Timely Innovations/Divergent Futures: Shifting Temporal Modalities of Shamanic Visionary Experience in Mazatec Indian Religious Life

Edward Abse
Virginia Commonwealth University
emabse@vcu.edu

Since the first years of this century anthropological studies about time have taken an “expectations turn” in developing anthropologies of hope, “the capacity to aspire,” and even “nostalgic futures.” Such a temporal reorientation corresponds to the experience of the sorts of peoples we have traditionally studied: As their ability to enact forms of social reproduction in accordance with a model and practice of “the past in the present” has become undermined by the forces of modernity, they look forward toward an uncertain future – with variant degrees (and shapes) of hopefulness or despair. I explore the current situation of the Mazatec Indians of southern Mexico as a case study of the causes and consequences of an associated transformation in time-consciousness, with a focus on rituals wherein the Mazatecs are effecting a thoroughgoing reconfiguration of the methods and purposes that have long been characteristic of their inherited traditions. The unraveling of community inspires divergent modalities of visionary encounters with the future as imagined and projected from the particular social position of the subjects involved. Shamans are turning from the diagnosis and cure of illness to unprecedented forms of apocalyptic prophecy, in the attempt to imaginatively reconstitute the holistic and hierarchical order within which their mediatory role is (or was) crucially situated. Laypersons, by contrast, are developing a new individualist form of ecstatic religion in the appropriation of shamanic techniques now redirected toward the “search for one’s road,” with each envisioning their own way forward into a future of divinely sanctioned prosperity.

Keywords: Shamanism; Mesoamerica: Ritual Change

Conceptualizing Boş Zaman [Empty Time]: Revisiting the Notion of Leisure in Turkish Islam

Oguz Alyanak
Washington University in St. Louis
oguzalyanak@wustl.edu
How do we think of leisure or free time in Islam? The Turks in Strasbourg, whom I studied as part of my fieldwork in 2016, use the term boş zaman, which literally means “empty time”, to qualify the notion. The negative connotation ascribed to leisure is evident not only in the saying that “only empty men have empty time”, but also in Friday sermons, as well as lectures in religious conversation circles (sohbet), where religious leaders speak of ways of spending empty time with caution, citing the hadith that health and free time are the two blessings that people waste away.

In Strasbourg, however, most working class Muslim Turkish men do not spend their free time at home with their families or in the mosques dedicating time to ethical cultivation, which are seen as socially acceptable ways of spending free time, but in coffeehouses and shisha bars, which are stigmatized venues. While these men recognize that their leisurely habits do not correspond to the cultural norms, they also find it hard to transform their habits as they do not consider mosques or homes as places to decompress after a long day’s work. But why is that the case? And how do they qualify their decision, which contradicts norms shared by not only imams and other religious leaders, but also their mothers or wives. This paper tackles these questions by revisiting how members of the Turkish community negotiate the proper ways of spending “empty time” in Strasbourg.

Lessons from an Ethnographer’s “Among-the-Text”: Some Comparative Notes on Epistemological Authority across History, Anthropology, and Christianity

Douglas Bafford
Brandeis University
bafford@brandeis.edu

The central epistemological question facing historians is how to reconstruct knowledge about an inherently elusive past. Anthropologists, too, have regularly faced this challenge, either by tracing the antecedents of contemporary social phenomena or by taking as their explicit object of inquiry the cultural dynamics of past societies. This paper contributes to conversations about the value added of an anthropological perspective on historical texts. Such moments of cross-disciplinary ventures offer a unique opportunity to put into focus the epistemological authority that differentially grounds historical and ethnographic knowledge production. To explore these contrasts, I draw on and entwine data from two seemingly unrelated projects on religion. First, I discuss a project I recently completed on nineteenth-century American missionaries to South Africa, for which I relied on archival letters and reports. Trained as a sociocultural anthropologist, I consider how an ethnographic approach to the documentary evidence of an archive reveals assumptions in the logic of historical argumentation. Second, I refract the insights gained from this historical project through the lens of ethnographic work I conducted in 2014 among young-earth creationists in Kentucky. Specifically, I argue that these Christians’ discourse on the accessibility of and preconditions for understanding human origins places into relief the various strategies that communities—whether religious or academic—adopt to make knowledge claims across daunting temporal boundaries. A comparative approach to such epistemologies of past
events illuminates key divergences among these cultural systems’ implicit cosmological foundations, as well as telling parallels in their common reliance on “witnessing” or “testimony.”

**Temporal Religious Practices: Public Memory and Everyday Ethics in the Swaminarayan Hindu Tradition**

Kalpesh Bhatt  
University of Toronto  
kalpesh.bhatt@mail.utoronto.ca

By exploring how Hindu devotional communities engage with the manifold dimensions of time to effect religious experience, this paper analyzes the relationship between devotional practices and everyday ethics. It argues that certain devotional practices cause temporal collapse of the past into the present and the future, and thereby, in contrast to common understanding of religious practices, lend their practitioners agency and tensility for negotiating secular concerns, conditions, and actions. To illustrate, I investigate how two devotional practices—*smriti* and *manasi*—of the Swaminarayan Hindu tradition interact with the current apprehensions and future aspirations of their practitioners.

In the Swaminarayan Hindu tradition, ‘*smriti*’ is to meditate on the divine actions, accounts, and events of God and ‘*manasi*’ is to worship God through imaginary devotional performance and conversation. In *smriti*, devotees tap into public memory of the distant past or personal memory of the recent past, recollect the stories they are familiar with or the moments they have witnessed, and try to memorize and internalize them. Whereas, in *manasi*, they mentally reenact the memories of worship but augment them with their own imaginations and inclinations.

Drawing from the theological doctrines of these meditative practices and the ethnographic data collected in the BAPS Swaminarayan centers of New Jersey, USA, this paper examines the interaction between public memory, personal performance, and everyday ethics of their practitioners. It explores how such devotional practices add inward affective elements to the outwardly normative ethics, and hence become an important location for understanding autonomous agency in religious communities.

**Sacred Calendars and the Concept of Time in Traditional Mvskoke Religious Ceremonialism**

Christopher B. Bolfing  
University of Arkansas  
cbbolfin@uark.edu
The Mvskoke, or Creek Indians, are a Native American cultural group that originated in the southeastern United States. In north Florida, a community of Mvskoke still practice their traditional religious ceremonials, called Busks. Many layers of natural symbolism tie the Busks to particular seasonal phenomena and elders often comment that “everything in the Busk is derived from the natural world.” Sacred calendars and concepts of time are no different, and are a particularly interesting aspect of the framework of understanding learned through participation in the Busks. For example, ceremonial leaders describe time as an unbroken circle, reflecting the importance of and emphasis upon observing the natural world by incorporating the circularity of seasonality into cultural conceptions of time. The Busks are scheduled by making use of several overlapping cyclical calendars that connect the ceremonials to understandings of the relationships between people and place. Therefore, the various calendars and the natural symbolism embedded in the practice of the Busk ceremonial provide tools to analyze the complexity of Mvskoke conceptions of time and cyclicality that are deeply connected to the natural world.

_Evaluating Texts in Time: Censorship and Religious Conflict in Early Modern Europe_

Paul Buehler
Tulane University
pbuehler@loyno.edu

_Evaluating Texts in Time: Censorship and Religious Conflict in Early Modern Europe_

During the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth centuries, Catholic and Lutheran communities of the Holy Roman Empire observed an uneasy co-existence. The Religious Peace of Augsburg (1555) compelled the Empire’s princes to tolerate one another’s religious commitments and refrain from interfering in one another’s religious affairs. This settlement initiated a process termed “confessionalization.” By sanctioning programs of religious indoctrination, the Religious Peace of Augsburg tacitly confirmed the mutual antipathies of the Empire’s confessions, making the possibility of popular religious violence real under a particular combination of circumstances. This paper evaluates the contextual considerations that undergirded censorship during the age of confessionalization in central Europe. Low rates of literacy aside, printed religious invective had accompanied periods of disruption since the Reformation, contributing to the combustibility of otherwise latent hostilities. Censorship of religious texts was therefore justifiable to preserve social and political stability. One of the principal considerations for determining the risk of critical discourse, as this paper argues, was time: Theological principles that were basic to confessional identity could menace the social order as time went on and conditions changed. This paper assesses the importance of time to the censorship of religious texts in several respects. First, authorities targeted texts that could inflame religious passions at inopportune moments, when tensions were elevated. Second, confessionalized authors used history to comment on present circumstances, drawing the ire of authorities. In the final assessment, this paper argues that censorship of religious texts was determined as much by historical context (time) as content _per se_. 
Religion, Time and Morality among Children in Brazil’s Most Evangelical City

Alana Sá Leitão Souza
Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil
alanasaleitao@gmail.com

Roberta Bivar Carneiro Campos
Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil
robertabivar@gmail.com

Based on an ethnography carried out with children at a public school in Abreu and Lima, a city well known as the most evangelical in Brazil, we propose to analyze how they experience their religiousity and negotiate beliefs, values and practices in public space – specifically that of the school. Abreu and Lima has seen its number of evangelical residents grow in the last few decades. We examine the children considered here through their performances and contradictions. This means that we did not established coherence in an ethnographic present, but looked at approaches and distances between experiences and perceptions, studying specifically how they performed gender and religion in different spaces and times.

We perceive that, in order to assess moral dimensions, it is necessary to focus attention on the verbalization and discussion of existing norms and values, as well as considering temporal and spatial dimensions where body values and techniques are articulated. Therefore in addition to carrying out ethnography at the school, we also observed the children in the church they attend, the Assembly of God.

