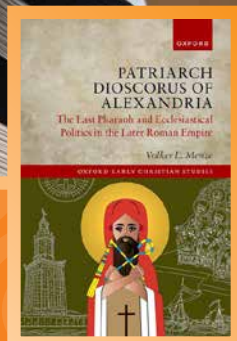
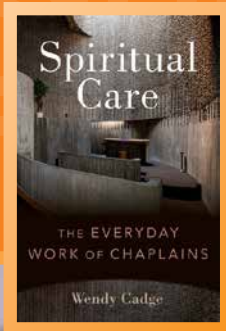




Annual Report 2022-2023

Princeton University Center for Culture, Society and Religion



Our Mission

Founded in 1999 as the Center for the Study of Religion, we expanded our mission in 2021 to become the Center for Culture, Society, and Religion at Princeton University. We remain committed to encouraging greater intellectual exchange and interdisciplinary scholarly studies about religion among faculty and students in the humanities and social sciences, while developing a new emphasis on raising the level of the public conversation on religion. The Center promotes scholarly research and teaching that examine religion comparatively and empirically in its diverse historical and contemporary manifestations. It aims to facilitate understanding of religion through a program of support for Princeton faculty to pursue teaching, research, and public event planning; awards for Princeton graduate students to complete dissertation research and learn to communicate their research through new media; funding for undergraduate students to write senior theses and junior papers; two interdisciplinary seminars; undergraduate courses; public lectures and conferences; and opportunities for visiting scholars to affiliate with the Center.

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Academics

The Center offers two weekly interdisciplinary seminars that bring together faculty, visiting scholars, and graduate student fellows to present and discuss research in progress. Papers are prepared and distributed in advance of each week’s meeting. Participants in these seminars develop a level of trust that allows them to share the challenges of writing and offer each other supportive yet critical feedback. CCSR also offers funding for Princeton faculty to develop and teach new Freshman Seminars and undergraduate courses. The sponsorship of new courses across the university curriculum is part of our commitment to scholarly research and teaching that examines religion theoretically, comparatively, and empirically in its diverse historical and contemporary manifestations.

Culture, Society and Religion Workshops

The Culture, Society and Religion Workshops are weekly interdisciplinary seminars exploring religion in its diverse historical, contemporary, philosophical, and literary manifestations. CCSR graduate student fellows, postdoctoral fellows, and affiliated scholars present work-in-progress (usually related to a chapter of their dissertation or book project) and receive constructive

criticism. Papers are prepared and distributed in advance of each week’s meeting. Participants in these seminars develop a level of trust that allows them to share the challenges of writing and offer each other supportive yet critical feedback. We also aim to encourage intellectual interchange with specialists outside one’s normal discipline or subfield.

This year the two sections of the workshop were led by CCSR Director and Professor of Religion Jonathan Gold and Associate Director Jenny Wiley Legath.



Left to right: Mateusz Falkowski, Babak Manouchehrifar, Kim Akano, Liya Xie, Kentaro Ide, Darren Yau, Jonathan Gold, Enoch Kuo, Suzanne van Geuns



Left to right: Hasan Hameed, Jenny Wiley Legath, Nikianna Dinenis, Lauren R. Kerby, Kelly Carlton, William Stell, Ipsita Dey, Min Tae Cha

Undergraduate Courses

Jonathan Gribetz, Near Eastern Studies and Judaic Studies

FRS 145: Jerusalem: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Jerusalem is considered a holy city to three faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In this course, students learned the history of Jerusalem from its founding in pre-biblical times until the present. Over the course of the semester, we asked: What makes space sacred and how does a city become holy? What has been at stake--religiously, theologically, politically, nationally--in the many battles over Jerusalem? What is the relationship between Jerusalem as it was and Jerusalem as it was and is imagined? Students wrote weekly reflection papers, an essay on a Jerusalem-related material object from the University’s collections, and a final project proposing a peace plan for contemporary Jerusalem.

Dan-el Padilla Peralta, Classics

CLA 422/HUM 422/REL 422: Roman Religion: Sources and Methods

What was/is Roman religion? Our main focus in this course was the nature, variety, and geographic range of the source material for religious practice in the Mediterranean world of the Roman Republic and Empire (6th c. BCE-5th c. CE). We examined how, and with what repercussions, Roman religion set the terms for and changed in response to Rome’s expansion into a Mediterranean empire. Finally, we thought about the place of “Roman religion” in the global history of religion, and the usefulness of the term “religion” to characterize how the Romans related to their gods.

Bryan Lowe, Religion and Mayuko Kawakami, Osaka University and Numata Visiting Professor

REL 533/EAS 535: Readings in Japanese Religion: Buddhist Exchange between the Continent and Japan

This seminar explored exchange between Japanese and continental (China and Korean) Buddhism. We read primary sources and secondary scholarship including transmission narratives, hagiographies, and pilgrimage

records to show how Buddhism in East Asia was facilitated by exchange and to move beyond nation-centered narratives. Significant time was spent on translation, as well as research methods and tools necessary for the study of premodern Buddhism.

The Crossroads Project

This year The Crossroads Project awarded its first grants for projects that will help advance understanding of the diversity of Black religious communities and cultures, past and present. The 2022-2023 cohort of Crossroads Fellows represent scholarly, artistic, activist, and religious communities, and their projects will

My participation in the CCSR media team ultimately inspired me to create and submit my video “A Tale of Two Snakes,” about my dissertation research to Princeton Research Day. It was awarded the FitzRandolph Gate Fan Favorite Award and I am deeply grateful to the CCSR media team for teaching me how to turn research narratives into stories that hold an audience’s attention.

