also has something she acts for, *i.e.*, a principal. This conceptualization of religious agency prompts questions, such as: What kinds of capacities for action do new age agents create? What or who do they act for? By what kinds of (ritual, narrative, embodied, material, gendered, *etc.*) practices is the principal (that is often 'the Other') involved as resource in their everyday lives? Moreover, what effects does becoming and being a particular kind of religious agent have? This kind of approach points towards the Jamesian practical power of 'as if', and thus towards not only constructivist but also pragmatic theories of religion. The practices where one acts as if one was the agent of god, cosmos, one's inner self, destiny or whatever, construct special agents of these principals and their metaphysical realities.

Vähi, Tiina – University of Helsinki, Finland
tiina.vahi@ut.ee

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

THE WEREWOLF IN ESTONIAN FOLKLORE AND AT THE 17th-CENTURY WITCHCRAFT TRIALS IN LIGHT OF ARCHAIC LAW

Seventeenth-century witchcraft trials in Estonia revealed poignant ideological and religious divergences on the folkloric werewolf concept. On one side there was the worldview of homo Christianus – judges as representatives of the state authority and clericals as proponents of the ecclesiastical ideology – and on the other the animistic folkloric philosophy of homo naturalis – the accused, mostly peasants, who lived in close contact with nature. The ruling Christianity clashed with the suppressed folk religion. This brought to light different concepts of law and justice, of ethics and customs, which accounted for the differences in the interpretations of werewolf beliefs. While in principle making provision for penalisation for lycanthropy the folk tradition had its own customs that always evidenced a certain shift towards either acceptable or unacceptable ambivalence and not always coincided with Christian ethics. Even at the 17th-century witchcraft trials the people were able to ‘recollected’ ancient werewolf stories. Accordingly, they might have remembered the olden-day laws concerning the punishment of werewolves, and may have based their testimonies at courts predominantly on the folk tradition, which they knew better than the doctrines of Christianity and the laws effective in their day. Apparently, the popular mentality towards werewolves had retained vestiges of prehistoric justice, of principles of archaic law, for, as appears from the folkloric material and court testimonies, measures evocative of common law and based on magic, which were not codified into generally established and clearly interpretable sets of laws, were taken in the penalisation of werewolves.

Valk, Ülo – University of Tartu, Estonia • ulo.valk@ut.ee

NARRATIVES AND BELONGING: TEMPLE LEGENDS IN VERNACULAR RELIGION OF ASSAM

The paper discusses contents, generic traits and functions of oral narratives, recorded in North East India during four field trips from 2000 to 2009. Several temples of the region (e.g., Kamakhya temples near Guwahati and in Silghat, Madan Kamdev temple), are tied together by a web of narratives about Shiva, his relationship with Sati, her tragic death, Shiva’s grief and future marriage with Parvati. Other stories tell about

conflicts between the local asura-rulers and gods (e.g., Gupteshvar) and the war between Shiva and Krishna. Discovering old temples or sites of future temples (e.g., through dream revelations) is another recurrent topic. Through these traditions places acquire mythic dimensions as tangible manifestations of the divine. Such narratives are spread through networks of tradition carriers – local devotees, people who live in the region, pilgrims and other visitors. Social, ethnic and religious borders, which are manifest in the public sphere, do not divide these networks of tradition carriers, formed around narrated places. Thus, neo-vaishnava devotees, whose religious doctrines (established by Shankaradeva in 15th and 16th centuries) condemn idol-worship and sacrifice, visit temples of Shiva and goddess and spread the respective legends. Some of these legends are also known among the indigenous peoples of Assam. Thus, oral traditions build up alternative social realities – networks and communities of individuals whose belonging rather depends on the narrative gravity of places, not on social identities and hierarchies.

Vallina, Francisco Javier Fernández, Spain

LA RELIGIÓN COMO FORMA DE LA RAZÓN SIMBÓLICA

Tipo por favor o pegue su resumen aquí: El progreso científico y las experiencias históricas del siglo XX han acentuado la necesidad del estudio interdisciplinar y las respuestas desde la complejidad (E. Morin). Tras la crítica del la Escuela de Frankfurt y el desafío que plantea el desarrollo sostenible y las exigencias de una ética civil consensuada es preciso superar de modo innovador la tradicional docotomía de las llamadas culturas “científica/humanística. Por ello, se somete a discusión la ordenación de las tres razones indispensables y complementarias del ser humano: a) la razón científico-instrumental; la razón simbólica y la razón filosófica. Todo nuestro conocimiento se produce en la intersección de las tres razones, pero cada una de ellas goza de un espacio específico. Trataremos de justificar esta nuevo posible paradigma global, explicando brevemente las tres, ahondando en el ámbito y alcance de la razón simbólica, para detenernos en la justificación del estudio y conocimiento de los fenómenos religiones y sus expresiones como una de las formas de esta razón simbólica.

van den Heever, Gerhard – University of South Africa, South Africa · vandenheevers@lantic.net

DISCURSIVE COMPETITION – THE ‘LAST FLOWERING OF PAGANISM’ IN ROME

This paper considers a set of inscriptions from the ancient Phrygianum in Rome self-identifying the dedicants as holders of priesthoods. The dedicants in question advertised in stone their multiple initiations and priesthoods in a specific stereotypical configuration of cults. A remarkable feature of the Phrygianum inscriptions is the stereotyping of the deities mentioned: Magna Mater (Mater Idea) and Attis Men Tyrannus, Sol Invictus/Mithras, Liber Pater (= Dionysus), Hecate, and Isis. These cults were all products of imperial discourse. This particular constellation of cults brilliantly illustrates the political life of religious traditions. Much studied in the context of the last phase of Mithraism at the ‘end of paganism’ in Late Antiquity, they open a much wider window on to the discursive foment that was late fourth century Rome. These cults were not the detritus of a now-gone past epoch, supplanted by their opposite, an officially sanctioned Christianity. Both ascending Christianity and these cults subsisted in the same imperial and imperializing discourse, and furthermore, the multiple mentions of taurobolic and kriobolic rites and the mentions of rebirth signal a disposition-making process mirroring that of contemporary Christianity. Contextually, as events of self-expression, they are situated in the tumultuous liminal period between tolerance for traditional cults and hard-line suppression of such cults under Gratian. They represent the ‘last flowering of paganism’ in the midst of an increasingly Christianizing Rome. Collectively they counted among the so-called ‘aristocratic pagan party’ who still saw honour in holding priesthoods and regarded it as a sign of elite status. It was a way of promoting tradition and maintaining the rites that in ensemble continually reconstituted the Empire in practice. It was a time of discursive fighting over identity-formation in a war over defining symbols. The process of Christianization of Rome was a much more complex development than a simple ‘victory’ for the cult of Christ. At stake was a redefinition of tradition, of identity, of demographic changes in the heartland of the empire, of a reconstitution of power and authority instances, all of which, when considered, demands a redescription and retheorizing of religion and tradition. As such this paper is an exercise in description for the purposes of redescription emblematic of the current Redescribing Graeco-Roman Antiquity project and contributes to the groundswell of alternative kinds of religio-historical study that move beyond mere description and paraphrasing to an interpretive analytics of religious history.

