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ABSTRACTS

ETHICS OF DIFFERENCE: MORAL DISCLOSURE, REGULATIONS, AND BOUNDARY MAKING.

Chair: AMINTA ARRINGTON.

Fixing the Boundaries and Redrawing the Purity Map. AMINTA ARRINGTON. John Brown University

The Lisu are ethnic minority in southwest China that converted to Christianity about 100 years ago. Lisu Christians are known for two external markers: not drinking and not smoking.
Beginning with Mary Douglas's classic analysis of the Old Testament book of Leviticus, and moving to the New Testament Gospels as well as Pauline theology, I demonstrate that purity and pollution requirements were essential, from an anthropological viewpoint, for religious and ethnic minorities to consolidate their members into a coherent group. From a theological standpoint, such moral codes reflected a spiritual need to manifest externally a deeply meaningful internal faith.
Based on my fieldwork among the Lisu over several months from 2012-2014, I contend that the Lisu Christian ban on drinking and smoking can only be understood as an embedded aspect of their overall social system: The Lisu are surrounded by other ethnic groups, live within the bounds of a powerful state, and need to support their strong group orientation by means of symbols and rituals in the absence of hierarchy and bureaucracy. Within such a system, the Lisu purity regulations—namely the no drinking/no smoking ban—serve this structure by (a) maintaining holiness, distinctiveness, and set-apartness; (b) identifying with the historic Christian conversion; (c) strengthening the group and reinforcing the boundaries; and (d) protecting from danger.
Far from pursuing legalistic righteousness, through their no drinking and no smoking standards the Lisu created their own Christian social order.

The Rhetoric of Filth in Moral Discourse. ROBERT PRIEST. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

In cultures and religions around the world one encounters a primordial rhetoric of filth (of disgust, uncleanness, pollution, defilement) within moral discourse. Such symbolism and rhetoric is central to the formation of a certain sort of moral agent. This paper, drawing on one-and-a-half years of field research among the Aguaruna Jivaro (*Awajun)* of northern Peru, examines filth symbolism in Aguaruna moral discourse, and considers the role of such symbolism in shaping moral sensibilities and influencing religious conversion to Christianity. This paper will critique the approach of Mary Douglas, and will frame an alternative approach more indebted to Victor Turner's understandings of "condensation symbols."

The Ethics of Gustatory Taste: Ethnicity, Class, and Tibetan Buddhist Practices in Post-Mao China. YASMIN CHO. Duke University.

My paper focuses on the relationship between the sense of taste and the production of Buddhist ethics in the Tibetan Buddhist revival in post-Mao China by exploring the food consumption practices of lay Buddhist practitioners in an urban center and Buddhist nuns in a monastic community. Among Chinese lay and non-lay Buddhist practitioners, consuming particular types of foods—especially the strong preference for certain tastes, usually non-salty, non-oily light flavors—has been partially a way of marking oneself as a "good practitioner." This notion of the "good practitioner" often leads to a sense of superiority and social boundaries in Buddhist practices, which then functions as a marker of class between Chinese and Tibetans. Using ethnographic research conducted between 2010 and 2014 in a Tibetan Buddhist community and among Buddhist practitioners in a bustling Chinese urban center, my paper addresses how Buddhist ethics is shaped through the politics of gustatory taste in post-Mao China and how such a politics reconfigures certain norms of Tibetan Buddhism from the inside.

The Memoirs of a Brahmachari: How the Identity of a Brahmachari Can Give Him Political Legitimacy. MANSI MAJITHIA. University of Washington, Jackson.

Celibacy is regarded as one who renounces from all desires in order to reach a certain stage of spirituality or stage. Oftentimes the concept of celibacy and politics intersects. The concept of Brahmacharya is one example. In Hinduism, Brahmacharya is derived from a studentship stage of life prescribed by Manu, a sage. Soon remaining a celibate was a must in Yoga and then throughout time, a real Brahmachari is one who devotes his whole life for the purpose of society. This includes remaining a celibate and partaking in politics and social welfare. As Gavin Flood interprets an ascetic as performing a tradition of memory, I argue that a Brahmachari does the same. He is regarded as the ideal man in both society and one leading a religious life that others aspire for. However, not only is his act a performance of tradition of memory, because he leads a political and religious life, the performance of tradition of memory is transformed into a collective memory performed by his constituents. I will be using speeches as discourse analysis made by the current Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi along with contemporary articles and prescriptive methods of the use of Yoga in everyday life to understand the physiological and spiritual benefits of remaining a celibate- all which are based from India.

Convenience Kavadi: Is There a Right Way to Observe Kavadi Ritual? A South African Perspective. PRATAR KUMAR. University of KwaZulu Natal.

The issue of correct procedure of Hindu ritual is one that has been intensively discussed and debated in scholarly literature that covers both the academic study of religion as well as social scientific studies. Using the case study of Kavadi ritual practice in South Africa, this paper addresses the issue of 'rightway' of practicing Hindu rituals in the Indian diasporic context of South Africa. The paper attempts to bring out the internal debates in which the community is engaged. It unpacks the underlying assumption of the community that there is a correct way of observing Kavadi and that must be adhered to. In view of the fact that what is correct is an issue that divides the community squarely, the paper also attempts to problematize the issue of

whether or not there is a correct way of practicing Hindu rituals, e.g., Kavadi rituals. As the paper is part of a larger on-going research project, it does not attempt to offer any final conclusions except indicating the broader issues of academic nature in addressing the question of unity of ritual practice.

QUESTIONING MORAL AUTHORITY: CONTEMPORARY SPIRITS IN THE U.S. AND BEYOND.

Chair: MISTY L. BASTIAN.

Emile Durkheim, invoked by the conference organizers as having set out primary social science problems of religion and morality early in the 20th Century, notes that society does not physically constrain us so much as offer constraints to individuals' consciousness through the application of moral authority (Durkheim 1995 [1912]: 209). Many societies invest just such religio-moral authority in their dead, in the form of ancestors, or in spiritual forces that have never been human, however much they might enjoy interacting with or even possessing human beings. Europeans and North Americans, however, have not usually been described as societies that take ancestorhood seriously—outside of certain, limited, and often political circumstances (e.g., "Founding Fathers" in the U. S. A. or the development of Spiritualism). The papers in this panel will not only speak to an efflorescence of attention to North American and British ancestors by contemporary paranormal researchers as well as by practitioners of a transatlantic and African ancestor and spirit religion characterized by possession, but it will also describe how the moral authority of ancestors is being held up to question as well as being attended to in our polyglot, poly-cultural, globalized societies. As part of our focus on questioning moral authority, the papers will investigate concepts of secrecy, doubt, the emotions of the living, and the construction of temporal regimes that make the dead's moral authority both immanent and imminently questionable. If that great religious force, society *sui generis,* is trying to communicate through the dead and other spirits in the contemporary world, á la Durkheim, the panelists here wish to lay out some of the difficulty felt by people in understanding what, exactly, is being communicated.

Fragile Spirits of the Sacred Forest: Protecting *Vodún* through Secrecy in Bénin, West Africa. TIMOTHY R. LANDRY. University of Arkansas.

In *Vodún*, the West African forest religion known colloquially around the world as "Voodoo," processes of religious secrecy protect a spirit's power and social efficacy. By initiating into a spirit cult practitioners learn and eventually master a spirit's secret dances, songs, foods, names, and abilities. To tell a non-initiated person a spirit's secret is to shatter or break the spirit (*gbá vodún*) beyond usability. In this paper, I argue that as *Vodún* continues to globalize, and find new homes in places such as New York City, the spirits' social power is protected from breakage – or becoming obsolete by so-called modernity – by a community's ability to maintain a *vodún*'s processes of secrecy. While processes of religious secrecy are reinforced, to meet the demands of new urban environments in the U.S. and globalization the secret itself, such as the composition of a shrine, may localize. However, the power of the secret – and of the spirit itself – its

maintained as *Vodún* practitioners recreate successfully the sacred (and secret) forest as the most important space in *Vodún* cosmology and as the keeper of the religion's mysteries.

Between Electricity and Spirit: Paranormal Investigating and the Production of Doubt. MICHELE HANKS. Case Western Reserve University.

Since the late 1990s, paranormal investigating has emerged as a popular means of seeking knowledge of the ghostly or paranormal in England. Paranormal investigators are self-fashioned experts who aim to balance scientific and spiritual perspectives in hopes of researching the existence of ghosts from an objective perspective. They dedicate significant amounts of their leisure time to reading about, talking about, and researching ghosts or the paranormal. Despite actively seeking out ghosts and amassing first hand paranormal experiences, doubt and uncertainty mark paranormal investigators' project. In this paper, I explore the production and experience of doubt by examining paranormal investigators' struggles to define and quantify the paranormal. Competing ideas about the substance or nature of ghosts lie at the heart of this struggle. Paranormal investigators believe that energy contributes to people's experiences of ghosts; however, they must grapple with competing scientific and spiritual interpretations of electromagnetism as either an environmental factor that offers a natural rather than supernatural explanation for ghosts or a spiritual materiality that proves the reality of ghosts' existence. In this paper, I will examine paranormal investigators' theorizations, measurements, and understanding of energy in their research. I argue that navigating between natural and supernatural explanations of energy challenges paranormal investigators to ultimately define the paranormal. Reckoning with the materiality of energy ultimate engenders doubt about the nature of the paranormal itself among researchers.

The Ethics of Paranormal Investigation: How Morality and Meaning Are Formed in the Face of the Supernatural. STEPHANIE BOOTHBY**.** University of Florida.

While most televised portrayals of paranormal investigation teams depict the investigators as thrill-seekers who wander dark halls with flashlights chasing ghosts, the reality of paranormal investigation is much more complex. Through participant observation, a deeper understanding of Western paranormal perceptions can be placed in the context of the anthropology of religion. Paranormal teams often deal with very sensitive situations that call for more than infrared cameras and voice recorders; the team's primary objective is to help clients, the people requesting assistance with a paranormal problem. Rather than a scientific experiment, these investigations can embody more of a consultation aimed at emotional healing. Many paranormal investigators initially entered the field of ghost hunting after experiencing anomalous phenomena themselves, and feel a moral obligation to help others who experience the same strange events. To address extreme cases or claims of demonic activity, outside experts are consulted: psychics, demonologists, or priests, depending on the clients' religious affiliation. In all cases, these paranormal experiences surpass the sensations of the ordinary world and incite beliefs and perceptions of the afterlife, divine and spiritual beings, and other realms. In addition to the rituals of the demonologists and priests, the investigations themselves are a form of ritual intended to procure answers and insight into the world of the supernatural. The impact of these paranormal experiences on an individual's cosmological beliefs is a central concern and should be further

examined to understand how anomalous or extraordinary experiences shape religious meaning in ordinary people's lives.

Dead Time: Temporal Regimes of Working Class American Paranormal Researchers. MISTY L. BASTIAN. Franklin & Marshall College.

In this proposed paper, I will discuss how working class North American paranormal researchers ("ghost hunters") understand the complexities of temporality. Ghost hunting hobbyists, as well as more serious paranormal researchers, are interested in flows of time that may seem to run counter to those more familiar to mainstream North American society. Indeed, for paranormal researchers, time is not only "out of sync," but it is purposefully de-synchronized through their technological and mediumistic practices in order to establish communication with past people in spaces once associated with labor and leisure possibilities that seem increasingly out of reach. The technical equipment used by paranormal researchers may also detect the locations of already de-synchronized time/space—"portals" in their cosmology—that enable direct communication with the dead and (not quite) gone. As I will argue in the paper, North American paranormal researchers' work constitutes an attempt to reconfigure the value of their time and of their labor in a society that seems to care less and less about working class men and women's experience. By going into "dead time"—the liminal period after most North Americans' bedtime and before most North Americans' awakening—ghost hunters attempt to recover snatches of the voices and glimpses of the forms of the United States' working class past.

THE MORALITY OF MORALITY: PRESPECTIVES ON DEATH IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.

Chair: DIANNA BELL.

Death and its accompanying rites have been at the center of theoretical developments since anthropology's emergence as a formal field of academic inquiry. For Tyler and Frazer, it was humankind's contemplation of death that gave rise to entire religious systems. Durkheim approached death as a moment that threatened social cohesion, although the collective's ability to govern personal emotion nearly always shined through. Radcliffe-Brown studied death for the kinship rites it prompted, which van Gennep and his inheritors mined for their ritual and symbolic content.
Although varied, anthropologists have duly acknowledged that death and responses to death constitute a universally important aspect of the human life cycle. But the precise and varied cultural responses that death evokes continue to deserve close and ongoing field study. This panel will look at the relationship between death and morality in Sub-Saharan Africa as interrelated and prominent features of present-day social life. As death sets off a period of mourning and grief, the presenters in this panel each explore the ways that death works to renew proper relationships within communities of the living and between the living and the dead. Additionally, these papers coalesce to consider the moral weight that the emotions that surround the moment of death carry by showing how death and funerary rites become key sites at which people demonstrate the cultural values and ideals that pervade in their communities.

Each of the papers focuses on a complementary theme of the morality that surrounds death in Africa. Bell's paper approaches Muslim death in southern Mali as a process rather than an instantaneous transition into a fixed heaven/hell eternity. Bell uses death to explore an understudied merit system in the region, arguing that the deceased remain enmeshed in daily life by either suffering or benefiting from the living's acquisition of merit. De Jorio and Sow's paper, also set in southern Mali, turns to saint veneration to understand the changing nature of how Muslim groups approach mausoleum construction and rites that accompany death in light of the ongoing conflict in the region. With an eye on hunting fraternities in Côte d'Ivoire, Hellweg considers the ways that funerals for initiated hunters remind attendees of both Islamic and hunting ideals. The paper focuses especially on the songs that hunters sing at funerals, arguing that funeral songs are designed to inspire hunters to both kill game and to link their hunting commitments to orthodox Muslim practice. Miller synthesizes funerary rituals in northern Ghana and Uganda to argue that death rituals usher in change, which is expressed prominently through music. The paper shows that music, when played in funerary contexts, enables communication with the dead, momentarily reversing or overturning social norms, and inducing grief.

These studies combine to elucidate the moral expectations that accompany death, an aspect of culture that has played no small role in the religious lives of the people of Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere.

Muslim Merit-Making in Posthumous Sacrifices in Mali, West Africa. DIANNA BELL. Vanderbilt University.

Muslims in the West African state of Mali use the concept of *baraji*—which translates from the vernacular as "divine reward" or "recompense"—as a framework for understanding proper religious practice and the role of Islamic practices and indigenous ritual in daily matters. As religious diversity continues to increase in Mali in the twenty-first century, the meaning behind an affiliation such as "Muslim" had naturally become complex. Muslims negotiated this diversity by approaching their religious lives and decisions primarily in terms of *baraji,* as people uniformly emphasized that they hoped to acquire units of *baraji* through various Islamic and indigenous practices and other daily pursuits.

This presentation will explain both the Qur'anic and local basis of merit-making and *baraji* and how Muslims in southern Mali use *baraji* to drive their lifelong aim to acquire the unspecified amount of *baraji* that God requires for a person to gain salvation and admission into paradise. I will focus on how kith and kin earn *baraji* on one another's behalf, especially through posthumous sacrifices. Such sacrifices are crucial and represent a concerted effort to earn *baraji* for departed kin so that the deceased will eventually have the *baraji* needed to join their Muslim ancestors in paradise. The paper will highlight death as a process in which the acquisition of *baraji* continues vis-à-vis kin and posthumous sacrifices and daily moral choices, revealing indigenous religion and Islam in West Africa as dynamically embedded in daily social life and relations with ancestors.

Disputes around Mortuary Practices and Grave Sites in Post-Conflict Mali. ROSA DE JORIO[1], AMADOU BEIDY SOW[2]. [1]University of North Florida, [2]Indiana University.

This paper examines some of the disputes surrounding mausoleum construction and saint veneration in Mali. The occupation of the North and the destruction of mausoleums and cemeteries in Timbuktu in 2012 brought to the fore underlining divisions among Malian Muslims. Beliefs in saints and the practices surrounding their grave sites (but also funerary practices in general) have increasingly divided followers of Sufi orders and representatives of the heterogeneous Islamic renewal movement. We suggest that economic and political transformations such as the retreat of the state coupled with the proliferation of state-like organizations as well as limited democratic gains, partly prompted detectable shifts within the Muslim community, have led to a rethinking of funerary practices and care of the death in Mali. In the process, Sufism is being redefined as prominent Sufi leaders increasingly question established logics and practices surrounding the care of the death. Similarly to Becker (2009) we also recognize that "the place of the dead in social relations" as well as competing visions of the social order are at stake in such debates. In our paper we examine some of the disputes surrounding specific mausoleums in Segou, Mali in a effort to better situate such debates in specific contexts keeping also an eye on some of the post-conflict challenges (e.g and the shifting relations within Mali's religious sphere and between the state and religious organizations) facing Mali today.

Death as Moral Discourse: Dance, Song, Sacrifice, and Text in the Making of Dozo Funerals. JOSEPH HELLWEG. Florida State University.

This paper explores the moral discourses of funerals held for initiated hunters in northwestern Côte d'Ivoire. The death of each hunter is a crisis requiring resolution. A killer of game has died who supplied his family and community with meat as well as medicinal plants and protective sorcery. Each hunter's death is, in part, the death of hunting, presenting the possibility that no one may ever fill his absence. The songs hunters sing on such occasions reflect this fear, portraying dead hunters as heroic, praising them for their occult expertise and the game they killed—feats, singers claim, that the living may never match. In response, hunters perform dances that mimic the hunt while women clap, sing refrains, and sometimes dance themselves. Uninitiated men watch in silence.

One singer called the harp he played the "hunters' Qur'an," confirming that hunting songs compel hunters to moral feats just as the Qur'an inspires Muslims to godly achievements. Deep within his claim was a challenge to the predominance of Muslim scripture and orthodox theology over the so-called "folk" Islam that hunters perform at their funerals, where they make sacrifices to the spirit of the first great hunter who, they claim, descended from Abraham.

Ultimately, the claims singers make at their funerals not only challenge hunters to kill game; they subvert the usual moral hierarchies that value literacy over orality and Islam as a world religion over its local variations.

Generation, Reproduction, and Societal Harmony in Case Studies of African Death Ritual Through Sound. JESSE MILLER. Florida State University.

The death of a person has societal implications, usually through causing an imbalance due to the loss of a social position. Death within a community sets the stage for changes to occur, such as, shifts in social hierarchy, and suspension of societal norms. Looking at several case studies of African funerary practice my paper examines how communities use the occasion of death to

achieve transference of power, facilitate reproduction, and to signify change, through sound and music. The Sisala of northern Ghana use funerals, which they often delay until the depraved dry season, as a locus of power that they use to extract life force from the earth. In this paper, I show this through an analysis of Grindal's frightening and baffling account of death divination, in which he witnesses the reanimation of a corpse that subsequently rises and plays the drums. Sound plays a vital role in this re-animation. The Lugbara of Uganda, utilize special death dances performed by kin of the deceased to signify a suspension of sexual taboos, promoting reproduction. The Lodagaa of northern Ghana also utilize sound to announce the death of a community member. The beating a fowl to death on the slats of xylophone compels the community into a state of mourning. One can conclude that sound and thereby music are powerful and prominent elements within funerary practice, which serve as a means of transferring power, signifying change, and facilitating transition. Therefore, sound and music are more than just vibrations; they are manifestations of power that cause things, such as social change, to occur.

Discussant: ADELINE MASQUELIER. Tulane University.

PENTECOSTALISM THROUGH THE LENS OF POLITICS, SEXUALITY, AND COMPETITION.

Chair: JOSHUA BRAHINSKY.

The Deliverance of Jacob. JASON PRICE. University of California, Berkley.

In this paper, I carefully describe a notable deliverance at a small Pentecostal-charismatic ministry on the outskirts of a Malawian town in an effort to think about the ways ecstatic scenes offer Malawians unique opportunities to engage with spectral sexualities and, by extension, social and political concerns related to gender and sexuality so hotly debated in many African contexts.

Pentecostal Politics, Democracy and Morality in Brazil. PRISCILLA GARCIA. University of California, San Diego.

In this paper I will investigate the recent involvement of Pentecostal believers with politics in Brazil. I argue that the Pentecostal cultural value of salvation working with a more general Brazilian cultural value of freedom within a democratic governance provide a cultural framework for politics to be considered as a moral work. Politics for these Pentecostals is conceived as a moral landscape through which believers work in order to save society from problems, such as violence and corruption, and to guarantee the sovereignty of the values of salvation and freedom within a democratic public sphere. Such a view, on the one hand, seems to result in a political model quite different from Western models of the political in which a separation exists between religion and politics, civil law and religious law, the church and the state, and so forth. For these Brazilian Pentecostal believers, political activism serves as a moral work through which the good Christian engages in order to save society and to guarantee the highest value of democracy: freedom.

Christianity's Moral Dilemmas in a Hybrid Neoliberal Context: Relational Analysis of Struggle for Religious Equality in Ethiopia. DATA D. BARATA. California State University, Sacramento.

Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa in general, where in recent years religion has re-emerged to an unprecedented public visibility, provide an especially relevant context to emprically observe as well as inductively theorize issues of morality in contemporary religious politics. In the early 1990s, Ethiopia's new government declared religious freedom and equality of religions, thus removing historically established legal and political privileges of the Ethiopian Orthodox (Coptic) Church. The new government's religious policy effectively extended a form of neoliberalism to the religious realm in the sense that the religious forms were to compete in a religious free market with little or no interference from the government. This ushered new kind of religious contestation that in turn has brought to the fore important issues including the question of general morality or its failure in religious practices. Drawing on case studies from southern Ethiopia, this paper will comparatively examine dilemmas faced by two forms of Christianity, namely, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Evangelical churches/Pentecostalism that have to aggressively compete against each other while also competing against Islam and "traditional religious". More specifically, the paper will examine how religious actors from the two forms of Christianity have deployed peculiarly construed notions of religious freedom and associated interpretations of religious human rights. The contestation, as the paper will show, culminated with producing competing religious narratives presented in the language of struggling against religious domination vs. defending national spiritual heritage. The attendant cultural struggle in this domain has inspired, I will argue, ordinary persons to participate in the fight for equality and social justice in general. The paper will also explain why and how the competing religious forms have contributed, knowingly or unwittingly, to unequal and unjust social and cultural forms.