—**Ipsita Dey**
Graduate Student Fellow
Media Team Member

Right: Ipsita Dey with Dean Rochelle Calhoun

take a variety of forms, including documentary and experimental film, digital mapping, oral history interviews, curated digital exhibits, research reports, sound installation, dance and spoken word performance. The Crossroads Project continued its monthly meetings for the Black Religious Studies Working Group. It also sponsored several events, listed in the Events section of the Report. A highlight this year was “The Sonic Souls of Black Folk: Sacred Sound and Black Religion in America” symposium in partnership with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University. The symposium brought together leading scholars to collectively explore how the rich sound of black sacred expression has colored the American religious landscape. Crossroads Fellow Alphonso F. Saville IV conducted research on this same topic for a digital story that will be featured on The Crossroads Project website. The story examines the music of D-Vine Spirituals, a Memphis gospel label that operated just after the era of civil rights, and also highlights the work of the Memphis Listening Lab, a public listening library that houses

by Judith Weisenfeld with Anthea Butler, University of Pennsylvania, and Lerone Martin, Stanford University.

Religion and the Public Conversation

The Religion and the Public Conversation project is an initiative of Center Director Jonathan Gold. It aims to raise the level of the conversation around issues of religion in public discourse, bringing value to the scholarly community both here at Princeton and at large, and also the greater public. This mission is accomplished through a Media Team (see page 36) and an annual series of events (see page 35). The Center employs a team of Princeton graduate students, who receive professional training in communications and the more technical aspects of audio and visual media production. Then they use this training to conduct interviews with established scholars in the relevant fields. Some of these interviews are held as public events, while others are less formal conversations. These exchanges are then edited into accessible audio and video media and posted for public and educational use on our website. The production of these materials benefits the graduate students pedagogically and professionally and benefits the public by providing accurate, current, and relevant content for discussions around religion today. The 2022-2023 theme for this series was “Religion and Technology: From Codex to Coding.”



People

Visiting Fellows



Lauren R. Kerby

My second year at CCSR gave me the opportunity to write three chapters of my new book, *The Gospel of Rise and Grind: A History of Hard Work in America*. I benefited greatly from the thoughtful comments of participants in the CCSR workshop and the American Religion workshop, whose feedback has shaped not just these chapters but the whole project. At the AAR Annual Meeting, I spoke about my research on two panels exploring work as a site of inquiry for religious studies scholars. I also had the chance to share material with public audiences thanks to a keynote address at Utah State University and an invited lecture at the University of Heidelberg. I will be sending chapter drafts to several interested editors by the end of summer 2023. During the spring semester, I had the honor of teaching a seminar in the Department of Religion on the topic of Christianity and U.S. social

movements, cheekily titled “How to Change the World.” Most of my students were religion majors, and all of them produced excellent work and learned ethnographic methods they will use in their junior papers and senior theses. Every week, they inspired me with their questions, ideas, and drive to make positive change in the world. As they say, the kids are alright. This year was also a big year for the Media Team! It was a joy for me to be joined by my colleague Suzanne van Geuns this year—truly, two post-docs are better than one. Together, we found new resources and partners on campus that will expand the range of what our talented graduate students can do in years to come. It’s been such a privilege to co-lead this team for two years, and I look forward to seeing how they continue to grow. Thanks so much to Jonathan Gold, Jenny Wiley Legath, Jen Hemingway, Suzanne van Geuns, and the whole CCSR community for making my two years as a post-doc productive, generative, and fun!



Mayuko Kawakami

Mayuko Kawakami, Osaka University, spent the Fall at Princeton as the Numata Visiting Scholar. With Bryan Lowe, she co-taught “Readings in Japanese Religions: Buddhist Exchange between the Continent and Japan.” She and Lowe co-organized the international workshop “Doctrine and Practice beyond Borders: International Interactions in East Asian Buddhism.” Kawakami also gave a public lecture “Sovereigns as Bodhisattva and Cakravartin” in October 2022.



Alphonso F. Saville IV

This year as Associate Research Scholar at The Crossroads Project, I facilitated several of the monthly meetings for the Black Religious Studies Working Group. I also organized “The Sonic Souls of Black Folk: Sacred Sound and Black Religion in America” symposium in partnership with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University. The symposium brought together leading scholars to collectively explore how the rich sound of black sacred expression

has colored the American religious landscape. Additionally, I conducted research on this same topic for a digital story that will be featured on The Crossroads Project website. The story examines the music of D-Vine Spirituals, a Memphis gospel label that operated just after the era of civil rights, and also highlight the work of the Memphis Listening Lab, a public listening library that houses the D-Vine Spirituals collection. I was also able to make great strides regarding individual research projects. I completed the second round of revisions for *The Gospel of John Marrant* manuscript, under contract with Duke University Press. My second work in progress, tentatively titled *The Problem of God and Slavery* at Georgetown, examines the production and reproduction of racial violence in early American Jesuit theology, and the interplay between religion and slavery at Georgetown and in the broader American society. At the invitation of the Director at Georgetown University Press, I anticipate submitting a book proposal by the end of June 2024. I plan to complete the manuscript during the final year of my fellowship at The Crossroads Project, and hope to submit a completed manuscript by the completion of summer 2025.



Suzanne van Geuns

As a Visiting Fellow, I had the pleasure of being at the heart of many activities at CCSR. The graduate students on the media team, which I co-led, made great video content, but I am even more proud of the collaborative spirit and practical know-how - from script-writing and story-boarding to editing - we developed together. Joining intellectual exchange at CCSR, both at events and in the weekly workshop, has oriented me toward the breadth and depth of academic scholarship on religion. This perspective informs my own public scholarship project, a toolkit composed of short videos and annotated bibliographies for scholars and journalists who want to develop the skills they need to treat the internet as a place for the study of religion. My hope is for it to be a CCSR project through and through: thoughtful, useful to others, and open to the world beyond the academy. I also advanced my personal research: my book manuscript *Seductive Methods: Sexual Success in the Computational Imagination* is under contract with the University of Chicago Press in the Class 200 series. The book is a genealogy of misogynist frustration and an inquiry into our shared computational condition.