Varona, Alberto – California Institute of Integral Studies, USA · aevarona@gmail.com

YHWH: A STRUCTURED PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE GOD DEPICTED IN THE BIBLE

YHWH, the primary deity of the Hebrew Bible, is the basis of the concept of god in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This structured personality assessment study measured the level of health and pathology attributed to YHWH in two selections of the Hebrew Bible, the J and the P texts, which were selected for their unique depiction of YHWH and for their distinct historical and thematic emphasis. Methodology: 46 participants holding a graduate level degree in psychology assessed a depiction of YHWH using the Shedler and Westen Assessment Procedure (SWAP-200), a personality assessment instrument designed for clinicians to describe their patients in detail. They were also given a poststudy questionnaire identifying their own religious beliefs and affiliations. Results: The profile that emerged described YHWH as possessing both Narcissistic and Antisocial Personality traits. The Narcissistic Personality traits were just slightly below the threshold for a formal diagnosis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. The primary traits revealed include attention-seeking, controlling, critical, angry, and hostile, and seeking power and influence over others. In addition, the Antisocial Personality traits describe a figure that experiences no remorse for the harm or injury caused to others, nor concern for the consequences of his actions. Most participants were very consistent in their portrayal of YHWH; however, a deviation was found in those who showed a personal affinity for YHWH, and they assessed the deity more favorably. This study was the first to successfully quantify a personality assessment of a religious deity.

Vinnichenko, Oksana – The member of Ukrainian Religious Association, Ukraine
vinnichenko.oksana@gmail.com

CRIMEA AS THE NEW HOST OF INTER-RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN EUROPE

Religious conflict in Crimea today resembles the situation in Balkans and North Caucasus which they sought to solve in different ways, but unrest continues with terrorist acts, armed clashes, manifestations of ethnic and religious intolerance, etc. Large aspects of this unrest are motivated by religious beliefs. Historically, Crimea has long been characterized by its polyconfessionalism, but always dominant are Christianity or Islam. Christianity appeared in Crimea in the III–IV centuries CE, and was common among the settled inhabitants of the peninsula and was predominant for almost fifteen hundred years.

But at the beginning of XVIII century, Christianity was almost entirely superseded by Islam. The inclusion of Crimea by the “Golden Horde” in the first half of XIII century led to the Islamization of the majority of its population. For almost seven centuries Islam became the predominant religion of the peninsula. However, also found in Crimea were separate regions of Christian culture operating in a predominantly Muslim confessional space. In light of this history, this paper will ask if it is possible to overcome or minimize the conflict between Christians and Muslims in the Crimea? Will existing conflicts lead to an escalation of opposition, or might it lead to efforts of Christians and Muslims to work toward peace in Crimea, where Russians can live in harmony with Ukrainians, Tartars, Karaites, Greeks, Armenians – all belong to different religions?

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Vita, Silvio – Italian School of East Asian Studies,
 Kyoto

PARIS AS A CULTURAL CONTACT ZONE IN THE MAKING OF MODERN DISCOURSE ON BUDDHISM

During the 19th century several themes that would become central in the construction of Buddhism as an intellectual domain were also the result of travel and meetings with people. This was particularly relevant for many Japanese, as traveling to Europe took for them the role of the bildungreise. In this paper I will consider the first few months of 1973, when in Paris were simultaneously present a few important figures of the Japanese government as members of the Iwakura Mission, and those of other “missions” sent to Europe by the two main branches of Shin Buddhism. Such seminal figures in their respective traditions as Shimaji Mokurai (1838–1911), Akamatsu Renjō (1841–1919) and Ishikawa Shuntai (1842–1931) had the chance to get acquainted there with the approaches to the problem of religion in Europe and its role in society, as well as to the academic discipline of Buddhist studies, developed out of a textual framework in the preceding decades. I will show how their meetings with the French scholar Léon de Rosny (1837–1914)– in the context of a city that has been considered the cultural “capital” of that age– produced a fruitful exchange that would continue over time. For French intellectual society it opened up the possibility of dealing with a “living” reality, that could be interpreted through dialogue rather than reading of ancient texts. This trend continued in the following years, and led, among other things, to the well-known visit of Emile Guimet to Japan to survey Japanese religion with the method of the ethnographic interview. The presentation will thus shed light on an influential aspect of the cultural exchange between European and Japanese in a domain that has been the object of scholarly interest in recent years.

Von Stuckrad, Kocku – University of Groningen, The Netherlands · c.k.m.von.stuckrad@rug.nl

REFLECTIONS ON THE LIMITS OF REFLECTION: AN INVITATION TO A DISCURSIVE STUDY OF RELIGION

It has repeatedly been claimed that the study of religion should not essentialize “religion” as an object of study that exists “out there,” waiting for us to discover and understand “it.” Reflection on the contexts and hidden agendas of concepts of religion are part and parcel of scholarly activity. But can there be an end to such a circle of reflection? This paper argues that definitions of and approaches to religion are intrinsically linked to the episteme and the discourse of the time. After clarifying the terms “discourse,” “episteme,” and “field,” this dynamic is exemplified with the emergence of the academic field of “Western esotericism.” The paper concludes that rather than looking for a better definition of religion, the academic study of religion should focus on describing, analyzing, and demarcating the religious fields of discourse. These fields are both the object of study for scholars of religion and the scholars’ habitat.

Waggoner, Michael D. – University of Northern Iowa,
USA · mike.waggoner@uni.edu

LIGHT FROM HEAT: CONSTRUCTIVELY ENGAGING RELIGIOUS IDEAS IN US HIGHER EDUCATION

Among modern Western societies, the United States is one of the more religious – both in terms of diversity of traditions and individual belief and practice. Yet, its nonsectarian institutions of higher education are polysemous about the place of religion and spirituality in its academic discourse and larger institutional life. Sources in popular culture have, in recent years, hailed the resurgence of religion. It is argued here that this phenomenon is more a re-engagement of attention to something present all along, rather than a new higher level of societal awareness. What may be new in the social milieu, however, is the prospect for engagement with the ideas of religion and spirituality in the broader discourse of nonsectarian higher education – outside the confines of religious studies department and on different grounds than in its earlier national history. This new engagement may be possible due, in part, to new understandings of secularisms. This paper addresses major elements of the cultural and intellectual landscape of US society and higher education that contributed to higher education's 'failure to engage' with religious ideas in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Seen through new lenses, these same elements may now become loci of a new engagement of religion and spirituality in higher education. These elements include the 'balkanization of religion', shifting bases of authority, radical individualism, challenges to cultural authorities (culminating in and fulminating from the 60s), civil religion, and blind spots in important constituent aspects of the academy: faculty, curriculum, students, and student affairs staff.