We were able to identify the learning of a series of corporal techniques that are activated beyond the wall of the Church. We argue that elements such as body, self and moral are constructed in practice through actions that are cumulative in the constitution of the agent, where even seemingly unsuccessful actions are accumulated (Asad, 1993; Foucault, 1997; Mauss, 2003; Mahmood, 2005; Pinto, 2010).

Time and Cosmology in the White Shaman Mural

Whitney Cox
University of Houston
wcox23@gmail.com

Kim A. Cox, independent scholar
KimACox@aol.com

The 2,000-year-old White Shaman rock art panel in southwest Texas is perhaps the earliest creation story recognized as such in North America. The Archaic artists who painted this panel formulated it around natural cyclical temporal events, thereby relating it to the cosmos as a whole. The methods used by the creators of the panel were designed to infuse time and thereby life into this religious mural in order to create a living masterpiece, one likely used for ceremonies focusing on transcendence through transformation. In this paper, we will discuss the archaeology of the panel itself, the order of its composition, and the similarities between its symbols and recorded Mesoamerican calendar systems. In addition, we will highlight how the mural contains elements of several historically recorded mythologies of Corachol-Aztecanspeaking groups.

*Proper Burial and the Afterlife: Reordering Space and Time in the Sierra Leonean Muslim Diaspora*

JoAnn D’Alisera
University of Arkansas
dalisera@uark.edu

This paper addresses the way Sierra Leonean Muslims living in Washington D.C. negotiate displacement in transnational settings through mortuary activities and debates about the afterlife. For many of these pious men and women, complex tensions emerge in the struggle to negotiate their desire for burial in their homeland and the Islamic doctrine that mandates that a corpse is buried within twenty-four hours. Fear of never setting foot in Sierra Leone again, alive or dead, compels them to interrogate Islamic theology relating to burial time and location and to reconfigure spatiotemporal social fields to accommodate new understandings. In this paper, I illustrate how community debates centered on the consequences of alternative burial strategies play a role in setting the stage for revising and reorienting space-time registers and linking distant localities through space-time compression. I explore the way encounters invested with the desires and the imagined needs of Sierra Leonean Muslims to be “at home” while living in distant places creates new worlds of meaning that reorient and bind people together in the face of social and geographic displacement. Thus I argue that disquiet about interment and the afterlife serve as one of many ways that Sierra Leonean Muslims negotiate time-space displacements and construct enduring links between emplaced bodies, dead and alive, and national and religious belonging.

*Time, Timelessness and Eternity in Alevi Belief*

Dilsa Deniz
Every religion has its forms of temporality and Alevism also possesses certain time perceptions and settings. While eternity, a time of timelessness, is one of the most significant temporalities, on the other hand actual timings are mainly based on phases of the sun and the moon. Both are used in daily life not totally separately, but with some intersecting periods of daily or annual routine. Therefore, sacred and profane timing interact in everyday activities. While sacred timing is set intermittently, profane timing is based on daily routine, though both are interwoven with social life.

In my presentation I aim to focus on the use of timelessness and actual timing in the social existence. In order to do so, I intend to analyze two Dersim mythical narratives. According to Mircea Eliade, the inception of the myth is at a moment outside of time, and myths are the stories of events that occurred in a more sacred period (Eliade 1992: 43-44). So myths are the most sacred stories in a timeless period but still act in real/simultaneous time. I plan to use a deconstructive method along with discourse analysis, and symbolic anthropological readings. By using these eclectic methods, I intend to analyze time in the myths, comparing sacred timing and its functional interaction in daily societal life with its asymmetric rival, ‘profane timing.

Narrating Spiritual Time: Revelation, Miracles, and the History of Wamalkia wa Ubembe

Nicole Eggers
Loyola University - New Orleans
eggers@loyno.edu

In the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, in the province of South Kivu, in the territory of Fizi, there is a church known as the Troisième Eglise , or Wamalika wa Ubembe, that was founded by a prophet named Tata Wahiseelelwa in 1983. It emerged out of an earlier church – l’Eglise de la Fois – which dates back to the early 1950s. The history of the church spans what historians consider some of the most significant periods of the Congolese past – the late years of Belgian colonial rule, Independence and the Congo Crisis, the Simba wars, the deterioration of the Congolese economy and increasing autocracy of Mobutu’s regime in the 1980s, and the first and second Congo wars and their aftermath. Yet these are not necessarily the terms by which the Wamalkia periodize their past. Instead, their history is narrated through a series of revelations, miracles, and transfers of spiritual power. Of course, these spiritual events map onto historical moments that cannot be divorced from more conventional periodization, but for Wamalkia, the notions of causation and significance assigned to those moments exist in a spiritual realm that is
and was both within and beyond the immediate socio-political context in which they unfolded. In this paper, I will consider the significance of such alternate notions of periodization and causation in thinking and writing about the history of Wamalkia.

**Presence Reprised: Thinking Divine Time through the Practice of Apophasis**

Aaron Frederick Eldridge

University of California, Berkeley

eldrige@berkeley.edu

In Robert Orsi’s recent work, *History and Presence*, he cites the problem of the gods’ presence, and its resolution into an anxious absence, as foundational to secular modernity. Animated through particular divisions within Western Christianity, Orsi shows how the formation of modern secular subjectivity in capitalist democracy is dependent upon the uneasy caesura captured in the Catholic syntagma ‘real presence’, i.e. reality and its representation. Taking up this question in terms of temporality, I consider the ‘time’ of absence and presence as vital and complimentary to the spatial division of the world into nature and supernature. In this sense, the punctum of linear nature by the eternity of supernature is a managed danger that produces a homogenous, historical time. As a riposte, I retrace a particular Christian conception of Divine presence as found in the writings of Eastern Orthodox thinker, Gregory Palamas, one which proceeds from an apology for an embodied apophatic (negative) theology. Not only does Palamas insist on the apophatic as the means for knowing the Divine, but his defense of the possibility of its experience is constituted through the circumscription of the mind within the body. Outlining this rebuke of Western scholasticism as that which refuses the temporal division of nature/supernature, I ask after the possibilities engendered therein; how might such a conceptualization enable thinking Divine time and the time of this world apart from a transcendent division of absence and presence? That is, a lived cosmography in which Divine time is always-already enfolded within the body and thus the time of this world?

**“No Anti-church Diatribes, No Signs or Banners, and Sunday-best Dress”: Mormon Feminists and the Role of Clothing and Respectability in Activism**

Amy Flynn-Curran

Maynooth University, Ireland

a.flynncurran@gmail.com

Amidst a growing number of highly publicized feminist activities where “pussy hats” and pantsuits signify political resistance, Mormon women negotiate ways in which they can embody their message of change within Mormonism with strategic clothing choices. Authorities from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints emphasize the role of women’s dress as visual display of modesty, gender distinction, and piety. Women involved in Mormon feminist demonstrations
must negotiate to what extent they value the linking of feminine and modest dress to faith, as well as its usefulness in legitimizing the message of equality they wish to put forward as they participate in organized ‘actions’.

This paper will assess the ways in which Mormon feminists involved in activist demonstrations pertaining to women’s ordination in 2014-16 engage with church dress standards. Building on an existing body of work relating to the multidimensional properties of clothing, I will draw upon experiences in the field with Mormon feminists to further explore clothing’s possibilities. By examining discourses relating to obedience, dissidence, belonging and transgressions in relation to dress, I hope to demonstrate the political dimensions of dress as a means of validating activists as faithful and authentic believers who seek change within their faith.

*Whither Rupture? Time, Ritual and Definitions of the Everyday in Sufi Iran*

Seema Golestaneh

Indiana University Bloomington

sgolesta@indiana.edu

This paper analyzes the concept of the “everyday” as seen through experiences of “timelessness” during the dhikr ritual of the Nimatullahi 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 describe a diverse array of experiences. While some articulate this destabilization of subjectivity as a loss of socio-political subjectivity, others describe the experience in more classically mystical terms, discussing the melting away of the “lower soul” or “ego” (*nafs*). Despite the differences in the explication of their experiences, one recounting an “escape” from the socio-political realm while the other relaying a spirito-existential evolution of sorts, both groups describe a sense of timelessness or out-of-time-ness. Beyond this stoppage of time or transformation into a state of “timelessness,” there is one other characteristic of their ritual experience that almost all report: a “break” from the everyday. This paper will subsequently answer the following questions: what can we learn about the fluidity of the concept of the everyday, and why is it so tied to linear time? Does it refer to a specific type of consciousness or temporality, or perceived temporality? And should this distancing from the everyday be seen as a type of rupture? Drawing from the work of Veenas Das, Michel DeCerteau, and Georges Perec, this paper will analyze the relationship between time and the everyday through experiences of the Sufi dhikr ritual in Iran.

*Things, Selves, and the Local: Religious Inflections of Cosmopolitan Villagers*

Hector Guazon

University of the Philippines-Diliman
This study highlights the intersections between the sacred, things, persons, time and places by considering how material things and their flows provide understanding on how the cosmopolitan problem of inflecting local village life and sociopolitical relations becomes a question of locating religious subjectivity. By material things, I refer to DVDs made by local musicians and videomakers about the canao (a religious ritual) as the bundles of roses in styrofoam produced in Bahong, La Trinidad, Benguet Province are transported to and brought back from the key cities in the Philippines during what they term as “sacred” seasons.

In so doing, the study firstly looks into the circulation of material things, their inflections within everyday life worlds and rituals, and the ideological understandings of diverse forms and processes that turn them into one thing in one village and another in different locations; secondly, it explores the various forms of mediations and constraints – religious, cultural, political, and financial – that contour the possibilities of material things in particular places and times; and, finally, it examine the ways in which material things (re)shape religious subjectivities, made manifest in agents’ desiring and feeling their way through, creating an expanded purpose even as they are overtaken in significance by others.