Affiliate Visiting Fellows



Nareman Amin

“Is God for Revolution” is a book about social change in a time of political upheaval and uncertainty. My research is based on an in-depth analysis of 60 interviews with Muslim Egyptians in 2018 and 2019 and ethnographic fieldwork from 2015 to 2019. I explore the ways in which political participation in a revolution and the emotions that the unprecedented democratic moment in Egypt evoked changed the landscape of religious discourse and practice. Before the 2011 revolution, for much of their early lives, my interlocutors found themselves in structures of culturally agreed-upon forms of religiosity. They were raised during what scholars call the “Islamic Awakening” of the late twentieth century and heeded the advice of religious figures that circulated freely in mass media. Visible markers of piety, such as the veil for women and beards for men, became commonplace. Anthropologists of Islam have emphasized the importance of embodiment as explicated by the rich Islamic tradition to the formation of a pious, ethical Muslim self. In the wake of the 2011 uprising

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and its perceived political defeat, my interlocutors broke free of many of these structural conceptions of Islam. My book shows how, for many youth, revolutionary emotions, notably hope, disillusionment, shock and anger, transformed their understandings of what it means to identify as a pious Muslim resulting in a fluidity with regards to how one reaches moral and religious perfection.



Gillian Frank

What a delight to spend this past academic year affiliated with CCSR. Receiving feedback on a chapter of my book manuscript, *A Sacred Choice: Liberal Religion and the Struggle for Reproductive Freedom Before Roe v Wade* (Forthcoming UNC Press), from CCSR’s wonderful workshop participants made this project smarter and stronger. As I approach the finish line on this project, I am grateful for the privilege of thinking with the folks at CCSR. Overall it’s been a busy year, especially in the wake of the *Dobbs* decision. I co-authored an article for the *American Historical Review* entitled “Doing it With Sound: Podcasting the History of Sexuality,” which explores the theories and methods of producing our podcast about how the history of sexuality

shapes our present, *Sexing History*. The article dovetails with our collaboration with the AHR to produce an episode, “A Sacred Calling,” that showcases the religious history of two Texas abortion providers. I published an article on Trans Refugees and Moral Panics for the *Revealer’s* special issue on Trans Lives and Religion. Because of my expertise on the religious history of reproductive politics, I was invited to give a number of in-person and remote talks at institutions across the country. My research was profiled in *Faith and Leadership*, Duke University’s learning resource for Christian leaders. And I spoke with a number of journalists seeking to understand religion and reproductive politics (with quotes in articles for *NPR*, *The New Republic*, *Salon*, and *Mother Jones*). I also was a lead author of an amicus brief for “Historians of Religion, Reproduction, and the Law.” We submitted this brief in support of the plaintiff-appellees for an Indiana case involving abortion rights and religious freedom. Finally, I continued in my role as a member of the advisory committee for the LGBTQ Religious Archives Network. I also served as a jury member for their annual Virginia Ramey Mollenkott Award, which honors outstanding research and scholarship in LGBTQ religious history.

Graduate Student Fellows



Kim Akano, Religious and Racial Education among Twentieth-Century African Students in the United States

This project considers how the racialized experiences of African educational migrants living in the United States further complicate understandings of religion and race in America. Specifically, I explore how the racial discrimination that African students encountered in the U.S. during the 1960s illuminated tensions between American Christianity and the Christianity espoused by African immigrants. Many of these students were initially embraced by Protestant American missionaries while living in their home countries in West Africa. However, after migrating to the U.S., many students were turned away from predominantly white schools and churches due to their race. Drawing upon oral history interviews, I argue that the experiences of such students help us better understand how migration troubles expectations of religious belonging. In my future work, I hope to use this project as a case study for a dissertation on African migration, race, and religion in the U.S.



Yuzhou Bai, *The Rise of the Nine-rank Categorization of Humans in Early Imperial China* (200 BCE–600 CE)

My dissertation outlines the development trajectory of the Nine Ranks [jiupin 九品] system in early imperial China. This system was initially conceived by Confucius as part of his philosophy of education, then turned into an influential political institution from 200 to 600 CE, guiding Chinese governments' official recruitment process. The first half of this project offers a case study of how a Chinese theory of meritocracy, one that constructed and prescribed human differences in systematic, hierarchical, and numerical terms, turned into a political institution. The second half of this project expounds on why this meritocratic experiment failed, as well what its remnants were in the educational, religious, and cultural spheres. Methodologically, this dissertation proposes a new way of studying

political institutions through the lens of history of ideas.



Kelly Carlton, *Children in Medieval Chinese Buddhism: Discourses on Ethics and Practice*

This dissertation examines how children are portrayed in medieval Chinese Buddhist sources from the 4th to 10th centuries CE. It reevaluates a range of sources featuring children—including legal codes, ritual literature, Daoist sources, and miraculous tales, in addition to Buddhist hagiographies, monastic codes, healing and funerary liturgies, apotropaic literature, and donor portraits—with a sensitivity to cultural definitions of children and childhood. This study employs age as an analytical category to assess perceptions of children's moral standing, as well as considers depictions, prescriptions, and ideals of their religious practice. It demonstrates that notions of age-dependent karmic culpability, religiosity, and vulnerability emerged in the medieval period as Chinese Buddhists reconciled Buddhist ethical principles with medieval Chinese sociocultural concepts of childhood and moral development. By forging interdisciplinary connections between religious studies and

histories of childhood, this project further illustrates how the category of childhood and a consideration of children can enrich the study of Buddhism.



