

**‘Politics of Religious Knowledge and Ignorance’**  
**Society for the Anthropology of Religion (SAR) Conference, Victoria College,**  
**University of Toronto, May 21-23, 2019**

**May 21**

**9:00-10:45am ~ VC 206**

**Gender, Religion, and Secularity**

**Chair:** Jennifer A. Selby (Memorial University of Newfoundland)

- Jennifer A. Selby (Memorial University of Newfoundland): Tracing Secular Sensibilities on Postcolonial Bodies: Transnational Muslim Marriage in France
- Ali M. Kassem (University of Sussex): Embodied Pedagogic Exercises: Coloniality and the Muslim Hijab in Lebanon
- Heather Munro (Durham University): Religious Knowledge as a Tool for *Haredi* Women’s Agency
- Isaac Friesen (University of Toronto): Religious Authority and Secularism in the Vernacular in Provincial Egypt

**9:00-10:45am ~ VC 211**

**Entangled Agencies: Ethical and Legal Perspectives on Indigenous Religious Knowledge of Territory**

**Organizers/Chairs:** Raphael Preux (Université de Montréal) and Émile Duchesne (Université de Montréal)

- Carole Delamour (Centre interuniversitaire d’études et de recherches autochtones): "Knowledge-power": Rethinking Power in Light of the Relational Skills of the Innuatsh of Mashteuiatsh
- Robert Crépeau (Université de Montréal): “We are the Masters of the Forest”: Kaingang Religious Knowledge in Perspective
- Raphaël Preux (Université de Montréal): From Secrecy to History. Achuar Politics and Epistemology of Visionary Knowledge
- Émile Duchesne (Université de Montréal): Territory as Value: Producing Value and Persons Among the Innu of the American North-east

**9:00-10:45am ~ VC 212**

**Knowledge, texts, and interpretations**

**Chair:** Kalpesh Bhatt (University of Toronto)

- Kalpesh Bhatt (University of Toronto): Politics of Interpretation: The Concept of Equanimity in the *Bhagavad Gita*
- Christina E. Pasqua (University of Toronto): Bible Comics, “Little Paper Missionaries” that Redraw the Boundaries of the “Real”
- E. Frances King (University of California, San Diego): Mail Order Missions: Episcopalians, Magazines and New Evangelism
- Candace Lukasik (University of California, Berkeley): Knowing Ethos: Transnational Anxieties and Authority in Coptic Theological Education
- Nermeen Mouftah (Butler University): The Difference in What is Shared: Muslims and Christians Mediating God’s Word in Post-Mubarak Egypt

**9:00-10:45am ~ VC 215**

**Author-Meets-Critics: A Discussion of Jon Bialecki’s *A Diagram for Fire: Miracles and Variation in an American Charismatic Movement***

**Organizer/Chair:** Courtney Handman (University of Texas at Austin)

- **Participants:** Webb Keane (University of Michigan), Andreas Bandak (University of Copenhagen), Matthew Engelke (Columbia University), Hillary Kaell (Concordia University), Girish Daswani (University of Toronto), Timothy Larsen (Wheaton College); Discussant: Jon Bialecki (University of Edinburgh)

#### 11:00-12:45pm ~ VC 206

##### **Belief and Ignorance in Religious Practice**

**Chair:** Nicholas R. Abrams (University of Toronto)

- Nicholas R. Abrams (University of Toronto): “You Wanna get Twoored?”: Ignorance of Evil and the Racial Politics of Witchcraft in KwaZulu-Natal
- Yahia Baiza (The Institute of Ismaili Studies): Religion, Scientific Reasoning, and Knowledge: A Critical Examination of Religious Knowledge and Its Internal Properties
- Guangtian Ha (Haverford College): The True *Murīd* Do Not Know: Ritual and Ignorance among China’s Jahriyya Sufis
- Anishka Gheewala Lohiya (London School of Economics): Krishna has Stolen the Butter! On Not-knowing the Playful World of Baby Krishna
- Khurshid Sana Khan (BRAC London): Madrasa-Based Religious Knowledge and Ignorance, Populism and Blasphemy Law in Pakistan: Untangling the Religio-Political Nexus

#### 11:00-12:45pm ~ VC 211

##### **Mentoring Session 1**

**Chairs:** Joel Robbins (Cambridge University) and N. Fadeke Castor (Texas A & M)

- This session is open to any graduate students.