My study presupposes that the agents’ inflection of their material things, as extension of selves and local village life, reveal a religious imaginary that helps stabilize identity, give permanence to relationship, and enable sociopolitical desire and purpose.

Waiting to Wait: Time, Religion and Politics in a Bosnian Landscape

Safet HadžiMuhammedović

University of Bristol

safet.hadzi@bristol.ac.uk

This paper unpacks the multiple codes of waiting in the Field of Gacko, a politically polarised landscape in the south-eastern Bosnian highlands. In the Field’s cosmology, the harvest festival of St Elijah’s Day marked a moment of condensed sociality. The ‘syncretic’ annual cycle amalgamated the Proto-Slavic pantheon, Christian saints and Muslim religiosity. Before the 1990s war, it was also actively ‘shared’ by Orthodox Christians, Muslims and Gurbeti Roma. As a gravitational force for the entire landscape, St Elijah’s Day directed and represented the structure of social relationships. As soon as one festival passed, the waiting for the next one would begin.

Such community-defining waiting gained in meaning after life in the Field was violently restructured. The ‘ethnic engineering’ that climaxed in the 1990s destroyed much of the
landscape and drove parts of its population into exile. For those who have returned, waiting for Elijah became a call for the kind of communal life that entails waiting. It was an orientation of the body and the landscape towards the reconstruction of social relations. They waited to wait the way they once did. In doing so, the Field’s residents constructed a chronotopic rift between the landscape of their past and the one steeped into nationalist constructions. The entangled and analytically useful waiting for the return of the ‘shared’ Elijah thus speaks about the intimacy of passing time, the temporal arrangements of the social, memory and consolidation of the homely, but also about time as a political resource and an investment into the future.

The Everyday lives of Muslim Youths in Vancouver B.C.

Michelle Hagman
Simon Fraser University
mhagman@sfu.ca

This research paper focuses on initiatives taken by Muslim youths in the Greater Vancouver Area to educate the non-Muslim community about Islam. The participants in this study are aware of the negative opinions towards Islam, which is why they organize these educational events (in particular Islam Awareness Week at Simon Fraser University and A Journey into Islam at the Az-Zahraa Mosque in Richmond B.C). Focusing on what it means to be a Muslim (practically and ideologically) in a Multicultural society, this paper explores the everyday lives and practices of Muslim youths and their identity construction. During the course of my research, which was based on participant observation and interviews with several members of organizational committees of events that “counter misconceptions about Islam,” it became apparent that questions about identity, gender, and everyday practice, but also on how multiculturalism (in Canada both a cultural tradition as well as policy) affects the everyday lives of the Muslim youths are part of their everyday reality. This research is based on participant observation and interviews with several members of organizational committees of events that “counter misconceptions about Islam”. Drawing on my ethnographic study, this paper will give an overview of the ethnographic results and compare these to literature both within a multicultural framework, and the everyday lives of Muslims who live in a secular society.

Archival Violence: An Ethnography of (Un)Archiving the Life and Death of the Enslaved Gender-Variant Muslim

Vanja Hamzić
SOAS, University of London
Member, 2016-2017, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ
vh1@soas.ac.uk, vhamzic@ias.edu

Abstract: The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Anglo-American archive of the trans-Atlantic slave trade has been described as an agonism (Kazanjian, 2016). On the one hand, as Saidiya
Hartman suggests, what little remains of the official records of the lifeworlds of the enslaved is akin to “a death sentence, a tomb, a display of the violated body” (Hartman, 2008) and their perusal—their coming to a ‘second life’ in academic studies—often constitutes an act of violence in its own right toward both the living and the dead. On the other hand, as this paper will argue, the absences and silences produced in the specifically Anglo-American science of archiving are often deliberate, and account for premeditated acts of oblivion and violent memory-making.

This paper critically interrogates archival violence through an ethnography of the records—and the lack thereof—of Muslim gender-variant slaves who were—or may have been—shipped from Africa to antebellum Louisiana. It accounts for the vestiges of their faith and timescales both before and after the horrors of the Middle Passage, as a novel meditation on both the archaeology and anthropology of time (cf. Gell, 2001).

**Cyclicity of Life-Death, Hope and Motion: Time Perceptions of Bektashis and Esoteric Meanings**

Rabia Harmanşah, Lafayette College
harmansr@lafayette.edu

This paper is an attempt to discuss the peculiar Bektashi perceptions of time, which nestle both linear and cyclical forms. Bektashism is generally considered to be one of the branches of ‘heterodox’ Islam in Turkey. According to one of my informants, “God decides the length of one’s life not by the number of days or years, but by the count of breath. Human-beings decide the length of their lives by the ways in which they use their breath which is given to them by God as a blessing.” This complexity is embedded in *menakibnames*: There is place, but no time in *menakibnames*; it is possible to see people from different centuries coexist in one story or travel long distances in a short time. By referring to the cyclicity of life and death (the idea of metempsychosis), the cyclicity of hope (the Mahdi belief and multiplicity of Mahdi figures), and the cyclicity of motion (*sema* ritual dance) in heterogenous Bektashi belief system, I will discuss how time occurs like a helical spring, ranging to eternity, rather than a closed circuit. This time perception prompts disregard of chronology and reveals esoteric meanings. In such a conceptualization of time, it is the motion that matters, not the strict relation between the cause and effect. This paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork I have conducted in Turkey at different times.

**Religion as a Chain of Memory and Education in Post-Socialist Societies: Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic**

Jakub Havlicek

Palacky University, Olomouc, Czech Republic
In her book “Religion as a Chain of Memory”, Danièle Hervieu-Léger proposes the concept of religion as a “chain of memory”, as a shared tradition based on religious phenomena. From this point of view, religious tradition becomes an important tool of creating collective identities – not only confessional identities in terms of church affiliation, but also ethnic and national identities. It helps making the individuals the members of a society and it also allows keeping the sense of historical continuity within society. Shared religious memory allows to interpret the past, understand the present and plan the future, and therefore it acts as an important device of the politics of time. The presentation is based on describing and analyzing the role of religion as a “chain of memory” in the Czech Republic, Slovakia (Czechoslovakia until 1993) and Poland from a comparative perspective. What are the position and the roles of religious traditions in the three societies? What is the role of religious memory in the process of producing national history narratives in the three societies? How is “religious memory” used in nation-building process in the three societies? The presentation focuses on how religious traditions are applied in the process of teaching history (“national history”) in the three countries after the fall of the Communist regimes in 1989 up to the present day.

“In Pay Careful Attention to the Time”: Synchronized Prayer in an Evangelical Women’s Movement

Ingie Hovland
University of Georgia
ingiehovland@gmail.com

In early-twentieth-century Norway there was a growing evangelical women’s movement that worked for gender equality within Christian organizations. One of the touchstones they chose was “the work of prayer,” which took several forms. In this paper I wish to consider one of their ritualized activities: they arranged for prayer to be carried out at the same time by evangelical women in Norway and Norwegian female missionaries across the globe. What did this synchronized prayer mean to them? I will consider various interpretations, including the possibility that they were working against a Northern European background in which femininity was traditionally associated with space, while masculinity was associated with (the agency of) history and time, and that temporally marked prayer was a way for these Christian women to appropriate time.

Improvising Islam: Muslims and the Secular Liberal Encounter

Nur Amali Ibrahim
Indiana University, Bloomington
nai@indiana.edu
The fall of President Suharto’s authoritarian regime in 1998 brought along free and fair elections, the push for transparency and anti-corruption, and neoliberal economic reforms to Indonesia. During this time, hybrid religious practices began to emerge among Indonesian Muslims: for example, accounting books typically associated with the business world were adopted for purposes of tracking pious rituals, while the works of liberal philosophers like Locke, Hume, Kant, and Hegel began to inform the exegesis of the Islamic holy scriptures. These hybrid religious practices are a result of religious improvisation, the imaginative project geared towards exploring new and novel ways to be pious following the expansion of secular liberal ideals in the age of Indonesian democracy. This paper uses “improvisation” as a heuristic to examine how Muslims create a habitable life in the context of the continuing hegemony of the west. In dominant discourse, Islam is often portrayed as standing outside of secular liberal ideals, making it easier for the U.S. to bring Muslim lands within the close range of our weapons. This paper’s focus on the improvised, everyday, and situational aspects of Islam speaks against ongoing efforts to reduce Islam to an abstraction in order to challenge the comfort that we take in “our” distance from “them.”