Walker, Richard R. – Wilfrid Laurier University,
Canada · walker@wlu.ca

MODIFYING THE SPIRITUAL BRAIN: COGNITIVE SCIENCE, NEUROTECHNOLOGY AND THE CONTROL OF RELIGION

It may seem like science fiction, but cognitive and neurobiological studies of religion raise the possibility of neurotechnologies being developed which can control religious experiences and beliefs. The pursuit of techniques to augment or suppress aspects of human thought is one of the motivational foundations of the cognitive sciences as it is, arguably, of some religious practices. This confluence of goals, technological and religious, is suggestive for understanding how the cognitive sciences of religion are oriented towards their

object of study as well as the ways in which interventions into brain functioning are being pursued. In the fields of medicine and health care the neurobiology of religious experience and belief is invoked as the basis upon which various medical technologies, pharmacological interventions and behavioral therapies are used to promote mental and physical health and well-being. At the same time, psychological explanations of religious beliefs in supernatural agents and events have led some cognitive scientists to suggest ways to suppress the potentially harmful social and political effects of our natural inclination for religion. However, just how realistic is the possibility that future technologies will be developed to turn religion on or off in our brains? With reference to technology assessment studies of emerging neurotechnologies, this paper will negotiate the question of whether or not attempts to create technologies designed to intervene in religious brain functioning are either possible or desirable and what this might signify for the future of the cognitive study of religion.

Wang, Hongmei – Peking University, China
flora.hm.wang@gmail.com

HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM: SEARCHING FOR A BALANCE BETWEEN RELIGIOUSNESS AND SECULARITY

Humanistic Buddhism (Renjian Fojiao), a Chinese Buddhist phenomenon emerged from the early 20th century and now prospering in Chinese regions, disregards the conventional Buddhist image of detachment from this world and emphasizes on active social involvement. Often compared to Engaged Buddhism, it is viewed as pulling Buddhism from the obsession with other-worldly and death affairs back to this-life and human concerns. For almost one century, it has had significant beneficial social impact. However at the same time, a lot of religious characters of traditional Buddhism are gradually losing to the secularizing endeavors. In fact, in Humanistic Buddhism, the tension between religiousness and secularity is unavoidable as many fundamental characters of traditional Buddhism are transmundane; for example, concerns in death matters reflect the unique thoughts in life and death in Buddhism. In early Humanistic Buddhism, the founders disregarded many of these factors in order to adapt Buddhism to the then urgent request for modernization; however, after almost a century's development, a new task appears that is not to disregard these factors totally, but how to bring them into the modern context. Take Taiwan Tzu Chi foundation as an example, after half a century's efforts which have made Tzu Chi a world-renowned religious organization for its charity work, its founder Master Zhengyan recently claims more efforts should be made for Buddhism per se besides the charity work.

This reflects the awareness of Humanistic Buddhism that religiousness should also be addressed in contemporary context.

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Wario, Halkano – University of Bayreuth, Germany
halkanoabdi@googlemail.com

LOCATING THE 'RELIGIOUS FIELD' IN A NORTHERN KENYAN MUSLIM COMMUNITY: REFLECTING ALONG BOURDIEUIAN LINES

Pierre Bourdieu is quoted to have rejected his work as 'a project of grand theory.' He said that 'I do not theorize, it is a temporary construct that takes shape for and by empirical work.' He considers his concepts as 'thinking tool' that can only be visible through the results that they can yield. I shall attempt just that by using case study from my field work among the Borana Muslims of Northern Kenya, focusing on examples from Merti, a small Muslim town in the area. For a socio-scientific study of religion to make sense, we need to examine the competitive structure of the religious field, the habitus of the practitioners, their interests and strategies, the forms of capital at stake and the exercise of domination and violence. It is through such an effort that one can provide a critical and self-reflective study of religious practice.

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◀ **Wasim, Alef Theria** – State Islamic University, Indonesia

SYNCRETISM IN WAYANG KULIT PERFORMANCE: SHIFTING THE SIGNIFICANCE OUT AND MULTIPLE INTERPRETATIONS IN RELIGIOUS-CULTURAL STUDY

This presentation challenges the field limited boundaries that researches, scholars, readers often constructed between religious-cultural insiders and outsiders. Drawing on my observation and understanding, I inform that the main task of understanding, interpreting and explaining reading the three fragmental texts of Sĕrat Mahabarata, and the realities is locating the self in relation to ambiguous and dynamics and turning the significance. An elementary analysis of understanding, interpreting and explaining of three texts located readers to illustrate how religious people culturally identify the meaning and significance of human life. As a sacred text of Hinduism, Mahabharata, was adopted in an Old Javanese text at the time of Kediri's gloriousness in 19 parvas. The myth of Mahabharata shifted to be a story with wayang performance's style through a long history, taken part by the "absolute" authority when the dhalangs play it. The dhalangs might be developing their creativities to meet the need of people, and the adopters doing the same things. This creativity emerges such a new "religious" trends as new institutions (multiculturality) bring conflicts and other socio-cultural disorder.

Here, through adoption and adaptation the elites (incl. elites in wayang) are motivated to create a new harmony among the existing inter-sects one to another. The process of adoption and adaptation was recorded by the text. Three fragmental texts are chosen from Sĕrat Mahabarata, and Srikandhi is the prominent and important figure, and the adoption and adaptation as a cultural product re-emerging a neo-syncretism. This presentation explores the religious experiences dimensions of research relationship and informs that there may transform and reinforce and interact with socio-cultural phenomena.

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Wasim, Alef Theria – State Islamic University, Indonesia · aleftw@indo.net.id

WOMAN IN SĒRAT MAHABARATA: READING ON FRAGMENTAL TEXT OF SRIKANDHI SUCI

The presentation will focus on the figure of woman in the fragmental text, Srikandhi Suci or the holy Srikandhi. Reflecting on an idiom expressed with 'unity and the idea of harmony', this paper is presenting something about a kind ecological unity: to invoke nature is to invoke primordial balance, holism, and understanding of its relationship between things. In the study of religions this description is called cosmology, and here a story about interrelationship and balanced not just between the world of woman and man as other human beings but between microcosmic and macrocosmic as well. In the recent study of gender, the focus has been similar and the text of Srikandhi Suci stressing cosmological text and ritual practices as ecologically expressed with sacralize "woman" so that human beings can live as integral part of the universe. The reading of the text of Srikandhi Suci will present the reader about how the reader use the text and what the text in turn impresses about the relationship of creator, creation and creature. This text is closely related to the episodes of the fragmental texts, before and after: Lairipun Srikandhi (the birth of Srikandhi), Gĕrbong Bale Lumur, and Seta Gugur, as an integrated unity of the perfect woman's process of maturation.

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Wasserman, Emma – Rutgers University, USA
wasserm@rci.rutgers.edu

COSMIC HIERARCHY IN THE APOCALYPTICISM OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

Scholars have made dualisms central to the definition of early Christian apocalypticism and the thought of Paul in particular. Though the 20th century re-discovery of apocalypticism took it as an embarrassing chapter in Christian history, subsequent interpreters found a theology of hope and social critique in its dualistic contrasts between good and evil, what is with what should be.