Min Tae Cha, *Presbyterian Visions of Global Order: Religion, Empire, and Constitutionalism, c.1830-1880*

In this dissertation, I argue that modern religion and modern constitutionalism were mutually constitutive. For every constitutional question that plagued British and American politicians—written constitutions, electoral reform, disestablishment, imperial reform, international federation, and global governance—there was a corresponding debate within British and American churches. Churchgoers were also often taxpayers and voters, elected officials and activists. Therefore, debates within Church and within State did not develop along parallel lines, but rather intersected on several planes. The revolutionary transformation of Church-State relations—which American scholars call “Disestablishment”—is at the heart of my argument. In the first half of the period (c.1780-1830), British and American churches lost their hold on significant sections of the population: in America, through

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disestablishment; in Britain, through industrialization; and in both, by expanding settler colonialism. In order to reclaim the “un-churched masses,” churches had to recruit men to become missionaries, and raise funds to support them. I argue that this gave birth to a new type of church: the fiscal-missionary church (the religious equivalent of the fiscal-military state). Facing the challenges of fiscal-missionary mobilization, churches re-constituted themselves. Churches often had to streamline, rationalize, or break with, inherited ideas and practices. Church constitutions, whether written or unwritten, were the products of such processes. My dissertation focuses on Presbyterians, a minority denomination within Protestantism, which was also a numerical minority among the world population. Presbyterians, originating from Scotland and northern Ireland, were a diasporic people, who were disproportionately represented in migration to both the USA and the British colonies scattered throughout the world. Following this ethno-religious group and its institutions enables me to tell a global history of constitutional and religious politics. I focus on ways in which churches—like civil governments and multinational corporations—exercised legislative, executive, and judicial powers within a constitutional framework. Read in this way, church documents reveal a marvelous degree of interaction with political and constitutional discourse in the ‘secular’ realm. In other words, my approach blurs the boundaries between legal, political and religious history and applies insights from one realm to the other.



Ipsita Dey, *Capacities for Life and Belonging on Indo-Fijian Farmscapes*

This dissertation probes how the ethno-nationalist construction of “indigeneity” as a racial category in Fiji frames Indo-Fijians as a political other to indigenous iTaukei Fijians, yet lived experiences defy the limits of racial structuring logics. Indo-Fijian farmers in the Sigatoka Valley, the field site of this long term ethnographic study, embody, articulate, and syncretize indigenous epistemologies, especially through their material and metaphysical relationships to farmland and histories of indentured farm labor. This dissertation develops and advances the idea of the “farmscape”, which is both the cosmological and physical locus of Indo-Fijian “homing desires” for social and cultural belonging. Through ethnographic analysis of spiritual, labor, and bodily practices on the contemporary Indo-Fijian farmscape, this dissertation thinks about how colonial racial logics, indentured labor migration, and indigenous politics are co-constitutive in the self-articulation of Indo-Fijian diasporic, yet simultaneously, local identities. This study does not reproduce a racial dialectic between iTaukeis and Indo-Fijians, but rather considers and questions

the possibilities of Fijian identity beyond the limiting structures of indigenous ethnonationalism and ethnic accounting.



Nikianna Dinenis, *Reading Women: Laywomen, Textual Culture and Religious Reform in the Holy Roman Empire, 1400-1700*

Religious leaders in the Holy Roman Empire, as elsewhere in Europe over the course of the later middle ages and early modernity grew increasingly suspicious of women's leadership, creativity and public-facing authority, seeking either through enclosure of nuns in their convents, or of laywomen in the household to privatize women's piety and limit its communal influence. Within these circumscriptions, women consciously and consistently built communities, more or less formally, to pursue their visions of piety and reform, and placed themselves in positions of authority and in dynamic situations of knowledge exchange with family, kin, neighbors and spiritual advisors. They did so especially through texts: through reading, writing, circulating and transmitting books. Far from reading privately, pious laywomen, whether they were widowed, lived with families, or in dedicated houses

I appreciated fellows' thoughtful, genuine engagement with the research and writings-in-progress presented in the workshop. It was especially fruitful to discover how my research resonates with, and can benefit from, other graduate research fellows' work on topics from vastly different cultural, geographic, and temporal contexts.

—**Kelly Carlton**
Graduate Student Fellow

for devout laywomen, were closely linked with the religious life of their wider communities and imagined their reading practices to be central to communal reform. With chapters on women’s libraries, manuscript prayer books and annotated books, letters shared among women and between women and their spiritual advisors, and institutional documents from convents and informal houses of devout women, I move from the perspective of prescription to that of lived practice. I bring into conversation work on women’s roles in religious reform, in reading and textual culture, and in charity and the *vita activa*, showing reading to be less a private act than a relational and outward-looking one, which saw reform of the self as inextricably bound to reform of societies.



Mateusz Falkowski, “Precision and Pragmatism. Antonio Agustín’s Philology, Antiquarianism, and Counter-Reformation (1517-1586)”

“Precision and Pragmatism” explored the intellectual life and episcopal career of the Spanish prelate, jurist, and antiquarian Antonio Agustín (1517–1586). It studied his working practices, his critical studies of canon law, his contributions at the Council

of Trent (1545–1563), and his efforts to introduce new reforms to his Catalan dioceses of Lérida and Tarragona. It engaged first and foremost in the current debates on philology, erudition, and confessionalization in early modern Europe. By comparing Agustín’s, his collaborators’, and his critics’ working methods with contemporary textual practices of philologists and antiquarians who worked on classical texts I argued that early modern Catholic scholarship was not only a religiously motivated program, but also a rigorous intellectual enterprise. A reconstruction of Agustín’s ways of working with manuscripts and editing texts and his working life as a canon lawyer, bishop, and archbishop uncovered how he combined the roles of humanist scholar and Tridentine pastor. On the one hand, my work investigated thus the balance of precision, judgment, and compromise in ecclesiastical scholarship, where confessional debates and censorship set limits to what could be argued. On the other, it situated confessional scholarship in a larger context of early modern knowledge making and information management.



Hasan Hameed, Ethics and Erotics: The reception of Persian literature

and the remaking of Islam in colonial India

For centuries before the coming of European colonialism, Persian was the language of culture and power in India. For Muslims in particular, Persian classical texts such as the *Gulistan* of Sa’adi (d. 1292) occupied a foundational role in the cultivation of ethical selves and community. In addition to forming essential components of educational curricula across regional and religious divides in South Asia, these texts also connected it to a broader Persianate world stretching across much of Euro-Asia, from modern-day Turkey to Central Asia and the borders of China. As the British assumed greater control over India in the 19th century, however, they made these Persian texts the object of severe criticism, lambasting them, above all, for being ‘obscene’ and ‘erotic’. What does it mean when texts prized by a people as ethical handbooks come to be declared morally corrupting by colonizing outsiders? This dissertation explores debates over ethics and obscenity in 19th century India by examining the reception of classical Persian literature under colonialism. Given the historical enmeshment of Persian literature within standard Islamic curricula, changing attitudes toward the former profoundly influenced the meaning of ‘Islam’ as a discursive tradition and lived reality.