Pentecostal Mobilization, Or The Lack of an Ethics of Ritual, Event, Resistance and Agency? JOSHUA BRAHINSKY. University of California, Santa Cruz.

The following essay uses a mix of ethnographic and historical analyses of Pentecostalism within the Assemblies of God to argue against any political or ethical valence to ritual, event, agency, or resistance. As a relatively effective experiment in mobilization within neoliberal globalization, Pentecostalism is usefully thought alongside post-structural theorists who share a set of approaches and contexts. In particular, both groups see events, resistances, ritual, and agency as crucial markers of humanity's relationship to modernity. That most Pentecostals lean to the right politically both clarifies and confuses. For however effective, the strategies shared between Pentecostals and post-structural thinkers are less tied to a particular ethico-political valence than some imagine. Even so, this juxtaposition of Pentecostal and post-structural allows me to refract contemporary discussions of the ritual, event, resistance, and agency against an actual movement, with real successes and failures.
Events and resistances are both crucial elements of mobilization, often thought as the agentive in opposition to mechanistic ritual. And among post-structural and critical theorists the event, resistance, and agency all hold a place of privilege, a hope for the ethical and political future. However, I argue that these polarities teach us about their mobilization potential, not

their ethical valence. This becomes especially clear when analyzing Pentecostals, the exemplars of resistance and evental practice within neoliberalism. While many have argued for the revolutionary and transformative potential of Pentecostalism, the jury is still out. The ethical valence of Pentecostal practice seems all over the map. A similar, although inerted, story can be told regarding Pentecostal relationships to agency and ritual. In both cases, Pentecostals challenge liberal assumptions: they decry excessive individualistic agency and challenge the reduction of spirit to a deathly ritualism. Yet, neither abstraction provides a clear ethical trajectory. In other words, it appears that the abstraction of practice does not offer a solution to ethical or political quandaries.

In fact, even asking for an ethics here misses the traction of Pentecostalism in the world – which comes from its ability to inspire, open and mobilize, across multiple contexts and ethical projects. In fact, within the Assemblies of God, a massive bureaucracy teaches a deeply systematic process, but one that invites yielding to the contingency and destabilization of an ostensibly outside force – the Holy Spirit – realized through personal transformative rupture (baptism, speaking in tongues, or conversion) but also collective revival, schisms that challenge bureaucracy. Perhaps then Pentecostals are especially liable to moments of productive derailment, while laying new tracks in the process. As such, the sensibilities cultivated by Pentecostals include a deep attachment to rupture, and the sense that discontinuous experience might open minds and bodies to new ways of being that are inaccessible via the slogging of everyday reason. Even so, this is no ethical substrate.

RITUAL, SACRIFICE & SUFFERING.

Chair: ASHER BRUM.

Opus Dei: Suffering Rituals and Secular Moral Critique. ASHER BRUM. University of Campinas, Brazil.

In this paper, I want to analyze the suffering rituals played by the Opus Dei's actors and place them in a context of secular moral critique. Starting from my own ethnography – which I began in 2011, in Sao Paulo, Brazil – I would like to describe and analyze how ex-members and critics of the Opus Dei in that country have criticized these ritual practices through a secular moral conception of minimization of suffering and pain. My point is that these rituals have created a specific place for the Opus Dei in Brazil. First, because the suffering rituals are associated with a religious subjectivity and with an orthodox catholic morality, viewed by their critics as contradictory with the secular and lay group that the institution intend to be; second, because the Opus Dei's critics look at those rituals through a secular moral conception which claims that pain and suffering must be eliminated in the modern secular world. These critics are ex-members, which consider those rituals a sort of "spiritual abuse", and some groups of the Catholic Church associated to the labor party, which has defended the social struggle in order to minimize the suffering of the poor people and the labor class. This paper is organized in three parts: 1) the Opus Dei's conception of suffering and pain and its association with an orthodox catholic moral; 2) the ethnographical description of the suffering rituals in the Opus Dei; 3) the analysis of the attacks against the Opus Dei, in Brazil, through a secular moral discourse.

Sundance in Quebec: Ethic of Blood and Suffering in an Indigenous Ritual. EMILIE PARENT. University of Montreal.

The Sundance ritual was born in the Great Plains, and is considered to be part of the Lakota cultural heritage. Among this nation, there are seven rituals that are considered to be sacred and should not be performed by others unless the permission has been given. During this ritual, dancers fast and dance around a sacred tree for many days to redeem the suffering of the community and the world in general. Dancers also offer physical sacrifices, from breasts, backs and arms. The Sundance was banned in the United States and in Canada for a century, before reappearing in the 1960s. The ritual was then used as a tool for indigenous revival not only for the Lakota, but also for members of other communities across North America. They came from everywhere to dance during the huge fest in South Dakota. Robert, an Ilnu shaman from Quebec, was invited to participate in the Lakota Sundance for many years. After more than seven seasons, the ceremony was passed to him and he was able to organize the ceremony in the region of Lac-St-Jean in northern Quebec. From there, the ceremony has spread to other reservations.

Disgusting Ritual and the Potentiation of the Human Immune System. THOMAS B. ELLIS. Appalachian State University.

Disgust is a complex emotion: it admits of two modalities, core and animal-nature. The former evolved as a disease prophylaxis: humans find the pathogenic disgusting. The latter pertains to the emotion humans tend to feel when they are reminded that they are expiring organisms, contributing thereby to a triad of moral emotions, i.e., the CAD (community-autonomy-divinity) triad hypothesis: humans tend to feel disgusted when they witness others transgressing, say, the purity codes of the local religion. Curiously, though, certain rituals engage precisely the impure: both historical and ethnographic records document the practice of blood sacrifice (e.g., the Greeks, the Jews and the Aztecs historically and the Dinka, the Tamils, and Vodou practitioners ethnographically). Morally suspect or not, blood sacrifice harbors a biological function. Recent, psychoneuroimmunological research indicates that acute stressors, for instance, the macabre scenes of popular horror films, potentiate the human immune system. Such potentiation is found not only through salivary assays and blood chemistry, but also through a rise in thermoregulation. This paper suggests that blood sacrifice and the disgust it elicits similarly potentiates the immune system. Such a hypothesis would account not only for the general tendency to perform blood sacrifice when a member within the community presents with infectious disease symptoms, but also, and specifically, for the association of infectious disease with the hot goddess to whom the sacrifice is offered in south India. Blood sacrifice stimulates a stronger, collective defense against the transmission and contraction of infectious disease, providing thereby an indigenous, public health service.

Blood Ties: The Tiwa Tribe and Śākta Tantra. SRAVANA BORKATAKY VARMA. Rice University.

Numerous studies have noted the symbolisms and practice of sacrifice to be one of the most persistent and unifying themes throughout the development of Hindu religion. Though the popularity of *bali*, animal sacrifice, plummeted in brahmanical India, it continues to be a

mainstream feature in the śākta tradition. While many commentators have bemoaned the argument of associating Tantric rites to the indigenous traditions, this paper explores the vital connections between tantric rites and those of South Asian tribal religions that scholars have often presumed but neglected to demonstrate. These connections are enumerated by drawing on rituals of animal sacrifice amongst Tiwas, a tribe in India and the practice of animal sacrifice at Kamakhya temple, important śākta pith. The first part of the paper sets up the scene by discussing the importance of animal sacrifice in the Tiwa tribe. The focus of the paper then shifts to discussing animal sacrifice in Kamakhya and the ritualistic association of Kamakhya with earth's annual menstruation. In conclusion, the dialogical maneuvers that are highlighted are that the śākta tradition and rituals in Kamakhya have borrowed heavily from the indigenous tribes and in many ways turned the brahmanical rituals on their head. Similarly, much as the tribes detest the brahmanical traditions, they have internalized a lot of the brahmanical rituals.

IN BAD FAITH: TROLLING AS RELIGIOUS PRAXIS.

Chairs: ERIC HOENES DEL PINAL and JOSEPH BLANKHOLM.

Though part of our task as anthropologists of religion is to critically examine what social actors say and do in the course of their religious lives, we nonetheless tend to work from the assumption that more often than not what our interlocutors say is representative of their worldviews and that what they do is motivated by values and principles they adhere to as part of that. As we work to understand the other's religious point of view our tendency is to presume that they are acting ethically— in good faith— even if we might find aspects of that religion problematic or personally distasteful. But what about instances in which religion and religious discourse are mobilized with duplicitous or deceptive intent— that is, in bad faith? How might we productively think about irony, satire, bullying, and toxic speech not simply as rhetorical strategies, but as forms of religious practice in an of themselves?
We use the concept of "trolling"— the practice of making deliberately offensive or provocative statements with the aim of upsetting people and eliciting angry responses— as a theoretical starting point for investigating cases in which social actors engage in deliberate antagonistic provocation as a means of developing and circulating religious ideas. How does a celebrity evangelical Christian pastor's use of pseudonym to troll "feminists and liberals" on-line help him advance a project of masculine subject making? When street preachers on college campuses condemn students as homosexuals and whores, must we assume that their discourse is motivated primarily by deeply held concerns about the relationship between sexuality and salvation? How do the provocations of Orthodox counterprotestors at Russian LGTB demonstrations challenge us to rethink religion and civil discourse in the public sphere? What can organized nonbelievers' questionably sincere attempts to be recognized as a religious minority teach us about the fragile boundary between the secular and the religious? By addressing these cases and others, this panel seeks to offer new insights into how religious discourses are formed and circulated, and contribute to anthropological critiques of sincerity (Keane 2002) and authenticity (Lindholm 2008, Bielo 2011) as organizing concepts in modern religious life

Trolling on Mission to Save a "Pussified Nation". JESSICA JOHNSON. University of Washington.

In 2000, posting under the pseudonym William Wallace II, Mark Driscoll, former pastor of Mars Hill Church in Seattle, began a thread entitled "Pussified Nation" on a publicly accessible, non-moderated Christian message board called Midrash. While Driscoll claimed to be attacking "emerging church-type feminists and liberals" inundating the site, in his book Confessions of a Reformission Rev. (2006) this online persona is a precursor to a masculine reformation within the church. While the media frenzy generated after "Pussified Nation" was disseminated as a 140-page pdf focused on Driscoll's allusion to women as "penis homes," this paper examines his trolling as a form of bullying that staged his assertion of spiritual authority during the rapid physical and digital expansion that accrued Mars Hill cultural capital beyond Seattle and Christian circles. I argue that rather than discursively insulting women in the name of recapturing "biblical manhood," Driscoll's violent posture online circulated shame and fear as bodily affects whose material and emotional effects eclipsed the reinforcement of a doctrine of normative masculinity to be properly embodied. Instead, I analyze Driscoll's trolling as a social process of conviction through which the men of Mars Hill were constituted as subjects whose beliefs and identities as Christians were sutured to potential threats and abuses both physical and spiritual.

Trolling for Souls: Street Preachers on American College Campuses. ERIC HOENES DEL PINAL. University of North Carolina, Charlotte.

It is not unusual to see evangelical Christian itinerant "street preachers" periodically proselytizing to university students on many American campuses. The most effective of these preachers—measured in terms of how large an audience they attract and how long they maintain it— succeed by using overtly sexist and homophobic rhetoric, accusing women of being indiscriminately promiscuous and men of being closeted homosexuals, and condemning both to hell unless they repent for their immoral ways and come to know Jesus and the Bible. Students, for their part, largely dismiss the both the accuracy of these characterizations and the moral grounding of the preachers' statements. Yet, rather than ignore them, sizeable groups of students gather to listen to the preachers, sometimes for hours at a time. Moreover, these audiences are far from passive, with students vociferously contesting the preachers' characterizations of their moral selves, Christian identity, and interpretations of the Bible and God's will. Based on research conducted at a public university in the American Bible Belt— where a vast majority of students already self-identify as evangelical Christians— this paper examines the discursive strategies campus street preaches employ. Far from making straightforward attempts to "spread the Gospel", these preachers are instead trolling their audiences, intending first and foremost to elicit a strong emotional response from them. This paper asks how students' emotionally charged responses figure into this particular form of public religiosity, how these confrontations constitute a ritual practice in and of themselves, and what consequences does this have for the place of religion in secular higher education institutions.

Believer, Activist, Provocateur? The Counterprotester's Challenge. JESSICA MASON. University of Wisconsin, Madison.

LGBT events in Moscow are often challenged by a well-known group of counterprotesters, who chant about perversion outside their protest rallies and break into art shows to deface photographs. Led by a man every pro-LGBT activist knows by (pseudo-)name, these

counterprotesters call themselves "Orthodox activists" and claim in media interviews and in person to be defending traditional culture and values from the onslaught of Westernization, consumerism, decadence, and other sins. But their actions pose a challenge to pro-LGBT rights activists trying to make sense of those who seem to be their opponents. Are they "believers," acting out of sincere devotion to faith? "Obscurantists" (Rus. mrakobesy), seeking to take Russia "backwards" into a patriarchal, antimodern past? Secretly homosexual, as proposed by certain activists who claim to have overheard talk while sharing jail cells? Seeking media attention by predictably making a scene at every opportunity, unlike "true" believers who have other concerns? Or mere provocateurs? That last, I argue, provides an entry into the knotty problem posed by these "Orthodox activists," who aggressively confront pro-LGBT activists— and visiting anthropologists— with problems of authenticity and interpretation. "Provocation," as activists discuss it, is a generative act that seems to force reaction by transgressing the limits of tolerability. Encounters with the challenging figure of the religious conterprotester engage activists in a continual renegotiation of questions about morality, reality, and the present and ideal future place of religion in Russian society.

The Sincerely Held Beliefs of Nonbelievers. JOSEPH BLANKHOLM. Columbia University.

In the wake of the Boston Marathon bombing, atheist and humanist organizations protested their exclusion from an interfaith memorial service despite calling themselves "faithless." A few months later, in July 2013, American Atheists installed an "atheist monument" at a Florida courthouse, invoking the same free speech laws that allow for a 10 Commandments monument nearby. More recently, a secular humanist organization has gained the right to solemnize weddings in Indiana by asking the court to treat it like a religious group, but not actually call it "religious." Another humanist organization avoids this problem by maintaining its "religious" status with the IRS solely for the purpose of "ordaining clergy" that can officiate weddings. Are nonbeliever groups sincere when they ask to be treated like religious groups, or are they acting in "bad faith"? If they aren't sincere, are they trolling the courts and other branches government— and if so, to what end? This paper relies on extensive fieldwork among a national network of secular activists throughout the United States, including sixty-five in-depth interviews and participant observation at workshops, conferences, and other events. The aim of the paper is to show the ways in which America's secular activists reject, conform to, and intentionally undermine official understandings of religion. By acting in "bad faith," these groups challenge the U.S. government's insistence on treating religion as special by trolling court-protected "sincerely held belief" and making manifest contradictions in the division between private and public life.

Discussant: JON BIALECKI. University of Edinburgh.

SPIRITUAL THERAPIES, RELIGIOUS DOUBT, & ETHICAL CRITIQUES: ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN RELIGION AND HEALING.

Chair: AYALA FADER.

Healings, Weddings, and the Legal Limits of Ethical Practice. DUSTY HOESLY. University of California, Santa Barbara.

The anthropology of morality has broadened beyond the predicaments of individuals into larger interactions with relational others. Unlike most previous work, however, this paper pays particular attention as well to the state as a corporate actor which delimits and transforms the range of available religious and ethical action. I examine two case studies from my fieldwork and interviews with people ordained by the Universal Life Church (ULC). The ULC ordains anyone for free; over 20 million people have become ministers since 1962. One reason people become ordained is to officiate weddings for friends in spiritual or non-religious, personalized ceremonies. Most states accept marriages as legally valid only if performed by a religious leader or a civil official. For couples who reject civil ceremonies as unromantic and religious ones as incommensurate with their beliefs, the ULC allows them to create a wedding which reflects their values. People also become ordained to avoid legal liability when performing non-traditional healings such as Reiki. The growth of naturopathic healing in the U.S. reflects an ethical critique of allopathic medicine as degrading patients into mere bodies. Since states require people who touch clients in therapeutic contexts to obtain a medical license, unless they are ordained clergy, ULC credentials allow these healers to practice their therapies legally. I argue that state regulation of weddings and healings spurs novel religious formations which utilize religious freedom protections in order to sustain ritual practices that manifest ethical critiques of the state and its traditional religious and medical institutions.

From Observation to Participation: The Making of a Non-Traditional Spirit Medium. KAREN FJELSTAD. San Jose State University.

I studied Vietnam's Mother Goddess Religion (Đạo Mẫu) for nearly thirty years using the classic method of participant-observation. I attended spirit possession rituals in several different regions of Vietnam, but focused on the religion as it is practiced by mediums in northern California. During research on social relations between temples, the life histories and personal narratives of mediums, and the challenges immigrants face while practicing religion, I never considered that the beliefs and rituals might have meaning for my personal life. That changed when I underwent chemotherapy for ovarian cancer, and I was eventually initiated as a spirit medium. This paper examines my personal transformation from researcher to spirit medium and compares and contrasts the kinds of knowledge gained as I shifted from partial to full participation.

Treating Religious Doubt: Jewish Religious Therapists and Double Lifer. AYALA FADER. Fordham University.

Among ultra-Orthodox Jews in New York, there is a growing population of "double lifers": Jews who have lost their faith (*emunah*) in Judaism, but choose to remain in their communities practicing Jewish orthodoxy both to protect their families and because they do not necessarily want to live a "secular" life. In many cases, a double lifer will seek out therapy or more often a spouse will discover the loss of faith and the double lifer will be referred to a therapist, after seeing a rabbi because loss of faith is considered a mental illness, a result of dysfunctional relationships. Most of the therapists that double lifers are referred to are observant Jews themselves. In this paper I focus on the encounter of Jewish therapists and their doubting clients.

What are the goals of such an encounter? How do observant Jewish therapists juggle competing moral discourses? How do double lifers experience therapeutic language and ideas? Most of all what are the implications of the interpenetration of Jewish religious ethics with a therapeutic framework? I draw on ongoing fieldwork, which includes the Nefesh Convention, the International Network of Mental Health Professionals, interviews with therapists and life coaches, and with double lifers. Drawing on historical and anthropological scholarship on ethics and psychology, I argue that a recent turn toward interiority and sincerity among ultra-Orthodox American Jews raises new theoretical issues for the encounter between religious and therapeutic ethics.

Healing as Culture: An Ethnography of the Healing Rituals of a Brazilian Ayahuasca Religion. HENRIQUE FERNANDES ANTUNES. University of São Paulo.

The scope of the paper is to present the findings of an ethnographic work I undertook in a religion that makes use of ayahuasca – a hallucinogenic beverage based on two plants native of the Amazon forest – the Santo Daime church, located in the state of Acre in Brazil. My goal is to discuss the spiritual healing practices presented by Santo Daime´s members, focusing on the relation between ritual and morality. First, a brief historical overview of the Santo Daime church will be presented, acknowledging its Amazonian origins. Then, I will present an accurate description of the healing rituals performed in the church and explore the moral aspects of this ayahuasca religion, including its Christians influences. Ultimately, I intent to present an analysis of the ayahuasca healing rituals as part of an Amazonian cultural tradition.

MORAL SELF-FASHIONING (1).

Chair: STEPHEN D. GLAZIER.

Ritual and Authenticity in New Age Judaism. RACHEL WERCZBERGER. Ben-Gurion University of the Negev/University and Tel-Aviv University

In this lecture I propose using the concept of 'ethics of authenticity' in order to explore New-Age Judaism (JNA). According to scholars "the quest for authenticity touches and transforms a vast range of human experience today" (Lindohlm, 2004:1). This modern-cum-romantic notion according to which each individual (and culture) have an inner essence or core to be individually discovered and realized is now associated with consumer culture, neo-liberal ethos, reflexivity and projects of identity construction. Moreover, as Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor suggests the so-called 'secular age' is saturated with the 'ethics of authenticity' (Taylor, 1991; 2007). In his book *A Secular Age* Taylor associates the ethics of authenticity and expressive individualism with contemporary spiritual search. Accordingly, "The religious life or practice that I become part of must not only be my choice, but it must speak to me, it must make sense in terms of my spiritual development as I understand this"(Taylor, 2007: 486).
JNA is highly characteristic of these tendencies. First, its New Age styled hybridity and the fusion of non-western/indigenous religions with Jewish tradition relies on the notion that these cultures are indeed authentic, hence 'spiritual'. Second, influenced by the therapeutic ethos, JNA thought and practice focuses on the authentic self, endowing it with a theological prominence

and consequently sacralizing it (Heelas, 1996). In my lecture I will discuss the intricate ways in which the idea authenticity is incorporated into JNA thought and practice, leading to the re-formation of Jewish ritual as authenticity-centered ritual. I will argue that although the new and modified JNA rituals are directed inwards, toward "the self," in practice this goal is achieved by the structuring mutual relations between the individual and the group. The end result is Jewish rituals whose defining elements are ludic, experiential, and individualistic which convince their participants of their authenticity and Jewishness.

Affect, Morality, and the Self: The Pre-Discursive in Afro-Caribbean Religions. STEPHEN D. GLAZIER. University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The seventeenth century philosopher Baruch Spinoza argued that affect is a constant in the human experience. All humans, Spinoza contended, are subject to pre-discursive emotions like love, hate, hope, desire, and fear. While Spinoza's ethic sought escape from what he saw as the tyranny of affect, participants in Afro-Caribbean religions often celebrate pre-discursive affects to condition the body, consciousness, and the senses through sound, songs, light, and images. To date, the most systematic treatment of morality and affect in an Afro-Caribbean religion is Todd Ramon Ochoa's *Society of the Dead* (2010), which highlights the pre-discursive forces of hate, fear, and desire in Cuban *Quita Manaquita* and *Palo*. I apply Ochoa's methodology to the analysis of other Afro-Caribbean religions such as Sango/Orisa, Rastafari, and the Spiritual Baptists of Trinidad with attention to ritual preparation, drumming, chants, incense, pungent smells, temperature variation, alternating light/darkness, varying textures, drugs, and the subtle manipulation of dreams and images. I argue that while some Afro-Caribbean religions (e. g. Orisa/Sango and the Spiritual Baptists) are 90% affect/10% discourse, other Afro-Caribbean religions (e. g. Rastafari) are 90% discourse/10% affect.