This paper argues that Paul's apocalypticism can be better understood in hierarchical rather than dualistic terms. Reflecting patterns of ancient Mediterranean thought generally, Paul understands the cosmos as a closed hierarchy of substance and value, a cascading series of spheres, levels of being, and agents that extends into the human sphere to differentiate among persons and groups. Like a range of Jewish apocalyptic writers, however, Paul maintains that a single, all-powerful ruler plans immanently to restore and purify this order while extending protection and vindication to a special elite. Thus, his cosmic order legitimizes a particular hierarchy of substance and value among human beings by giving the supposedly true Christ-followers proximity and access to the truly powerful invisible agents. On these terms, dualistically constructed normative categories like insiders and outsiders, the righteous and the wicked, and true and false religious beliefs and practices generate and re-enforce a particular vision of hierarchy and rule.

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Wasserstrom, Steven M. – Reed College, USA

IS JUDEO-ISLAMICATE HERMETICISM "WESTERN ESOTERICISM"?

"Hermeticism flourished among the Jewish elites of the Muslim world between the ninth and the thirteenth centuries. Its literary expressions were in Arabic and Hebrew, and they ranged from incidental mentions of the name Hermes to works of fundamentally Hermetic substance. This paper will first give a brief overview of this little known phenomenon. It then argues that there is nothing to be gained intellectually by characterizing Judeo-Islamicate Hermeticism under the rubric of "Western Esotericism." The primary reason to be argued in some detail in this paper is that "western esotericism" essentializes disparate phenomena that should not be segregated into a putative category. This argument leaves aside the question of whether or not Judeo-Islamicate Hermeticism is "Western" or "esoteric". Instead, this paper will identify the problems that arise when one attempts to locate Judeo-Islamicate Hermeticism in a category that is foreign to its defining characteristics."

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Watanabe, Kazuko – Toyo Eiwa University, Japan
 lashamk@yc4.so-net.ne.jp

CONTRACTS AND OATHS IN ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA

For a long time it has generally been supposed that covenants between a god and the people are unique to the Bible and should be discussed separately from legal and social contracts. Among the clay tablets from Ancient Mesopotamia discovered during the recent 150 years, there are many religious as well as legal contracts.

The number of discovered clay tablets and fragments amounts to over 300,000 and is still increasing. These cover roughly the time from 3000 BC to 500 BC. One third of them are already published. The Mesopotamian contracts have varying contents and cannot be clearly divided into religious and non-religious. Even in the seemingly mere legal documents, gods could be summoned to be witnesses, or to curse the person who broke the contracts. Especially in the oaths, gods played important roles and could even seal the documents with their own seals. Concrete evidence of a sealing? by a god was provided by the oath documents of the Assyrian king? Esarhaddon (672 BC) which were published as "the vassal-treaties of Esarhaddon" in 1958. The ancient people did not call it a "treaty," but an "oath". The biblical covenants seem to have followed the long foregoing tradition of gods acting as legal entities in Mesopotamia. Oath documents have been on a point of contact between the religious and legal spheres even up to the present time. Various authorities rendering validity to contracts and oaths should be discussed in a wider scope of time and place which includes Ancient Mesopotamia.

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Weaver, Jace – University of Georgia, USA
 jweaver@uga.edu

INDIGENOUS COSMOVISIONS: DEFINITIONS AND POWER

This presentation will look at attempts to define "indigenous" religions so as to avoid primitivism. Focusing on Native North American cultures' cosmovisions, it will look at such religious traditions as constituent of identity and social cohesion. In particular, but not exclusively, it will look at the work of the late Apache philosopher Viola Cordova as it intersects with these issues.

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Weiner, Isaac – Georgia State University, USA

LISTENING IN: REFLECTIONS ON STUDYING SOUND ACROSS RELIGIOUS BOUNDARIES

Recent scholarship in Religious Studies has begun to take increased note of sound and hearing practices, emphasizing how music and other sounds offer a means for constructing and negotiating collective identity. Yet most of this attention has focused on how sound functions within bounded religious communities. In the larger project on which this paper draws, I attend to how public sounds, such as church bells, prayer calls, and amplified proselytizing, cross boundaries, mediating contact among diverse religious communities. In the pluralistic spaces of American public life, these sounds reach multiple, heterogeneous audiences – both intended and unintended, willing and unwilling

– who hear and respond to them in different ways. I focus especially on complaints about religion as noise, analyzing what such a claim has meant at different historical moments. In this paper, I consider some of the theoretical and methodological challenges associated with studying sound across religious boundaries. How do we “listen in” on how others have “listened in”? In particular, I plan to call attention to three related issues: 1) how we attend both to the ways that sounds shape encounters between diversely religious Americans and to how responses to these sounds are shaped by culturally specific values; 2) whether there is something “distinct” about sound and its mediating function or whether these sounds act as “triggers” in the same way as other public displays of religion; and 3) how we study sounds that go unnoticed – for sounds only become noise when someone pays attention to them.

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Wijzen, Frans – Radboud University, The Netherlands

“THERE ARE RADICAL MUSLIMS AND NORMAL MUSLIMS”. AN ANALYSIS OF THE DISCOURSE ON ISLAMIC EXTREMISM

In his article Discourse in Braun & McCutcheon’s Guide to the Study of Religion, Murphy (2000: 403) notes, “when it comes to discourse theory and religion, we find ourselves in mostly uncharted territory”. Ten years later it probably would be more appropriate to state that quite some scholars see discursive study of religion as a fruitful alternative to the phenomenological and the sociological ones, and as a way-out to the dilemma between (social) science and humanities approaches to the study of religion (Kippenberg 1985; Flood 1999; Kippenberg & Von Stuckrad 2003; McCutcheon 2007) but that “[t]here are no clear rules or conventions as how to conduct an analysis” (Granholm 2005: 260). Many studies on discourse and religion remain quite abstract and theoretical. They seldom make analyses of concrete discourses. The aim of this contribution is to develop a multi-perspective and poly-methodical model for the discourse-analytical study of religion and to test it using data generated through focus group discussions on Muslim-Christian relations in Tanzania and Indonesia. The structure will be as follows. First we will outline and develop further the Faircloughian model of discourse analysis. Next we will elaborate on how we use this model in our research focusing on the discourse on “Muslims Militants”. We end with discussion and conclusion.

Williams-Hogan, Jane – Bryn Athyn College, USA
janewh@dwave.com

RELIGION THE HUMAN INSTITUTION: THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In sociology, religion is generally classified as one among the five major social institutions. The five are institutions that are ubiquitous among human groups. The others are: the family, education, economics, and politics. Many animal species, particularly those who live in groups, share with human four of these five institutions. Religion is the institution that is not shared with animals and is unique to humans. Physiologically, religion is connected with human beings relative lack of instincts on the one hand and capacity for language on the other. Human reflectivity and self-consciousness give human being the ability to stand in the present and to reflect on the past and to contemplate the future. Human beings can consciously witness both birth and death. Reflectively standing between the two, they ask about the meaning of life and death. This human predicament gives rise to Tolstoi’s questions – questions of salvation: “what shall I do and how shall I live?” Since the human condition remains constant and requires negotiation with the birth of every generation, religion will not disappear. This implies that religion is not just an old vestigial institution that will die through the process of secularization, but that it has modern and post-modern guises. This paper will explore the sociological implications of seeing religion as “the human institution.”