#### 11:00-12:45pm ~ VC 212

##### **Sacred Mountains: Politics, Power and Revelation**

**Organizers/Chairs:** Jonathan Miles-Watson (Durham University) and Shayne A. P. Dahl (University of Toronto)

- Jonathan Miles-Watson (Durham University): From Mt Olympus to Mt Meru: Entangled Mountain Myths in Northwest India
- Jenny Butler (University College Cork): Identity Politics and Power Play at the ‘Holiest Mountain in Ireland’
- Maria Turek (University of Toronto): A Tibetan Sacred Mountain, Translocalized
- Young Hoon Oh (University of California, Riverside): Paradigm of Relativity: Sacred Peaks Climbed in Himalayan Mountaineering
- Shayne A. P. Dahl (University of Toronto): Alpine Affects and Mountain Politics in Northeastern Japan

#### 11:00-12:45pm ~ VC 215

##### **Ethics, Embodiment, and the Senses**

**Chair:** Josh Brahinsky (Stanford University)

- Josh Brahinsky (Stanford University): Letting Go: The Somatic and The Political in Evangelical Submission
- Bryan Clancy (Queens University Belfast): Corporation, Church, Family? The Ordinary Ethics of Knowledge Creation in Northern Ireland.
- Jacob A. Boss (Indiana University): The Steel Cocoon
- Connie Gagliardi (University of Toronto): “Knowing” and “Unknowing” the Mystery of Faith: Knowledge and Revelation in the Crafting of Iconography in the Holy Land
- Thomas Fearon (Goldsmiths, University of London): Between Worldly and Divine: Transformation and Embodied Knowledge in Anthropological Fieldwork

- Nicholas William Howe Bukowski (University of Toronto): Hot Heads and Soft Hearts: Knowledge, Sociality and Atmospheres in the British Columbia Christian Soccer League

**12:45-2pm ~ Alumni Hall  
Lunch**

**2:00-3:45pm ~ VC 206**

**Mystics, Spirits, and Their Institutions**

**Chair:** Paula Pryce (University of British Columbia)

- Paula Pryce (University of British Columbia): Knowing and 'Unknowing' as Charismatic Persuasion: Performance, Ambiguity, and Eroticism in American Contemplative Christianity
- Arun Chaudhuri (York University): The Electric Prince: Religion, Race, and the Esoteric Mysticism of A.K. Mozumdar
- Rodrigo Toniol (University of Campinas): Minutes of the Spirit: The World Health Organization and its Forms of Instituting Spirituality
- Meredith McLaughlin (Yale University): "Bureaucratic Miracles: Religious Knowledge in Encounters with the Indian State"
- Vlad Naumescu (Central European University): Unveiling the mystery: epistemologies of revelation in the Orthodox faith

**2:00-3:45pm ~ VC 211**

**Ritual as Knowledge-Making and Knowledge-Masking**

**Organizer/Chair:** Aniruddhan Vasudevan (University of Texas at Austin)

- Alex Kreger (University of Texas at Austin): Freights of Love: Knowledge Exchange and Ethical Publicity in the Staging of an Alevi Ritual
- Aniruddhan Vasudevan (University of Texas at Austin): To be the Goddess: Identity and Separation in Thirunangai transgender women's devotion to Angalamman
- David Strohl (Colby College): "Implicit Knowledges: Religious Authority and Secrecy in Mumbai's Ismaili Muslim Community"
- Krishantha Fedricks (University of Texas at Austin): Televangelist version of Nirvana: Production of Knowledge through Ritual Discourse and Media Technology