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Kentaro Ide, The Salvation of Evildoers: Hönen and Buddhist Discourse of Salvific Inclusivity in Medieval Japan

The doctrinal and social development of Buddhism in early medieval Japan, from the tenth to thirteenth centuries, is characterized by an ever-growing concern with the salvific inclusivity of those deemed to be of lesser religious capacity. By invoking scriptural examples of evildoers, sinners, and foolish persons, various Buddhist thinkers examined how “even” those conventionally seen as hard to be saved—“evildoers”—might ultimately be included in the scope of salvation. My dissertation research investigates the Buddhist thinker Hönen’s (1133-1212) unique contribution to the medieval Japanese debates over the salvific inclusivity of evildoers. By integrating into a single narrative the intellectual history of Buddhist doctrines and the social history of aspirants’ lives, I argue that Hönen criticized the conventional discourse of salvific inclusivity for serving in fact as an ideology that reified hierarchical differentiation among capacities under the guise of being “inclusive” of the disadvantaged. I thus reveal that, based on this critique, Hönen

eventually conceptualized salvation as transcending the requirements of wisdom and morality; and he taught the equality in a religious sense.



Ferdose Idris, Immigrant Integration: The Role of Religion, Race, and Destination in Immigrant Labor Market Integration

The passage of the Immigration Act of 1965 and Refugee Act of 1980 completely altered the immigrant flow to The United States. Today Immigrants represent a diversity of country of origins and religions that have to grapple with the racialized economy that exists in The United States. This dissertation consists of three papers that attempt to understand how immigrants/refugees of diversity in origins fare in terms of their labor market outcomes. I explore heterogeneous labor market penalties of refugees based on individual religious identification and ethnic backgrounds. I explore how refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East experience employment penalties when it comes to employment probability and wages. I argue that these are due to their introduction into the racialized economy. I also investigate how location or where Black immigrants settle themselves

matters for their labor market performance. I explore how the presence of existing Black communities can mitigate Black immigrant labor market integration.

Navjit Kaur, Forms and Futures of Savings in Muslim Punjab India

Over the course of 22 months in the small Muslim town of Malerkotla, I observed the marked refusal of unbanked Muslim women to use government-issued formal banking structures to save their money. My dissertation refuses to read this refusal as a remnant of financial illiteracy or romanticizing this gesture as an evidentiary ‘subaltern resistance’. Rather, if the question of saving is an index of securing the future, an important function performed by the bank, then where and how people choose to plan the future, tells us a great deal about who they want to depend on. It also further tells us how they imagine communities or eschew others completely.

Much scholarship views this refusal to banking as a marked expression of the religious practices of Muslim women reducing religion to a merely scriptural prohibition. My research departs from understanding the experience of being Muslim merely as an instance of Divine Command, where religion is reduced to a doctrinal literalism. Rather, I show that religion cannot be seen as a singular source to cultivate ethical judgment and sometimes it finds itself complicit in justifying economic rationality. By ethnographically documenting the moral economy that is at play in such economic actions, I foreground

the anthropological task of “charting the reach of imaginable worlds that are also inhabitable in practice.”



Sinae Kim, *Preaching Buddhism in Late Medieval China: Sutra Lecture Texts and Performance*

Through the weekly CCSR workshop, I found the most valuable experience of this academic year. The constructive and analytical feedback from interdisciplinary fellows tremendously improved my dissertation writing. I appreciate the mutual support and intellectual companionship that the workshop fostered.

—**Sinae Kim**
Graduate Student Fellow

such as sutras, commentaries, hagiographies, anecdotes, and archaeological materials, I situate popular sutra lectures within their textual, ritual, and social contexts. The dissertation is divided into three parts. Part One demonstrates how preachers used literary and

pedagogic devices to adapt Buddhist scriptures to the audience’s needs. Part Two reconstructs sutra lectures in a more extensive ritual context and examines the collaborative efforts among preachers, redactors, and scribes during their preparation for performance. Part Three explores multicultural and bilingual sermons (Sino-Korean, for example) and discusses the diversity of performance and the ideas and values of preaching. Through this analysis, my dissertation moves beyond problematic binaries in the field of Chinese religions, including canonical versus non-canonical, literary versus religious, monastic versus lay, institutional versus “everyday,” and theory versus practice.



Enoch Kuo, *Beyond Sovereignty: The Political Theology of F.D.E. Schleiermacher*

Despite being well-known as a political and ethical thinker in the 19th c., studies of classical German political philosophy often skip over Schleiermacher in their journey from Kant to Hegel. This dissertation lays a foundation for a political-theological reappropriation of Schleiermacher’s thought by reconstructing the innovative accounts of right, property, and authority which both underlie

his account of the modern nation-state and provide categories for an innovative ecclesiology and the politics of knowledge. As an early Romantic critic of classical liberalism and its post-Kantian variants, Schleiermacher challenges accounts of political equality which pay inadequate attention to the political-economic basis of right-claims, develops an innovative non-statist account of collective property, and develops an anti-sovereign, non-contractarian account of republican liberty. Although very much a man of his time, Schleiermacher’s innovative political positions allow him to stake out a somewhat unconventional approach to understanding the nature of race and inequality in the modern state. In an era where classical liberal accounts of state and society are under great pressure, Schleiermacher’s political-theological vision attempts to reemphasize the ongoing significance of the Protestant Reformation for offering an innovative new angle into rethinking religious and secular trajectories into and beyond the structures of modernity.