Perpetually Born Again: Baptism and the Affective Politics of Joyful Encounter

Jessica Johnson  
University of Washington  
trystero@uw.edu

At the multisited megachurch formerly called Mars Hill co-founded by Pastor Mark Driscoll in Seattle, baptisms were performed in public parks, before sermons, and in large-scale productions on Easter. As the church multiplied its facilities and expanded its online presence, baptisms were marketed in music videos of MTV-quality uploaded to YouTube as signs of its blessings and success. Metrics publicly published in annual reports numerically broke down baptisms per facility alongside tithing amounts, offering empirical evidence of God’s hand in Mars Hill’s mission to convert unbelievers, plant churches and train disciples. Such statistics also fostered competition among facilities for new Christians and sacrificial giving, while encouraging donations from local congregants and remote audiences. Meanwhile, narratives performed onstage and online suggested that the majority of those baptized at Mars Hill were not uninitiated in their belief or faith, but rather desired to be born again (again). This paper examines the spiritual affects and political effects of a socially and aesthetically promoted process of perpetually becoming born again in support of Mars Hill’s ongoing growth and Driscoll’s rising celebrity. My investigation analyzes ethnographic and discursive evidence using affect theory that concerns the virality of joyful encounter, emotional entanglements of shame-interest, and Nietzsche’s concept of eternal return, to consider how the sacrament of baptism was exploited to excite affective labor that amplified Driscoll’s spiritual authority and trademark in the name the Body.
Jewish Marriage in Corporeal Time: The Rhythm and Rhyme of Niddah

Isobel Johnston
Arizona State University
ijohnst2@asu.edu

Several advocates of the religious Laws of Niddah, Jewish menstrual practices, observe that its practice creates a rhythm within time of sexual rest and sexual activity. This Niddah rhythm centers on observant women’s womb-based bleeding events, making this rhythm unique to each couple. While this rhythm is centered on the women’s body, the Niddah rhythm embodies observant couples as they live within its ritualized practices. This couple-specific rhythm in time is credited with many effects: synchronizing hormonal levels and sex drives, attuning male partners to their women partners’ bodily rhythms, cultivating sexual and non-sexual relational skills, organizing the couple’s individual and shared activities, maintaining sense of self within couple-hood, the list goes on. These impacts reflect an embodied practice that creates a synchronization impacting the couple’s relationship on conscious and unconscious bodily, affective, and mental levels. We can understand how this ritual generates these impacts, by situating Niddah’s ritual practices within the intersection of Humphrey and Laidlaw’s archetypal action and Thomas Csordas’s concepts of the co-embodiment of religious ritual, health, and well-being. This analysis will reveal the innate capacity of Niddah ritual practice to harmonize a couple’s body, heart, and mind, thereby framing Jewish marriage as life practice centered in corporeal time.

Politics of Everyday Life: How Young Pentecostal Believers Have Taken Political Stands Based on their Religious Affiliation in Brazilian Universities

Cleonardo Mauricio Junior
Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil
cleonardobarros@gmail.com

Clashes pitting leaders of Pentecostal churches or parliamentarians linked to these churches against social movements that demand sexual and reproductive rights have been recurrent in the contemporary Brazilian political landscape.

One of the most vocal opponents of LGBT and feminist demands is the televangelist and pastor of a megachurch, Silas Malafaia. In one of the clashes that has larger repercussions - and that took place in a public session of the Chamber of Deputies - Malafaia defended the promulgation of a law which restricted the concept of the family to heterosexual couples and their offspring, and debated against the President of the National Association of LGBTs.

In addition to leading the fight against what he calls "moral trash" at the national level, Pastor Silas Malafaia has been urging evangelicals to take a stand against liberal ideas. Repeating that believers should not shut up, since they are citizens, he attempts to link conservative political activism to the construction of the Pentecostal person.
But how have ordinary believers reacted to this exhortation? How have they been presenting their political positions in everyday relationships?

Drawing on my fieldwork among the youth of Malafaia’s megachurch, I intend to show how they have faced this challenge by taking a stand on issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage at their universities. My aim is to show how the tension between the ethics of political citizenship and the Pentecostal ethics of Christian witnessing has been interwoven in building the public persona of these young people.

**If Not Now: Politicizing Religious Time**

Moshe Kornfeld

Washington University in St. Louis

mkornfeld@gmail.com

In response to the 2014 Gaza War, a loosely affiliated group of millennial activists unified under the banner #IfNotNow. Since that time, the group has continued to organize anti-occupation actions and has recently taken a leading role in Jewish resistance to the Trump administration. "If Not Now" refers to a rabbinic text, a famous passage from *Ethics of our Fathers*, that the group uses to establish a religious mandate for their anti-occupation and anti-Trump activism. Drawing on research conducted on a 2017 #IfNotNow protest action, this paper situates the group’s religiously infused rhetoric in relation to the history of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Jewish social activism. In the early twentieth century, Old Left Jewish activists tended to define themselves in opposition to religion, asserting a progressive secularism. A counter-trend defined by an embrace of religious texts and practices as sources of moral authority for progressive activism began in the late 1960s and has intensified in the first decades of the twenty-first century. #IfNotNow thus asserts a religiously infused moral authority in competition with other moral and religious claims. Paying particular attention to questions of time, I analyze youth activist claims in relation to other temporal claims including those based on end-times that are invoked by Christian and Jewish religious Zionists. Ultimately, I argue that these conceptions of religion and time should be viewed as anti-political political claims that seek to ground political claims within a higher authority.

"A New Paradigm": Technology and the Future of Korean Christianity

Heather Mellquist Lehto

University of California at Berkeley

heather.mellquist@gmail.com
In South Korea (as in North America), it is said we live in a “technological age,” but what implications does this have for religion? Particularly in contexts where this “technological age” connotes a presupposition of a secular social order, how do people understand their religious practices and communities relative to conceptions of the past, present, and future? Based on field research in Korean churches in Seoul, this paper will explore the temporality that developed through the “economic miracle” and rapid Christianization of late 20th Century South Korea. Departing from theoretical distinctions between “sacred” and “secular” time, I will discuss how the very definition of “religion” becomes bound up with a temporal framing of modern secularism. I follow ethnographically how Christians and church organizations, concerned that religion is becoming too associated with conceptions of the past, deploy technological artifacts and fashion an image of themselves as “technological” in order to position the Christian religion within the imagined technological present and future. Through such practices, Korean Christians both forge future-oriented subjectivities and seek to maintain a public image of Christians as subjects of the future. Balancing concepts of “tradition” and “change” theologically, this paper considers how this style of Christianity has played in Korean developmentalist and secularizing projects--projects which embrace a future-orientation required by certain market-driven activity.

One Ritual, Many Times: Religious Variations on Socialist Funeral in Urban China

Huwy-min Lucia Liu
Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
hmhmliu@ust.hk

When ordinary Han Chinese die in contemporary Shanghai, they are commemorated in “memorial meetings.” The main event of these meetings is a highly conventionalized speech by the deceased’s work unit representative focusing on the deceased’s work history and socialist ethics such as selfless, frugal, and enduring bitterness. Memorial meetings thus create a “socialist” time where everyone lives as if they were all model socialist citizens. Furthermore, Shanghai people today have created religious variations on this secular-socialist ritual. In this paper, I explain how memorial meetings create socialist times, how Shanghai people have appended religious times onto this socialist time, and what the co-existence of different perceptions of time in one single ritual may indicate.

My paper shows that the need for rehabilitation during the Cultural Revolution has made memorial meetings a particularly important field for defining whether someone is a proper person by showing people’s commitment to socialist time through externalized conventional acts. Moreover, Shanghai people today have created popular religious and Buddhist variations of memorial meetings by adding religious times before and/or after socialist time. Protestants, on the contrary, have attempted to use a new Christian time to encase and encompass the standard secular-socialist time. While all these religious variations on socialist ritual construct religious times in conjunction with the socialist time, Protestant’s attempt to alter the nature of the
“socialist” time itself has led to more frequent conflict in Protestant variations of memorial meetings.

**“Pretend to a Knowledge of Futurity”: Anti-Fortune-Telling Statutes and the Regulation of Religion**

Charles McCrary
Florida State University
charlesamccrary@gmail.com

In the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century United States, at least a few dozen people—mostly white Spiritualist women—were arrested under anti-fortune-telling statutes. These statutes, drawn from very old English anti-vagrancy law, often included the phrase “persons pretending to tell fortunes” or, sometimes, “pretending to a knowledge of futurity.” My paper analyzes a few court cases, from locales throughout the U.S., in which claimants appealed to their religious freedom rights in order to contest (unsuccessfully, in each case) their convictions. A key issue in the trials was whether or not a person can know the future, or, in other words, if there is any such thing as fortune telling or only pretending to tell fortunes.

With these brief examples in mind, the paper moves into a larger discussion of the anthropology of secularism, drawing from Talal Asad and others. I am interested in how secular states govern or manage religious (or quasi-religious, or “superstitious”) people and practices, and what that explains about the workings of the category religion in a modern secular world. This sort of anthropological investigation explores and critiques not only the intellectual genealogy of “religion” and secularism, but, more importantly, the stakes of their employment in the business of regulation. Whose practices are allowed and whose are banned? In these fortune telling cases, one of the central questions becomes, How do secular states evaluate and manage alternative religious conception of time?

**Kaqchikel (Maya) ajq’ija’: Ritual Specialists Counting the Days and Creating Time**

Judith M. Maxwell
Tulane University
maxwell@tulane.edu

Traditional Kaqchikel ritual specialists, ajq’ija’ serve their communities, organizing their ceremonies, healings, and consultations according to the 260-ritual calendar, consisting of 20 named days with 13 numeral coefficients. This calendar, the cholq’ij, provides a divinatory portal into the future as well as a channel of communication with deceased ancestors and guardian spirits. Ritual specialists ajq’ija’ choose dates and locations for their ceremonies based on careful consultation of the cholq’ij. Each client has a constellation of nine of the twenty days whose influences must be meshed with the energies of
the ceremonial day and place. The calendar guides communal as well as personal action. Not only did the Maya NOT predict that the world would end in December of 2012, but the aijq’ija’ actively worked to inaugurate the new era that was ushered in on the 21st. Every full Kaqchikel ceremony entails the (re-)creation of time (and space). While the cholaq’ij (known as tzolkin’ to epigraphers and Yucatecanists) was the only one of the four Classic Maya calendars to continue in use throughout the colonial period and the post-independence era (the solar year, ab’ (haab’ in Yucatecan/epigraphy) having given way to the Gregorian calendar brought by the Spanish, Mayan intellectuals are now studying epigraphy, learning the various “counts” and calendars shown in glyphic texts, and redeploying them in modern contexts, especially in publishing. As the Maya spirituality re-emerges after five centuries of repression, understandings of the Mayan calendars are being re-worked, standardized and adapted to aid the struggle for cultural rights.