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Wilson, Cecile – Exeter University, UK
cecilewilson@rogers.com

THE INTERSECTION OF SCIENCE AND ‘PRACTICAL MYSTICISM’ IN THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER, AMORC 1917 TO 1926

This paper has been accepted by the panel ‘Seduced by Science’. While organizations such as the Theosophical Society and Anthroposophy have received ample attention in previous academic studies, the attitudes of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC toward the intersection of science and ‘practical mysticism’ have, as far as I know, not been examined. Yet a review of some of the publications of AMORC at its inception in the United States in the early part of the twentieth century reveals a quest that many still find relevant today: an attempt to integrate two seemingly disparate poles of perception and arrive at an integrated approach to reality. The posture taken towards science in the articles raises the questions: Did AMORC seek to realign its ontology with science or did it seek to realign science with the ontology of AMORC? Furthermore, just whose prestige was being raised: that of science or esoteric tradition?

How was this prestigious knowledge presented to the general public? For AMORC, it seems that the rationalism of science provided an unarguable foundation for belief in 'traditional' concepts. On the other hand, science itself could, from a certain viewpoint, be considered as much 'a matter of inspiration and revelation, as is religion.' (The American Rosae Crucis, April 1920, p. 13) This paper will examine sample articles from magazines published by AMORC between 1917 and 1926 inclusive highlighting: - the use of scientific vocabulary applied to spiritual or mystical contexts; - examples of scientific concepts or discoveries considered to be in support of the traditions of practical mysticism; - examples of scientific concepts or discoveries considered fallacious, and therefore in opposition to traditions of practical mysticism; - the means of determining the veracity or fallacy of scientific claims. I will use these examples to argue for an enchantment, necessarily by science, but with the aid of science.

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Wilson, David Gordon – University of Edinburgh, UK
 davidgordonwilson@blueyonder.co.uk

WAKING THE ENTRANCED: REASSESSING SPIRITUALIST MEDIUMSHIP

This paper is part of a proposed panel entitled: "Body, Mind and Religion", in the Section 'Innovation'. Both scholarly and popular works have tended to contrast Spiritualist mediumship as passive and shamanic practice as active, following Eliade's characterization of the shaman as typically one who 'travels'. This paper arises from a recent doctoral thesis in which I tested the hypothesis that Spiritualism is an example of shamanism, one indigenous to modern Anglo-American society. This hypothesis required me to re-examine and challenge this traditional typology, with consequences for our understanding of both mediumship and shamanic practice as examples of possession phenomena. A re-examination of Spiritualist mediumship reveals it to be a practice comprising a range of skills, acquired through a process of apprenticeship, enabling the practitioner to maintain an altered state of awareness for the purpose of communicating with spirits, and expressly intended to facilitate this practice without practitioners exposing themselves to the risk of uncontrolled possession. In addition, shamanic practice involves clear examples of possession, with Eliade's characterization of such examples as atypical, or as exemplifying a deteriorated form of shamanic practice, increasingly difficult to sustain. This paper argues for a more nuanced understanding of spirit mediumship and shamanic practice as learned crafts, which enable practitioners to manage a dialectic between control and possession (in the sense of control by another).

Wilson, David Sloan – See Plenary Presentations, p5

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Winter, Franz – University of Vienna, Austria
 franz.winter@univie.ac.at

"MESMERIC YOGA"? THE INTERPRETATION OF INDIAN MEDITATION TECHNIQUES IN THE OUPNEK'HAT

One of the milestones of the reception of India in the West is the Latin translation of the Upanishads provided by the French scholar Abraham H. Anquetil-Duperron (1731–1805) in 1801–02. The voluminous "Oupnek'hat id est secretum tegendum" (lit.: "Oupnek'hat, which means: secret to be kept") became an important reference tool for everyone interested in Indian philosophy and theology, especially after being used extensively by the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer in his interpretation of the Indian "Weltanschauung". Anquetil-Duperron's book shaped the way India and its religious traditions were thought of until modern times. In this paper I would like to focus on the way specific Indian religious topics, especially the Yogic meditation techniques, are interpreted in this influential publication. This is done by referring mainly to the introduction in the translation itself, wherein Anquetil-Duperron seeks to provide a general introduction to the "summa orientalis systematis", i.e., a summary of the "oriental" (philosophical and theological) system which is said to be fundamental to all the philosophical and religious traditions of the world. The most important feature of this text is the fact that Anquetil-Duperron attempts to prove his theory of an "absolute philosophy" by explaining concepts found by him in the Upanishads with reference to specific Western religious traditions. Therein Mesmerism is one of the major points of interest as it provided a possible tool for the interpretation of various features of Indian meditation techniques. Furthermore, as Anquetil-Duperron's translation is based on a Persian translation of the Upanishads which was framed already in a special religious background, namely the Sufi-tradition, we also have to pose the question of a specific pre-tradition of his approach to India and its religious heritage.

Xinping, Zhuo – Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China

CHINESE RELIGIONS AND THEIR SOCIAL BACKGROUND

Chinese Religions in the contemporary process of globalization have undergone great changes, and exerted unprecedented impacts in Chinese society since China's reform and opening-up to the outside world. But this development has its social background. This article will undertake comparative studies of various religions in the Chinese society today and in the past, discuss especially the present social existence of these religions, their significance and functions in this society understood by the contemporary Chinese scholars. Major expositions of this article include the relationship between religion and politics, religion and law, religion and society, and the mutual interactions of religion and culture in the past and contemporary Chinese society. The present situation and future possibility of religious existence and development in China should be based on their close relationship with the Chinese society and their roles in contemporary Chinese development. The understanding of religion in China today has a very favorite atmosphere in the Chinese effort of constructing a harmonious society.

Xygalatas, Dimitris – Aarhus University, Denmark
xygalatas@mac.com

THE COGNITIVE STUDY OF RELIGION IN THE WILD

This paper will explore the application of experimental methods in the study of religious behavior. It will discuss two particular case studies, based on ethnographic research conducted by researchers at Aarhus University, in an attempt to bring laboratory methods into the field. The first study is an expedition to the Spanish village of San Pedro Manrique, where biometric measurements (heart rate) were used to study synchronous arousal during the performance of a fire-walking ritual. The second study is an expedition to the island of Mauritius, where the use of game-theoretical models in the field was explored as a paradigm for further field research.