Mélena Laudig, “Her Country’s Children”: African American Religion and Childhood in Slavery and Freedom

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My dissertation mines previously underexplored archival materials to document the history of African American children—as well as adult constructions of Black childhood—across the nineteenth century. Drawing on oral histories of formerly enslaved people; the bureaucratic records of Protestant and Catholic orphanages and schools; the visual and textual cultures of antislavery propaganda; the diaries of missionaries and teachers; and more, the project argues that religious leaders, educators, authors, and reformers instrumentalized the metaphor of the Black American child to further religious and racial projects of “uplift” during slavery and its aftermath. Both Black and white communities throughout the nineteenth century, the dissertation

It was enormously helpful to get a wide range of disciplinary perspectives on my dissertation project, given that I want the eventual book to be as public-facing as possible. I will very much miss this multidisciplinary community next year!

—**William Stell**
Graduate Student Fellow

unveils, viewed the moral cultivation of African American children as central to the progress of the race. At the same time, the project reads normative archives against the grain and examines untitled sources, such as photographs and ephemera, as windows into the religious perspectives and performances of Black children themselves. In the process, it unearths the hidden history of how Black American children have experienced religion and, at times, practiced insurgency against the norms scripted by religious institutions, discourses, and communities.

Ultimately, the archival analysis conducted in this project offers a new portrait of the intersection of race, religion, gender, sexuality, and age in America in the antebellum and postbellum periods.



William Stell, *Born Again Queer: Evangelical Gay Activism and the Construction of Antigay Christianity in the United States, 1968–1988*

This dissertation examines a network of authors, ministers, and professors in the 1970s and 1980s who worked to persuade Christians in the United States that homosexuality was morally neutral and that same-sex unions should be affirmed. As veterans of institutions self-identified as evangelical, members of this network made characteristically evangelical appeals to “the Gospel,” the Bible, sexual ethics, gender norms, racial logics, and more. Leading evangelical gay activists during this period included Troy Perry, founder of the largely LGBTQ+ Metropolitan Community Churches; Ralph Blair, founder of Evangelicals Concerned, a religious organization engaged in gay advocacy; and Letha Dawson Scanzoni and Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, leaders of the evangelical feminist movement and co-authors of the book *Is the*

Homosexual My Neighbor? Another Christian View (1978). Though small in numbers, this network had an outsized impact. In the late 1970s, some journalists and scholars of religion wondered how “the so-called ‘gay evangelicals’” might shape the future of evangelicalism. Meanwhile, prominent antigay evangelicals labored to deny and distort the substantial resemblances they shared with this network. In time, their denials and distortions not only buried the history of evangelical gay activism but rendered the term itself illegible. This dissertation both recovers that history and analyzes the historical construction of that illegibility.



Junbin Tan, *Moving Gods, Moving Times: Intimate Sovereignty at Taiwan’s Border with China*

Kinmen is a Taiwanese island territory two miles from Fujian, China and over a hundred miles from Taiwan’s capital, Taipei. Once the Republic of China (Taiwan)’s battlefield against the People’s Republic of China, Kinmen has become Taiwan’s closest border crossing with Fujian since 2001. With Taiwan and China caught in escalating tensions over the question of Taiwan’s sovereignty in recent years, Kinmen’s location and



Meeting—and learning from —new colleagues



It was especially fruitful to discover how my research resonates with, and can benefit from, other graduate research fellows' work on topics from vastly different cultural, geographic, and temporal contexts.

—**Kelly Carlton**
Graduate Student Fellow



The year as a CCSR fellow immeasurably enriched my dissertation. The workshop's close and dedicated readers provided incisive comments and exposed me to wide-ranging perspectives from outside my discipline that not only improved my writing and argumentation but also broadened the scope and theoretical reach of my work. The deep and engaging discussions on work from a variety of disciplines, periods and geographies, were a highlight of my week and testimony to how fruitful interdisciplinary exchange is to scholarship.

—**Nikianna Dinenis**
Graduate Student Fellow



I have grown so much from dialoguing with interdisciplinary conversation partners who ask questions I had not even considered and push me to examine my research questions through new methodological and theoretical prisms.

—**Mélena Laudig**
Graduate Student Fellow

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its relations with Fujian has been recognized as a site of geopolitical importance. Through fieldwork on Kinmen and with Kinmenese on Taiwan, my research complicates geopolitical perspectives by examining people's closeness and relations with gods, tradition, and "Chinese-ness" in the face of the drawn-out 20th century, early 21st century Kinmen. By studying religious practices in communities and cultural workers' ritualistic archiving of these practices, this research contributes to debates in political anthropology, lived religions, and Sinophone studies, with attention to how politics, authority, and "sovereignty" is imagined outside geopolitical contours.

William Theiss, *The Registration of Souls: Collective Memory and State Formation in Central Europe, 1517-1945*

My dissertation tells the story of how early modern people went from belonging to a town to being subjects of the state. I do so through the history of church books (*Kirchenbücher*), the registers of the baptized, the married and the dead that comprise the largest manuscript corpus of early modern Central Europe. I write against the view that these are mere lists of names and instead excavate what they meant as holy writing. Across chapters on the Thirty Years War, the Seven Years War and the Napoleonic moment, I track how the states of Germanophone Europe intervened in the books. Armies looted them and fire burned them. Centralizing governments secularized, copied and standardized

them in new experiments of control. My research is based on visits to more than twenty rural and urban archives across Germany, to the churches where these objects still are. Together they attest that the passage out of early modernity involved a traumatic severance from the past.