A View of the Past: The 1957 Funeral of the Mogho Naba and its Relevance Today

Jesse Miller
Florida State University
jcm14b@my.fsu.edu

My paper takes a look at renowned ethnographer Jean Rouch’s film of the Mogho Naba’s funeral in what is now known as the country of Burkina Faso. The Mogho Naba was the emperor of his people, the Mossi, and his death tore a rift in the social fabric. This rift could only be mended by conducting a funeral fit for an emperor. As the Emperor of the Mossi, he also served as the central focus of ancestral sacrifice, the gift economy, and the Mossi Empire’s elaborate taxation system. My paper shows how the incident of the Mogho Naba’s death provides a lens to examine the economics of the Mossi. Thousands of Mossi poured into the capital of Ouagadougou bringing tribute, gifts, and sacrifice to ensure that their Emperor gained the esteemed status of a royal ancestor. Sixty years later, I argue in my paper that funerals are still at the center of economic activity in Burkina Faso. Families of the dead often accrue large amounts of debt in order to put on costly funerals, reflecting the Mossi’s appreciation for different types of wealth. In this case, it is wealth with all important ancestors who ensure the integrity of the Mossi social fabric and all activities, whether they be religious or economic, therein. Furthermore, I argue that Mossi funerals lie at the center of trans-national networks of exchange, with displaced Burkinabé returning from their lives in the diaspora to partake in funerals. This suggests that Mossi are more comfortable investing in relationships with ancestors than in a neo-liberal capitalist economy that is failing in Burkina Faso. In fact, I suspect that funerals are growing even more grand and elaborate as a response to a failing economy, because it provides the opportune way to invest in time tested and reliable ancestral relationships.

Time, Religious Moments, and the 1979 Revolution

Behrooz Moazami
Tense political developments often happen in waves. Why? One answer is certainly the connectedness of structural developments and their crises. The other is the interconnectedness of human actions in response to structural crisis and social needs. The conjunctions of human experiences, expectations and actions make certain moments more consequential than others. Hence, their impacts as waves. I call these actions or moments, “strategic”, because they often shape the trajectory of consecutive events.

How do we analyze these actions and ensuing moments? What does it take to classify certain historical developments as a moment, period or an age? What signals their beginning and hint of their demise? How does the connectedness of certain moments could make us blind to variations and details?

I will explore these issues by looking at the 1979 revolution in Iran often identified as a pivotal moment in the Islamization of political and social movements in the Middle East, representing the forceful return of politicized religion. I argue that this moment was an outcome of complex and long-term national, regional and global processes. Yet this moment, because of its inherent sectarian nature, bred oppression and divisiveness and provided the seeds of its own destruction. I argue that the opposition to Islamic rule in Iran since 1979 as well as the Arab Spring are the kernels of the unraveling of this Islamic moment, despite their failures. Religious discourse in its illiberal form is in retreat in the region.

**The Time of Spirits**

John A. Napora

University of South Florida

jnapora@usf.edu

Anthropologists have long noted people’s relationships with spirits of deceased ancestors in societies across the globe. In this paper I will describe a working class American family’s dreams and experiences with recently deceased family members in the Rust Belt of the United States which occurred over more than a two year time period. I will show that these experiences transcended time as ordinarily understood as they moved those who had them both into the past and into the future, as if spirits are not constrained by the limits of time as we know them. The paper will contribute to a growing ontological turn in anthropology which sees people’s experiences with spirits as being part of the reality of the human condition.

**The Cross on the Courtroom Wall: Trials of State Violence, Indigeneity, and Argentina**
Between 1976-1983, a military government ruled Argentina, systematically torturing and murdering suspected political dissidents. Argentina has been going through deep political and social transformations ever since, and in 2003, newly-elected president Nestor Kirchner made trials against the military a state policy. These trials proceed under the argument that the international law frames the military’s violence as a crime against humanity, and they are a hallmark of Argentina’s current political moment, with over 500 convictions and a handful of acquittals to date, with hundreds of trials yet to be completed. In this paper, based on years of ongoing ethnographic research on trials criminalizing human rights violations, my concern is two-fold: I examine the logic of being a good Christian with which judges have adjudicated innocence and responsibility and issued sentences, and I trace the links between Argentina’s 1876 decimation of its indigenous populations and current judicial efforts to use trials to establish a new social contract and national order. Judges who advocate criminalizing committed by the armed forces often maintain blindspots towards recognizing and condemning violence committed against indigenous people in the name of making the nation more Christian and European. This idea—of questioning the concept of closure—is the theme the talk takes up, as I describe a case study of judges who refuse a victim’s request to take down the cross from a courtroom wall in a case of state torture.

“God Tests Us with Both Hardship and Ease”: Islamic Self-Help Education and Minoritarian Subjectivities in Contemporary Singapore

In Singapore, Islamic self-help classes that reference the Quran and Hadith (prophetic traditions) as well as self-help rhetoric have flourished over the past decade. Taught by Al-Azhar returnees, the classes purport to equip university-educated, minoritized Malay Muslims with critical skills such as applying new understandings of Islam to everyday life in Singapore. To impart these skills, the teachers utilize social media extensively within the classroom and as a marketing tool. The vast majority of students are fashionable young women constantly documenting their participation on Facebook and Instagram. In response to the state’s construction of minoritized ethnic Malays as lacking in progressive ethos and burdened with poverty and unemployment, the teachers promote Islamic self-improvement strategies, aiming to alter Muslims’ habits of the heart toward success. In so doing, they present the ideal Muslim subjectivity as the ability to orientate one’s self toward the future by engaging in neoliberal projects of self-transformation in the present, while relying on divine intervention in withstanding broader difficulties. In this paper, I explore the following questions: How do the self-help teachers present the intersection
between time and faith in constructing ideal Muslim subjectivities? Specifically, how do the teachers utilize affective pedagogies to cultivate sentiments such as hope, patience and the belief in recompense in contending with quotidian challenges? How do the teachers and students’ elision of structural inequalities inadvertently further the state’s governmentality of race and religion?

**Nostalgic Catholicism: The Temporal Politics of Presence in Paris**

Elayne Oliphant
New York University
eo45@nyu.edu

Often, in reflecting upon changes to religion in France, my Catholic Parisian interlocutors contrasted what they saw as the vanishing of their religion in the present with a history marked by a sense of clearer orientation. At times such repines were articulated to me explicitly. At others, they were more implicit, with remarks such as: “before, people knew what their roles were;” “before, people stayed married;” “before, church bells were central to French identity: you knew where you were in Paris by the sound of the bells.” I understand these laments as expressions of nostalgia. A number of theorists have demonstrated how pining for the past is firmly rooted in the politics of the present. I argue that through these expressions of nostalgia in France, the apparent decline of Catholicism allows it to become a site of desire. Rather than a dangerous intrusion upon public life – as Catholicism was imagined in anti-Clerical discourses in the early 20th century – the politics of nostalgia allow for new and invigorated expressions of Catholicism in the public sphere. The haunting of an imaginary past against which the present is always negatively compared means that Catholics are able to articulate a form of public expression denied to practitioners of other religions in France, especially Islam. In this paper, I provide an ethnographic study of the politics of nostalgic Catholicism in present-day Paris in order to reflect not only upon the privilege of Christianity in Europe, but the potential implications of perceived threats to that privilege so evident in popular xenophobic discourses today.

**Moving Spirits, Sarimbavy Mediums and the Transgenerational Sexual Socialities of Possession**

Seth Palmer
University of Toronto
seth.palmer@mail.utoronto.ca

This paper considers the peregrinations of *sarimbavy* (same-sex desiring and/or gender non-conforming, male-bodied) spirit mediums and *tromba* spirits to and from shrines in northwestern Madagascar. *Sarimbavy* mediums converge and socialize at *tromba* spirit shrines (*doany*) in the interior of the Betsiboka Valley and at the largest regional ritual gathering (*fanompoambe*) in the city of Mahajanga. Despite their shared sexual/gendered alterity, *sarimbavy* mediums are unlikely to articulate themselves as belonging to a bounded “community.” Nevertheless, mediumship in the lives of *sarimbavy*, especially in the northwest,
provides a space for transgenerational socio-sexual networking and mutual belonging, however tenuous. Based on 24 months of ethnographic fieldwork in a rural, riverine town and a regional, urban center, this paper draws from the life histories of three differently aged, urban and rural-residing sarimbavy spirit mediums. Older sarimbavy mediums regularly reproduced nostalgic narratives about self, nation, and mediumship while simultaneously articulating their present, temporally informed concerns with death, a theme that is represented in possession rituals themselves. Temporalities attached to the practice of possession are given added import given how sarimbavy are increasingly conceived of as timely subjects by public health HIV/AIDS prevention projects seeking out “MSM” and, relatedly, American-led efforts to support the Malagasy “LGBT” community. These “modern” and future-oriented social and medical projects converge with sarimbavy participation in the “traditional” realm of mediumship in novel and often uncanny ways. Finally, the paper asks what is queer about the temporality of tromba possession and of what cultural presumptions and assumptions are (Western) queer theories on haunted temporalities possessed?