**2:00-3:45pm ~ VC 212**

**Making Requests and Making Time: Rethinking the Efficacy of Religious Knowledge**

**Organizers/Chairs:** Fred Klaitis (SUNY at Buffalo) and Yang Shen (Boston University)

- Fred Klaitis (SUNY at Buffalo): "Yes, No, or Wait – but Never Maybe": Asking and Listening to God in African American Pentecostal Churches
- Yang Shen (Boston University): The Efficacy of Framing Moments in Lottery Divination Performances in Chinese Temples
- Hanna Kim (Adelphi University): On the Containment of Religious Knowledge: A Case Study Involving an Earthquake, Survivor Requests, and a Transnational Hindu Community
- Sara Swenson (Syracuse University): Better Futures for the Dead: Upgrading Ghosts with Infrastructure in Southern Vietnam
- Gareth Fisher (Syracuse University): Re-signifying Time: Agency, Temporality, and Destiny among Buddhists in China
- Adeline Masquelier (Tulane University/Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies): Discussant

**2:00-3:45pm ~ VC 215**

**Oscillating Mediation: Tracing Religious Technologies from Erasure to Hyper-Presence**

**Organizers/Chairs:** Hillary Kaell (Concordia University) and James S. Bielo (Miami University)

- Maria José de Abreu (Columbia University): Outstanding Elasticity: Presencing Here-Else
- James S. Bielo (Miami University): Technology as Prosthesis at D.C.'s Museum of the Bible
- Hillary Kaell (Concordia University): Policing the Technologies of Global Intimacy
- Yasmin Moll (University of Michigan): Televised Tears: Sincerity and Artifice in the Egyptian Islamic Revival
- Sharday Mosurinjohn (Queen's University): Ontology, Agency, and "Misrepresentation" in Digital Games

**4:00-5:45pm ~ Chapel**

**Presidential Panel**

**Chair:** Simon Coleman (University of Toronto)

**6:00-7:15pm ~ Chapel**

**Presidential Lecture**

**Chair:** Simon Coleman (University of Toronto)

**7:15pm-9:15pm ~ Alumni Hall**

**Reception**

## **May 22**

**9:00-10:45pm ~ VC 206**

**Modern Revelations: Hidden Ethics & Politicized Revealing of Knowledge**

**Organizers/Chairs:** Chris Taylor (George Mason University) and Lauren Zwissler (Central Michigan University)

- Christopher Taylor (George Mason University): Hiding in Plain Sight: Islamic Charity and Ethical Obligations to Secrecy
- Elizabeth Crocker (American Association for the Advancement of Science): Gossip, Power, and Sacred Knowledge: Haitian Vodou and Negotiating Belonging in the Diaspora
- Eric Hoenes del Pinal (University of North Carolina at Charlotte): On Care for the *Tzuultaq'a*: The Ethical Obligations of Q'eqchi'-Maya Environmentalism
- Laurel Zwissler (Central Michigan University): 'If More People Knew': Revealing Hidden Connections in Christian Fair-Trade Discourses
- Kristin Norget (McGill University): Discussant

**9:00-10:45pm ~ VC 212**

**Roundtable Discussion**

**Rapid Religious Change: Why do Religious Beliefs/Knowledge at Times Change Very Quickly, and What Kinds of Societal Impacts do These Changes Have?**

**Organizer:** Derrick Lemons (University of Georgia); **Chair:** Simon Coleman (University of Toronto)

- Participants: Valentina Napolitano (University of Toronto), Joel Robbins (University of Cambridge), Ingie Hovland (University of Georgia), Hanna Kim (Adelphi University), Derrick Lemons (University of Georgia)

**9:00-10:45pm ~ VC 215**

**Encyclical: Circulation and/of Christian Knowledge**

**Organizer/Chair:** Heather Mellquist Lehto (University of Toronto)

- Heather Mellquist Lehto (University of Toronto): Holy Infrastructures: Networks of Communion and Conscripton
- Courtney Handman (University of Texas at Austin): Christian Locations: Radio Beacons and the Remote Mission Station
- Marc Lousteau (College of the Holy Cross): Hostings: A Transylvanian Pilgrimage Site and Its Rural to Urban Circulations
- Jason Price (IUPUI): The Encyclical Self in Born-Again Malawi