The Christ Event and the Immanent Turn in the Anthropology of Christianity. CHARLES FARHADIAN. Westmont College.

Anthropologists interested in unpacking the cultural and religious features of Christianity have explored topics as diverse as healing, publicity, morality, democracy, music, and agency. This paper moves in a slightly different direction by investigating cultural conversions constitutive of the "Christ event," a paradoxical yet foundational Christian affirmation of God's descent into human culture, with a view of underscoring the immanent turn toward the local. Without overlooking the global and transnational features of Christianity, so prevalent nowadays in the concept of so-called Global Christianity, this paper focuses on the new significance of reconfigured cultural identities through highlighting themes at the intersection of symbolic anthropology and conversion studies. Several ethnographic examples are incorporated into the presentation.

Peer Group Ethics and the Remaking of Masculinity: How Peer Groups in the Evangelical and Support Group Movements Help Transform Male Gender Identity in Urbanizing Costa Rica. WILLIAM DAWLEY. University of California, San Diego.

Recent work in the anthropology of ethics has begun to look more closely at the sociality and social organization involved in sustaining moral and ethical systems. My research on peer group

ethical programs that combine (or *re*combine) elements of Christian peer groups and support groups (especially Twelve Step groups) provides a unique demonstration of how even ethical traditions that emphasize virtue ethics are deeply social and relational, despite sometimes being caricatured as individualizing and even solipsistic. Based on twenty-two months of ethnographic research with peer groups that are associated with the evangelical, ecumenical, and support group movements in the urbanizing center of Costa Rica's rural Northern Zone, my research focuses on the extent to which peer group ethical systems are helping to create a new model of "spiritual masculinity," a potentiality made possible by the reimagining of an "active" and therefore recognizably masculine spirituality of struggle and process. This popular and growing form of ethics is not only remaking masculinity; it is contributing to a transformation of how Latin Americans imagine "spirituality" (and thus religion), which a focus on evangelical church services or "religion" alone obscures.

Moral Subjectivity in an Unstable Place. HECTOR GUAZON. University of the Philippines/ Saint Louis University.

In the context of the shifting sociopolitical circumstances that condition the manner by which state policies on migration in Brussels, Belgium are implemented, my paper looks into the ways in which socially differentiated Filipino Catholic migrants frame and transform their moral experience by creatively suffusing religion along inter(trans)-personal networks.
In this paper I *firstly*, depicts Brussels as a place providing work opportunities along with exercising hostility to Filipino migrants and their religious expressions; *secondly*, I explore the precariousness of residential in Brussels, Belgium; in the process, *thirdly*, I expose the challenges this entails to Filipino migrants' inter(trans)-personal relations; and, *finally*, I look at the ways Filipino migrants make reference to and, in the process, reappropriate Catholic-associated idioms of punishment and rewards/blessings.
Hence, my paper digs dipper into the moral dimension of the Filipino migrant experience, relatively underexplored by researches on Filipino diaspora. The moral I refer to in this paper situates actors' intentionality with reasonable judgment of particular circumstances, within a religious worldview of spiritual power, and mediated by inter(trans)- personal relations and obligations.
By probing this moral dimension ethnographically within an unstable place, my research challenges anthropological studies on Filipino migration, which focus on state policies and Non-Governmental Organization's advocacies that cast the migrant workers as servants of globalization and lacking agency in the shaping of their moral experiences. Alongside, my paper further stirs longstanding questioning of received normative/essentialist notions of Filipino religiosity and sociomoral values.

THE LABORS OF MORALITY: WORKING TOWARD THE MORAL GOOD AND WORK AS A MORAL GOOD.

Chairs: AARON GREER and RUPA PILLAI.

As Max Weber famously argued, capitalism's success hinged not only on the ideological promise of prosperity, but also on the link forged between labor and morality. Through

Protestant notions of morality, labor transformed into a duty and a virtue with the individual simultaneously working towards the moral good and understanding work as a moral good. The rise of similar religious moralities operating in concert with shifts in the political/economic landscape demonstrates religion's susceptibility to extra-liturgical influences. By acting as a disciplinary technique to promote productivity, religious morality plays a key role in the semiotics of success in addition to its function as a regulatory technology of political economy. Genealogies of contemporary religious moralities may then illustrate linkages between articulations of secular moralities within and between religious moralities.

To consider such linkages, this panel investigates the role of political and economic logics in shaping religious moralities and examines the everyday realities of learning and living such moralities. Questions considered by this panel include, but are not limited to the following: What is contemporary morality? Is there a distinction between secular and religious morality? How does neoliberalism and globalization impact the articulation of religious morality? How does ritual process and practice create a good worker? What distinguishes a good worker from a good citizen from a good devotee? How are religious moralities in conflict with political and economic logics?

Lottery Luck and Ethical Rewards: Gambling as Religious Practice in Thailand. RACHELLE M. SCOTT. University of Tennessee**.**

On the first and sixteenth day of each month, many Thais purchase lottery tickets in the hope of "winning big." Lottery vendors, while always present near religious shrines and Buddhist temples, are especially conspicuous on these days. More often than not their ticket selection has been radically reduced by the end of lottery drawing days, and the demand for particularly auspicious numbers often surpasses their supply. This paper examines the prevalent place of the lottery in contemporary Thai religious practice, and how its linkage with a variety of religious specialists and spirits constitutes a vibrant religious economy that transcends religious boundaries. Rather than viewing the relationship between religion and the lottery as a problem of superstitious belief and distorted hope, my paper seeks to demonstrate how lottery practices build upon traditional notions of religious ethics and how they help to constitute new religious networks.

When Work Doesn't Pay: The Protestant Ethic in Post-Industrial America. SHARI JACOBSON. Susquehanna University.

Members of Grace Baptist Church, a fundamentalist church in rural America, face tough economic circumstances. On the frontlines of today's insecure workforce, their longstanding jobs in the manufacturing sector are gone, and stocking shelves in supermarkets, washing dogs at a kennel, and scrambling for piecemeal electrician work are how congregants now sustain themselves. They are hard-working and believe in the virtue of labor and self-reliance, but the reality is that the work available to them is insufficient.

This paper examines what becomes of the Protestant ethic when the work goes away, and how orthodox Christians construe virtue in relation to industriousness when there is no industry in which to work. Drawing on a 12-week course on "biblical finances," I examine how the figure of the steward now eclipses in this community the figure of the worker. The course teaches that all our possessions are not really ours, but belong to the Lord. Christians' calling is to manage these

possessions prudently, and the course thus offers practical techniques for finance and budgeting, assuring participants that proper resource management will free them from debt and usher in a secure and godly life. However, the arrangement also holds that, because everything really belongs to God, it can be lost at any moment, whenever He decides and for reasons that may not be readily apparent to the faithful. In this way, the figure of the steward both sustains congregants' convictions about the virtue of agency and self-reliance, and normalizes their precarious economic situations.

The Call to Service and the Politics of Denomination in American Orthodox Women's Talmud Study. CAROLINE BLOCK. John Hopkins University.

Explained as a model of Weberian rationalization, a tool of Protestant secularization, or simply a condition of modernity, denominationalism is, in fact, a historically contingent and nationally distinct program of institution building whose relation to labor, when turned back on itself, reflects far more than the generation of material capital.
 As American Judaism has taken up the imperative of civil religion in conforming to the symbolic framework of denomination, the role of rabbi has been re-shaped as that of a professional in the model of the Protestant pastorate. In this context, ethical claims to rabbinic authority seem to be grounded in knowledge of Jewish law, a qualification earned through study. However, in a tradition that ritualizes textual learning, the value of study exceeds that of professional qualification. The labor of religious scholarship is considered analogous to prayer, which is itself conceptualized as a replacement for cultic sacrifice. Rabbinic training then, produces not only leaders with baseline knowledge of Jewish law, but practitioners of spiritual labor.
 Based on fieldwork in women's Talmud programs in New York City, where Orthodox Jewish women study a rabbinic curriculum without the current possibility of receiving traditional rabbinic ordination, or of serving as rabbis in their denominational milieu, this paper examines the spiritually and denominationally defined labor of study for these practitioners. Following a call to serve, through entry into rabbinic textual dialogue, the women are keenly aware that their religious scholarly work may not be recognized by most Orthodox institutions, and have begun to experiment with cultivating alternative forms of pious authority and spiritual leadership – both an experiment in ethical claims-making and a political project calling forth a new community.

Discipline and Party: The Hindu Ethic and the Spirit of Neo-Liberal Capitalism in Trinidad. AARON GREER. Pacific University.

A prevailing national self-image of Trinidad may best be characterized as "the party island." Trinidadians often boast of themselves as the West Indians who know how to cut loose and have a good time. Work, in this iteration of the national imaginary, is always second to play. Indeed, for these Trinidadians, capitalism's bluff is called as play becomes equal, if not superior to, work. Street *limes* (impromptu parties), fêtes, house parties, rolling trucks with stadium size speakers, raucous rum shops and bars, all appear to confirm Trinidadians' collective zeal for revelry of all kinds. For others, however, this hedonism is both a sign and symptom of the country's rapidly deteriorating moral economy. The sharp rise in violent crime over the last ten years, the drug syndicates, the alarming rates of domestic abuse, drug and alcohol addiction, and violent crime can be traced back, they will assert, to a decadent society unwilling to discipline its

children and impose moral order. For many of the Hindus organizations I have worked with or whose literature I have read over the past eight years, the problem with Trinidad is its collective disregard for morality. The solution is the dedication to discipline. This paper will describe and analyze how many Trinidadian Hindus attempt to fashion disciplined youth who can resist the temptations of Trinidad's morally reckless popular culture and succeed as hard-working citizens able to give back to their community.

Cultivating Intention: The Ethics of Guyanese Yoga in New York City. RUPA PILLAI. University of Oregon.

In the ethnic enclave of Little Guyana in Queens, New York, yoga classes are becoming more prevalent. Taught in mandirs, school gyms, and homes of practitioners, these classes offer Guyanese Hindus who cannot access the trendy studios of Manhattan and Brooklyn the opportunity to learn yoga. While many students attend these classes to work on their bodies and achieve a standard of beauty, the instructors strive to cultivate a Vedic intention. For these instructors, such an intention is crucial in New York, where Guyanese Hindus struggle with the demands of working long hours and the experience of being racialized minorities. By cultivating Vedic intention students may become better workers and citizens while becoming better people through yoga. Drawing upon participant observations in these classes and interviews with instructors and students, this paper will examine the instructor's motivations behind this intention and how students are or are not cultivating and deploying it in their everyday.

RITUAL/ANTI-RITUAL.

Chair: KAORI HATSUMI.

Halleluiah People: The Catholic Easter Rite, Evil, and the Religious Sensibility of Tamil Fishers in Shri Lanka. KAORI HATSUMI. Kalamazoo College.

This paper examines the therapeutic effects of the Easter rite on a group of Catholic Tamil fishers who survived the last and the most brutal phase of the civil war in Sri Lanka. Building on Csordas (2013) that the notion of evil should constitute an analytic category as part of an anthropological approach to morality, I investigate, through ethnography, the ways in which the Catholic fishers responded to genocidal violence and how evil is understood in the rite. The paper draws on anthropological fieldwork I conducted in northern Sri Lanka between February 2009 and May 2010. At the time of Easter in April 2010, the fishers had just been released from government captivity in postwar camps and started rebuilding their lives in their war-torn village, which was then under the occupation of the Sri Lankan Army. The fishers were struggling to mourn their dead in the absence of their bodies that were still abandoned in the battlefield. The ethnography has a distinct chronological thrust. It begins with Easter Thursday, moves through Good Friday, and ends with "Halleluiah Saturday" or Easter Saturday midnight mass. It illuminates how the villagers moved through grief at each stage of the rite, and how the rite brought back a sense of belonging to a place and to a community as well as a sense of order (through the order of the rite) back to their lives. It also illustrates the therapeutic effects of certain local traditions that were added to the rite.

Lessons in Church Math: Brand Theology, an Emotional Economy, and Rejecting Ritual in a Multisite Metro Atlanta Megachurch. MEGAN A. MOORE. Georgia State University.

North of Atlanta, as the city gradually transforms into suburban sprawl, billboards, bumper stickers, and beautiful, strategically placed buildings all featuring the words "Dry Ground" can be seen along the most traveled roads. Dry Ground is a multisite, quickly expanding, Wesleyan megachurch located across three counties just north of Atlanta. Throughout 2014, the church was preparing to launch an ambitious plan opening five new campuses in early 2015, making a total of nine. Over ten months of ethnographic field work with the church in 2014, I traced the narratives of expansion through interviews with pastors, staff, and attendees. In this paper, I will explore the anti-ritual narratives that colored all of my conversations with staff and attendees at Dry Ground during ten months of ethnographic field work in 2014.

The rapid multisite expansion that Dry Ground was engaged in required intensive considerations of the future. Any human expansion is inherently about engaging in visions of the future and creating spaces to carry them out. However, the specificities of these projects and their understandings of and desires for the unconverted often illuminate greater systems shaping social action. At Dry Ground, the rejection of certain ritual produced a social space for different rituals, often revolving around American pop culture, that became a key point of mobilization in their expansion project.

Rethinking "Traditions": Reading Classics as Ritual. YANG SHEN. Boston University.

How do generations of Chinese remain connected across history? How do the anthropological studies of religion help us re-conceptualize the realm of sociality and historicity? This paper considers reading classics as one important way by which many heterogeneous traditions come together for the Chinese. In line with this emphasis, the paper argues that reading classics in China constitutes a ritual action that creates a "as-if" space for the contemporaries to enter into a historical community. In the Chinese context, reading is first an activity done aloud in the presence of other people, notably those in what can be broadly envisioned as a teacher-student relationship. This kind of reading is rhythmic, public, and makes use of a historical subjunctive in which both the deceased and the yet-to-be-born are brought together by the readers' embodied acceptance of the notion of "sages". Therefore what are called "traditions" in China could be discussed more in terms of orthopraxy than orthodoxy. The perspective of reading suggests one is capable of understanding by "doing" rather than by "thinking" alone; and such reading activities serve not only to regenerate but also to create new relationships among and between contemporaries and their historical relatives.

THE CHRISTIAN NATION AS ETHICAL FRAMEWORK: ON MORAL AUTHORITY, CHRISTIANITY, AND THE STATE.

Chair: NAOMI HAYNES.

Although the relationship between religion and the state is a central concern in contemporary social science, much of the research on this topic has focused either on Islam or secularism in

post-Christian contexts. Far less has been said about claims of Christian nationhood, especially in the postcolonial world, where this idea has particular traction. Indeed, in some of the cases examined in this panel, Christian nationalism has been inscribed in laws, constitutions, and state-sponsored declarations of faith. In others, although the notion of Christian nationhood may not enjoy government support directly, it figures prominently in claims made on the state, animating the rhetoric of lobbyists, activists, politicians, and church leaders. In both instances the idea of the Christian nation represents an intervention in political life and a potent source of claims about what the nation should be. Some scholars have identified in Christianity a way to hold political leaders to account – a moral platform from which to speak truth to power. Others would focus on the polemical nature of these claims, the social boundaries they draw and spectre of exclusion they raise. Clearly, the concept of a Christian nation is both politically and ethically charged, creating new spaces and closing off others, inviting novel points of collaboration while at the same time giving rise to new, sometimes violent, forms of exclusion.

This panel will explore Christian nationhood, broadly defined. Drawing on a range of ethnographic examples, we seek to establish a comparative framework within which to examine some of the key questions that this issue raises, focusing particularly on the politico-ethical nexus outlined above: What kinds of moral claims does the notion of Christian nationhood allow people to make? What sorts of temporal, spatial, and social imaginaries are created by the concept of the Christian nation? Does the idea of a Christian nation always serve the interest of powerful elites, or can it be leveraged in political critique? Can it be a site of resistance? How is Christian nationhood different from other forms of religious nationalism? How does Christian nationalism vary across cultural contexts? Is Christian *inter*nationalism as common as Christian *trans*nationalism? And finally, must the modern state be a secular state – that is, is there a place for a religious state in a world concerned with human rights, civil liberties, and democratic governance?

'Is Ghana under a Curse?': Debating the Nation's Past and Future in a Christian Present.
GIRISH DASWANI. University of Toronto.

In his book *Is Ghana Under a Curse?* (2000), Protestant writer Divine Kumah asks why Ghanaians are experiencing God's wrath if Ghana is a Christian country. His answer is that Ghana's past and present are filled with an idolatry that manifests itself through traditional religious practices and the self-interested and corrupt politicians who act like gods. Like Kumah, Pentecostal church leaders engage with their country's changing political and economic situation through a Christian narrative that promotes redemption from an idolatrous past and salvation from the endemic presence of corruption in Ghana. Since the discovery of oil in 2007 and the 2008 economic crisis, Ghana's economy has been steadily declining while calls for transparency and accusations of corruption have been rising. Public debates in the media increasingly centre on Ghana's economic hardship, or the "oil curse." They also raise concerns about the moral character of religious leaders and politicians and their willingness to redistribute wealth. This paper examines how moral claims of "Christian nationhood" in Ghana allow for a political critique through three types of spatiotemporal framings: moving forward toward a better future; reflecting on a non-Christian past; acting in the time of the "now." If "getting ahead in life" is conditional to one's ability to "live a good life," building a Christian future becomes a moral project for Ghanaian citizens, who engage in shared debates about which specific promises of the

past have failed to meet expectations, what needs to be left behind and how to appropriately move forward.

A Self-Proclaimed Christian Nation and a Pastor's Bid for President. NAOMI HAYNES. University of Edinburgh.

This paper will examine the rhetoric of one of Zambia's most prominent and controversial religious leaders: Never Mumba, a Pentecostal pastor who was the nation's first televangelist, erstwhile republican vice president, and who is currently running for president as the embattled frontman of one of the nation's most prominent political parties. Mumba has consistently used his religious credentials to demonstrate his personal integrity, saying that his election would bring a moral sea change in Zambian politics. Yet despite the high regard with which most people in this self-proclaimed "Christian nation" hold him, Mumba's participation in public office has by no means been universally welcomed. This is even true among Pentecostals, who regard Mumba as an important religious figure but are often reticent to support him as a political candidate. At issue here is not the question of whether Christians ought to be involved in politics – most Pentecostals would say that they should – but rather the particular implications of a pastor running for president. Through a close reading of Mumba's press releases and other writings, as well as ethnographic material gathered among Zambian Pentecostals, this paper will show how Mumba's rhetoric simultaneously mobilizes Pentecostal ideas and contravenes the norms of Pentecostal sociality, particularly those concerning the relationships between church leaders and laypeople. Not only does this analysis shed light on the curiously lackluster support for Mumba among Zambian Pentecostals, more importantly, it reveals the particular contours of Christian nationhood in a country where this idea is a key political touchstone.

Nations without States, and States without Nations: Christian Nationalism and Christian Withdrawal in Southern California. JON BIALECKI. University of Edinburgh.

Christian Nationalism is predicated on a question: what is the relation between the State and ethical communities of belonging? Entailed in this as well are questions about the proper sources, forms, and media of authority. This question's force arises from the fact that it is not just a question for the anthropologist, but also one for the anthropologist's interlocutors. And with all questions, variations in the circumstance and manners in which it is posed - and sometimes quite small variations - can result in differently structured answers.
Using ethnographic evidence from two different and historically linked Southern California Charismatic-Evangelical movements (The Vineyard and the Calvary Chapel network), I chart some of the various responses to this question, and identify some of the differential relations subsisting the question that allow for differentials in the response. Without exhausting possible answers, I identify two trajectories: an identification of ethical community, the state, and authority, which give rise to a politics of Nietzschian *ressentiment*; and a disaggregation of these categories, which result in a political position reminiscent of Hegel's account of "The Beautiful Soul." These positions, independent of 'left' or 'right,' themselves have several differential realizations or decompositions that are actualized in different positions on the America political spectrum.

The Irreducible Materiality of 'Unity': Christian-Israelite Critiques in Papua New Guinea Politics. COURTNEY HANDMAN. Reed College.

In 2013, the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Speaker of Parliament, Theo Zurenuoc, took a chainsaw to the traditional carvings decorating Parliament House (modeled more generally on a traditional Sepik men's house), claiming that these traditional material forms were acting as doorways for the devil to corrupt the nation's Members of Parliament. Later, Zurenuoc revealed his plans for an alternate decorative element meant to ensure moral Christian leadership of the MPs: Zurenuoc hoped to remove the Sepik-inspired totem poles and replace them with a "unity pole," an obelisk on which would be inscribed the word "unity" in the roughly 800 languages of PNG.
While this iconoclastic gesture would seem to reiterate the destructive compulsions of early Protestant reformers, I argue that this move must be seen in terms of a project that is reconfiguring the relationship between Christianity, ethnicity, and citizenship in contemporary PNG away from a Euro-American ideal of the secular liberal state. In tracing out some aspects of mission history and missionary discourses on cultural difference, I show how PNG citizens use as a basis for political reform a sense of their connection to ancient Israelites (and contemporary Israel) through a dematerialization of traditions into a largely linguistic sense of Semitic connection. That is, the material forms that anchor the authority of the nation are no longer men's house totem poles signifying a Melanesian modernity, but the universalizing translations of "unity" inscribed onto a pole that is literally anchored by what many PNG citizens call "the God of Israel."

How Dead is the Monster: Revisiting the Ethics of Church/State Relations in Russia through *Leviathan*, the Movie. JULIA KLIMOVA. University of California, San Diego.

In Russian constitution the secular nature of the state is confirmed, and establishment of the state religion is forbidden. However, in the preamble to the federal law "On Freedom of Consciousness and Religious Unions" it is stated that Orthodox Christianity has a special role in the history of Russia, and in foundation and development of Russian spirituality and culture. In the decades following the disintegration of the atheist Soviet regime, which according to some scholars resulted in the situation of the "moral breakdown" (Zigon 2011), a growing number of Russian citizens are (re)assigning the institute of the Russian Orthodox Church a leading role in the ethical construction of the nation. The view of the Church as the (re)emerging moral force in Russian society is not without challengers. In this paper I will analyze discourses formed around the recently released movie *Leviathan,* whose depiction of immorality of both state and church authorities had provoked heated discussions among clergy and laity alike of such themes as destiny of Russia as a Christian (Orthodox) nation, its civilizational difference from the West, compatibility of values of Orthodoxy and liberal secular modernity, nature of worldly power and sources of religious authority, possibility of moral partnership between church and modern secular state. I will develop the argument that Church's moral authority and standing in contemporary Russian society is accumulated not only by adhering to its religious traditions, canons and rituals, but also by responses to critique and diversity of views, secular and religious.