Discovering Neo-orientalist Blind Spots in the Research about Jains Interactions with Muslim Emperors

Jain Pankaj

University of North Texas

pankajaindia@gmail.com

Although Islam and Jainism originated from different parts of the world and in different periods of time, they came in contact in the medieval period when Islam was spreading across Asia. In this paper, I am critiquing a 2013 PhD dissertation that focusses on various interactions of both these religions. After critiquing the purva paksha, I present my own research on this topic. The most obvious Islamic influence is in the repudiation of image worship by various sects of Jainism: Sthānakavāsī and Terāpantha groups in the Śvetāmbara sect and Tāranpantha group in the Digambara sect. Jain influence at the Mughal court of Akbar is an important chapter in Indian history. Akbar honored Hīravijaya Surī, the leader of the Śvetāmbara Tapagaccha group. His disciples and other monks also gained the respect of the Mughal emperors Jahangir, Shahjahan, and Aurangzeb. Moreover, Akbar prohibited animal slaughter near important Jain sites during the Paryuśana festival of Jains. Jahangir also issued decrees for the protection of Jain pilgrimage site Mount Śatrunjaya. Similarly, Aurangzeb recognized Jain proprietary rights over Śatrunjaya. I end the paper with a suggestion for a thorough investigation of original sources before precluding them by labeling them “Hindu nationalistic” or “orientalist.”
**A Dharmic Categorization for the “Religions” of India China, and Japan**

Jain Pankaj  
University of North Texas  
pankajaindia@gmail.com

Western categorization of Indian and Chinese cultures have resulted in misrepresentation and misunderstanding of these cultures for last several centuries. In this paper, I suggest an alternative categorization based on similarities of Asian cultures. The alternative category of Dharma can help shift the paradigm for researching and teaching of Asian cultures based on the differences between the two categories of "dharma" and "religion". Whereas “religion” is an exclusionary, separative, and conclusive category, “dharma” is a kaleidoscopic and multivalent category signifying much looser and flexible connotations. Instead of referring Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Shintoism as religions, as we do in teaching “World Religions” courses, this new approach suggests that we make use of “dharma” to research and teach Asian cultures, especially now that the word “dharma” has been added to the Oxford English dictionary. Just as yoga, karma, and guru are used in English without translation, dharma should also not be translated as religion.

**Rupture Routinized: Rites of Passage(s) as Model for Christian Conversion(s)**

Devaka Premawardhana  
Colorado College  
dpremawardhana@coloradocollege.edu

This paper, based on ethnographic work among the Makhuwa of Mozambique, explores parallels between religious conversions and initiation rituals. It focuses on the limits of temporal models in classic initiation studies. These tend to assume a linear sequencing of events: separation followed by liminality followed by aggregation. They also assume the liminal space to be undifferentiated and anti-structural—a space beyond time. The Makhuwa space of initiation, by contrast, is full of discontinuous and noncontiguous domains. Within it, spaces are bounded and borders are crossed. It is a site not of liminality but of liminalities, and Makhuwa rites of passage are better seen as rites of passages. Assuming that the dispositions cultivated in such rites extend beyond the ritual grounds, this carries consequences for how religions are experienced, particularly insofar as these come to be regarded as missionaries usually present them—as bounded and discrete. This explains why many who convert to Christianity, particularly to branches of Christianity characterized by discontinuous temporalities, appear not to experience
their conversion as a one-off event. For the Makhuwa, including for many Makhuwa Christians, rupture is routine—repeatable and, indeed, reversible.

The Role of the Spiritual Mass in Promoting Spiritual and Temporal Agency

Eugenia Rainey
Tulane University
erainey@tulane.edu

In this paper I explore how the ritual “work” of Spiritism can function to heal relationships over time. Spiritual masses in the La Regla de Ochá community, also known as Santería, are where attendees seek dialogue with the spirit world at large and, in specific contexts, with ancestors and deceased loved ones. Through the ritual of the spiritual mass, religious practitioners interact within a spatiotemporal dimension that promotes personal healing. The idea that death ends a life, but not a relationship is illustrative of the role of the Spiritual mass in the lives of La Regla de Ochá devotees. Through analytical foregrounding of the phenomenon of Spiritual masses given specifically to honor and support recently deceased loved ones, I will describe the landscape of this practice. Then through a specific analysis of a Spiritual mass held this past July in south Florida, I will explore how this religious ritual does the “work” of healing personal relationships, both spiritual and temporal, through both the demarcation of space, the exclusion and inclusion of different actors, and through promoting the agency of both the living and the dead.

Muslims’ Everyday Religious Life. News from the Moroccan Diaspora in Southern Europe

Roberta Ricucci
University of Torino
roberta.ricucci@unito.it

Within a multi-cultural, multi-religious, “wired” society, nowadays the use of the Internet for religious purposes has potentially important implications for inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations, policy making, and education. Furthermore, the internet has, over the past decade, provided a new platform for religious groups as a new approach and avenue for proclamation, communication and interaction, with both members and non-members of their faiths. The growing presence of Muslims in Europe stresses relations with “diversity”, especially in those areas where the incidence of migrants coming from Maghreb is higher and where there is an Arabic presence visible through ethnic shops, women wearing the chador and men wearing long robes. In these areas, the issues of control and safety have been on the agenda for many years. Nowadays, these issues are less evident thanks to several local policies aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue. On the other hand, according to Muslim organizations there is a common interest in presenting a “moderate Islam”. In this scenario, this paper will be focused on 1) How young Muslims live their religious everyday life and 2) Should the internet (and social networks in
particular) be a safe arena in contrast to cities, neighborhoods and groups where anti-Muslim feelings are in the air and break out frequently? Is online religious identity a good strategy for overcoming stereotyping in the real world? These issues will be discussed using 40 interviews with young people growing up in a Muslim family in Italy and Spain, carried out in 2015-16, divided equally by sex.

**Mounds, Bundles, and the Architecture of Memory: Native American Earthen Mounds and Townhouses in the American South**

Christopher B. Rodning
Tulane University
crodning@tulane.edu

The Cherokee people are one of many Native American groups of southeastern North America. Traditional Cherokee religious thought and practice emphasizes themes of balance, centering, and animacy. Distinct realms within Cherokee cosmology—sky, earth, and the underworld—are connected with each other by way of portals that have material referents in the built environment and the sacred geography of Cherokee towns in the southern Appalachians. Community structures known as townhouses were focal points and center places within Cherokee towns, they were settings for town councils and other community events, they housed the hearths in which sacred fires were kept, and they were architectural symbols of the spiritual vitality of towns themselves. The archaeology of Cherokee townhouses, and Cherokee oral traditions about the roles that townhouses played in the cultural landscape and sacred geography of Cherokee towns, illustrate the religious principles that guided the architectural layouts and architectural history of these structures, which were often associated with earthen mounds. Cycles of building and rebuilding townhouses and associated mounds demonstrate periodicity, perhaps on generational scales, and archaeological evidence of these architectural cycles shows that these structures made direct reference to past generations of towns and townhouses themselves. Townhouses and mounds created permanence within the Cherokee cultural landscape, and they also condensed the passage of time into discrete places and architectural spaces.

**Restless Ghosts and Karmic Time: Reflections on Temporality in Thai Buddhism**

By Rachelle M. Scott
University of Tennessee
rjacobs2@utk.edu

In Thailand, thousands of miles away from the Halloween aisles at grocery stores and historically distant from Celtic and Christian practices, Halloween is celebrated each year in the cosmopolitan capital of Bangkok and in the tourist cities of Chiang Mai and Phuket. Costume
parties abound at the popular nightclubs while foreign and domestic horror films dominate at the movie theatres. In Thailand, however,

Halloween does not represent a momentary rupture in time and space that allows the dead to visit the living; rather, most Thais believe that there is no permanent division between the land of the living and the land of the dead. The dead are always near and ever present, and they do not remain dead. They are reborn again. These births are conditioned by karma and bear the imprint of previous existences.

One’s rebirth as a ghost, for example, is as much of a story about the past as it is the present. This paper will examine how Thai ghost stories reflect dual temporalities, as they simultaneously tell tales of past karmic wrongdoings and current states of woe.

“The Road Back to Nature”: Reversing Secular Temporalities in Aspiration for Chronic Illness Empowerment through Nature Cure (Prakriti Jeevanam) Therapy in Post-Development Kerala, south India

Victoria Sheldon
University of Toronto
v.sheldon@mail.utoronto.ca

While tourist companies celebrate Kerala as “God’s Own Country”, citizens are increasingly suspicious of “fast” modern lifestyle trends in this lush south Indian state. With India’s 1990s expansion of markets, Kerala’s rising middle-class entered a “health crisis”: chronic “lifestyle” diseases rapidly increased alongside the decay of its once-celebrated public health infrastructures. In response, ‘Nature Cure’ (prakriti jeevanam) residential camps formed: activist-doctors “empower” citizens through a hybrid “Divine Science” that brings activist awareness to “Medical Mafia” pharmaceutical corruption. Based on 30 months of continuous fieldwork, the ethnography presented here examines the life stories and narratives of activist-healers who creatively reconstruct boundaries between ‘science’ and ‘religion’ in their reimaginations of health as ethical subjecthood, shaped by and shaping of both popular science and Sanskritic Hindu and Christian doctrine and practice.