**11:00-12:45pm ~ VC 206**

**Land, Landscapes, and Environments in Religious Experience**

**Chair:** Ian Turner (University of Toronto)

- Ian Turner (University of Toronto): Facebook Farmers and Urban Entrepreneurs: The Politics of the Sacred in the Place-Making and Place-Claiming of the Kathmandu Valley
- Seth Schermerhorn (Hamilton College): The Politics and Poetics of O'dham Categories of Movement
- Roger Ivar Lohmann (Trent University): An Anthropological Theory of Haunting
- Adam Dunstan (University of North Texas): The Sacred and the Settler: Native American Sacred Landscapes and Ontological Hierarchy in Religious Freedom Law
- Judith Ellen Brunton (University of Toronto): Striving town: Aspiring and Knowing through Oil Work in Alberta
- Xiao Han (Université du Québec à Montréal): The Production of Pu'er Tea and the Reconstruction of Ethnic Identity in the Perspective of Folk Religion and Theravada Buddhism: A Case Study of the Bulang Ethnic Group in Mangjing Village (Yunnan Province, China)

**11:00-12:45pm ~ VC 212**

**Religion in the Making of Anthropological Knowledge**

**Chair:** Joseph Webster (Queen's University Belfast)

- Joseph Webster (Queen's University Belfast): Anthropology-as-Theology: Violent Endings and the Permanence of New Beginnings
- Pauline McKenzie Aucoin (University of Ottawa): On the Flighty, the Untrue, and the Emergent: Provisional Knowledge and Un-Truth Claims in the Anthropology of Religion
- Galen Watts (Queen's University/Cambridge University, 2019 Lent term): The Commensurability of Anthropology and Theology after the Ontological Turn
- Quincy J. Amoah (Princeton University): On Cucumbers and Oxen: Resolving the Problem of Substitution in Nilotic Sacrifice
- C. Travis Webb (CultureHum Foundation): Inventing the Invention of the Study of Religion
- Alana Sá Leitão Souza (University of Toronto): Anthropological Knowledge about Pentecostalism: A Case Study

**Geertz Prize Panel: A Discussion of N. Fadeke Castor's *Spiritual Citizenship: Transnational Pathways from Black Power to Ifá in Trinidad***

**Organizer/Chair:** Valentina Napolitana (University of Toronto)

- Participants: Valentina Napolitano (University of Toronto), Tamara J. Walker (University of Toronto), Elaine Pena (George Washington University), Brent Crosson (University of Texas at Austin); Discussant: Fadeke N. Castor (Texas A&M University)

**12:45-2:30pm**

**Lunch (not provided)**

**2:30-4:15pm ~ VC 206**

**Heterodoxies and Hermeneutics: The Politics of Knowledge in Esoteric and Occult Traditions**

**Organizer/Chair:** Omri Elisha (Queens College-CUNY)

- Jon Bialecki (University of Edinburgh): Resurrection, DNA, and the Quantum archeologists
- Omri Elisha (Queens College-CUNY): Astrological Knowledge and the Will to Be Aware
- Erin Yerby (Brown University): Spectres Emerge from the Body: Toward a Theory of Intense Figuration
- Paul Manning (Trent University): The Medium, the Message and the "Message Medium"
- Jordan Haug (University of California, San Diego): At the Tip of Satan's Tongue: Political Oratory and a Fantasia of Rumors in Papua New Guinea
- James Bielo (Miami University): Discussant

**2:30-4:15pm ~ VC 212**

**Experiences of Religious Authority**

**Chair:** Jean-Michel Landry (McGill University)

- Jean-Michel Landry (McGill University): The Shari'a and the Questions That Animate It
- Christa Mylin (SUNY Albany): Believing and Belonging: Finding Space to Belong in the American Mennonite Church
- David Belfon (University of Toronto): Because He Said So: Questions and Questioning in the Leavetaking Accounts of Formerly-Orthodox Jews in Toronto
- Hector Guazon (University of the Philippines): Politics of Initiation
- Rachelle M. Scott (University of Tennessee): To Know or Not to Know: Buddhist Epistemologies and Authority in Thailand