Yachi, Yu – The University of Tokyo, Japan
yuyu yatty@ybb.ne.jp

[PLEASE NOTE: This paper has been withdrawn]

BELIEF AND OUR COGNITION OF THE WORLD: AT THE CONFLUENCE OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE

The aim of this presentation is to reveal the structure of our cognition of the world, especially that of "reality" and "fiction," from a viewpoint of "belief." To construct a more universal theory of "belief" in the distinction between "reality" and "fiction," I will begin the analysis with the notion of "conceptual scheme" by W. V. O. Quine, a leading philosopher of the analytic tradition. A "conceptual scheme" is an organization that interprets and puts in order the raw experiences. It is stimulating to our understanding of "reality," which depends upon the selection of "conceptual schemes" based on the "belief." That is, the "reality" can be "real" as long as it is "believed." Quine indicates that "the principal of charity," which includes unconscious assumption that we have "common" recognition on various things, strengthens such a fluid "reality." I will posit that there should be considered the "meta conceptual scheme" level, and insist that a kind of "belief" also works here. Quine tries to explain this level by the activation of sensory receptors, but it is defective. The rich store of knowledge of the modern cognitive science, especially that of "real" and "fiction," will make it possible to argue about it more essentially and gives an innovative view. However, I aim to overcome the limit of Quine's tendency of scientism and, consequently, it is to be presented that there are some states of "belief" with which the cognitive science cannot deal.

Yagi, Kumiko – Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan · kuyagi@tufs.ac.jp

NEW MUSLIM PREACHERS AS AN ASPECT OF RE-ISLAMIZATION

This paper examines "Muslim Televangelists," new Muslim preachers in Egypt, who are particularly popular among Westernized Muslims of the upper class. Their voices are heard through new media such as satellite television and the Internet. Their fluent English and fashionable clothes are indicative of their intimacy with Western culture. In spite of their success, their authority is being questioned by the Ulama because their educational background is not the traditional/religious one represented by Azhar. There is competition between these preachers and the Ulama.

Their popularity comes from the fact that the Islam they present is aimed at their audience. First, it is not political; the emphasis is on the spiritual awakening of individual Muslims. Second, and more important, these preachers are familiar with Western culture. Although not a few Ulama are open-minded toward Western culture, they see it as a culture of the other. However, for the new preachers, Western culture is an indispensable constituent of their life. Therefore, they have the 'authority' to discuss Islam on behalf of Westernized Muslims, if not the authority to interpret the sacred texts. This explains why they are popular among immigrant Muslims in the West as well. The decline of the Ulama's influence does not necessarily indicate secularization of Muslim society. In the present case, the opposite is correct. The Ulama's monopoly in the religious market may be broken because a larger part of the society is re-Islamized, which creates a more diversified demand of Islam.

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Yamada, Hitoshi – Tohoku University, Japan
 yamadahi@sal.tohoku.ac.jp

JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY FROM ETHNOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Ethnology has been one of the main points of view from which Japanese mythology has been studied. Parallel motifs, similar tales, and corresponding structures have been pointed out by mythology scholars with ethnological interests. Even though their methodologies were diverse – Nobuhiro Matsumoto with French sociological background, Akihide Mishina with Dixonian historicism, Masao Oka with culture historical methods of German-speaking countries, and Taryo Obayashi (who belonged to the next generation of the above three) with somewhat synthesizing perspective –, one of the foci of their studies lay apparently on the ethnogenesis of the Japanese. This trend changed recently. We have much more multiple interests, methodologies and viewpoints nowadays. However, the heritage of the mentioned scholars might be reassessed in the context of recent international myth studies led by Michael Witzel, Wim van Binsbergen, and Yuri Berezkin among others. In the ongoing discussion, "ethnogenesis" should be incorporated into "anthropogenesis," *i.e.*, the emerging long-term human intellectual/religious history.

Yamada, Takako – Kyoto University, Japan
 t-i-yamada@mbox.kudpc.kyoto-u.ac.jp

LADAKHI SHAMANISM AND THE CONTINUITY OF BUDDHIST TRADITION

Anthropology of religion has revealed that religions continue to exist side by side with peoples or societies as ways and means to sustain mentally their everyday lives, and occasionally even to support ecologically sustainable lives. In particular, religions do not only function as a mechanical device for keeping peoples' lives fruitful, but as a holistic system that can arouse them to spirituality or religiosity. Any religion cannot survive without providing every individual or society spirituality, a sense of security, or a feeling of solidarity. It is noticed, therefore, that every religion or folk religion has developed its own unique systems of ceremonies, rituals, liturgies, festivals and feasts in order to make its followers recall regularly religious meanings and a feeling of solidarity by sharing the same beliefs. Although those that make peoples feel spirituality can be universal, as is shown by the examples of world religions such as Christianity and Islam and/or world-wide shamanistic traditions, some can be still relative to cultures. In reality, because of the differences in the layout and settings of a Buddhist temple between Japan and Tibet, Japanese mostly feel spirituality differently when visiting a Tibetan Buddhist monastery. This paper is to explore the backdrop of the continuation of religious practices today in terms of ritual performance with special reference to the shamanistic and Buddhist tradition of the Ladakhi in Western Tibet. Examining thus, this is to discuss the universality and relativity of ritual performance and to show how Ladakhi shamanism has kept its influence over the continuity of Buddhist tradition.

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Yamamoto, Shinichi – University of Tokyo, Japan

THE SABBATEAN NOMISM IN THE BOOK OF HEMDAT YAMIM

Sabbateanism, whose messianic vision exerted a great deal of influence upon the almost every Jewish community in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, caused even a religious vortex in its heyday. Although Sabbatai Tzevi proclaimed his messiahship and attracted a large number of believers with his charisma, he converted to Islam, as is widely alleged, for the redemptive mission. Even before Tzevi's conversion, an ardent propagandist of the movement, Nathan of Gaza had elaborated a kabbalistic doctrine and justified his messiah's sinful behavior. In the course of fashioning the paradoxical messiology, especially after the mass believers' disillusionment, some leading advocates were involved in religious antinomism.

The antinomian tendency based on Nathan's doctrine resulted in clandestine Sabbatean sects and afterward in heretic Frankism. There existed, in contrast, more conventional and ritualistic nomism, which the scholars of Sabbateanism has underestimated. From the outset of the propaganda, indeed, Nathan wrote several kabbalistic devotions to call for the people to repent their sins, and his disciples observed the commandments he ordered. The Book of Hemdat Yamim has been said to have emerged from this nomistic side of Sabbateanism. Its anonymous author filled his book with wording of Zoharic and Lurianic kabbalah, and expounded the religious customs along a series of commemorative days. Thus there still remains unsolved question: whether this book which has prima-facie traditional atmosphere and no reference to Sabbatai Tzevi can be called a Sabbatean work. It is to be presented that the ambiguity itself implies the characteristic feature of Hemdat Yamim.

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Yamayoshi, Tomohisa – University of Tuebingen, Germany

CYLINDRICAL CULT STANDS FROM TEL REKHESH

Three clay cult stands were found from Tel Rekhes in northern Israel during the archaeological excavations. They are dated to the Iron Age I. These cult stands, open at both ends, belong to a large group of cylindrical type, which is known all over the ancient Near East from the Chalcolithic period onward. In Palestine a number of cult stands can be dated to the Late Bronze Age and the Iron Age I. They show certain variations in shape and decoration. It was once thought that these cult stands were generally used as incense burner, because some of them preserved soot on the upper part. However, discovery of many cult stands without soot should suggest that they were also used for libation as well as holders of sacred plants. The archaeological contexts indicate that the cult stands functioned not only in the official cults, but also in the domestic ones associated with small shrines of the private houses.