In aspiration for both cure and moral transformation, participants engage in two levels of temporal reorientation. First, patients agentively “become their own doctor” by embodying the moral virtue of prakriti (natural): in contrast to “fast” Western biomedicine, they draw on Gandhian discourse and follow a divine science of ahimsa (non-violence), “yogic” raw food diet, and taking rest to allow their prana (vital energy) to “slowly” work upon the body. Second, this cure process signals a collective, nostalgic return to Kerala’s pre-Capitalist lifeways, emblemized through discourse on the pan-religious subaltern tribal ‘Adivasi.’ This merging of “Divine Science” and “Return to Nature” narratives serve as an ethical counterpoint and cure to ‘fast’ and ‘shallow’ lifestyles associated with secular consumerism, rapid urbanization and struggles for caste and class mobility.
Synchronizing Moments in the Alevi Miraçlama Ritual

Mark Soileau
Hacettepe University
mark.soileau@hacettepe.edu.tr

This paper will explore the ways the many temporalities of religio-cultural life are brought together in the performance of rituals among the Alevis, a minority religious community in Turkey. The main periodic communal ritual of the Alevis – the cem – brings together the individual personal temporalities of the congregants into a common ritual time and orders their individual actions in accordance with a ritual sequence. Within the overall liturgical sequence of the cem is a section known as miraçlama, consisting of a verse narrative of Muhammad’s ascension to the presence of God and his subsequent interaction with the mythical saints known as the Forty, sung with a cadenced musical accompaniment, and accentuated with bodily gestures that simulate actions referenced in the narrative, culminating in the performance of the semah dance. As this ritual sequence is enacted, mythical, narrative, musical, and somatic temporalities coincide – or are synchronized – and their intersections are highlighted especially at particular moments in the sequence, which will be analyzed here.

Finally, observations will be made on the temporal ramifications of the migration of the Alevis, their culture, and the miraçlama into the modern era – such as when the cem takes place in diverse urban environments and is filmed, and the miraçlama poetic-musical form is recorded separately and reproduced for mass consumption – and on whether and in what moments this historical temporality might also be said to be synchronized.

Listen, the Time is Coming, Fill Your Ears with the Sunna! Women Listening to Sermon in Niamey

Abdoulaye Sounaye
Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Germany

Abdoulaye.Sounaye@zmo.de

This paper discusses the way in which listening to sermon is perceived not only as a learning experience (kara ilimi), but also as an aesthetic moment. It focuses on the lived experiences of young people who have engaged in the popularization of the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad (sunnance), an act many equate to a religious obligation. The paper analyzes how in salafi context, youth mobilize listening and hearing as instances of religious experience. Aesthetic may not be viewed as epistemic, but in this case, young Muslims clearly make a connection between the cognitive and the bodily experiences as they seek to make the self available to the Sunna. How knowledge is lived and could be theorized in this context is a question that will be central to my discussion. I argue that in order to understand current appropriations of Salafism we need to go beyond its claims of rationality and of dismissing the body to pay a particular attention to the
ways in which Salafi practices reintroduce other aesthetic modes. In that sense, Salafi epistemology produces its own aesthetic as it relies on the body and the beauty of the sermon, but also on the listening moment. The paper is based on ethnographic materials I collected in Niger, mainly in Maradi and Niamey, two cities where Salafism has been instrumental in reforming Muslim subjectivities, intellectual practices and epistemic horizons.

*Spirit Possession: Alienation’s Opposite?*

Amy Stambach

University of Wisconsin-Madison

aestambach@gmail.com

In this paper I rethink anthropologists' arguments about the end-of-days, with reference to Anna Tsing's considerations of the possibility of life in capitalist ruins. I draw on ethnographic accounts and historical records from Kilimanjaro, Tanzania to broaden the idea of "salvage accumulation" and to show that not all kinds of "pericapitalist" goods and services are salvaged for capitalist accumulation. Following presentation of historical and contemporary evidence regarding bush spirits and bank accounts, I propose greater attention to the manner in which non-material, non-species qualities animate salvaged economies through salvation mapped onto and re-made through both world religions and situational conditions.

*The New Old-Fashioned Way: The Temporality of Islamic Revival in Modern China*

Alexander Stewart

University of California, San Diego

a1stewart@ucsd.edu

Islamic movements that emphasize texts and practices attributed to the time of Muhammad are often simplistically labeled as stagnant or retrogressive in contrast to the predominantly linear and progressive senses of time in the West. This characterization is strongly influenced by the beliefs of violent radicals and conservative political parties who seek to recreate their vision of Muhammad’s political community, but few have examined the views of apolitical revivalists who focus on cultivating the subjectivity of the original Muslims through individually studying Quran and embodying practices recorded in Hadith. Many Hui Muslims in China’s Qinghai Province embrace revival movements like Salafi and Tabligh Jama’at movements as modern alternatives to the syncretic practices or violent separatism they associate with a lack of education and the feudal past of Chinese Islam. As non-Muslim Chinese look to transnational markets and consumption practices for economic opportunity and neoliberal modernity, Chinese Muslims embrace transnational Islamic movements that allow them to imagine themselves as part of a global community of individuals who strive to reconcile seventh-century subjective spirituality with the demands of living in a secular and multicultural modern world. Hui Islamic
revivalists see themselves as progressing from a state of isolation and religious atrophy under Maoist and late imperial rule by reviving historic expressions of piety and fusing them with neoliberal subjectivities. Instead of attempting to recreate the umma as a form of political organization, these revivalists envision the global umma as a loose network of autonomous individuals, each independently striving to apply the past to shape their futures.

**Textual Authority and Utopia: An Examination of the Pentateuchal Passover Traditions**

Jenna Stover-Kemp  
University of California, Berkeley  
jkemp@berkeley.edu

This paper examines the compound tradition of the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread in three pentateuchal passages within the Hebrew Bible. These rituals navigate the tensions and interconnections between time and space, boundary maintenance, and collective continuity. Using theorists such as Deleuze and Guattari, de Certeau, and Foucault, this paper examines each text in the context of the unification of tradition within the collection of Hebrew Bible texts. The fact that later readers construct a unity out of the multiplicity of the textual traditions reflects the reality of the rising authority of these texts (even within the biblical period). As this process continues, we can understand the text as space that accumulates time infinitely through the interpretation of an absolutely time-bound ritual.

**“Love Jihad, Inter-religious Marriage, and the Politics of Progress in Contemporary India”**

David Strohl  
Colby College  
djstrohl@colby.edu

Many Indians consider openness towards inter-caste and inter-religious marriage to be an index of the nation’s material and spiritual progress. Although such marriages remain relatively rare, two recent events have once again made them the subject of public scrutiny. Several state governments recently increased the cash awards they give to mixed-caste couples who decide to marry in a move to increase integration between Hindu castes and decrease discrimination. In a different vein, a recent moral panic about Muslim men marrying, and converting, Hindu women as part of a “love jihad” has provoked Hindu criticism and Muslim apologetics about the supposed backwardness and immorality of the Muslim community. What ideas about national belonging and progress animate these discrepant readings of inter-caste and inter-religious marriage? In this paper, I draw on media discourse and conversations with informants in Mumbai to answer these questions.

**Building Roads: Time and the Movement of Interpretation**

Letha Victor
Spirits, both living and dead, human and non-human, inhabit the roads of Acholi, northern Uganda. These roads were notorious spots for rebel ambushes, government troop movements, battles, atrocities, and displacement camps from 1986-2008. In this paper I introduce Lanyero, a lifelong traveller and one-time road worker, whose movements and encounters with spirits have prompted interpellations that creatively resist modernist and millennial teleologies and lay bare the undetermined nature of time. Here, the state narrative of economic and social progress (with its telos of modern development) is legible in the major roadworks in the region and in the discourse of post-war therapeutic interventions. Concurrently, the charismatic pentecostal maxim to break with the past and move toward the second coming has gained traction. The impetus to form new subjectivities is partially resultant from decades of political violence between the Government of Uganda and the rebel lukwena (“messengers”), who aspire to create a purified Acholi manyen (new Acholi) society. Yet the immediacy of history, embodied in human remains unearthed by road excavators and by disembodied spirits that demand acknowledgment by the living travellers of the road, threatens the emptiness of linear temporalities. For Lanyero, like others, the outcome of the future and the place of the past are less determined, but daily travel — both literal and figurative — must be undertaken nonetheless. The interpretation of spirit encounters, I argue, is a form of ethical action that has consequences in both time and space.

**The Time of the Ghost Hunters**

Ehler Voss  
University of Siegen  
ehler.voss@uni-siegen.de

Ghost Hunting has been becoming a very popular practice of ghost communication in the US and in many other parts of the world. With the help of a lot of technical media such as audio recorders, cameras, modified radios, as well as a variety of measuring devices, Ghost Hunters try to make something invisible visible, perceptible, and audible. In doing so, the Ghost Hunter’s practice is deeply based on the idea of objectivity and provability. This presentation is based on fieldwork among Ghost Hunters in California and focuses on different, but related aspects of time. On the one hand Ghost Hunters focus on the past through visiting historical landmarks and getting in contact with deceased people and thus they recall the past. On the other hand they simultaneously focus on the future through the idea of scientific progress that helps to proof the existence of ghostly beings. After examining the way Ghost Hunters deal with time, I will Interpret current Ghost Hunting practices against the background of 19th century mediumism. I will show similarities and differences and will present a perspective which oscillates between looking at the 19th century institutions as a pre-history of the current institutions such as Ghost Hunting, and looking at the current institutions as a post-history of the 19th century mediumism.
**Authenticity, Orthopraxis and Efficacy in New Orleans Vodou: The Cases of Ancestor Veneration and Spirit Possession**

Samuel Ward

Queen’s University, Belfast

sward21@qub.ac.uk

The Afro-American religion of Vodou integrates elements of Catholicism, Freemasonry, Spiritism, and West African traditional religion. However, despite being a distinctively syncretic religion, the New Orleans Vodou community places a heavy emphasis on orthopraxis: most innovations are viewed with suspicion, incorrectly performed initiations lead to the shunning of the initiate, and a frequent interrogation of ritual practice is conducted, to ensure that there is as little deviation from the inherited tradition.