**2:30-4:15pm ~ VC 215**

**New Approaches to Religious Coexistence**

**Organizer/Chair:** John Dulin

- Esra Özyürek (London School of Economics): Muslim Engagements with the Memory of Jewish Holocaust in Germany
- Girish Daswani (University of Toronto): Contradiction and Inter-religious Coexistence in Contemporary Ghana
- Angie Heo (University of Chicago): Christian-Muslim Coexistence in Comparison
- Devaka Premawardhana (Emory University): Religious Boundaries and Boundary Crossings among the Makhuwa of Mozambique
- John Dulin (Utah Valley University): The Syncretic Hierarchies and Boundaried Symmetries of Muslim-Christian relations in Gondar, Ethiopia
- David Henig (Utrecht University): Fatwa as/against Tradition: Muslim Holy Sites and the Politics of Pluralism and Anti-pluralism in Bosnia-Herzegovina

**4:30-6:00PM ~ Chapel**

**Rappaport Lecture**

**Joel Robbins (Cambridge University)**

**6:00-7:00pm ~ VC 206**

**SAR Board Meeting**

**7:30-9:30pm ~ Off-Site**

**Ethnographic Films**

## **May 23**

**9:00-10:45am ~ VC 206**

### **Anthropologist Walks into an Archive: Writing Lived Religion from Ethnographic and Historical Sources**

**Organizers/Chairs:** Ingie Hovland (University of Georgia) and James S. Bielo (Miami University)

- James S. Bielo (Miami University): Scattered Archive, Forgotten Place: Tracing Promises of Presence at Kentucky's Holy Land
- Britt Halvorson (Colby College): Stricken: Disappearance and Ethical Legibility in Malagasy Church Archives
- Courtney Handman (University of Texas at Austin): Cargo cults and Communists: The Colonial Imagination of Secrecy in the Field and the Archive
- Ingie Hovland (University of Georgia): How Do Anthropologists read? Questions that Arise when Reading a Protestant Woman's Notes in an Archive
- Pamela E. Klassen (University of Toronto): Remediating the Archive

**9:00-10:45am ~ VC 211**

### **Mentoring Session 2**

**Chairs:** Michael Lambek (University of Toronto) and TBA

- This session is open to any graduate students.

**9:00-10:45am ~ VC 212**

### **Science, Religion, and Modes of (Secular) Knowledge-making**

**Chair:** Deana L. Weibel (Grand Valley State University)

- Deana L. Weibel (Grand Valley State University): "Something Beyond What We Understand": Shifting between Scientific and Religious Models of the Universe in Space Professionals' Conceptualizations of Outer Space
- Ehler Voss (University of Siegen): Who is Allowed to Fake? The Magic of Skepticism
- Andrew Walker-Cornetta (Princeton University): "Clouded by God's Hand: The Anthropology of Intellectual Disability in Mid-Twentieth Century American Catholicism"
- Theodora Sutton (University of Oxford): Dopamine Spirituality: Belief and Pseudo-Science in a New Age, 'Digital Detoxing' Community
- Irit Offer Stark (NYU School of Law): Knowledge and Ignorance as Regimes of Religious Power and Authority: The Case of Determining the Moment of Death in Jewish Law

**9:00-10:45am ~ VC 215**

### **Knowing and Ignoring in Pilgrimage (Part I)**

**Organizers/Chairs:** Simon Coleman (University of Toronto), John Eade (University of Roehampton/University of Toronto), and Evgenia Mesaritou (University of Cyprus, University of Toronto)

- Nadia Caidi (University of Toronto): Information Dissonance and Avoidance as part of the Pilgrim's Toolkit
- Mahshid Zandi (University of Toronto): "Welcome to Divinity College": Subjectification in Pilgrimage to the Iran-Iraq War Battlefields in Contemporary Iran
- John Eade (University of Roehampton/University of Toronto): How the Formal Separation of 'Sacred' and 'Secular Space' Limits Our Understanding of Pilgrimage: Material Connections at Lourdes, France
- Barbara Hazelton (University of Toronto): Gendered Pilgrimage Landscapes: The Great Female Adepts of Tibetan Buddhism and the Hidden Treasure Tradition
- TBA: Discussant