Blurred Visions: Christian State and Secular State Ideals in Fiji. JACQUELINE RYLE. The University of South Pacific, Fiji.

The ideal of constitutionally declaring Fiji a Christian state has played a role on the political scene in Fiji since the mid 1980's. In the tense atmosphere preceding the 1987 elections and subsequent first of four coups between 1987 and 2006, this ideal was part of ethno-nationalist indigenous Fijian campaigning against the growing political influence of the predominantly non-Christian Indo-Fijian community. During the 2014 election campaign, the Christian state was again in focus. Disaffection and frustration in several quarters at clauses in the new constitution adopted by the military administration in 2013 was also a significant factor. Former constitutions note that Christianity and other religions played a historical role in making the nation of Fiji. The 2013 constitution states that Fiji is a secular state and religion a personal matter. For some, this strengthens the case for a Christian state. Blurred interpretations, misconceptions and polemics as to the exact meanings of the terms 'Christian state', 'secular state' and 'secularisation' compounded the complexity of the debate. Important nuances were lost due to lack of openness and understanding towards other perspectives. I explore the strong feelings these terms evoke and the layers of meaning they hold for different people, from historical, political, theological, spiritual and sociocultural perspectives.

Discussant: SIMON COLEMAN. University of Toronto.

THE MORALITY OF MILLENARIANISM: AGENCY, ETHICS, DIACHRONICITY, AND OTHER UNDERPLAYED CONCEPTS.

Chairs: JACOB R. HICKMAN and JOSEPH WEBSTER.

The recent profusion of anthropological scholarship on morality should be of particular interest to the anthropology of religion. Religious revitalization movements—including apocalyptic, messianic, millenarian, and nativistic varieties— provide fertile ground for examining the moral dimensions of such religious experiences. One way to characterize millenarian movements would be to consider them attempts to establish new moral frameworks for the societies in which they are embedded. Alternatively, these movements could be read as attempting to enact a more authentic or ancient form of morality that contemporary societies have somehow lost. As well as discussing the productive confluence of the anthropology of morality and the anthropology of millenarianism, this panel will also question the predominant frameworks through which religious studies scholars and anthropologists have sought to understand these movements.
Early scholarship understood these movements primarily through the lens of "deprivation theory" (see Aberle 1970; Thrupp 1970)—that is, as a religious means of overcoming political powerlessness and socio-economic deprivation. The literature on 'Cargo cults' provides a classic example of this. Importantly, this revitalization-as-a-response-to-deprivation model remains largely intact as an explanatory framework within much of the social scientific literature (see Scott 2009, Harkin 2004). Over the last five years, however, some within anthropology have been developing rather different theoretical frameworks, most especially within the anthropology of morality. It is these new theoretical insights that this panel will put into dialogue with emerging ethnographic perspectives on millenarianisms. For example, Laidlaw (2014) seeks to establish a more robust theory of agency that must underpin an anthropology of ethics. This move provides good ground to critique the 'deprivation theory' explanation of religious revitalization movements, and to analyze the forms of agency that potentially underpin

millenarian activity. This panel constitutes a comparative analysis of distinct religious revitalization movements that seek to address these issues and establish a more robust theoretical understanding of millenarianism beyond deprivation theory by integrating key insights from the anthropology of morality.

In short, we propose to explore what unique theoretical contributions a comparative focus on millenarian movements from different social milieu can offer our understanding of religious revitalization at various levels, micro- and macro-, synchronic and diachronic, colonial and post-colonial, etc. Key ethnographic and historical questions include: Under what conditions and with what effects do religious groups predict the end of the world or the coming of a new one? Are there distinct features of millennial movements that arise in precolonial, colonial, or post-colonial contexts? Are these distinct from millennial movements in global diasporas or transnational groups? Are these diasporic religious movements fundamentally responding to the same social pressures as colonial-era movements, or are they co-opting old cultural forms for new purposes? How do etic sociopolitical analyses of religious revitalization mesh with the emic religious meanings of participants in these movements? What do we make of the discrepancies which emerge between these two ways of knowing? What role do emotions play here? How do these movements rewrite (and reread) popular history in order to cast the past in terms more amenable to their own aims? Are there patterns in how this is accomplished or asserted? What sorts of futures are predicted by these movements? Crucially, we do not seek to separate religious movements from political ones, but rather to query both the religious and political implications of the movements we discuss (cf. van der Veer 1994). Further, this panel addresses these considerations through a comparative consideration of different religious revitalization movements that are situated in a wide variety of distinct cultural and political circumstances, and thus offer a high degree of comparative validity in our analyses of the formation and implications of these movements.

What Does Pentecostal Heritage Look Like?: From Linearity to Incommensurability in Moralizing the Millennial. SIMON COLEMAN. University of Toronto.

A standard understanding of the bureaucratization of charisma in Pentecostal movements sees it as pushing the millennium into the distant future, as anticipation turns into disappointment or apathy. I want to explore some of the ways we can expand our understandings of Pentecostal constructions of time by seeing religious practices as involving movements between and across different ethical and spatio-temporal regimes of action. Thus for instance 'heritage' and the 'apocalypse' can be combined, or at least juxtaposed, within the same religious life. We should not attempt to see such regimes as logically compatible; but both are equally Pentecostal. I explore these questions using my own fieldwork as well as other literature on Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism.

Left-Eyed Morality and the Postcolonial Age: Caodai Theories of The Period Before The World Ends. JANET HOSKINS. University of Southern California.

Vietnamese Caodaists predicted that the final world age, inaugurated in 1926, would begin with the fall of the great European empires in Asia----the French, the British, and the Dutch. This glorious postcolonial period should last for 700,000 years (according to most orthodox assessments), but there are occasionally some spirit messages suggesting the end may come

sooner. This paper probes the connections between theories of morality and visions of the left eye (closer to the heart, and representing the positive, dynamic forces of yang). It does so by juxtaposing colonial-era vision of the future (as articulated in the late 1920s, Caodaism's "age of revelations") with later statements formulated in the "age of diaspora" (1975-present) when many Caodai leaders and followers went into exile. In two widely contrasting historical contexts, a shared religious vocabulary has been used to connect current events to a reflexive re-synthesis of Vietnamese religious traditions. Issues of morality are here tied to issues of identity, transformed racializations of being Vietnamese and being Asian, and an inversion of Orientalist ideas of a passive, feminized Orient through assertions that the left eye represents a progressive, masculine monotheism that can encompass Christian elements as "local practices" under an overarching Asian cosmology.

The Fifth Pillar of World Religions: Moral Agency over Time in Hmong Millenarianism.
JACOB R. HICKMAN. Brigham Young University.

Hmong millenarian movements—historically common in Southwest China and Southeast Asia—have continued to proliferate in the contemporary global Hmong diaspora that extends to communities in the United States and Australia. On the surface, the discourse and ritual practice of these groups may appear to be a classic case of religious revitalization as a response to sociopolitical deprivation. However, a closer analysis of the discourse and strategies employed by leaders of these movements reveals an innovative strategy to redefine Hmong society in particular ways that reach beyond the explanatory power of the deprivation model. Based on ethnographic work with two such movements in the United States and Thailand, I argue that a stronger notion of moral agency is needed in order to adequately understand what these millenarian Chairs are up to, what types of social and political pressures they are responding to, and the innovative ways in which they seek to cast a new moral outlook for global Hmong society. The ultimate goal, as phrased by one of these group leaders, is to establish this millenarian form as "the fifth pillar" of world religions, along with Islam, Christianity, Buddhism/Hinduism, and Judaism. They imagine that their revised religious framework will pervade all of Hmong global society to put Hmong on par with other great religions and societies of the world. I will address the question of whether Hmong in the contemporary diaspora are fundamentally responding to similar pressures as Hmong in precolonial and colonial eras, or whether they are co-opting older cultural forms toward new social and political ends. The question of moral agency is critical in understanding these distinctions and deriving a more adequate understanding of Hmong millenarian activity.

Eschatological Agency: Moral Freedom and Prophecy Fulfilment on Land and at Sea.
JOSEPH WEBSTER. Queen's University, Belfast.

By reflecting upon fieldwork among Brethren deep sea fishermen in Gamrie, NE Scotland, this article explores how two sources of authority – Biblical apocalyptic prophecy and the agentive acts of individual Christians – were imagined to relate to each other. More specifically, by using the term 'eschatological agency', I consider how local Christian fishermen placed themselves at the centre of 'end times' events by first *reading* and then *fulfilling* such prophecy. How, in this context, are we to understand what it means to be a moral actor or a free agent? These questions are made more complex still by attending to the ways in which Gamrie's Christian fisher-

families obfuscated their own agency by attributing all human actions to either God or the devil, while at the same time working tirelessly to identify and enact various 'signs of the times' that collectively evidenced the nearness of the end of the world. Here, '*self*-fulfilling prophecy' is given a new double meaning; not only does it create the semiotic conditions necessary for its own apocalyptic realisation, but also creates the material conditions necessary for the apocalyptic realisation of the Brethren self and community. This paper offers an ethnographic sketch of that self and community, and, in so doing, attempts to query recent anthropological pairings of freedom and morality through a re-examination of the notion of authority.

Pilgrimage to Jamkaran: Messianic Representations, Identity Construction and Apocalyptic Aspirations/Expectations. HOSSEIN MIRRAZI. University of Cambridge.

Prior to the Islamic revolution, the modest mosque located at Jamkaran on the outskirts of the city of Qom in Iran was a minor site of pilgrimage. After the revolution, rise of messianic (Mahdistic) orientations in the government changed the small mosque into an enormous shrine and major site of pilgrimage which hosts thousands of pilgrims every Tuesday evening for faraj (deliverance) prayer. The messianic representations of the place along with promotion of pilgrimage to the sacred site are closely interconnected. Accordingly, through connecting the three salient notions of pilgrimage, subjectivity and identity, this research aims to shed light on the relationship between pilgrimage and the construction of identity showing how pilgrimage as a symbolic system can help people to see who they are and what they can become. On the one hand, it makes a link between pilgrimage and the anthropological tradition of discussing the shared inner life of the subject, to the way subjects feel, respond, and experience in order to show how pilgrimage help pilgrims to reconstruct and redefine their identity. On the other hand, by considering subjectivity, it attempts to discover the relationship between pilgrimage and the construction of identity through representation, which positions us as subjects and produces meanings through which we can make sense of our experience. The research thus explores the relationship between representations, pilgrimage practices and identities by underscoring the diverse modalities through which perspectives and forms of an optimistic future are imagined and constructed. Such messianic hopes and expectations do not flourish in a vacuum detached from the socio-economic and politico-religious landscape; rather, they should be seen as a result of various hybrid forms of politico-religious knowledge, experience and discourses that have largely been ignored in the study of modern Muslim societies. The ethnographic qualitative approach involving mostly participant observation and interview has been employed to collect data from Jamkaran mosque as the field of this study. The results of the research denote the constant replication of the cult of Mahdi (Shi'a promised messiah) as well as representation of Jamkaran as a major place for pilgrimage and piety is a state agenda to produce meaning and values from which individuals can form their identity. This interpellation of messianic expectation and aspiration helps individuals to keep and construct their religious identity as well as achieving tranquility by resolving their problems spiritually.

Discussant: JOEL ROBBINS. University of Cambridge.

RELIGION AND MORAL SENTIMENTS.

Organizer: NOFIT ITZHAK.

Anthropologists of religion have long attended to the role emotions, affects and sentiments play in the constitution of religious life and practice. Paralleling theological preoccupations with the role of emotion in faith, anthropological investigations, ranging from classical works by Durkheim, Malinowski and Tuner, to accounts of contemporary modes of religious engagement, interrogate the manners in which affective and bodily experience shape and motivate religious practice and religious actors' encounter with the divine. While questions of morality and ethics have been implicitly present in many of these accounts, explicit anthropological theorization of the relationship between religion and moral emotions or sentiments remains underdeveloped. The panel addresses this lacuna by investigating the manners in which moral sentiments are implicated in the constitution of religious life and practice across religious traditions, cultures, and social contexts. This includes religious actors' explicit or reflective engagement with moral sentiments (or the morality of sentiments), as well as more implicit, unreflective or mundane ways in which moral sentiments constitute religious subjectivity and sociality. Collectively, panelists bring together insights from the anthropology of religion, the anthropology of ethics and morality, and the anthropology of emotions, to advance our understanding of the role of moral sentiments in the constitution of contemporary forms of religious engagements and religious modes of being in the world and with others.

A Comparative Phenomenology of Good and Evil. TANYA LUHRMANN. Stanford University.

This paper sets out an initial comparison of the moral dimensions of spiritual experience in three new charismatic evangelical churches in the San Francisco Peninsula in the US, in Accra, Ghana, and in Chennai, India. It argues that different ways of thinking about thinking—different local theories of mind—shape the way experience God's goodness and the way they fear and experience demons. Different local models of selfhood also shape the sense of the human-God relationship, shaping in turn the way people understand sin. These differences seem to be reflected even in the rates of seemingly unrelated bodily events like sleep paralysis, which are far greater in the setting in which evil is understood to be more substantially real.

On Love, Compassion, and Making Ethical Relationships in Christian Humanitarianism. NOFIT ITZHAK. University of California, San Diego.

Anthropological accounts of humanitarianism highlight and critique the centrality of "moral sentiments", such as compassion, to the constitution of humanitarianism and other forms of aid. However, while liberal iterations of compassion have their roots in Christian theology, I have found that Christian aid workers themselves reject and are highly critical of the idea of aid as motivated by compassion or other "fellow feelings." Rather than seeing their mission as motivated by feelings of compassion, aid workers and volunteers consider the aim of their mission to be one of creating the reality of love in their relations with others. This paper examines how members of Catholic Charismatic Development NGOs in France and in Rwanda attempt to realize this ethical project in their relations with those they aid, arguing that its

realization hinges, at least in part, not on the recognition of similarity, but on the establishment of otherness. Investigating the conditions under which relationships in this context succeed or fail, I suggest that particular prayer practices that hinge on the establishment of co-presence with God may aid in the cultivation of ethical orientations required for the establishment of successful relationships across difference.

Some Ambivalent Conceptions: Feelings of Difference in Evangelical Disability Ministries. TYLER ZOANNI. New York University.

How should we feel about disability? How does it feel to be disabled? In this paper, I examine one set of responses to these questions by exploring the competing uses of sentiment in a newfound disability activism that is burgeoning within North American evangelical Christianity. Growing numbers of American evangelicals—typically people with physical disabilities and parents of children with disabilities—contend that conditions of disability are part of God's plan, and that people with disabilities should be embraced as blessings. In order to critique and mobilize fellow evangelicals around disability issues, the people I call evangelical disability activists invoke, produce, and work on a range of sentiments (compassion, pity, despair, joy) and affective states (suffering, solidarity, celebration). The paper focuses on three particular disability ministries—one ritual in emphasis, another humanitarian, the last educational—and the lively debates over proper feelings of and about disability that these ministries foster. I contend that while the theological pronouncements made by evangelical disability activists are relatively clear, the emotional tenor, sentimental rhetoric, and affective labors of their activities reflect considerable ambivalence about disability.

Sentiments of Suffering: Moral Sentiment in a Catholic Convent. ANNA CORWIN. Stanford University.

Christ's suffering has preoccupied the moral, spiritual, and emotional imaginations of religious Catholics for centuries. To this day, Christ's suffering before his death is deeply cultivated in the spiritual imaginations of lay and monastic Catholics across the globe. Most Catholic Churches depict Christ suffering on the cross – a crown of thorn piercing his skin, his flesh punctured and his face contorted in pain. Many theories abound to explain the Catholic attention to Christ's suffering. It can be seen as movement towards connection with the divine – an experiential transformation of the divine, a radical move in which the divine can be symbolically and conceptually experienced as radically proximate to the human experience.
This paper, which draws on eleven months of ethnographic data gathered in a Franciscan convent, will examine how one group of elderly Catholic nuns understand and convey experiences of Christ's suffering and how these images and sentiments of Christ's suffering are drawn upon, echoed, and modeled as they describe and experience their illness or pain at the end of life. The paper will ask how the narrative of Christ's suffering is embodied through various moral and emotional forms and how this narrative might shape moral and experiential forms of suffering in the convent in institutional, social, and personal ways.

Moral Emotions, Religious Traditions, and the Variably Transcendental Self. JULIA CASSANITI. Washington State University.

How is what we feel connected to what we want to feel, and how are these emotional aspirations associated with religious ideas about the transcendental nature of the person? In this talk I will examine some commonly moralized emotions in a Theravada Buddhist community in Northern Thailand, and compare them to commonly moralized emotions found in a Baptist Christian community in the same region. While people in the Buddhist community tend to put moral value on calm, low-arousal emotion, people in the Christian community tend to put moral value on relatively more excited, robust emotionality. I'll show how these differing moral emotions are articulated in and motivated through bodily practice in everyday life in the two communities. I'll then argue that these divergences in moral sentiments can be attributed in part to diverging ideas about the self and the self's ontological status in the two religious traditions. Such an argument points to the importance of recognizing ontological pluralism in the study of religious experience.

Tradition, Agency and Emotion in Hmong Moral Discourse. AUSTIN GILLETT and JACOB R. HICKMAN. Brigham Young University.

The precise role of agency in moral action and moral experience is one area that has received increased theoretical attention and critique (e.g., Mahmood 2004; Laidlaw 2014; Cassaniti and Hickman 2014). However, lucid ethnographic (empirical) demonstrations of what agency in cultural accounts of morality actually looks like are less common. Such accounts would provide a critical understanding of some of the ways that agency plays out in the moral thinking of our ethnographic interlocutors. Recent discussion on the topic has questioned the distinction of deliberate, independent acts of morality from decisions that reproduce the moral conventions of a particular group. The question of whether or not this promotion of moral convention is, in fact, a moral choice, involving agency, has called for continued research and ethnographic study. This paper is the result of efforts to ground this theory—of the possibility of agentive moral reproduction—in greater ethnographic detail and juxtaposing it against theories of 'agency as resistance.' Through an analysis of Hmong moral discourse, this paper aims for an ethnographically grounded account of the ways that Hmong agentically seek to reproduce and assert their vision of 'the worthy life'— which they experience as discursively frame as 'traditional.' This idea of traditionalism is grounded in a sentiment that carries a particular emotional weight for our interlocutors. This traditionalist moral sentiment, we argue, provides good evidence for the agency inherent in Hmong morality-as-reproduction.

MORALITY OF MOVEMENT: MIGRATION, PILGRIMAGE, DIASPORA, AND RETURN (1).

Chair: SUMA IKEUCHI.

"Movement" is commonly understood as a physical act of changing locations, and rarely as a mental, affective, temporal, spiritual, or moral act. Movement as we experience it, however, is fraught with aspirations, anxieties, and ambiguities. "Going forward" often invokes advance, progress, and – by extension – modernity. The synonyms for "going back," in contrast, include recede, revert, and regress – which connote decline and degeneration. But going back does not always equal becoming backward. "Return," for instance, can evoke a complex web of affects

through a claim for one's roots, an image of pure original state, and nostalgia for the distant – often primordial – past.

Thus a quick overview of words and images already attests the entanglement of movement in moral implications. Movement is therefore an ideal topical lens through which to explore the issue of morality – particularly in the study of religion in today's world. This is for two reasons. First, the vast majority of religious traditions, if not all, have incorporated movement into their philosophies and practices. Diaspora, pilgrimage, and missions are just a few examples. Second, the movements of people, ideas, and objects are shaping the face of many societies in the era of globalization and transnational migration. Within today's transnational networks, religion is also on the move. Religion may mediate "local moralities" (Zigon 2008) while also channeling global imageries through explicitly trans-national rhetoric.

The relations between movement and morality therefore demand serious scholarly attention in today's connected and yet diversifying world. To this end, this panel explores a wide range of questions. How do people envision and experience movement (one-way, irreversible, repeated, return, circular, physical, temporal, affective, political and so on)? What are the moral ramifications of their lives on the move, which can include conversion, de-conversion, and intensification of religious identity? How do geopolitical and historical forces shape experiences and claims regarding movement? Does movement have "before," "during," and "after" and, if so, how does it affect the self? When does movement fail and what are its moral implications? How does memory play into movement and morality – especially when individual actors have not physically experienced the movement but claim to partake in it?

The panel focuses on Christianity – its diverse traditions (Catholic, Orthodox, evangelical, Pentecostal) as well as its interfaces with other religions (such as Candomblé, Buddhism, and Judaism). It should be noted that neither "traditions" nor "religions" exist as *a priori* entities; they are borne out of relational processes, discursive negotiations, and genealogical orders. Movement often induces contrast between what actors perceive as diverging ways of life: "modernity" vs. "tradition," "secular" vs. "religious," etc. Movement can also challenge previously taken-for-granted notions by rendering the familiar strange and the strange familiar. By extension, it often reveals "inequality of languages" (Asad 1993) – reality in which certain analytical categories are accepted as more "transcendent," "universal," and value-free. Movement can therefore serve as a powerful thematic lens to examine diverging ways in which actors invoke values and moralities.

A Chapel, A Synagogue, A Mosque: Journeying through the Holy Land with the Sisters of Sion. DONNA YOUNG. University of Toronto.

Movement through the contested landscape of Israel and Occupied Palestine to visit sites sacred to the three Abrahamic faiths is laden with moral implications. Indeed, the ability to move freely is a privilege granted uniquely to the visiting Christian pilgrim, as the movement of Jewish and Muslim locals and pilgrims to Holy Sites is often restricted, if not forbidden. While on pilgrimage with Roman Catholic religious completing a bible course with the Sisters of Sion, who live and work in East Jerusalem, an attempt was made to engage respectfully with the religious practices of others. This paper will focus on the ways in which political barriers throw up interpretive barriers, and vice versa. Not only do checkpoints and borders shape and manage interfaith encounters in particular ways, the interpretive practices of the Sisters of Sion favor building interfaith dialogue with Jews and stymies efforts to build interfaith dialogue with

Muslims. However, the journey itself, viscerally and spiritually, challenged the faithful and built unexpected forms of solidarity.