While this might at first strike one as a desire for “authenticity”, reifying a cultural practice and its history, this is contradicted by the innovations that Vodouisant (Vodou practitioners) are willing to make, such as the rejection of animal sacrifice, and the reciting of the Jewish Kaddish at festivals for the dead. This paper examines why certain practices and beliefs are rejected, and others wholeheartedly embraced. It will argue that this juxtaposition is internally coherent if Vodou dedication to orthopraxis is understood not as an attachment to “authenticity”, but to efficacy of the ritual structure: its ability to bring about a liminal state, in which linear time loses significance, the dead may be interacted with, not simply as ghosts, but as immanent persons, and the Vodouisant may converse with spirits that exist outside of time and space. This argument will be made by examining the ritual forms of ancestor veneration and spirit possession, based on fieldwork currently being conducted by the researcher in Louisiana.

**“Religious” Time and National Renewal: The Miraculous Inauguration of Donald J. Trump**

C. Travis Webb

Claremont Graduate University

C.Travis.Webb@cgu.edu

In *Imagined Communities* (1991) Benedict Anderson argues that one of the key differences between the modern, secular world and the ancient, religious world is their respective formulations of time. The religious world, according to Anderson, relies on an essentially “vertical” conception of time, while the secular world, and its most potent manifestation the nation state, relies on a “horizontal” conception of time. “What has come to take the place of the mediaeval conception of simultaneity-along-time is... an idea of ‘homogenous, empty time,’ in which simultaneity is, as it were, transverse, cross-time, marked not by prefiguring and fulfillment, but by temporal coincidence, and measure by clock and calendar” (24-25). Anderson’s distinction between horizontal and vertical time is a key linkage in his argument for the modern emergence of the secular nation.
Departing from Anderson, and following contemporary theorists, such as the sociologist Shmuel Eisenstadt and the historian Azar Gat—who argue that the nation-state is not an exclusively modern phenomenon—I contend that horizontal time is not an emergent property of the printing press and the radio, but a social strategy that has bound trans-local supra-kin communities since before the common era. Moreover, the vertical conception of time Anderson (and Benjamin) associate with the “religious” frame is present in the most “ secular” of ceremonies, such as the 2017 inauguration of Donald J. Trump. I present a close reading of his inaugural address, the ceremony, and subsequent commentary to support my thesis.

“Time from Eternity to Eternity”: Space Exploration and the Astronaut Experience of God’s Worldview
Deana L. Weibel
weibeld@gvsu.edu
Grand Valley State University

Joshua Ambrosius
University of Dayton

Political scientist Joshua Ambrosius’ research (2015, 2016) reveals that among the different religious groups present in the United States, evangelical Christians tend to be the least supportive of U.S. space policy. Ambrosius also demonstrates that evangelical expectations for space exploration are lower than those for other religious groups. He finds, for instance, that American evangelicals believe Jesus Christ’s return is more likely to happen in the next 40 years than human astronauts landing on Mars. Ethnographic research and biographical writings, however, such as Deana Weibel’s interview with an American astronaut she calls "Tom Calvin" (a self-described evangelical Christian) indicate that many American astronauts not only identify as evangelical Christians, but see space exploration as wholly compatible with and affirming of their religious beliefs. These astronauts describe space travel as a way to better experience God’s creation and even as a path to understanding time and space themselves from God’s perspective. This paper will explore the distinction between general evangelical Christian thought about space exploration and the experience of space travel as a religious act as described by evangelical astronauts, with particular focus on ideas about the future and time itself.

Time and Transformation in Awacaipu’s Religion
James Andrew Whitaker
Tulane University
jwhitake@tulane.edu

During his travels in South America in the 1860s, Carl Appun was told of an Arekuna shaman named Awacaipu who was said to have gathered almost 1,000 Amerindians together during the 1840s to form a settlement called Beckeranta – meaning “Land of the White(s)” – near Mount
Roraima in the border zones of modern-day Guyana, Venezuela, and Brazil. Awacaipu formed a religious group around himself at this settlement. After weeks of singing, dancing, and the drinking of cassava beer, Awacaipu led his followers in a three night episode of mass killing with promises that those slain by their coreligionists would be resurrected and transformed into “whites” during the next full moon. This paper will examine the roots of this short-lived religion in missionary teachings and Amerindian beliefs and will examine the impact of both on indigenous notions of time and transformation. More specifically, with an emphasis on the theoretical framework of Amerindian perspectivism, this paper will describe how indigenous notions of bodily transformation and circular time were combined with Christian notions of bodily resurrection and linear time.

**Purity and the Atom: Cultural Scripts of Purity and Taboo and the Link between Japan’s Outcasts, Traditional and Modern**

Greg Wright  
University of Texas  
gregoryhwright@gmail.com

In Japanese Shintō, *kegare* is the inherent impurity that comes from death, contrary to the pureness of life. For much of Japan’s written history, *kegare* and similar concepts have used to separate the living and the dead, as well as allowing for justification for class segregation and the creation and enforcement of Japan’s primary outcast, the *burakumin*, those who handle dead bodies, executions, and butcher animals. With the advent of Japanese modernization, laws passed in the 1870s made Shintō the state religion and subject to the law, which prevented it from contradicting Imperial decrees that all persons were equal, eliminating outcasts. How, then, has *kegare* survived well into the modern era, and how is it defined? With the terminology surrounding the survivors of the atomic bombs in Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant disaster often referencing the impurity of those involved, how does this correlate with *kegare* and ancient concepts of purity and taboo? What is the purpose of purity in Japanese society, and has that purpose changed over Japan’s long history?

**Facebook Shrines: Blurring of the Secular and Sacred in the time of Social Media**

Sydney Yeager  
Southern Methodist University  
sydnemyeager@gmail.com

Many in the 21st century live a good portion of their lives in digital space, connected to people around the globe. Through emergent technological practices, social media prayer requests and digital memorials all blur the line between the secular and sacred. The instant and
ephemeral nature of Social Media plays into users’ concept of time particularly in relation to their social lives, yet the media produced has permanence. Digital spaces develop unique ritual behaviors, synchronizing physical cultural practices from across the globe.

In moments of crisis, people turn to their religious and cultural values for answers. Prayer requests now find their way into social media and are particularly prominent on Facebook feeds of users in the Southern United States. Mourning practices have also transitioned onto the digital landscape. When Facebook users die, their existing Facebook accounts live on, allowing mourners to share their grief publicly with their extended network. Memorialization on Facebook shares many similarities with ancestral and spontaneous shrines; this inspired my term "Facebook Shrines." While there is a range of responses offline to such digital prayer requests and Facebook memorials, the overwhelming tendency is for online comments to be positive and encouraging. Users who feel uncomfortable or generally dislike Facebook Shrines or digital prayer requests primarily avoid the content rather than responding negatively to it. This silence demonstrates a unique degree of respect in this digital age, creating a sacred space in a secular digital medium usually reserved for sharing mundane and trivial content.

Creating Antagonists, Constructing Identity: Islamic Movements and Recruitment in Pakistan

Meryem Zaman
City University of New York - BMCC
meryemz@gmail.com

Islamic movements in Pakistan, ranging from the jihadist to the political to the educational, are becoming increasingly visible and are rapidly recruiting new members. Urban Pakistanis consider these movements contentious, partly because upon joining, members begin aggressively proselytizing to their friends and families, exhorting them to change parts of their previously unremarked everyday lives. Reforms promoted by movements include the reinstitution of gender segregation and veiling, the adoption of local shalwar kameeze by both men and women, and a rejection of music and other common forms of Pakistani sociability. Pakistani Islamic movements promote these radical changes by drawing on two distinct pasts to construct images of an embattled Islam which requires defense by their recruits; a pre-colonial past, in which Islam in the Indian subcontinent was adulterated through its interaction with Hinduism, and the colonial past in which Islam was tainted through its interaction with British laws. They counterpose these with the “pure” Islam recovered from the prophetic past which they claim to promote. The collapsing of these periods allows Pakistani Islamic movements to delineate an easily recognizable frontier of enemies, including Hinduism and the threat of Indian media, the Quranic “Yahud” and “Nasara” (Jews and Christians), and the hegemonic West. This paper explores the ways in which Pakistani Islamic movements across a wide ideological spectrum collapse time and draw on historical antagonists to recruit and motivate new
members. I argue that the wide-spread recognizibility of these antagonists helps explain the growing popularity of Islamic movements in Pakistan.

_Tehran’s Holy Defense Museum: War as “Glorious Time”_

Mahshid Zandi
Arizona State University
mzandi@asu.edu

Tehran’s Holy Defense Museum (HDM) was opened to public in 2012, almost 23 years after the end of the war between Iraq and Iran. Although commemoration of war martyrs is not unique to the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranian government has made its polities of commemorating unique to itself by rewriting the historical Battle of Karbala into the Iraq-Iran war. Karbala and the other battles of early Islam were encrypted into the Iran-Iraq war so much so that the war was gradually renamed to the “holy defense”. Unlike war museums that display the worst that has ever happened, HDM exhibits years of war as a glorious past, a national heritage to be preserved and transmitted to the new generation, a nostalgia to be recalled at times of hardships and isolation, and most important of all a truth to be appropriated for the contemporary political agenda of the state and its highly sensitive geopolitical position towards the crisis of ISIS in Iraq and Syria. In this sense, the war fronts serve as an Exhibitionary Complex, “serving short-term immediate exigencies” of the state. This paper argues that the HDM operates a 1 space for double mediation between power and religion, by mediating between the past and future. The HDM promotes Shia collective identity by rescripting it into the contemporary history of Iraq-Iran war and revolution and transcends the future of nation-state as “righteous” in light of the collective memory of Karbala.