Emma Thompson, *Indian Secularism and the Muslim Other: Attitudes towards Religion in Indian Queer Activism*

My dissertation draws on online and in-person ethnographic work with two queer activist organizations in northern India as case studies to analyze the ways they deploy the languages of secularism in order to understand the relationship between religion and queer activism. In using the term "languages of secularism" I move away from a state-focused approach to secularism studies to instead ask how the tropes and discourses surrounding secularism, like a notion of tolerance based in an underlying claim to common humanity or the insistence that religious differences are simultaneously trivial and immutable, figure in the work of queer activists. Central to my use of the term is the acknowledgment that these tropes and discourses are inconsistent and even at times contradictory. Comparing the two groups' usage of the languages of secularism helps uncover the ways that secularism impacts both religious and non-religiously affiliated groups and illuminates how the tropes surrounding secularism impact activists' relationship to religion. Furthermore, I situate both organizations within the

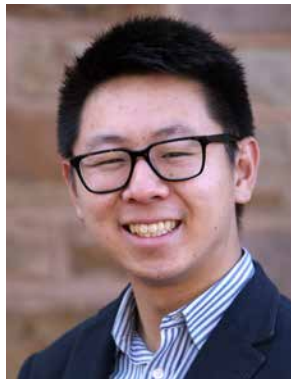
context of rising Hindu nationalism in India. While both groups draw on languages of secularism in their activism to combat Hindu nationalism, invoking secularism poses different risks given their differing relationships to religion.



Liya Xie, *In the Shadows of Rationality: Eastern Spiritualities, Alternative Medicine, and Mystical Archaeology in the making of Russian Modernity (1880-1930)*

One of the hallmarks of the late imperial Russian society and culture is the increasing fragmentation of sources of values. Rapid industrialization, urbanization, and expansion of railroad networks across the empire from the 1880s ushered in tremendous socioeconomic transformations that set the conditions for "the crisis of autocracy" and "the revolution of the spirit." As the authority of the Orthodox Church and the legitimacy of the monarchy gradually eroded, many Russians intensely questioned the meaning of life, hoping to find liberation, healing, and new paths toward transcendence. My project reconstructs a panorama of the ways in which pseudo-scientific, marginalized knowledge excavated from the deep past and

distant lands constituted an integral part of the search for answers to the looming crisis of value in late imperial Russian society (ca. 1880-1930). I propose the term “epistemic fringes” as an analytic category that characterizes the protagonists in my story who promoted indigenous, Eastern, and occult knowledge that was deemed incompatible with the scientific worldview. I also offer a new framework for understanding Russia’s complex relationship with multiple Easts beyond Edward Said’s classic Orientalism. I propose that the “East” is not merely a geographical concept but also a reservoir of conceptual tools and practices for solving crises of value in modernity.



Darren Yau, *Non-Violent Resistance: A Critical Reinterpretation*

Non-violence is one of the 20th century’s most compelling and contested philosophies of resistance. This dissertation offers a philosophical reconstruction of one of the most popular and influential accounts of non-violence: that of Martin Luther King, Jr. While situating King’s thought in it the intellectual history of non-violence, the project ultimately aims to engage with a series of common philosophical

objections to the philosophy of non-violence in order to examine its relevance for problems in democratic theory today.

Undergraduate Research Fellows

Genevieve Fraipont, *Faith and Healing at Lourdes: The Secular Performance of the Medical Bureau in the Past and Present*

In my thesis I analyze the existence of the Medical Bureau at the Catholic pilgrimage site, Lourdes in France. This is a site notorious for sick, disabled, or elderly pilgrims who travel to the site in the hopes of experiencing a miracle. However, the existence of a Medical Bureau in charge of policing individual’s believed experiences was the core of my thesis. I looked at the practices of the Medical Bureau as a performance in which they portrayed themselves as scientific and secular despite being authorized by the Catholic church. This performance is a tension that complicates a pilgrim’s healing journey to Lourdes. Over the years the Bureau has become increasingly hidden which has led to an even more secularized external appearance of their work today.

Moreen Rezkalla, *Exploring the Impact of Persecution on Christians’ Interactions with their Faith and the World Around Them*

Religion is one of the largest social categories to exist, and one of the least tested. Social interactions are one of the most fundamental behaviors we engage in daily. Prior

research has investigated the effects of religiosity, life satisfactions and goal affiliations, there is little done to explore the impact of persecution on these relationships. This study looked to explore the prejudice and stigmatization of Christian immigrants from notoriously persecuted countries and how it plays a role in private and public practices. Looking at these practices first on a general level, and then zoomed in to examine the effects of persecution on practices within the United States and participants native countries on an individual level. This analysis revealed notable correlation between persecution and various public and private practices (such as prayer and displaying specific identifiers). These effects were seen on both the general and individual level. We then introduce a series of prompts gauging the social interactions of participants and compared these also to public and private practices of Christianity. This analysis also revealed significant correlations, particularly between faith and relationships on private practices. Overall, this research calls for an increased focus to be placed on persecution, and attention to the role it plays in intrapersonal values and interpersonal relationships.

Heather Samberg, *Preaching Secularism: Maternal Health, Identity, and Religion in Contemporary Ireland*

This study explores the intersection between religion, secularism, women’s health, and medicine. Specifically, this project analyzes the National Maternity Hospital (NMH) in Dublin, Ireland, which is

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set to co-locate with St. Vincent’s Hospital, a previously Catholic-affiliated group. By walking through the physical space of the NMH, the politics of both hospitals and of the female body, and the experience of minority religious groups in the Irish medical system, and with the utilization of the scholarly discourse of secularism, this project argues that maternity hospitals are particularly invested in the concealment of religion in order to “appropriately” align with the supposedly scientific space. Nonetheless, in an attempt to achieve this religious neutrality, the hospital constructs a certain conception of the female body and therefore only further exacerbates exclusion.

Executive Committee

The Center is administered by an interdepartmental faculty committee appointed to rotating terms by the Dean of the Faculty. The committee sets policy for the Center and serves as the review and selection committee for applications to the Center, including those for its conferences and lecture series, graduate student fellows, and undergraduate course funding.

André Benhaim is Professor of French and Italian. His main areas of research and teaching are 20th-century French prose literature and culture and Francophone literature and culture from North Africa and the Mediterranean. Particularly interested in questions of identity and representation, and the relation between ethics and

aesthetics, he also focuses on the relationship between “canonical” literature, contemporary works, and “popular culture.” A Proust scholar, he is the author most recently of *Après Ulysse. Vers une poétique de l’hospitalité en Méditerranée* (2021), an essay on the Mediterranean as a space of passages and transformations, from Homer to the present.