Egress and Regress: Religious Mobility in Northern Mozambique. DEVAKA PREMAWARDHANA. Colorado College.

Among Mozambique's Makhuwa-speaking people—for whom religious change is conceived in spatial terms—models of mobility, histories of migration, and rituals of passage emphasize regress as much as egress. Makhuwa cosmogony, for example, is conveyed in proverbial form as follows: "From [Mount] Namuli we come, to Namuli we return." This paper explores the relevance of this return motif for understanding patterns of religious conversion, patterns I observed to be similarly bidirectional even with respect to the Pentecostal tradition noted for its demand of irreversible rupture. This exploration speaks to the anthropology of morality by reiterating a well-established critique of the civilizational narrative. With respect to migration, James Ferguson has challenged modernization theories' celebration of "progress" and "development" as expressed in "the myth of permanent urbanization." In this myth, labor migrations lead to that which western societies consider the normative pinnacle of civilization: the *polis* in which people settle, work, and prosper. Yet the overwhelming evidence from Zambia, as in Mozambique, points to migratory patterns that involve not so much outward movements resulting in permanent settlement as lateral movements marked by transient circularity. This paper aims to apply Ferguson's work on migration to what I observed to be the ambiguities and indeterminacies of religious conversion. If, among the Makhuwa, migrations are non-linear, and conversion is conceived in terms of migration, might this shed light on the non-linearity of conversions as well?

On the Return and the Criollo Pope. VALENTINA NAPOLITANO. University of Toronto.

I explore here some ideas related to the Return in the field of an anthropology of Catholicism, and Christianity at large. I use here the term in a postcolonial sense of a Return 'home' of reconfigured, or contested, native theories and the interruption of (metropolitan) publics by native questions. A Return invokes revenants and forgotten histories, produces traces, and entails negotiations of turning points and potential reversals. Under this rubric of Return I explore Pope Francis as a Criollo Pope from the Americas. If during the early modern period heterodox practices challenged confessional 'orthodoxies' taking shape within growing apparatus of states formations, I argue here that an analysis of Francis, as a Criollo Pope, helps us to address emerging transformations of these same states formations. In short the Return is then a tool to help us understanding present tensions between orthodoxy and heterodoxy. With a recrudescence of nation/state sentiments, at least in Europe, and yet a demise of the ethical leadership of 'secular' states, a Criollo Pope requires us to think ethical religious leadership in term of transformations of state sovereignty and a postcolonial Return.

Temporal Return of Migrant Pilgrims: Japanese-Brazilian Pentecostal Converts in the Land of Their Ancestors. SUMA IKEUCHI. Emory University.

Social discourses commonly define migration as a spatial movement and characterize conversion as a psychological transformation. But when migrants convert, how can the two phenomena be

interpreted in relation to each other? How does the move to a new faith speak to the particularities of migrants' lives and moral implications of their movements? This paper engages these questions through the analytical lens of time and temporality, which has long been one of the central foci of inquiry in the anthropology of Christianity. I probe this intersection of transnational migration, religion, and temporality through a case study of Japanese-Brazilians in Japan; the phenomenon of conversion among this migrant group provides a particularly fertile socio-historical context in which the stated questions can be explored. They migrate to Japan typically on a *Nikkei-jin* visa, which the Japanese government grants to foreigners of Japanese descent up to the third generation. Although the legal system constructs the *Nikkei* migrants as "Japanese," they are often marginalized on the basis of their foreignness and working-class profile. In this context of ambiguous in-between identity and contested belonging, many are converting to Latin American Pentecostalism that has flourished among the migrant communities in Japan. Based on a 14-month long fieldwork, I will articulate how the two phenomena – migration and conversion – are implicated on various temporal *and* moral projections and become interlocked in the lived experiences of migrant converts.

TRANSLATING RELIGION/RELIGION AS TRANSLATION: INTERPRETATION, RECITATION & PERFORMANCE.

Chair: LORA L. KILE.

Juxtaposition of Morality: Sahagún's Interpretation of the México Tlacaxipehualiztli Ritualization. LORA L. KILE. Arizona State University.

Bernardino Sahagún, the 16th century Spanish friar, is touted as the "first ethnographer" for his extensive work, *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España,* regarding the México (the lead ethnic group of the "Aztec" Triple Alliance) culture and religion. Sahagún had been charged by the Franciscan delegate general in New Spain to record México religion to assist the Spanish in understanding and converting the México and their followers to Catholicism. This paper explores how Sahagún's education as a Franciscan just prior to the Reformation influenced how he interpreted the Tlacaxipehualiztli rituals described to him by his México informants. Sahagún's decidedly Spanish Catholic worldview tinged the lens with which he wrote about the feathering, tethering and flaying of warriors and women during this ritualization. How did the México and their followers fit into the Franciscan view of the world population? How did Sahagún's moral influence his description of "idolatry?" How did the México explain their ritual? I will examine the morality of the Franciscan Order juxtaposed to Sahagún's informant's interpretation of the Tlacaxipehualiztli ritualization in order to answer these questions and better understand how Sahagún's brethren, the Spanish friars, utilized this interpretation in their conversion tactics.

"Dharma and Science are Complementary": Himalayan Environmental Studies and Conservation Organization's Experiments with Himalayan Communities. PANKAJ JAIN. University of North Texas.

This is a paper about the dharmic-social-scientific work done by Himalayan Environmental Studies and Conservation Organization (hereafter HESCO) in Himalayan villages in Uttarakhand, India. In 2012, supported by the Fulbright Fellowship for Environmental Leadership, I surveyed about a dozen districts in Uttarakhand to learn about HESCO's projects related to sustainable development and environment. HESCO arose in the 1970s as a new organization led by its founder Dr. Anil Prakash Joshi and some of his doctoral students. As botanists, as he and his students became aware of Himalayan forestry and other ecological issues, their research increasingly became sociocentric and eventually they all gave up their academic careers and became fulltime social workers. In my research, I discovered that HESCO carries out more than social work. Following Weightman and Pandey (1978), I argue that the concept of dharma can be successfully applied as an overarching term for their socio-economic work. Dharma synthesizes their way of life with social work based on dharma's multidimensional interpretations as I show in their work with the Himalayan communities.

Performing Evil: The Language of American Evangelical Hell Houses. SALIHA CHATTOO. University of Toronto.

Since the 1970s, church-run, youth-acted haunted houses known as Hell Houses have become a popular means for proselytism for many American evangelical communities. These performance-based conversion events allow young church members to craft theatrical depictions of significant issues in the lives of American youth. These issues are subsequently woven into a narrative of transgression, sin and punishment. Participants first identify what counts as evil and then perform the associated sinful transgressions and their consequences in the afterlife. This paper will consider the language of Hell Houses in order to investigate evangelical conceptualizations of evil. By engaging in discourse analysis, this paper will analyze the transcripts of two promotional trailers for a Hell House in Cedar Hill, Texas in 2012 and 2013. Each trailer employs language that constructs a moral universe that presents a specific type of evil; it is part of a rigid binary opposition to good wherein every transgression results in tragic consequences, and where what counts as evil is inextricably and dynamically linked with the socio-political issues that face American youth today. For this paper, the analysis of the language of the Cedar Hill Hell House will serve as a case study that will allow for a discussion of how certain young American evangelicals understand, interact with, perform and speak about evil.

Constructing a Moral Voice from a Spirit-Possessed, Refugee Body: Babylonian Medical Cosmology in the Hebrew Prophet Ezekiel. INGRID E. LILLY. Pacific School of Religion.

The Hebrew priest and prophet Ezekiel is the first character in Israelite literary history to deliver supernatural speech during spirit possession. As a refugee in Babylonia, he morally interrogates his colonized homeland to explain the military invasion that forcedly migrated him. During these speeches of judgment, lingering effects of siege cause him physical debilitation and emotional stunting. He shaves his head, ties himself in cords, lays on the ground in paralysis, goes mute for about six years, and obediently averts grief over the death of his wife.

Ezekiel's spirit-possession stands in a key moment in the development of Israelite prophecy. Mouthpieces of supernatural judgment, the prophets' authority to make moral claims was eventually conceived as 'wrought by the spirit.' How spirits or the spirit came to play this role in

moral discourse is, however, not well understood. Especially when compared with accounts of pre-colonial prophets (who are never possessed) or with ancient Near Eastern corollaries (who almost never speak ethical judgment), Ezekiel's spirit possession is a curious aporia. The puzzle is further compounded by issues of language since Hebrew spirit (ruach) can encompass cosmological, anthropological, and meteorological dimensions, a semantic overlap not found in Akkadian.

In this paper, I want to test a theory of trans-cultural spirit possession that draws on Babylonian medical literature. Cuneiform incantations and poetry about suffering invoke destructive and palliative winds to explain ailments and healing. These 'medical texts' invoke names of storm and war deities in Mesopotamian myths where we find numerous catalogues of supernatural winds enlisted to destroy or rehabilitate rebellious peoples and lands. Thus, in Ezekiel, we find a defeated and debilitated national subject whose moral voice is an achievement of cultural-linguistic appropriation.

MORAL SELF-FASHIONING (2).

Chair: HANNA KIM.

Dissolutions of the Self: Ethics and Aesthetics in Iranian Sufi Rituals. SEEMA GOLESTANEH. Connecticut College.

This paper explores recent interpretations of the objective of the remembrance (*dhikr*) ritual within the Sufi community of post-revolutionary Iran. While the objective of the *dhikr* ritual has typically been understood as the dissolution of the self (*fana)* in the wake of union (*tawhid)* with the divine, mystics today often articular the experience of this destabilization of subjectivity as a loss of socio-political subjectivity alongside the extinguishing of the "lower soul" or "ego (*nafs)*. This shift is seen most acutely amongst young people in Sufi Orders, who now insert the supposedly "extra-religious" terminology of identity politics and agency into a "traditionalist practice." In addition, within the *dhikr* ritual this loss of self is achieved through a specific form of ethical listening (*sama),* an aesthetic engagement that emphasizes morality and the intellect as well as the corporeal realms. In this paper, I hence examine the following: 1) contemporary interpretations of the objectives of the *dhikr* from the perspective of sheikhs and mystics active in Iran today, 2) how Sufi theories of ethics, the body, and aesthetics are utilized to achieve a destabilization of subjectivity, and 3) the broader ramifications for this insertion of the experiential knowledge of Sufism within Iran today.

Broken Houses and Too Much Local Brew: Immoral and Moral Ingredients in the Making of the Moral Self. HANNA KIM. Adelphi University.

As Joel Robbins, Yunxiang Yan, and Jarrett Zigon, have shared, the lines between the social, the moral, and the individual, are not so easily drawn and therefore the connections, in any given ethnographic context, between the influences of society, the acquisition of moralities, and the exercise of individual agency are in need of clarification. The anthropology of morality, it seems, is thus heavily dependent on ethnographic thickness. Again, as evidenced by the efforts of Robbins, Yan, and Zigon, it is ethnographic specificity that allows insights as to what factors

support the making of the moral self, what ingredients constitute circulating discourses on morality, and where ideas of moralities might be anchored or attain their moorings. This paper focuses on conversations with members of a transnational Hindu community, the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, and their efforts to promote moral transformation in two ethnographic settings: northern Gujarat, the epicenter of the 2001 Kutch earthquake, and rural south Gujarat, an area of tribal and low caste communities who are economically and socially disenfranchised. The experiences of the Swaminarayan volunteers who participated in Kutch earthquake reconstruction activities and the recollections of rural Swaminarayan villagers who have attained markers of upward mobility suggest that possibilities for moral self-transformation and the basis for its receptivity are heightened in times of social crisis and change. Though the question of why some more readily accept Swaminarayan devotional teachings is not answerable here, this paper argues that the Swaminarayan promotion of its devotional moralities engenders an ethical stance of being in the world that is both particular to being Swaminarayan and yet highly complementary to being a citizen of economic liberalising India. It is this twinned pairing, resulting in the devotee who is also a good citizen and subject that this paper seeks to address.

Indexing Morality: Voice, Self, and Divine Guidance in *Mabebasan* Literary Performance. NICOLE REISNOUR. Cornell University.

Anthropology has long had an interest in the complex relationship between morality and voice. Ethnographic studies of language use have shown moral self-formation to be intimately bound up with developing the skills and sensibilities needed to perform, recognize, and be affected by different linguistic registers and vocal styles (Hill 1985, Hirschkind 2006). Linguistic anthropologists have also highlighted the role of semiotic ideologies in linking particular ways of speaking to social identities and value systems (Bauman and Briggs 2003, Keane 2007). In this paper I consider some of the ways in which semiotic ideologies enable and constrain Balinese Hindu capacities for moral-self fashioning, drawing examples from my research on *mabebasan.* Mabebasan is an oral literary practice in which performers sing and interpret Kawi, Sanskrit, and Balinese-language religious texts. Since the 1970s the Indonesian Ministry of Religion has promoted mabebasan as part of a larger project of religious reform aimed at placing the self, rather than ritual, at the center of Hindu religiosity. While mabebasan is officially touted as a popular form of religious self-cultivation, through which participants internalize divinely-revealed moral lessons, many mabebasan performers are less interested in studying the contents of religious texts than in using these texts to aurally channel divine presence. This paper explores some of the tensions that arise as mabebasan performers and promoters work to construct a vocal and gestural style that indexes a devout and faithful Hindu self at a time when the semiotics of Balinese Hindu morality are deeply contested.

Buddhist Moral Meaning-Making through Community Service Learning. MONIRITH LY. Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia.

This paper is based on my Texas State University dissertation (Ly, 2013), an analytical case study sought to understand and build theories from Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia (PUC) educators' visions in supporting and implementing community service learning (CSL) and the participating undergraduate students' moral meaning-making of their CSL experiences. Wainryb (2006) recommended, "[T]he study of social and moral development in culture must attend to the

many contexts of social life in cultures and to the varied ways in which individuals make sense of their experiences in those social contexts" (p. 231). This perspective helps conceptualize my research. The study found that PUC educators' shared purpose was the cultivation of students' kindness to help needy Cambodian communities. Moreover, within the Buddhist society, PUC CSL volunteers considered community service as acts of kindness, solidarity and connectedness, and social change through the cultivation of kindness in the hearts of other people, which are different conceptualizations of their experiences from those by American service-learners. Furthermore, PUC CSL cultivated in volunteers such Buddhist ethics as *brahma-vihara* (goodwill, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity), *caga* (generosity), *amisa-dana* (donation), *dhamma-dana* (sharing knowledge and advice), *pañca-sila* (the five precepts), and *kataññu* (gratitude, especially to parents). The Buddhist ethics are contrasted to Kohlberg's ethic of justice (Brabeck & Shore, 2003) and compared to Gilligan's (1994) ethic of care. The experiences that notably facilitated volunteers' moral meaning-making were community education drama and such culturally symbolic processes as participation in *kataññu* (parental gratitude) ritual, elderly gratitude ritual, and collaborative cooking.

Ethics, Misfortune, and the Quest for Bliss among "Fallen" Wichí. GUADALUPE BARÚA. University of Buenos Aires.

Based on a long fieldwork experience among the Wichí of Northwestern Argentina, I am convinced that their worldview reveals a special tension between the desired existence implied in the mythical world of their ancestors (*the pahlalís*) and their current lives. This tension seems relieved by a type of daydreaming (*huislek*), also through birdsongs, storytelling and communal rites. However, the pain that fateful events inflict to them deprives these people of their peace and joy, reminding that the connection between the two worlds is fragile and that most of the time they are expelled out of the way of their ancestors. This sentiment of disenchantment leads them to nostalgia.

Like the Ricoeurian "promise", ethics implies the quotidian struggle and mutual compromise for "self-constancy". Evil is the outcome of being lost, "out of home", fallible, becoming "other". As this crisis affects to all, their ethic is manifested in an artful intersubjectivity. At critical times, they embrace themselves as if they were one person while the individual is due to an inner reflective work to reorient his soul (*hesek)* to his right locus.

Finally, with respect to the balance of capabilities and vulnerabilities, in the current world the negative power of events curtails their agency. That which was essential for men and women to maintain their completeness was hindered by specific events in mythical times; nowadays by witchcraft attributed to resident affines, as well as by recurrent underestimation and injustice perpetrated by their empowered neighbors.

The purpose of this paper is, in the line of hermeneutics, to think on these issues through the lens of Paul Ricœur and Walter Benjamin, among others.

POLITICS OF DISCERMENT IN CHRISTIAN PRACTICES.

Chairs: FRED KLAITS and BIELO S. JAMES.

Problems of knowledge animate Christian life. 'Is this God's will? Is this what scripture means?

Is this the right moral choice? Is this my gifting? Is this false prophecy?' Moreover, Christians grapple with determining what counts as an evidentiary standard, and how to link evidence with spiritual trust. 'Was that God speaking? Was that feeling the Holy Spirit? Was that an answer to prayer? Was that coincidence or providence?' We can reckon such problems of Christian knowledge as problems of discernment, a cultural process that reappears throughout Christian life and across cultural contexts. Ritual structures are created and maintained to make discernments clear and publicly known. Acts of discernment are performed through multi-modal semiotic channels. And, relations of authority and power are made visible by tracing who makes discernments for others and who trusts whom to do so. This panel gathers papers that explore ethnographically how Christians from varying traditions and locales address problems of moral, theological, and relational knowledge. Questions of spiritual and physical health mingle for Samoan Pentecostals, who use the body as an evidentiary medium to discern ethics of wealth. The theme of embodiment continues in a study of Colombia's fastest growing megachurch, where prosperity charismatics work to discern the movement of the Spirit from the movement of capital. In Buffalo, New York a comparison of majority white and African-American Pentecostal congregations shows how projects of valuing and de-valuing persons rest, respectively, on discerning God's love or God's blessings. An ethnographic analysis of the making of a biblical theme park in Kentucky asks how scriptural discernment occurs through registers of collaborative creativity and professional entertainment standards. In Papua New Guinea, the process of differentiating Bible-based knowledge from other forms of locally valid knowledge is taken up, revealing why land claims are exempt from Christian discernment. And, among Kikuyus during Kenya's colonial period, new anxieties concerning ritual efficacy emerged from the missionary imposition of a Christian semiotic ideology onto traditional rituals. Here, loyalty is discerned and enforced through the key discourse genre of oath taking. Engaging critically and constructively with existing scholarship in the anthropology of Christianity, these papers explore how methods and logics of discernment relate to matters of semiotic ideology, personhood, sociality, embodiment, and local economies of knowledge about land, finance, and labor.

Discerning the Sick Body: Embodied Evidence and Critical Christianity in Samoa. JESSICA HARDIN. Pacific University.

In Samoa, rising rates of metabolic disorders are interpreted by evangelical Christians as evidence of the need for (re)Christianization. Samoan Pentecostal Christians critique mainline Christianity as a source of suffering, and often posit a link between church-based exchange (i.e., public gift-giving) and metabolic disorders (i.e., diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease). Pentecostal Christians have developed an "analytics" of metabolic disorders linking health, wellness, and wealth to divine presence on the one hand, and disease and wealth to divine distance on the other. Notably, wealth can indicate wellness or sickness. In this paper, I explore how the body—sick or well, lean or corpulent—is used as an evidentiary medium to discern the ethics of wealth. Reading the body and wealth is a form of critical abstraction that locates material evidence in individual bodies while grounding an institutional critique of mainline Christianity.

Feeling the Spirit Move: Affect and Embodied Discernment. REBECCA BARTEL. University of Toronto.

"Just let the Spirit move in you. Don't think so much. Feel him move." This was a common refrain heard over the course of two years of fieldwork in Colombia's largest and fastest-growing mega-church, La Mision Carismatica Internacional. Whereas anthropological work on processes and practices of Christian discernment has tended to maintain the divide between internal beliefs and external rites, this paper responds with the question: how does the body discern? More specifically, this paper queries the spiritual inspiration for financial practices of tithing and pacting in the Mision Carismatica Internacional. Inspired by Catherine Bell's call to consider practices of "believing" rather than sets of "beliefs," and Kevin O'Neill's question, "how does the body believe?" this paper ethnographically traces practices of economic discernment within the context of a free market spirituality of Colombia's emerging middle class.

Informants shared experiences of overwhelming Spirit movement that inspired pacts of millions of pesos to God and to the church, often requiring offering on a credit card, or borrowing on interest from workplace cooperatives or even banks. Feeling the spirit guide towards a financial habitus of going into debt in order to make an offering to God raises the question: how do prosperity Christians discern the movement of the Spirit from the movement of capital?

Insult and Insecurity: Discerning the Good Life in Two American Pentecostal Congregations. FRED KLAITS. SUNY, Buffalo.

To the extent that the recent turn toward "anthropologies of the good" neglects Max Weber's concerns with the ways in which religious worldviews systematize understandings of what people need to be redeemed from, it risks overlooking the ways in which the religious imagination constructs its negatives. For many American evangelicals, discerning God's will and God's activity in the world is a practice of phronesis, an exercise of practical wisdom through which they imagine and sustain "good lives" for themselves but which also sharpens their convictions of their own vulnerability. In this paper, I compare practices of discernment in two Pentecostal congregations in Buffalo, New York, the fifth most racially segregated metropolitan area in the United States. In a majority white First-Wave congregation in the suburbs, believers discern through a logic of intercession how God redeems them from insecurities construed in psychological terms. By laying on hands and speaking in tongues, believers publicly "intercede" for one another, assuming alternately positions of supplicant and consoler. A logic of prophecy governs discernment in an Afro-Pentecostal church in the inner city, in which the pastor discerns the insults church members have experienced at the hands of non-believers, and extends them blessings by laying on hands. Members of Afro-Pentecostal churches worry that exploitative persons and malicious spirits may "steal their blessings" through inappropriate physical or emotional intimacies. In these cases, ritual practice sharpens practitioners' convictions of their vulnerabilities to either insecurity or insult, a dynamic that leads them implicitly or explicitly to identify persons whose lives are unworthy.

Discernment as Professional Activity: Notes from a Creationist Design Studio. JAMES S. BIELO. Miami University.