**11:00am-12:45pm ~ VC 206**

**Religious Knowledge across Boundaries of Difference**

**Chair:** Timothy Y. Loh (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

- Timothy Y. Loh (Massachusetts Institute of Technology): "Faith unites us": Discourses of Religion in a Jordanian Deaf School
- Abdul Majeed Ottakandathil (McGill University): The *Language* of Reform: Islamic Preachers' Encounter with Protestant Missionaries in South India
- Shlomo Guzman-Carmeli (Bar-Ilan University): Eating the Haredi Other: On Crossing Boundaries and Boundary Work in Culinary Encounters between Secular and Ultra-Orthodox Jews
- Justin Haruyama (University of California, Davis): Threatening Knowledges: Mandarin Language Acquisition by Zambian Jehovah's Witnesses and its Effects on Relations with Chinese Expatriates
- Sarina Annis (University of Toronto): Anthropology, Christianity, and a Vanishing Race on the Nass River
- Kirsten Wesselhoeft (Vassar College): More than Malcolm: US Islam as Religious and Racial Knowledge in French Muslim Communities

**11:00am-12:45pm ~ VC 211**

**'I Learned It from the Internet': Online Knowledge Consumption and Embodiment**

**Organizers/chairs:** Suzanne van Geuns (University of Toronto) and Saliha Chattoo (University of Toronto)

- Suzanne van Geuns (University of Toronto): Religious Instruction and Affiliate Links: Understanding Evangelical Women's Blogs as Infrastructures of Monetized Aspiration
- Saliha Chattoo (University of Toronto): Ethnography and the Internet: Online Spaces and the Creation of a Pentecostal Performance Microcosm
- Jeremy Cohen (McMaster University): How to Live Forever: Competing Discourses and Practices Within Radical Life-Extension Communities
- Zabeen Khamisa (University of Waterloo): Engaging the Sikh Digital Industry as an Instagram User and Researcher
- Jon Bialecki (University of Edinburgh): Discussant

**11:00am-12:45pm ~ VC 212**

**Religion, Politics, and Secular Order**

**Chair:** Catherine Wanner (Pennsylvania State University)

- Catherine Wanner (Pennsylvania State University): Vernacular Religion and Ways of Knowing in Ukraine
- Cleonardo Mauricio Junior (Federal University of Pernambuco): Talking religion or talking politics? Brazilian Pentecostalism and Ethical Self-constitution in Relation with Politics
- Mohamed Medhat (The American University in Cairo): Conflict and Resistance Over Islamic Tradition In Egyptian Courts: Religious Defamation Cases In Egypt As A Case Study
- Nicola Mooney (University of the Fraser Valley): "Knowing Sikhism through Praxis: The Union of Religious and Political in Langar"
- Nazlı Özkan (University of Arkansas): "Is Alevism a Sect, Culture, or Religion?" Embodied Knowledge and Religious Diversity in Turkey

**11:00am-12:45pm ~ VC 215**

**Knowing and Ignoring in Pilgrimage (Part II)**

**Organizers/Chairs:** Simon Coleman (University of Toronto), John Eade (University of Roehampton/University of Toronto), and Evgenia Mesaritou (University of Cyprus, University of Toronto)

- Nimrod Luz (Kinneret College on the Sea of Galilee): Materiality as an Agency of Knowledge: Competing Forms of Knowledge at the Tomb of Rachel in Tiberias

- Jackie Feldman (Ben Gurion University of the Negev): Reading, Touching, Walking: Paths of Knowledge on Holy Land Pilgrimages
- Alejandro I. Paz (University of Toronto): Walking the City of David: An Israeli Settler Theology of Land in Occupied East Jerusalem
- Evgenia Mesaritou (Marie Skłodowska-Curie IF, University of Cyprus, University of Toronto): Non 'Religious' Knowing and Ignoring in Pilgrimages to Sacred Sites: Greek Cypriot's 'Returns' to the Monastery of Apostolos Andreas
- TBA: Discussant