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Yelle, Robert – University of Memphis, USA
 ryelle@memphis.edu

SACRIFICING THE EXCEPTION: AGAMBen, SCHMITT, AND CONTEMPORARY NEO-PAGANISM

I will examine how theorists from the Weimar era to Georges Bataille have given sacrifice a privileged place in their accounts of sovereignty, or have used sacrifice as a metaphor for an irruptive, antinomian power that supposedly characterizes both sovereignty and the sacred. Recently, Giorgio Agamben has turned to the Roman institution of the homo sacer – of the man who has been

ruled outside the law and may be killed with impunity, but not sacrificed – as the primal scene of the sovereign exception. Agamben's avowed aim is to challenge the so-called "ambivalence of the sacred" – an ambivalence supposedly manifested in the homo sacer, who is simultaneously holy and taboo – which has permitted the misinterpretation of what is essentially a "juridico-political phenomenon." Agamben's theory directly challenges the category of the sacred. It also misreads Carl Schmitt's concept of the state of exception, which (as Agamben himself has elsewhere pointed out) was modeled, not on the homo sacer, but on Saint Paul's notion of the manner in which the Gospel suspended Jewish law. The Crucifixion was the "sacrifice to end all sacrifices," and placed us all in a certain state of exception, one that universalized the institution of sacrifice rather than that of homo sacer. By juxtaposing these readings of the original state of exception in relation to sacrifice, I will argue that Agamben's privileging of this Roman exemplum rejects the category of sacrifice, returns us to paganism, and denies the Christian dimensions of the contemporary political domain.

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Yelle, Robert – University of Memphis, USA
 ryelle@memphis.edu

SEMIOTICS AND THE QUESTION OF SECULARIZATION

Webb Keane's recent work shows how Christian understandings of the relationships among language, materiality, and subjectivity have shaped the semiotic ideology of modernity. Secularism has inherited the Protestant valorization of a transparent language or practice of signification opposed to symbolic, performative, and ritual language, and is similarly premised on the transcendence of a superstitious past. This suggests that one of the best definitions of secularization may be in terms of a transformation – a religious conversion – to a semiotic ideology with soteriological dimensions. My paper develops this thesis by focusing on the genealogy and application of Christian ideas of disenchantment. Numerous versions of the idea of "disenchantment" described this as a semiotic event. According to early Christian tradition, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross silenced the pagan oracles and abrogated the Jewish ceremonial laws, ushering in a new mode of semiotic transparency opposed to such obscure and figurative discourses. Typological interpretation, which was based on such concepts, encoded a semiotic definition of the manner in which Christianity had superseded Judaism and paganism. Protestant literalism and iconoclasm, which deepened and altered these traditional critiques of mythological and ritual language, contributed to a broader disenchantment of language that coordinated with what we think of as the secularization of the world.

Zaidi, Dr Sarah – see *Kirmanji, Nida*

Zahabi, S. Abbas – Islamic Azad University, Tehran

BUDDHIST AND MANICHAEAN BACKGROUNDS OF REINCARNATION IN ISLAMIC WORLD

To find the reason how reincarnation became a considerable problem in Islamic world, we should note to influences of some religious sources found in out of the Islamic world. Buddhism and Manichaeism (as apologist religions of reincarnation) played an important role to engender metempsychosis idea in some Muslim thinkers or sects in early centuries. Tanasokhiyya (who believed in reincarnation), originated in east of Islamic world (khorasan) where we can see the most relationship between Muslims and Buddhists. Silk Road which was considered as the main road joining east and west together, not only has led to transfer the commercial goods, but also provided the opportunity for transferring cultural grounds and religious learning. Both Buddha and Mani were familiar in east of the Muslims' society, such as some Buddhist and Manichaean books, like "Bluhar and Budhasef" and "Safar al-Asfar" (as an important Mani's book). In addition, residue of the largest Buddha statues in Afghanistan and many Buddhist temples in these regions till the late century 2 AH, indicates that regional culture of this part of Islamic world was a combination of Islamic-Buddhist culture. So it is evident that this co-existence led to transition of some Persian and Islamic traditions or customs to the far east. Historians have reported about "Naw Bahar" as a famous Buddhist temple in this region. The word Bahar is the modified form of the Sanskrit word "Vihareh" which means "Buddhist temple". There are many villages named Bahar in Afghanistan, eastern regions of middle Asia, west and northeast of Iran. These nominates are related to Buddhist and temples located in these regions in ancient Islamic periods. In Manichean tradition, issue of transmigration had been accepted and was considered as an essential belief. It could blossom again in Islamic era and influenced on some significant philosophers like Razi and some theologian sects like Ghulat. Furthermore, Manichaean leaders had clearly discussions with Muslims in Baghdad where was considered as a residence of Manicheans' chief-commander in 4th century AH. Key words: reincarnation, Islam, Buddhism, Manichaeism.

Zbiral, David – Masaryk University, Czech Republic
david.zbiral@post.cz

THE NORM-DEVIATION MODEL RECONSIDERED: 'ALTERNATIVE' SEXUAL MORALS JUDGED BY THE INQUISITION

The inquisitional register of Jacques Fournier from the years 1318–1325 reaches far beyond the topic of heresy. It encompasses various details about the common life, including sexuality and sexual morals. This case study reconsiders the norm-deviation model in the study of religions on the basis of four Fournier's trials dealing with sexual morals: that of Beatrix of Lagleize, Peter Vidal, Arnold of Verniolles, and Grazida Lizier. Sexual morals of these four people are certainly very different from the morals required by Jacques Fournier, but they are rather independent systems and norms than simple deviations from another system or norm, *i.e.*, the official sexual morals. The paper suggests that the norm-deviation model distorts the field of medieval sexual morals.

Zehadul, A. H. M. – International Islamic University, Malaysia · ahmkarim@yahoo.com

SANTAL RELIGIOSITY AND THE IMPACT OF CONVERSION: A STAGGERING CULTURAL SITUATION

Santal religion is absolutely based on a traditional belief system of this ethnic group who have their strict adherence to their sanatani (traditional) religious practices. But the Santals living in north-western part of Bangladesh have now been converted to Christianity in large numbers, and they have been seemingly formalized to a newly-evolved maladaptive religiosity. Traditionally speaking, the Santals had long been following their own religion which is certainly dissimilar from the Hindus or any other neighboring religions group of South Asian communities. Since long past, the Santals in Bangladesh have had maintained their own sanatani practices without having any socio-political interference from the larger Bengali communities. But as time passes on, they now become the victim of circumstances, where the Santals have now become almost landless; and many of them have been uprooted from their own settlement. In consequence, they migrate to the urban city centers, where the Santals seek employment in different Christian-based professional organizations. Being Christianized, the Santals usually change their parental names and instead, accept the new Christian names indicatively as a mark of religious compliance to their conversion. Interestingly however it is found that the converttees nevertheless retain their patronymic titles, having shown a kind of ethnic attachment to their tradition and genealogy.