Anthropologists of Christianity have, quite rightly, reckoned discernment as a deeply spiritualized cultural process. Prayer, practices of self-cultivation, exorcism, moral reasoning, prophecy: such Christian performances engage core, intimate religious values and imperatives. To complement the scholarship operating in this register, I offer an ethnographic case study that

requires an expanded notion of discernment. From October 2011 through June 2014 I conducted fieldwork with the design team in charge of conceptualizing Ark Encounter, a $150 million biblical theme park scheduled to open in Kentucky in summer 2016. The team's artistic labor is defined by constant decision-making about matters of design creativity, all of which happens within the distinctly fundamentalist frames of "doing God's work" and "reaching the lost." However, overtly spiritual discursive maneuvers were strikingly absent from the everyday studio environment. Never once was a design meeting or artistic production interrupted with, "I/we should pray about this." What, then, does an ethnography of discernment among creationist imagineers contribute to a comparative anthropology of Christian discernment? Ultimately, I argue that the team's methods and logics of discernment are grounded in models of collaborative labor, professional standards, and corporate hierarchy.

Discernment and Difference: Bibles, Land Claims, and Epistemic Categories of the Person in Papua New Guinea. COURTNEY HANDMAN. Reed College.

As structural linguistic analyses have shown, evidential categories are always contrastive within a specific set of locally valid forms of knowledge. For many contemporary Christians, specifically Christian forms of knowledge (discernment, bibliomancy, etc.) are usually compared to the scientific method or to traditional forms of knowledge production. Guhu-Samane Christians in rural Papua New Guinea are divided into schismatic church groups that argue over the morality of all kinds of traditional practices: dress, music, sexuality, dance, magic, prayers, ad infinitum. The one exception to this wholesale project of cultural self-critique is land and the ways in which land creates kinds of people. While pastors are enjoined to exempt themselves from land disputes, there is no discourse calling for the reform of the (often extremely contentious) processes through which land claims are made and argued. In this paper I suggest that land claims are kept outside of this reformist agenda because they are the key site in which Christian forms of knowing come into being through oppositional contrast with Biblebased knowledge. If land claims depend upon specific individuals' knowledge of secret material and proof, Christianity is more associated with the condition of being able to hear God's word as a reader of the sacralized Guhu-Samane New Testament. The exceptionalism of land thus guarantees the production of differences that Christian groups attempt to overcome in the moral battles they fight about other traditional practices.

"The Oath is Our Leader": Sovereignty, Language, and Ritual Supplementation in Colonial Kenya. ROB BLUNT. Lafayette College.

In H.K. Wachanga's memoir, "The Swords of Kirinyaga," he provides a first hand account of his guerilla involvement in Kenya's anticolonial rebellion and Kikuyu civil war popularly known as "Mau Mau." Perhaps the least sanitized example of a postcolonial genre of Mau Mau memoirs, Wachanga largely represents Mau Mau as a history of ritual; he spends a great deal of narrative time describing the oaths participants ritually swore, or made others swear, to secure loyalty to and secrecy within the movement. Yet, one of the more fascinating statements in Wachanga's memoir is his exclamation that "the oath was our leader!" Peculiar here is the fact that like many East African societies, the Kikuyu were acephalous, recognizing no centralized jural authority. This paper argues that Wachanga's attribution of centralized sovereign qualities to "the oath" can help shed light on other aspects of Mau Mau's ritual life that have otherwise proved perplexing.

For example, various sources attest to ritual dynamics in Mau Mau oaths that were clearly novel to Kenya's colonial era. The rituals were characterized by an explosive proliferation of disparate symbolic media that were supposed to amplify the effects of the oath's curse against those who violated its statutes. Additionally, during oathing rituals, oathgivers increasingly emphasized the exact, flawless replication of their words by oath-takers or face immediate disciplinary violence. And finally, Mau Mau guerillas often did not wait for the oath's curse to affect those who violated (or were thought to have violated) the oath's secrecy and loyalty statutes by, for example, confessing the content of their oaths to colonial authorities. Instead, Mau Mau loyalists would enact a sovereign violence against those who were perceived as breaking their vows. This paper argues that these ritual dynamics of symbolic proliferation and violence were supplementary procedures driven by underlying anxieties about the capacity to discern ritual efficacy; the definitive binding of a person to the veritative power of their own speech. This paper further argues that this problem of discernment was generated by the unconscious supplanting of an acephalous semiotic ideology of ritual efficacy with a centralized Christian one during the Kikuyu encounter with colonial administrators and missionaries. The anxious supplementation present in Mau Mau oathing rituals was thus rooted in the fact that oath-takers were placed in the impossible position of imitating the divine lawgiver's perfect speech.

Discussant: ERIC HOENES DEL PINAL. University of North Carolina, Charlotte.

RELIGION, MORALITY, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

Chair: FREDERICK (FRITZ) P. LAMPE.

Many non-governmental organizations, often faith-based, have invested heavily in community development. How does a religious perspective inform what community development is? How do the relationships between organization and community develop, to what end, and to whose benefit? How does the anthropological perspective inform and shape understanding these complexities?

This panel situates itself uniquely in an ever-expanding conversation about the relationship between religion and development. This discourse is, to a great degree, finally catching up with the pragmatics of community development. Despite Moyo's observation that "charity and emergency aid are small beer" compared to the huge sums of money poured through governmental channels (Moyo 2009:8), increased attention is being paid to the relationship between the ways people understand themselves in the world, organizations that espouse particular beliefs in action, and community development.
Spurred on by policy changes channeling United States aid monies through non-governmental aid organizations (see Hefferan and Fogarty 2010), the World Bank and the Millenium Development Goals (see Marshall and Van Saanen 2007), increased visibility through popular cultural icons partnering with or establishing their own foundations dedicated to alleviating global suffering, the rise in geolocal travel and digital communication, and the resources available to and disseminated by faith-based groups has grown tremendously in recent years.
Until recently most of the attention given to the interplay between religion and development has concerned Christianity yet that too is changing. The World Bank convocations of religious

representatives designed to discuss their faith tradition, poverty, and human suffering, have produced some interesting results.

Fostered by the USAID funding of projects through faith-based organizations, UN initiatives convening religious leaders to discuss interfaith dialogue and social wellbeing, grant monies given to institutes focused on religion, globalization, and development, and the Millennium Development Goals, this interest in the intersection between religion and community development has drawn interest from many fronts.

Clearly a number of problems emerge in writing about religion and community development not the least of which is vocabulary. Collections on religion and development have, in the past, focused on faith-based organizations, specifically Christian. "Faith" (from the *Latin fide*) and "religion" (from the *Latin religare*) are Western constructs. Anthropologists Hefferan and Fogarty in their introduction to the *Intersections of Faith and Development in Local and Global Contexts* acknowledge as much when identifying FBOs as "Christian faith-based organizations" (1). Yet to limit this study to FBOs would be to ignore the rich bricolage of principled activities that emerge in community development in non-Euro-dominant communities. Edited collections on religion and development now include essays by or about Sikh, Muslim, Jewish, African, Native American, and Hindu communities. Their inclusion demonstrates the variety of shared narratives of order, meaning, and origins. In many cases the rationality of *fide*, faith, is not understood in the same way that Christianity understands it. While helpful when speaking of some Western-based groups, using the phrase "faith based organizations" limits the breadth of complexity present in both the literature and on the ground. Add to this the difficulty in defining community development (Biddle 1966; Wise 1998) given the complexities of determining community as well as the varying ways the term development has been applied by proponents of social change over time.

Yet despite the difficulties that come with adequately defining terms in order to fully determine the parameters of this subject, community development and religion are becoming convivial. Within this burgeoning body of literature little attention has been paid to the creative ways local communities as well as international agencies syncretize different socio-cultural components alongside material culture as a part of local development.

"My Husband's Brother's Sister": Kinship Networks, Community, and Development in East Africa. FREDERICK (FRITZ) P. LAMPE. Northern Arizona University.

This paper proposes the confluence of both cosmological and epistemological constructs reflect a critical yet seldom considered place of creative syncretism in the study of religion and development. Well being and sociability are deeply wedded within the patrilineal patrilocal Abaluyia Bunyore in the area on the border between the Western and Nyanza Provinces of Western Kenya.

In this particular case, there are interesting intercies between perceptions about how the universe operates, what it means to be human, the acquisition of, use, and capitalization of resources, kinship, and the larger community. Add to this the complexities that come with adequately (and appropriately) understanding/fixing the cultural or communal boundaries when considering the imagined community and participation in the exchange of ideas, technologies, language, and material cultural from different global constituents. Globalization (Gupta and Ferguson; Appadurai), includes diffusion in the broadest sense.

This paper, an initial foray into the intersections of religion, morality, and community development, will consider the confluence between the cosmological and epistemological constructs, socialibility, access to and use of resources using an example from Western Kenya. In effect, what happens when notions about wealth, redistribution, and cosmological constructs meet. In this case the creative mix of ideas and expectations pit prosperity against whispers of witchcraft.

"Communities Like Us": Islam and the Development of Multispecies Morals in Jordan. KATE MCCLELLAN. Mississippi State University.

My paper examines the ways in which human-animal relationships are morally produced in Jordan, particularly through the lens of development and Islam. For instance, what does the 'proper' treatment of animals entail in Jordan? How is the moral conceptualization of animals linked to other discourses of morality – in particular, what it means to be a good Muslim, or to be a good citizen, or to strive for progress and modernity? In two realms in which human-animal ethics are actively produced in Jordan – wildlife conservation and animal welfare – workers frequently draw on the Qur'an as a way to relate animal compassion to Islamic morality; that is, one is a good Muslim if one is good to animals. This paper thus explores how animal welfare and wildlife protection in Jordan are, at their core, development projects that work upon both individual and communal understandings of Islamic morality. Indeed, ideals common to neoliberal development are placed at the center of animal welfare and wildlife protection. This is readily apparent in the kinds of phrases used by NGOs to describe their work; animal welfare and protection is a conduit through which to "fight poverty," "overcome ignorance," and "develop morality" among Jordanians. This kind of 'moral work' is an important aspect of human-animal debates in Jordan. It bleeds into other debates about human morality, welfare, and development, and in turn helps make intelligible some of the ways in which humans think about, negotiate, and debate aspects of their own morality and humanity.

White Progressive Christianity and Transformation Ethics in South Africa. RACHEL SCHNEIDER. Rice University.

Despite significant progress, South Africa remains one of the most unequal and racialized societies in the world. While much of the white populace has adopted a personalized religiosity that affirms their privileged socioeconomic position and cultural identities, recent fieldwork conducted in Johannesburg suggests that some white South Africans have utilized religion and spirituality in order to problematize their racial and economic privilege. Such subjects often view themselves as actively working to redress social inequality and working to construct alternate identities and forms of life. In this presentation, I will discuss progressive white Christian efforts aimed at self-transformation and social transformation. In particular, I will focus on a Christian non-profit organization – composed of black and white South Africans – that has developed specific spiritual practices and ideals of "community" aimed at challenging white insularity as well as responding to post-apartheid social divides.
Using frameworks developed in the anthropology of ethics, I will argue that the quest to cultivate a sense of spiritual community across racial and economic barriers is motivated by the deep desire of white members to attain a sense of social, national, and metaphysical belonging in a context of heightened insecurity. Members are deeply invested in the ideal of a "new" South

Africa, championed by iconic figures like Nelson Mandela, which advocates the adoption of "transformation" ethics that challenge the legacies of apartheid and link citizenship with moral action. Yet such efforts are not without perils and contradictions, especially in relation to their black peers.

Reverence Among Contrarians: Community and Eclecticism at a North American Festival Site. LUCINDA CARSPECKEN. Indiana University.

ElvinHOME incorporated is a faith based non-profit organization in the Midwestern United States whose objects and definitions of faith differ sharply from those in mainstream North America. On its 109 acres – at Lothlorien Nature Sanctuary - it hosts festivals with loosely Neo-pagan themes, experiments with sustainable forestry, horticulture and building, and provides temporary or semi-permanent living spaces for some of its members.   It has run festivals since 1984 and owned its own land since 1987. In 2005 the organization acquired 501c3 status based on a religious identity oriented towards "the Universe personified", as expressed through nature. At the same time it takes the toleration of all faiths as an explicit goal. This toleration is manifested in the many shrines on the property, which may contain goddesses, Buddhas, St Francis statues, fairies and other mythological and religious symbols.
Lothlorien's relative longevity seems to undermine Kanter's argument (1972) tying continuity in alternative communities to the commitment and sacrifice they demand from individual members. ElvinHOME defines "faith" very loosely, although voting rights and residence involve an agreement to work for 28 hours per month. This paper will explore various approaches to reverence on the land, conflicting interpretations among participants about community development, and the interactions between these two. Drawing on ethnographic research (Carspecken, 2015, 2014, 2012, Pike, 2001,) I will argue that in spite of frequent conflicts, the many levels and types of faith contribute to, rather than threaten, Lothlorien's persistence as a community sanctuary and festival site.

THE RELATIONAL MORALITY OF RELIGIOUS HEALING ETIOLOGIES.

Chair: KIMBERLY MARSHALL.
At their most basic, the premises that underlie religious healing connect physical symptoms and the non-physical world. Often, these connections tie illness with moral actions: a taboo transgressed, an obligation ignored. Religious healing, then, helps to shore up these rifts, with physically-manifest results.
However, recent anthropological discussions call attention to the ways that moral systems are always navigated by constrained actors. Moral systems are relational, binding together families, communities, and cultures. Even within Christianity, which has been described as "unrelentingly individualist" (Robbins 2004:293), Richard Eves points out that salvation often "depends to a large extent on how well [adherents] manage their relations with others" (Eves 2010:501).
This relational aspect of morality then calls for further investigation into the relational nature of the moral systems underlying religious healing. Discussions of healing etiologies (the logic underlying the causes of illness and healing) should therefore not just consider morality in terms of the patient (or healer), but further explore how these moral universes orient individual actors towards others, while simultaneously addressing their therapeutic ramifications.

In this panel, we bring together several recent ethnographic studies of religious healing to outline the different types of relational ties that influence the moral dimensions of religious healing etiology.

Blocking up the Healing": Navajo Neo-Pentecostal Moral Etiology. KIMBERLY MARSHALL. University of Oklahoma.

I investigate the moral underpinnings of contemporary Navajo neo-Pentecostal healing. While I find a relationally-moral orientation to healing to be a common thread that has helped neo-Pentecostalism localize among Navajos, I also argue that this moral etiology sets Navajo neo-Pentecostals into a relationship of confrontation with traditional forms of Navajo healing, complicating the pluralism described by contemporary literature on Navajo healing.

Porous Shamanic Selves: The Morality of Kinship. JUSTINE BUCK QUIJADA. Wesleyan University.

I look at the relational obligations of kinship as part of the healing process. I argue that healing in Buryat shamanism is achieved by accepting the moral obligations of kin-based relationships. Further, I point out that these kin-based relationships are literally embodied by the shaman in trance possession, and therefore provide a pathway to healing.

From Healing to Sex Scandal: Understanding the Haptic Logics of Guru Intimacy. AMANDA LUCIA. University of California, Riverside.

I consider the relational processes of intimacy happening between patients and contemporary charismatic gurus. I focus on the "proxemic desire" that the patient bring to their relationships with the guru, and how proximity and touch are seen by patients as conduits of healing.

Mindful Togertherness. NALIKA GAJAWEERA. University of Southern California.

I examine healing as a facet of mindfulness meditation in Southern California. I find that, rather than being a therapeutic practice that is secular and individual, mindfulness practitioners reconfigure elements of doctrinal Buddhism. In particular, they adopt the concept of sangha (the ordained monastic community), to promote religious healing through the "togetherness" of a moral community of lay meditating practitioners.

Discussant: THOMAS J. CSORDAS. University of California, San Diego.

SACRED HISTORIES & REIMAGINING RELIGIOUS ETHICS IN SOUTH ASIAN RITUAL PERFORMANCE.

Chair: CLAIRE ROBINSON.

Our panel will explore the interpretation of pre-modern religious histories in contemporary ritual performance in South Asia. Sacred histories or hagiographies are often enacted - through

religious processions, performances, and personal ritual practice. What spaces do these performances provide for developing fresh interpretations of sacred histories and their implications for ethnicity, class, and religious identity within a South Asian context? And what influences guide the repurposing of religious pasts in contemporary South Asia? Panelists will draw from case studies in Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic traditions, asking how these living religious communities render the ethical visible through bodily practice and performance. We will engage anthropological theories on performativity and religious change, exploring the relation of performance to both ethical and sectarian formation. Following Michael Lambek, we will investigate the ordinary contexts of ritual performances, grounded in agreement rather than rule. We will also engage James Laidlaw and others on the role of reflexivity in mediating between ethnographic theory and constructions of normative ethical doctrine. In our engagement, for instance, with discourses of secularism within the performance of sacred histories, we see in our case studies that reflexivity and contextuality are embedded in the ongoing practice of religious ritual performance.

Claire Robison's paper examines annual dramatic performances from a Vaishnava Hindu community in Mumbai, the Radha Gopinath temple in Chowpatty. In their dramas, the Chowpatty community performs Hindu scriptural models for ethical behavior, while also directing these roles in response to contemporary Hindu concerns. In particular, they refashion Vaishnava ethical models for a contemporary religio-political landscape through the performance of two perceived threats to Hindu identity in India: Muslim religious alterity and modern secularism. Joel Gruber's paper will explore the ritual enactment of the saintly biographies of Tibetan Buddhism in contemporary Tibetan monasteries in Benares. He will examine the process of enacting miraculous performances of past saints, or ritually "performing into existence" the sacred past, anazlying this alongside the performance of secular legend narratives. Rohit Singh's paper examines ethical discourses surrounding Shi'i Muharram commemorations in Leh, Ladakh. By framing the events of Karbala as a battle between justice and injustice, contemporary Shia in Leh emphasize that Hussein died for all religions and promote a modern Shi'i Muslim identity based on the ideals of religious pluralism, secular ethics, and global political consciousness. Lauren Smyth's paper assesses another aspect of modern religious performance in the Ladakh area, assessing the tourism industry's impact on the "traditional" and religious spaces of Leh. Through the reimagining of former or current religious sites for a non-religious audience, Leh's Buddhist tourism projects seek to impart an "authentic" Ladakhi experience for locals and tourists alike, shifting ritual and public usages of these sites in new registers of the secular and religious.This papers will explore the intersection of individual agency, place, and performed text in reimagining sacred histories within the ethical frameworks of contemporary sociopolitical landscapes - in particular through "performing the past," discourses of secularism and the modern, the politics of religious heritage/contestation, and the international tourist economy. In the process, panelists will query the role of class, ethnicity, and majority/minority dynamics in the ritual performance of sacred histories within diverse South Asian communities.

Performing Ethical Practice through Alterity: Dramas and the Sacred Histories of a Hindu Community in Mumbai. ROBINSON CLAIRE. University of California, Berkeley.

At the annual dramatic performances of the Radha Gopinath temple community of Chowpatty, Mumbai, models of ethical behavior are brought to life from a panoply of Hindu scriptures and sacred histories. In their dramas, the Chowpatty community performs Hindu scriptural models

for ethical behavior, while also directing these roles in response to contemporary Hindu concerns. In particular, they refashion ethical models for a contemporary religio-political landscape through the performance of two perceived threats to Hindu identity in India: Muslim religious alterity and modern secularism. These dramas retell the interaction between Hindus and Muslims in early modern India, and enact the tension between religious tradition and secularism in contemporary urban India. Yet alongside these narratives of exclusion, some dramatic narratives also develop a discourse of universal, "scientific and systematic" religion, crafting a vision of Hindu tradition that encompasses these perceived threats. My paper will explore the interplay between the drama's discourses of religious alterity, tradition, and secularism, examining the embodiment and contextualization of ethical worldviews within contemporary urban Hindu ritual practice.

Performing the Sacred Past Into Existence: Ritual Enactment of Tibetan Buddhist Saintly Biographies. JOEL GRUBER. University of San Diego.

This paper will explore notions of the supernatural, magical powers and ultimate reality through the ritual traditions and saintly biographies of Tibetan Buddhism. The paper will outline the precise methods that tantric practitioners use to this day to substantiate, contest and stretch the limits of what is possible. It will include specific examples in which contemporary saints were inspired by previous saintly biographies to ritually imagine accomplishing similar miracles, enact the miraculous performance of past saints, and eventually produce unexplained feats of tantric accomplishments. The paper will provide a concrete example by looking closely at a traditional saint named Vimalamitra, who has repeatedly been ritually "performed into existence" and purportedly appeared in the presence of, and even as the flesh and bone of, living Tibetan tantric masters. It concludes by drawing from folklore studies in order to compare the manifestation of an ancient Tibetan saint with contemporary examples of western, secular legends that have also been reenacted until they became realities, i.e., examples in which legendary persons, stories and incidents were acted out in popular culture in ways that reshaped cultural beliefs and values.

The "Secularization" of Muharram Commemorations in Leh, Ladakh. ROHIT SINGH. University of California, Santa Barbara.

My paper examines ethical discourses surrounding Shi'i Muharram commemorations in Leh, Ladakh. Commemorations consist of various lamentation rituals and performances. Local clerics often criticize some of these performances, especially acts of self-laceration and self-flagellation, maintaining that such actions create a negative public image for the Shia and prevent non-Muslims from appreciating the universal and "secular" significance of Hussein's martyrdom. Clerics in Leh use Muharram public gatherings to promote a modern Shi'i Muslim identity based on the ideals of religious pluralism, secular ethics, and global political consciousness. They thus frame the events of Karbala as a battle between justice and injustice with Hussein representing perfect righteousness and his opponent Yazid embodying tyranny. Shi'i clerics in Leh emphasize that Hussein died for all religions and that non-Muslims can learn from Karbala's "secular" moral lessons. This pluralist message takes place within Leh's public sphere where Buddhists and Muslims strive for reconciliation after decades of political tensions. Shi'is use Muharram commemorations as venues to engage in outreach to the Buddhist community. Invoking the dichotomy of justice/injustice, clerics also present a global political worldview in which Iran

stands for the ideals of Hussein and the US and Israeli governments represent Yazid. In public speeches, Shi'i religious leaders called on inter-religious opposition against oppressive political regimes, specifically America and Israel. I contextualize these discourses on pluralism and global politics in reference to Leh's multi-religious public sphere, modern Indian conceptions of secularism, and global Shi'i reform discourses.

Sikhs in the Trenches: Performing Historical Consciousness and Remaking Identities through the Great War. ELIZABETH WEIGHLER. University of California, Santa Barbara.

2014 marked the beginning of the four-year World War One Centenary. To commemorate, Great Britain has planned a wide variety of remembrance projects that have been a catalyst for collective reassertions of British identity. As part of these commemorations, the government has funded over 500 public history initiatives in an effort to incorporate ethnic- and religious-minority voices into its master narrative. Independent Sikh heritage groups have received a significant amount of funding to solicit "new histories" from community members under State-sanctioned guidelines, which include the secular contours of national identity. This process constitutes a new space for dialogue and authority, as volunteers work to resolve current dissonant frameworks for and expressions of Sikh identity, sovereignty, and religiosity through the historical narratives and their display. The assumptions, motivations, and perceptions of participating Sikh individuals come into contact with wider public discourses of British colonial history, its legacies, and their current status as both British citizens and South Asian ethnoreligious subjects. Using a case-study and preliminary research, this paper explores the connections between a Sikh-specific historical consciousness—an individual's relationship with the past—and the construction, adaptation, expression, and maintenance of religious and ethnic diasporic identity. Looking at the performative aspects of collective memory and the fluidity of these particular identities between sacred and secular space, this paper specifically engages reenactments, the role of *5K identifiers*—such as the turban and kirpan—in these debates and histories, and the subject's search for how to behave "Sikh" considering the tradition's celebration of sovereignty.

Coffee under Monastery: Authenticity, Religious Heritage, and "Beautifying" Ladakh. LAUREN SMYTH. University of California, Berkeley.

My paper will reflect on the current development of Ladakh's capital city Leh into a tourism hub, and the tourism industry's impact on the "traditional" and religious spaces of Ladakh. Located in the northwest Indian Himalaya, the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir is well known as a crossroads of religion, economics, and culture. As the city expands during the summer months to accommodate transients—tourists and laborers alike—there is a growing demand for new spaces, often available for only four or five months of the year to a distinctly non-Ladakhi customer base. While many of these new spaces are purely secular, a growing number of projects seek to open former or current religious sites to a non-religious audience. These range from allowing tourists access to Buddhist monasteries, to repurposing former monastic quarters as a cafe, to realigning and reconstructing streets through Muslim quarters. Beyond merely improving economic development in the city, these projects seek to demonstrate an "authentic" Ladakhi experience for locals and tourists alike, qualified as both secular and religious by shifting both the ritual and public usages of these various sites. Focusing on urban development and NGO-

based construction projects, I aim to explore Ladakh's use of religious and formerly religious space to exemplify what is understood to be Ladakhi identity—and for whom.

Discussant: RICO MONGE. University of San Diego.

MORAL MOODS, AFFECTS, AND ETHICS.

Chairs: CHINA SCHERZ and JARRETT ZIGON.

Mournful Moods: On Morality, Attunement, and Loss. C. JASON THROOP. University of California, Los Angeles.

In an effort to further an ongoing development of a phenomenological anthropological engagement with moral moods, this paper seeks to interrogate a spectrum of mooded attunements that arise in the wake of death. Viewing grief, mourning, and melancholia as moods that variously disclose an attunement to the loss of intimate others, as well to transformations in aspects of the world that those others have played a role in co-constituting with and alongside us, the paper makes some initial forays into thinking through the ways that such moods bring into relief various dimensions of what Edmund Husserl termed a given community's homeworld.

Enduring the Awkward Embrace. CHINA SCHERZ. University of Virginia.

Regimes of ethical and religious formation are often associated with practices intended to induce states of physical and affective discomfort. While many of these practices do not directly affect other people, some techniques of ethical formation involve direct, often inept, engagements between novices and those around them. Taking the iconic embrace between St. Francis and a man with leprosy as their exemplar, the Franciscan Sisters of Africa, a Catholic order of Ugandan, Kenyan, and Tanzanian nuns, require many of their members to engage in intimate acts of care with people with a range of debilitating medical conditions. Many of the novices and sisters find these practices uncomfortable, even nauseating, at first, but later come to accept and enjoy these interactions. While many of the sisters describe the importance of these encounters as central to their religious formation, the discomfort of the young sisters is also palpable to those to whom they are called upon to provide such care, creating a different, and unacknowledged, form of discomfort for those who must endure these sometime awkward embraces. In this paper, I explore the importance of physical and affective discomfort as both a tool for ethical formation and as a sign that ethical work is taking place, and explore the complex consequences of these exercises for those to whom these acts of care are addressed.

Mourning on the Maidan. CATHY WANNER. Pennsylvania State University.

When over one hundred people died during the first night of violence on the Maidan, Kyiv's central square, on February 20, 2014, memorial shrines commemorating the tragic deaths sprang up immediately. By sacralizing commemorative space, the surviving protesters created a means and a place for grieving. These popular memorials and the rites of mourning performed there not only commemorate death and sacrifice, they also focus outrage. As such, the memorials

cultivate deeply felt moral and aesthetic sentiments as experiential evidence for their truth. The widespread embrace of these sentiments as part of a shared experience of loss, mourning and grieving feeds the conviction that the protests were more than a political act. They constituted a "revolution of dignity," as the Maidan protests are locally known. This paper will explore two other corollary effects of these public sites of mourning. First, such memorials fashion new forms of urban affect that fundamentally shape experience by converting spaces into places where the past is returned to the everyday present. In doing so, these sites of mourning and the affect they generate articulate how moral obligations of solidarity are formed and to whom. Additionally, the sacralization of urban space in the form of sites of mourning, sometimes inadvertently and other times directly, becomes a means to demonize other places and peoples, conjuring up moral obligations of an entirely different kind.

Finessing Finitude: De-Historification and Religion at Moments of Crisis. CHARLES STEWART and JOSHUA BURRAWAY. University College, London.

Interest in the work of the Italian anthropologist and historian of religions, Ernesto de Martino, has been reawakened with recent publications such as his *Magic: A Theory from the South* (*HAU* 2015). This prompts a deeper consideration of one of his key ideas: the 'crisis of presence.' He formulated this concept drawing first on Janet's idea of 'presentification' (the individual's conscious synthesis of the past and the social present), later infusing it with Heideggerian and existentialist ideas of 'Being' (thereby adding anxiety about the future and finitude). During crises, personal existence came under threat resulting in withdrawal from the present, and intimations of annihilation. Presentification failed. The result was dissociation, giving rise to the manifold cases of catatonia, fixation, and other illnesses evident to ethnographers in southern Italy. Of particular interest to de Martino were folk Catholic spells which contained little stories (which he calls '*historiolae*') in which Christ or the Virgin appear as actors engaging with the illness. These mythic scenarios, and the healing rituals embedding them, acted to resolve the crisis of presence by removing the individual from history altogether in an act of de-historification. This paper will examine this theory in relation to an epidemic outbreak of dreaming among schoolchildren during a time of crisis (the Great Depression of 1930), and consider further applications in the analysis of alcohol dependency and homelessness in Britain and the USA.

Ethics of Dwelling, Politics of World-Building, Attunement. JARRETT ZIGON. University of Amsterdam.

What is the relation between certain forms of political ontologies and ethics? In this essay I take up this question through a rethinking of responsibility in terms of attunement. I do this by looking at the unique case of Vancouver, Canada and the enactment of what I call a politics of world-building motivated by an ethics of dwelling. I show that the approach taken in Vancouver differs significantly from a biopolitical model in that in contrast to the linear and individualized approach taken by the latter, Vancouver activists are in the process of creating a new world that is primarily characterized as being attuned with itself. As a new world attuned to itself it is always open to becoming otherwise. For to be attuned to itself, a world must always be open to becoming something that it is currently not. Thus, in contrast to the limitations of biopolitics and

responsibilization, it will be argued that a politics of world-building and attunement entail a process of becoming and therefore enacts a kind of freedom that could be described as openness.

MORALITY AND MOVEMENT: MIGRATION, PILGRIMAGE, DIASPORA AND RETURN (2).

Chair: STEPHEN SELKA

Mapping the Moral in African Diaspora Tourism in Brazil. STEPHEN SELKA. Indiana University.

This paper focuses on African diaspora tourism in Bahia, Brazil, particularly African American "pilgrimages" to the Afro-Catholic festival of Our Lady of the Good Death (or simply *Boa Morte*) celebrated every August by women of African descent involved with Candomblé. For many of the African Americans who attend this festival every year, traveling to Bahia is largely about recovering the past, specifically in the form of their African heritage. Indeed, this kind of travel is often framed in terms of a wider narrative of the relationship between heritage and personhood. Nevertheless, Boa Morte occupies a complicated position on the Afro-Brazilian moral landscape. For evangelical Christians, for example, Boa Morte and Candomblé stand for the diabolical, and conversion narratives often frame Candomblé as something that compromises full personhood understood in terms of free will. From this perspective, Afro-Brazilian religion is not something to recover, but to leave in the past. By contrast, to the extent that the festival of Boa Morte is understood as a celebration honoring "the ancestors," it is particularly appealing to African Americans seeking a connection with their ancestral past. At the same time, ancestors are understood to be dangerous and morally unpredictable in Candomblé; therefore Boa Morte occupies a complicated position on the moral landscape not only of evangelical Christianity, but of Candomblé as well. Accordingly, in this paper I discuss the contested links between heritage, personhood and morality that are enacted at this festival.

"Someday We Will be Like the Jews": Music and Moral Identity in the Syriac Christian Diaspora. SARAH BAKKER KELLOGG. San Francisco State University.

You cannot be a secular Suryoyo, like you can be a secular Jew. In thirty years, yes. Right now, no. In the Syriac Orthodox Christian, or Suryoye, diaspora in the Netherlands, secularizing elites frequently assert that it is only a matter of time before ordinary members of their community will begin to imagine themselves in possession of an ethnic identity, irrespective of individual religious belief. These elites imagine an inevitably secular future, complete with land rights and legal protections, as a recognized ethno-religious minority. There are, however, multiple versions of this secular future. These futures are not merely debated in the abstract, but are produced within the sacred practice of liturgical singing. These secular futures proliferate in competing narratives about the past, as different elites invoke alternative textual traditions of western scholarship on Middle Eastern religious minorities. What seems at first glance to be a debate over post-Ottoman naming practices—*are we Assyrian, Aramean, or simply Syriac?*—is on further inspection a complex contest over the moral future of Syriac Christianity. Diasporic Suryoye understand Christianity to be a kinship practice, making the ethnic fundamentally

indivisible from the religious. In light of the fact that even the most determined secularists can only authenticate their claims with appeals to the liturgical tradition, this paper examines the ways in which the sung liturgy is used to fashion an array of experimental futures for Syriac Christian moral identity.

Rituals of National Catholicism: The Resurrection of St. James and Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, Spain. JENNIFER SIME. San Diego Mesa College.

Contemporary analyses of the extraordinarily popular pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela (Galicia, Spain) very often emphasize a nearly unbroken continuity between the medieval heyday of the pilgrimage and the current practice of pilgrimage. In contrast, in this paper, I emphasize the gaps and continuities in the history of pilgrimage that led to the pilgrimage falling into decline after the ostensible relics of St. James (usually held in a crypt under the cathedral's high altar) were hidden – and then lost in the 16th century. The relics did not reappear until they were unearthed in archaeological excavations at the end of the 19th century. However, it was not until the Spanish civil war (1936-1939) that pilgrimage en masse to Santiago de Compostela began. During the late 1930s and through the 1940s, I argue, the inchoate Franco regime resurrected St. James as a contemporary "Matamoros," or Moorslayer, where the enemies of Spain were understood to be not Moors, but communists, anarchists, and anyone thought to support Spain's democratically elected Second Republic. Pilgrimage was understood as having a mimetic relationship to the saint's martyrdom and as a sacrifice carried out as a visible sign of allegiance to the united Spain of Franco's dictatorship. This paper suggests that the entanglement of politics and religious spectacle in pilgrimage during the Franco regime sheds an unsettling light on the histories that are remembered – and forgotten – in the pilgrimage's contemporary practices.

Implications and Applications of the Actor-Network Theory: Bruno Latour and the Infrastructure of Shared Pilgrimage Sites in Hatay, Turkey. JENS KREINATH. Wichita State University.

Bruno Latour has gained considerable prominence in anthropology and the study of religion. Besides the broad reception his Actor-Network Theory (ANT) has received, little ethnographic research and analytical rigor has been dedicated to the obvious implication and possible applications of this theory to the study of pilgrimage sites and the routes which connect them. The aim of this paper is to present my ethnographic findings in the study of the interreligious network of pilgrimage sites and find ways in which some of the theoretical concepts and parameters of ANT can be applied to reveal the leading infrastructures that connect and map out various interreligious pilgrimage routes and the sites to which they lead. Central to this paper will be the discussion of Latour's concept of agency and the way it can be applied to the indexicality of material objects and religious sites. I will argue that it is possible to claim that pilgrimage sites have the capacity to transform the agency of their visitors. However, it seems to be more fruitful to argue for a distribution and transformation of agency as proposed by Alfred Gell in his "Art and Agency." It is the prospect of this paper to refine one of the main insights in the work of Latour by re-contextualizing his approach within the confines of an analytically more rigid theory of agency.

NEGOTIATING RELIGIOUS AND OTHER BOUNDARIES.

Chair: ANAND VIVEK TANEJA.

Pastor Hsi's Legacy: An Indigenous Christian Community in North China. YI LIU. Shanghai University.

Christian world due to his distinctive, indigenous way of preaching, especially his efforts on Opium Refuges. While the local Christians survived through the great disasters such as the Boxer Rebellion and the Cultural Revolution, a revival happened since the 1980s in an indigenous sect, True Jesus Church, characteristic of femininity and healing. The local Christians interpret God and other Christian doctrines from a Chinese way, though they still have to face the challenges from their families and neighbors because of this foreign religion (*yangjiao*). Prayer as a key factor, their worship is emotional. Most of them converted firstly for the mysterious effect of healing, but they were transformed both spiritually and morally through various fellowships and meetings. Christianity works as an integral part of the everyday life of common believers, which "empowers" these disadvantaged people to face physical, psychological and social difficulties. This has more meaning against the background of fast modernization and urbanization. It echoes what happened in the later 19th century directed by Pastor Hsi. Taking Christianity as a lived religion, the author hopes to describe a life history of local Christians, with a focus on their struggle between spiritual directives and secular interests, as well as the cultural and social boundaries between them and their neighbors.

The Role of Islam in the Ethical Life of Hindus: Some Reflections on the Dargah of Firoz Shah Kotla. ANAND VIVEK TANEJA. Vanderbilt University.

Relations between religions in South Asia have been seen as marked by either competition or syncretism. Is there another way of understanding the inter-religious interaction? Turning to the interactions between Muslims and Hindus at the popular Muslim saint-shrine of Firoz Shah Kotla in Delhi, I offer another model in this paper—one of religions opening up new potentialities of ethical life and self-fashioning for the others they interact with, without either "conversion" or the dilution of doctrinal specificity. At Firoz Shah Kotla, the ethics of social interaction are anti-identitarian. People actively avoid asking each other's names, which easily identify one's religious community and caste. Instead, people follow an ethic of *nameless intimacy*, where they become friends and share intimate secrets while, on one level, remaining strangers. Women, for example, freely express their disaffection with the oppressive structures of their natal and marital families. The ability to form communities of *hamdardi* (shared pain/empathy) while stepping out of one's socially determined identity is a major factor in the healing power of Muslim saint shrines such as Firoz Shah Kotla. This healing efficacy can be linked to anti-patriarchal strands within Islam and to the Islamic ethic of *gharib-navazi* (hospitality to strangers/others), which is of particular importance to Sufi orders. By offering us a model of Islam as an ethical *inheritance* as opposed to a religious *identity*, Firoz Shah Kotla forces us to rethink normative ideas of religion, and the role of Islam in the ethical and religious life of North India.

Enacting Morality in Morning Assemblies: Insights into South African Schools. CHRISTINA CAPPY. University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Following twenty years of democracy, South African education has undergone several curricular changes, redefining national values to be promoted through schooling. Reforms have dismantled the apartheid-era Christian National Education curriculum, which advocated separated development under a moral framework based on the teachings of the Dutch Reformed Church. Current reforms promote nation-building through the principles of democracy, non-racism, equality, and Ubuntu (human dignity). Although proclaimed "secular" national values, these concepts become intertwined with Christian notions of morality in daily school practice.
This presentation examines the ways in morality is taught and enacted by teachers and students in rural and township schools in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. It focuses on one arena in particular—daily morning assemblies. During morning assemblies the entire school body gathers together to watch performances by teachers, students, and invited guests, from priests to health care workers. Such gathering are often party to less welcome outbursts from students with "bad spirits." By taking this daily practice as "ritual," in this presentation I investigate how students are confronted with ideas of "right" and "wrong," and the role religion and the spiritual in their everyday lives. Specifically, I explore the following questions: In schools, how do Christian concepts of morality become intertwined with national values promoted by the government? And how do students interpret and apply moral concepts presented during morning assemblies? Through this presentation I will shed light on how both secular and religious moral discourse shape youths' shared sense of belonging to the new South Africa.

"The Environmental Concerns are the Cultural Concerns": Sacred Space and Science in Navajo Environmentalism. ADAM DUNSTAN. SUNY, Buffalo.

Navajo sacred sites activism presents a trenchant critique of mainstream environmental ethics in the United States, especially those embodied in the policy decisions of federal environmental agencies. This paper presents findings from fieldwork with groups operating in Flagstaff, Arizona, working to halt ski resort development on *Dook'o'oosłííd* (the San Francisco Peaks) a Navajo sacred mountain and place of prayer, medicinal plant collection, and ritual. Many Navajo interviewed feel this mountain is threatened in its ceremonial purity by artificial snowmaking from wastewater. Blending the findings and studies of environmental scientists and the politics of anarchism and anti-colonialism with traditional Navajo teachings about a sacred mountain, Navajo activists in Flagstaff, Arizona, have cooperated with non-Navajo environmentalists to present a hybrid view of the landscape and to contend for an environmental ethic that is at once scientific, political, and deeply religious, and yet also appeals to those who hold a more secular view of the mountain. This paper explores how this joint activism comes about, and the very pointed critique it presents to environmental ethics found in U.S. policy, including concepts of nature as quantifiable, land as divisible, and living beings as resources.

What Counts: Moral and Ortho in American Old Believers' Projections of Judgment. AMBER LEE SILVA. McGill University.

Priestless Old Believers/Ritualists (*bezpopovtsy*) believe that apostolic succession was cut off when the Russian Orthodox Church supported Patriarch Nikon's liturgical and textual reforms

and anathematized his dissenters in the Council of 1666-7. The Eucharist, sacraments, and readings requiring a priest were lost to subsequent generations of bezpopovtsy, but the pre-Nikonian texts and rites (*e.g.* two-fingered sign of the cross, full prostrations, and monophonic prayer) were preserved. Questioning this paradoxical orthopraxy in Erie, Pennsylvania and Nikolaevsk, Alaska I found juxtaposing categorizations of ritual's effect on salvation. A baptism "doesn't count" if an infant is turned to the left. However, "God understands" that bezpopovtsy baptisms and marriages are performed by laymen. Yet the same man who argued that doom is assured for those who make the three-fingered sign of the cross even "in good faith," also said, "You seem like a nice person. I don't think you'll burn. But you won't see God." Is there a space for goodness, moral agency, and the chance to come "according to [one's] deeds" (Romans 2:6) outside eternal bliss and burning? Are there limits to God's Grace and understanding? Perhaps he was just being a nice person. This paper looks at formalistic Orthodoxy and generalized Christian charity as competing models of salvation-effecting morality apparent in American Old Believers' explanations of the Book of Life's balance of faith, and ritual and daily deeds. Projections of Judgment provide a theoretical space to explore the sacred/profane, this-world/next-world, belief/ritual dualisms fundamental to Anthropology and Christianity alike.

ALTERITY, (IN)TOLERANCE, AND ETHICS.

Chair: JODIE ANN VANN.

The Ethics of Alterity: Transgression as Moral Practice at Phoenix Pagan Pride. JODIE ANN VANN. Arizona State University.

At Phoenix Pagan Pride, participants consciously enter into a liminal space. However, their goal in doing so is not simply a personally-transformative experience, but to challenge broader social norms through carefully-structured public displays of alterity. This event, and similar ones around the world, blends social activism, public religious education, and community ritual with the flamboyant atmosphere of Gay Pride and the imaginative pastoralism of a Renaissance faire. Like other Pagan festivals it is an event full of ritualized symbolic importance. However, Pagan Pride is perhaps unique amongst Pagan festivals in its emphasis on public performance as a mode of initiating broader social change. Like the Gay Pride events on which it is modeled, Pagan Pride is intended to increase the visibility and public understanding of a particular marginalized identity marker. In order to accomplish this, participants, often consciously and usually conspicuously, challenge existing notions of religion by transgressing normative standards of religious expression.

Using ethnographic data gathered during Phoenix Pagan Pride 2013 and 2014, as well as interviews with community members before and after the event, this presentation will explore the ways in which transgression can be performed and interpreted as a moral practice. For many Pagans, existing social mores regarding appropriate religious ideas, behaviors, and practices are founded on ethically dubious (largely Christian) claims. Pagans who challenge those norms through the public performance of alterity are directly engaging and exploring the ethical dimensions of religion and religiosity as part of broader shifts in contemporary cultural and religious notions.

"The Campaign Was a Spiritual Low-Point": Proposition 8's Lasting Impact on a Mormon Community in the San Francisco Bay Area. AMY (AMIEE) FLYNN-CURRAN. National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

In 2008 Proposition 8, an amendment to California's state constitution that eliminated the rights of same-sex couples to marry, became one of the highest-funded state ballot initiatives in history. Much of the funding for 'Prop 8' came from members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, who were urged by church leaders to volunteer their time canvassing their communities and to contribute financially to the campaign. While the proposition was ultimately overturned it made a lasting impact on California's Mormon communities, particularly those in areas with prominent LGBT populations. Following the 2008 elections resulting tensions were evident within Mormon congregations; this paper will look at the ongoing processes of healing from Prop 8 within a Mormon Ward situated in the San Francisco Bay Area several years after it's passing. Drawing on fieldwork in Oakland's LDS community I will argue that the campaign has had as much of an effect on specific Mormon wards as other landmark events, such as the end of Plural Marriage or the revelation on the priesthood. Unlike those historical turning points within the faith, there were no changes to church doctrine when Prop 8 was presented as a Mormon issue, however the legacy of the campaign brought about major transformation in the church's attitude toward LGBT Mormons and their families. This paper will draw on the experiences of LDS members in order to discuss the ongoing processes of addressing the church's attitude towards homosexuality, and the emotional and spiritual challenges members experienced in the wake of Prop 8.