This abrupt shift of religious allegiance of the Santals precariously put them in a world of contradiction and fluctuation with respect to their religious practices. This paper therefore, explores as to what happens to their socio-cultural and religious adjustment in this context of liminality and staggering situation.

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Zeiler, Xenia – University of Bremen, Germany
zeiler@uni-bremen.de

“PUT THE FEAR OF GOD IN THEM” – NEGOTIATING THE HINDU DEITY AIDS-AMMA ON THE INTERNET

Hindu Goddesses have been associated with diseases since ancient times and texts. Mostly these deities are ambivalent in character as they are believed to both impose a certain disease (as punishment or divine touch) and also cure it. Based on this widespread belief in sanskritised and folk Hinduism a new goddess – AIDS-Amma, “Mother AIDS”, – has recently appeared in the Hindu pantheon. In 1999 a local schoolteacher in southern Karnataka installed the image of AIDS-Amma next to the local, established disease-goddess, thus implying a connection between both deities. He did so in order to educate the rural neighborhood about AIDS.

Interestingly this episode in a South-Indian, local and rural context – where Internet access and use is as yet uncommon – has since been discussed extensively on the Internet. Since the goddess emerged, four main issues have invited negotiation and discussion on the Internet: 1) the unusual construction of a new religious figure as authority; 2) the deconstruction of the older, established disease-goddess partly going hand in hand with it; 3) the combination of religious authority with public health awareness campaigns; 4) the goddess AIDS-Amma herself.

This paper analyses the media discussion surrounding the new goddess and her unusual background as multipurpose authority in religion as well as in public health. In doing so, it also examines recent media-based transformations in the Hindu pantheon in general.

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Zelege, Meron – Bayreuth International Graduate School, Germany

RELIGION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION; YE SHAKOCH CHILOT (THE COURT OF THE SHEIKHS)

Religious institutions are playing a very significant role in conflict resolution in different parts of Ethiopia. The Islamic Sufi shrines in north central Ethiopia are up to these days providing multifaceted services of conflict resolution, rituals of communal prayer, and healing.

There is a weekly regular court of conflict resolution on Mondays in these Sufi shrines called Ye Shakoch Chilot (the court of the sheikhs. This weekly court is vibrant and it handles cases of diverse nature ranging from homicide to minor disputes. Taking an ethnographic example of one shrine, the shrine of Tirusina, the paper examines the role of religious institutions in conflict resolution in contemporary Ethiopia. It analyzes the nature and type of cases handled by the court of the sheikhs. It discusses the various mechanisms used by the court to resolve these different conflicts which vary in nature. Furthermore, on the bases of the findings of the ethnographic research conducted in the shrine for one year, it discusses why people prefer to bring their cases to the court of the sheikh vis-à-vis the state based judiciary.

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Zenk, Thomas – Free University of Berlin, Germany
thomas.zenk@fu-berlin.de

THE “NEW ATHEISM” IN TRANSATLANTIC PERSPECTIVE

Criticism of religion can be found throughout the ages, not only in Europe but in other parts of the world as well. History of religions itself can be interpreted as continued criticisms of one religion against another (e.g., Christianity as criticism of Judaism and Mediterranean pagan polytheism, Buddhism as criticism of Hinduism) or within one religion (phenomena such as reform movements). In both the intra-religious as well as the inter-religious criticisms the frame of religion is not transcended. An explicit non-religious criticism of religion, however, is a relatively new phenomenon in the history. It can be traced back to the European Age of Enlightenment. Nowadays, atheistic or even anti-religious voices seem to have returned: the books written by the so-called “New Atheists” (Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Christopher Hitchens, Daniel Dennett) have all become bestsellers and have been widely and vividly discussed, both in the English and German speaking hemisphere. The theses and arguments of the “New Atheists” as well as their public reception are the subject of our research project at the Freie Universität Berlin. We aim to analyze the “New Atheism” in a historical comparison of the German situation and that in the United States. By means of a discourse analysis, we hope to gain insights about the relations between what is called “the return of religion” (Riesebrodt) and the return of the criticism of religion. At the 2010 IAHR world congress we will present our findings.

Zheng, Xiaoyun – Institute of World Religions, CASS,
China · zhengxy@cass.org.cn

THE SPREAD CHARACTERISTICS OF THERAVADA
BUDDHISM IN CHINA
THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPAGATION OF
THERAVADA BUDDHISM IN CHINA

After its spreading into Yunnan, South-west China, from South-east Asia, Theravada Buddhism has gradually been forming its unique culture system, which is different from that of South-east Asian Buddhism. During this process, the spread plays very important role in making special temperament of Chinese Theravada Buddhism. There are four characteristics in Buddhist movement. The first is the relationship between Dai-Thai minority is the bridge of culture exchange. The second is that Buddhism is supported by the local government, and extended from local government to people. The third is there is Archan in Buddhist management system, who is in charge of Buddhist social affairs. And the fourth is that Buddhism sets up believing consciousness by relying on the collective activities. All of these help Chinese Theravada Buddhism shaping its own local trait.

Zuber, Valentine – Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes
(Sorbonne), France
valentine.zuber@ephe.sorbonne.fr

LES PARADOXES DE LA LAÏCISATION FRANÇAISE
XIX-XXI

La laïcité française est le résultat d'un processus historique qui en fait l'une des formes possibles de sécularisation des sociétés modernes. En raison de la pluralisation des croyances et de la relativisation des valeurs qui ne cessent de s'accroître dans le cadre plus général de la globalisation contemporaine, la laïcité française rencontre à l'heure actuelle de nouveaux défis sur ses terrains d'action traditionnels, que ce soit à l'école ou dans l'espace public. Cet article s'attache d'abord à présenter l'histoire particulière de ce processus de laïcisation en France depuis la Révolution française jusqu'à nos jours. Puis dans un deuxième temps, il analyse de façon thématique les nouveaux enjeux de la laïcité française et les débats qu'elle génère dans la société actuelle.

Zydenbos, Robert – University of Munich, Germany
zydenbos@uni-muenchen.de

BECOMING GOD IN A GODLESS RELIGION: THE
SUBVERSIVE CASE OF JAINISM

Jainism, arguably the oldest existing Indian religion, survived in a not always friendly socio-religious environment through a number of means, one of them being the adoption of the terminology of theism, which is basically alien to its doctrine. Nevertheless, Jaina authors until today have spoken of a variety of beings as 'god', including humans who have developed certain characteristics, which is the goal of the Jaina spiritual path. Infusing an alien theistic terminology with their own religious hermeneutics, the Jainas have used it in their critique of rival religions, at the same time presenting their own tradition in such a manner as to make it more acceptable in a socio-religious environment that was becoming increasingly hostile; while doing so, they in effect created a conceptual framework by means of which a variety of types of religions can be meaningfully compared and that could serve as a model in modern comparative religious studies.

(END OF ABSTRACT) Comment: This paper was already accepted as a part of the following panel: The (De)Construction of Religious Founders on the Internet. Submitted by Dr. des. Dipl.-Theol. Kerstin Radde-Antweiler Dr. des. Xenia Zeiler