Homophobic Muslims. NUR AMALI IBRAHIM. Indiana University, Bloomington.

In line with the meeting's thematic concern with morality and ethics, this paper will consider an issue that poses a moral and ethical conundrum to Muslims: homosexuality. The paper, based on research conducted in multi-religious and multi-racial Singapore, examines the impact of cosmopolitanism on morality and ethics. While Muslims in Singapore have never regarded homosexuality to be a doctrinal issue that needed to be addressed by their religion, they have recently begun to identify homosexuality as a problem that merited condemnation. This new and emerging homophobia among Singaporean Muslims, I suggest, cannot be regarded to be a reflection of attitudes that are inherent in Islam because same-sex sexuality has been understood differently by Muslims in different times and places. Rather, the recent events in Singapore is tied to increasing state tolerance of civil society debates on homosexuality. When the state broached a debate over whether a pre-existing law criminalizing homosexuality should be repealed, evangelical Christians were the first to vigorously support the retention of the law, presenting themselves as moral guardians of a state that had become too liberal. Evangelical Christian activism had the effect of encouraging Muslims towards homophobia. I argue that mimicking the discourse of evangelical Christians (who are mostly middle-class Chinese) allows Muslims (mostly lower-working class Malays) to perform good citizenship and express aspirations for upward mobility.

What is a Moral Obligation? Religious Authority, Conscience, and Tolerance in an Indian Muslim Community. DAVID STROHL. Colby College.

This paper examines an apparent paradox between religious authority and individual conscience in the Ismaili Muslim community in Mumbai. The Ismailis are Shi'a Muslims who consider the Aga Khan, a wealthy philanthropist living in France, to be their living Imam and spiritual guide. In Ismaili Shi'ism, the Imam has the responsibility and authority to interpret the Quran according to the needs of the present. The Imam routinely issues edicts (*farman*, lit. "command") which Ismailis are, in theory, duty-bound to follow. Yet most Ismailis in Mumbai stress that these edicts are not commands, but rather "guidance" (*hidāyat*) that they must interpret and put into practice using their capacity for reason (*aql*). In what sense then is following these edicts an obligation? What type of authority do they presuppose? As I argue in this paper, while this case seems to be yet another example of Muslims autonomously submitting to a moral code, it also reflects the fashioning of an ethical self who is tolerant of differences in interpretation and conscience. I end this paper by reflecting on how such a seemingly individualistic morality both reproduces religious authority and exists alongside more "other-centered" notions of morality in the community.

The Ethics of Sacrifice, and the Sacrifice of Ethics: Transforming People with Learning Disabilities from Curse to Blessing. PATRICK MCKEARNEY. University of Cambridge.

The Foucault of *Discipline and Punish* or the Girard *of Generative Scapegoating* would have encountered little difficulty in analyzing the historic incarceration, oppression and exclusion of people with learning disabilities in the UK. But whereas all care organizations would go with Girard in seeing them as the unfortunate subjects of scapegoating, few, if any, would follow him in normatively navigating the theologically charged symbols of violence, exclusion and resurrection in their everyday discourse. A Christian organization called l'Arche has no such reservations. The community's deploys theological categories of poverty, rejection and blessing in service of an ethical project that takes them into the domain of the late, more than the mid, Foucault.

The organization trains carers to see people with learning disabilities as capable of confronting us with our own capacity to scapegoat. Rather than primarily focusing on integrating people with learning disabilities into mainstream society, the community aims to reveal their gift for relationship. In short, they aim to create a community in which people with learning disabilities are not burdens or problems, but blessings. The introduction of these Christian categories into the emotional labor of care work raises more questions than it answers though. Who is sacrificing what? For whom? And what blessing ensues?

Through attending to the moral complexities of navigating these questions in the practice of care work, this paper brings together considerations of the role that categories, discourses and practices of sacrifice play in ethical projects, with the ways in which anthropological understandings sacrifice are bound up with a normative theological terrain.

THE MEDIUMISTIC TRIAL. TESTING AND CONTESTING MEDIUMISM BETWEEN SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND MORALITY.

Chair: EHLER VOSS.

Mediumship, i.e. the ritualistic communication with otherworldly beings and transcendent

powers is a classic topic of the Anthropology of Religion and is deeply connected to questions of morality. Mediumship turns out to be a controversial topic all over the world and a closer look at the history of the term medium shows that a medium has always been a seed of doubt, be it "human" or "technical." On the one hand mediums as mediators between different realms have entailed the hope and the promise of new possibilities, improved efficiency, and thus a better life. On the other hand mediums have simultaneously always been under suspicion of inventing or at least altering the messages they mediate – evoking scientific, religious and moral controversies. In this process, a medium is often put to the test concerning its potentials and its trustworthiness. Using the terms mediumism and mediumistic trial we address the specific way of testing the capabilities and potentials of technical media and human mediums in Europe throughout the 19th century and up to today. In the past, mediumism was the subject of a controversy which was staged as a great transatlantic public debate between religious and secular interests and this controversy has had a significant impact on the way mediumism has been discussed and tested in other regions of the world as well. Towards the end of the 19th century mediumism was "domesticated" by various strategies in public discourse, through archaization (attributing it to a premodern state of mind), psychological immanentization (transferring magical agency to the psyche of the one suffering its effect (R. Morris)), and pathologization (treating and separating the individual). Even if this led to the dissolution of extensive public debates on mediumism, the testing of mediumistic capabilities and potentials of humans in altered states of consciousness as well as technology has not yet disappeared in the 21st century. In the 20th and 21st century, mediumistic trials continue to be conducted (e.g. in neuroscience, psychiatry, parapsychology, churches, esotericism, ethnology, art, and the skeptic movement) and they regularly produce new controversies and "trading zones" for different claims and interests.
In this panel we will take a comparative look at the many ways mediumism is and has been tested and contested in different settings, regions, and times.

Jugglery Without a License: Magic, Mediumship, and the Law. GRAHAM M. JONES. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In the North Atlantic world, entertainment magicians have largely aligned themselves against mediumship since the early days of Spiritualism. To cite one famous example, Harry Houdini (1874-1926), made the exposure of spirit mediums a personal crusade, attending séances in disguise to confront mediums face to face (some magicians even contend that he was murdered by Spiritualist operatives). Magicians frame still ongoing campaigns against the occult as a form of public service whereby they put their expertise as benign deceivers to use in revealing the malicious deceptions of religious charlatans, who often, they claim, rely on similar forms of artifice. Yet acts of exposure are also forms of publicity for individual magicians and for magic itself, expressively enacting the compatibility of magical entertainment with the normative ontology of Western modernity. In this talk, I take a cultural historical approach to the relationship between magic and mediumship, examining the now forgotten, but then notorious, 1865 trial of a spirit medium named Charles Colchester. The federal tax code of 1864 required entertainment magicians, referred to by the law as 'jugglers', to pay a licensing fee. At the time, Colchester was touring the East Coast performing feats of spirit rapping and extrasensory perception. Federal prosecutors alleged he was practicing the profession of jugglery without a license; Colchester countered he was a religious figure exempt from federal licensing fees.

Examining the arguments from this case, I explore moral and epistemological reasoning in a highly rationalized arena of categorical contestation, a federal courtroom.

A Case of Quasi-Certainty: William James and the Making of the Subliminal Mind. JANNY LI. University of California, Irvine.

Over the last twenty-five years of his life, American psychologist and philosopher William James investigated the trance states of Boston medium, Leonora Piper, as part of his work with the American Society for Psychical Research. James referred to Piper as his "white crow," the single exception that could destroy the universality of the general rule that all crows are black (Taylor 1999: 169). For James, Piper's trance phenomena destroyed all of the basic premises held by the mainstream scientific and medical community on the divisibility of the mind and the physical limits of human consciousness. In this paper, I consider the psychical research and pragmatism of James to understanding emergent theories of the mind and more specifically, to the making of the subliminal consciousness in the late nineteenth century. I show how James connected biologically determining aspects of his psychophysiological data with an ethically meaningful doctrine of free will and personal "truth" to formulate provisional theories of trance phenomena. In particular, I propose a shift in thinking about James' psychical research and pragmatism not as distinct, unrelated concerns, but rather as coeval, co-emergent, and intimately intertwined facets of his thinking. An analysis of the Piper case offers a historically grounded account of how James gained insight into the depth and potential of the human mind through continuous chains of verifying experiences and shifting relationships between the known and the unknown—bringing to the fore personal desires, moral convictions, and pragmatic truths.

Higher Beings Commanded: Paint the Fall of Icarus! The Presumed Absence of Mediumistic Art in the Former German Democratic Republic. OLIVER MÜLLER. Burg Giebichenstein University of Fine Arts Halle, Saale.

The contribution to the panel shall focus on the presumed absence of occultism, spiritualism and mediumism in the former GDR society in general and its sphere of fine arts in particular. Emanating that in full contrast to that, contemporaneously on the other side of the German Wall, a huge ongoing presence of these topics were measurable. In consequence one could state that on one side there can be found only very few examples of irrational art forms, while a varicolored examination happened on the contrary. The very famous West German artists Joseph Beuys and Sigmar Polke for example looked out for possibilities to "underdog themselves to inspiration" (Kliege 2011) by creating individual myths and cosmologies. Whereas the most fine artists on the other side of the wall at least superficially followed the anti-formalist doctrine of mastering the inspiration and the subject on duty of creating collective myths. The Fall of the Icarus became the most repeated epitome of this circumstance in former GDR Art-History. Since the German reunification a huge discourse is smoldering over the question how to estimate the "forced into line"-production of fine arts in a former totalitarian state. Following the tenor of the meeting it could be a refreshing addition to this discourse, if one relocates the focus away from the obviously separating circumstances of artistry production at this time towards a fundamental comparative survey of the morals and ethics of the artist as a medium (of social progress) in general.

Is the Truth Out There? "Paranormal" Experiences, Other Worlds, and the Politics of Ontology. MICHAEL KINSELLA. University of California, Santa Barbara.

For over thirty years, research on near-death experiences or NDEs has focused on the phenomenology of the experience and its aftereffects, speculated on the implications of such experiences, or presented explanatory models to account for them. Personal stories, however, consistently frame NDEs as paranormal events and as evidence for an afterlife, and this is what the public finds most compelling. The International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS) supports paranormal interpretations of NDEs; it disseminates NDE-related literature, encourages the development of local special-interest and support groups, and brings experiencers in contact with researchers and other interested parties. The proliferation of these groups, whose aim is not research in any conventional academic sense, suggests that NDEs are not simply a matter of intellectual or personal interest but are generating grassroots group activity about which little is known. This paper will draw upon findings from a three-year ethnographic study to show that IANDS-affiliated groups utilize NDE-related accounts and research to criticize modern Western culture while nonetheless basing many of their own claims upon the premises of this culture. Specifically, these groups are attempting to create a more holistic worldview wherein science and supernaturalism can conjoin, and in which other kinds of experiences may be interpreted as additional proof of other worlds. This paper will also discuss how IANDS-affiliated groups routinely equate near-death experiences with metaphysical completeness and that these experiences are much more heterogeneous than is often presented.

California Dreamin'. The Invention of Neoshamanism as a Mediumistic Trial of the 20th Century. EHLER VOSS. University of Siegen/Stanford University.

Mediumism — i.e. the testing of the capabilities and potentials of technical media and human mediums — was throughout the extended 19th century, the subject of a controversy which was staged as a great public debate between religious and secular interests. This debate was lessened when a psychological and immanent reading of negotiated mediumistic effects became dominant in the public sphere. Thus human trancemediums have been increasingly assigned to an obsolete archaic period, while technical media have been assigned to progressive modern times. In this perspective, human mediums and technical media are not coequal instruments in gaining knowledge of the world anymore. Instead altered states of consciousness only lead to knowledge of the particular persons themselves. In spite of this process of immanentization and the near dissolution of the great debate, the testing of mediumistic capabilities and potentials of humans and technology has not disappeared even in the 21st century. While in the 20th and 21st century, mediumistic trials have been conducted in smaller and less public settings than in the 19th century, this has resulted in new controversies. From ist beginning, mediumism has been a transatlantic approach and, following the contemporary actors and controversies, has especially led to California as a region in which new institutions of the mediumistic trial of the 20th century were invented, popularized, and globalized. As the invention of neoshamanism shows, the debate, at least partly, has nearly reached the level it had in the 19th century.

Cultivating the Wild Vision: Past and Present Channelers Making Meaning. ADAM KLIN-ORON. The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute.

Channeling, a New Age form of spirit mediumship, is a hyper-individualized religiosity, claiming each person can create her own reality. And yet, most channelers hold to very similar beliefs and practice their craft in a uniform manner. Through examination of both the careers of three pioneer channelers – Alice Bailey, Jane Roberts and Helen Schucman – and contemporary Israeli channelers, two stages are outlined: Wild and Cultivated. First, spontaneously or intentionally, channelers undergo powerful experiences of direct encounters with non-material beings, encounters that are not under their control, with strong embodiment, obscure meaning and threating undertones. Through time and practice, channelers come to understand and reshape these raw experiences through pre-existing systems of meaning learned from friends and literature. Moving to Cultivated Channeling, the beings are now all perceived as benevolent, the encounters always initiated by the channeler, and the content emphasizes empowerment. The force of Wild Channeling jars channelers out of their current lives and habits, but it the latter, Cultivated, stage that allows them to re-arrange their beliefs and lives around a new vocation.

Experiments with Power: The Scientific and Legal Trials of Religion in the Caribbean. J. BRENT CROSSON. New York University.

While the colonial anti-superstition laws that banned Caribbean ritual practices of mediumship, political mobilization, and legal intervention called them obeah, the healers I worked with in Trinidad often preferred to call what they did science. In this talk, I focus on criminalized diasporic religious practices in Trinidad to grapple with the limits of science and religion as authorizing categories. Drawing on healers' "experiments with power" during protests against police brutality and petroleum surveys in Trinidad, this talk explores the entanglements of science, religion, and experimental trials in the Caribbean from the late eighteenth century to the present. Rather than reading healers' talk of science as simply a legitimating mask, I argue that their experiments re-figure the conceptual and geo-political boundaries of the scientific and the relationships between medium and power in the social and natural sciences.

Communitas, Morality, Sorrow and Truth: Supernatural Means of Ascertaining Unorthodox Histories of Religiously Significant Sites. DEANA WEIBEL. Grand Valley State University.

An underlying idea that "history is written by the victors" may account for a certain number of morally motivated religious visitors (sometimes self-identified as esoteric or pagan) to French pilgrimage and historic sites whose experience of the sites involves a purported, occasionally mediumistic interaction with supernatural informational sources (spirits, energies) to corroborate what they see as the sites' true (albeit controversial) origins. France, which is secular in many ways but has a strong history of Roman Catholicism, is home to many tourist locations with strong religious overtones, including Rocamadour, a Marian shrine with possibly pagan origins, and Montségur, a historic stronghold of the doomed 13th century Cathar religious minority. Often a focus by participants on the destruction and persecution of the minority groups who fell to Catholic dominance involves evoking strong emotions, particularly a sharing in the sorrow of these groups, and a determination to tell the "real" story, frequently subverting official histories in the process. This paper will examine the role that site-centered ritual and imagination play in establishing a sense of communitas with persecuted groups of long ago; an analysis of the participants' sense of moral obligation to uncover historical truth, correct misperceptions, and

spread the true stories associated with these sites; and the way visitors outside of these groups dispute these claims. The connections between tragedy, morality, ritual and emotion as producers of communitas will be considered, with a focus on Edith Turner's contention that communitas "brings about triumph and enormous benefits from the greatest misery."

GENDER, RELIGION, AND CONSERVATIVE CULTURE: HOW PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURES ENABLE AND CONSTRAIN RELIGIOUS & ETHICAL AGENCY.

Chair: MAYFAIR YANG.

It has often been observed that traditional religious institutions and movements are often deeply culturally conservative. In matters of gender construction and family life, they have either withstood the challenges posed by liberal or revolutionary values, or have actively resisted aspects of modernizing discourses. Yet, to simply paint an image of traditional religions today as anti-modern or fundamentalist is to reduce the internal complexity, hybridized formations, and contradictory religious agencies that constitute the reality of traditional religiosities operating in modernity. This panel focuses on gendered agency in religious practices. Since patriarchal structures and institutions are no more than the implementation and putting into practice of their ideals and normative discourses by agents or actors (whether individuals, groups, or communities), we must examine closely how religious agencies reproduce or alter the larger structures which guide and set limits on their actions. How can we take into account the plural and contradictory movements of religious agency operating within a given religious tradition, yet acknowledge the larger conservative environment or discourse of these religious societies? This panel will examine how gendered religious agency manages to strengthen, incorporate, sideline, or even transcend conservative gender norms harbored by a given religious tradition, without actively, consciously, or publically resisting or challenging these patriarchal constructions of religiosity.   Examining a variety of religious traditions, such as American Christian evangelicalism, North Indian Hindu ritual healing, Italian Catholic exorcism, and the resurgence of goddess cults in Chinese popular religion, these papers show how the religious agencies of men and women operates in a plurality and complexity of modes within a conservative structure of organization and discourse.

Mental Ailments and Divine Treatment: Religious Healing Among Women in North India. ANUBHA SOOD. Southern Methodist University.

Based on ethnographic research among women at the Hindu healing temple of Balaji in North India, this paper demonstrates how religious healing becomes therapeutic for those experiencing mental health problems. Religious healing sites serve as popular venues of mental health care among Indian women with etiologies of supernatural affliction and possession-trance practices. Arguments such as women's affinity for spirit possession phenomena, propensity for experiencing dissociative states, and constrained access to modern medicine in patriarchal settings, have been advanced as reasons for the preponderance of women in religious healing settings around the world. I argue that healing in the Balaji temple becomes attractive to women because it employs therapeutic procedures that draw upon everyday Hindu religiosity and

involve women as active agents in reconstituting their gendered life-worlds. Through participation in a range of religious practices drawn from the sphere of Hindu domesticity, as well as the performance of bodily mortifications common to Hindu asceticism, female healing seekers in the Balaji temple attempt to generate healing transformation in the midst of fragmentary and conflictive gendered and social arrangements. Drawing upon person-centered interviews and participant observation with the female healing-seekers and their families that visited the Balaji temple between the years 2009-2012, I show how religious healing serves as an efficacious mode of mental health care for women in India.

Catholic Exorcism: Agency and Patriarchy. THOMAS J. CSORDAS. University of California, San Diego.

If all exorcists in a religious system are men, while a substantial majority of those possessed and in need of liberation are women, what more needs to be said? In fact, the analysis and critique of patriarchy as a social formation is well served by focus on a practice in which the principles of patriarchy are so near the surface of interaction and are enacted in such explicit terms. In this paper, I examine the experience of four women in Italy who have undergone the Roman Catholic rite of major exorcism formally conducted by a priest authorized by his bishop. Close attention to the women's specific circumstances allows for a fine grained appreciation of the cracks in the monolithic patriarchal structure of Catholicism and the texture of lived experience among women most explicitly subjected to its inquisitorial scrutiny through exorcism. Specifically, it allows for recognition of the authentic suffering of these women and the sincere attempts of exorcists to alleviate it. This paper examines several kinds of agencies: the agency of women who seek relief with willingness or who submit to ritual intervention with docility, the agency of possessing demons, and the agency of exorcists through their prayers of liberation. Problematizing these different agencies and exploring their interaction invites the question of whether the patriarchal system itself produces the specific forms of suffering it then attempts to ritually alleviate through the practice of exorcism.

Doing Gender/Doing Religion: US Evangelicalism, the Family, and the Art of Submission. SOPHIE BJORK-JAMES. Vanderbilt University.

In US evangelicalism, "doing gender"—embodying gendered norms—is a central component of "doing religion." The white evangelical ethical order is rooted in symbolic relations of leadership and submission, with pastors and Christian media encouraging evangelicals to learn how to submit to God's leadership through practicing leadership and submission in everyday relationships. The heterosexual family is a primary tool of instruction in this relational ethics, specifically through male headship in heterosexual marriage. Thus fitting into a patriarchal gendered ethics of leadership and submission, at least symbolically, becomes a central mode of religious practice. Based on ethnographic research on lived evangelicalism in Colorado Springs, I explore two separate themes around the cultivation of these gendered ideals: that around encouraging individuals to "leave homosexuality" and to develop healthy (heterosexual) marriages. This paper explores 1) how this ethical order is taught in formal workshops and pastoral messages and 2) how individual evangelicals work to achieve these gendered ideals, often experiencing failures at achieving these ideals as a crisis in their religious identity. Engaging with literature on women and conservative religions, I also show how developing a

properly gendered self is an act of religious agency, even when this act involves denying one's sexual identity or one's gendered autonomy.

Of Mothers and Goddesses: Religiosity and Women's Agency in Wenzhou, China. MAYFAIR YANG. University of California, Santa Barbara.

This paper will address the issue of how to understand women's religious agency in the public spaces dominated by men. Writing about the women's Islamic piety movement in contemporary Egypt, Saba Mahmood has criticized the narrow definition of women's agency put forth by liberal Western feminism. She suggests that women's agency cannot be understood or defined solely in terms of oppositionality, critical discourse, or rebellious acts, but must also take into account the modesty, self-effacement, and self-sacrificing ethos of pious women. This paper takes up Mahmood's point about non-oppositional women's discourse and self-understanding and will examine the importance of religiosity on women's agency in rural and small-town Wenzhou. By outdoing men in their religious piety and self-sacrifice, rural Wenzhou women are able to sometimes attain to religious leadership, transcending the patriarchal structure without directly challenging it. Since Mahmood does not pay sufficient attention to the social effects of pious women's agency, the paper will also address the social impact of women's religious agency in enlarging the spaces of religious worship and building an indigenous religious civil society, while increasing a much-needed ethical awareness in contemporary Chinese society. We will focus on Wenzhou women's relationship with two primary goddesses worshipped in the local area: Goddess Chen the Fourteenth and Bodhisattva Guan Yin, and their participation in popular religion and Buddhism.