Wallace Best is the Hughes-Rogers Professor of Religion and African American Studies in the Department of Religion, is a faculty affiliate of the Department of History, and serves as Director of the Program in Gender and Sexuality Studies. A scholar of African American religious history, he is the author of *Passionately Human, No Less Divine: Religion and Culture in Black Chicago, 1915-1952*, and *Langston’s Salvation: American Religion and the Bard of Harlem*, winner of the 2018 award in “Textual Studies” from the American Academy of Religion. He is currently at work on a book entitled, “The Spiritual Capital of Black America: Harlem’s World of Religion and Churches,” under contract with New York University Press.

Patricia Fernández-Kelly is Professor of Sociology and Research Associate at the Office of Population Research. She is also the director of the Center for Migration and Development. Fernández-Kelly is a social anthropologist with an interest in international economic development, gender, class and ethnicity, and urban ethnography. Her latest book is *The Hero’s Fight: African Americans in West Baltimore and the Shadow of the State* (2016)

and she is currently working on a book entitled *Hiialeah Dreams: The Making of the Cuban-American Working Class in South Florida*.

Bryan Lowe, Assistant Professor of Religion, specializes in Buddhism in ancient Japan (seventh through ninth centuries) and has broader research interests in ritual, manuscript studies, historiography, canons, and the religion of non-elites. Lowe’s first book, *Ritualized Writing: Buddhist Practice and Scriptural Cultures in Ancient Japan*, received the John Whitney Hall Book Prize from the Association of Asian Studies. He is currently working on a new book that combines manuscript and archaeological evidence to consider the role of preaching and ritual in the spread of Buddhism to the Japanese provinces.

Seth Perry is Associate Professor of Religion. He is interested in American religious history, with a particular focus on print culture and religious authority. Perry’s first book, *Bible Culture and Authority in the Early United States* (2018) explores the performative, rhetorical, and material aspects of bible-based authority in early-national America. Current projects include a biography of Lorenzo Dow, the early-national period’s most famous itinerant preacher; an article on “scriptural failure”; and a project on animals in early American religious history.

Sarah Rivett is Professor of English and American Studies. She works at the intersection of early American and Atlantic literature and Indigenous studies. She is the author of *The Science of the Soul*

in *Colonial New England* (2011) and *Unscripted America: Indigenous Languages and the Origins of a Literary Nation* (2017). She has published articles on religion, witchcraft, Enlightenment, gender and conversion, and early American historiography. Her articles include studies of Native American language texts, colonial-Indigenous language encounters, and the impact of Indigenous languages on 18th-century religious and intellectual culture. She is currently writing a book on the raven as a literary symbol from the Book of Genesis to Edgar Allan Poe and from the classical stories of the Haida, Tlingit and other Indigenous literatures of the Pacific West to contemporary Indigenous theorizations of the raven as a metaphor for social justice. Tentatively titled “Raven’s Land”, this book rereads American literary history through raven stories that contest U.S. settler colonialism by disrupting origin myths and exceptionalist temporalities.

Jack Tannous is Associate Professor of History and Hellenic Studies and Chair of the Center for the Study of Late Antiquity. He is interested in the cultural history of the eastern Mediterranean, especially the Middle East, in the Late Antique and early medieval period. His research focuses on the Syriac-speaking Christian communities of the Near East in this period, but he is interested in a number of other, related areas, including Eastern Christian Studies more broadly, Patristics/early Christian studies, Greco-Syriac and Greco-Arabic translation, Christian-Muslim interactions, sectarianism and identity,

early Islamic history, the history of the Arabic Bible, and the Quran. He is also interested in manuscripts and the editing of Syriac and Arabic (especially Christian Arabic) texts. He is working on a book entitled *Lovers of Labor at the End of the Ancient World: Syriac Scholars Between Byzantium and Islam*.

Moulie Vidas is Associate Professor of Religion and the Program in Judaic Studies. His recent publications include *Tradition and the Formation of the Talmud* (Princeton University Press, 2014) and a collection of essays, co-edited with Catherine Chin, titled *Late Ancient Knowing: Explorations in Intellectual History* (University of California Press, 2015). He serves on the editorial boards of the book series *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism and The Journal of Religion in the Roman Empire*. He is currently working on a book titled *The Emergence of Talmudic Culture: Scholarship and Religion in Late Ancient Palestine*.

Jenny Wiley Legath is Associate Director of the Center and served as Acting Director for the 2019-2020 academic year. She specializes in American religious history, focusing on gender from the nineteenth century to the present. Her first book, *Sanctified Sisters: A History of Protestant Deaconesses*, was released by New York University Press in 2019. Her new project addresses carrying firearms as religious practice. She sits with the Committee as a non-voting member.

Faculty Associates

Faculty Associates are members of the University faculty who have expressed particular interest in the activities of the Center and who help advise Center staff about relevant activities and interests in their respective departments. Complete descriptions of their publications and research and teaching interests are available from the Center’s website for students interested in knowing more about faculty resources in the study of religion.

Christopher Achen is the Roger Williams Straus Professor of Social Sciences, Emeritus and Professor of Politics, Emeritus.

Leora Batnitzky is the Ronald O. Perelman Professor of Jewish Studies and Professor of Religion. Her teaching and research interests include philosophy of religion, modern Jewish thought, hermeneutics, and contemporary legal and political theory.

John Borneman is Professor of Anthropology. With regard to religious studies, he explores the displacement of the sacred in and through secular processes.

D. Graham Burnett is Professor of History. His interests include the history of natural history and the sciences of the earth and the sea from the 17th through the 19th centuries.

Michael Cadden is Senior Lecturer in Theater, and Chair in the Peter B. Lewis Center for the Creative and Performing Arts. His areas of interest include modern and contemporary theater, Shakespeare

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in performance, and Australian literature and theater.

Michael Cook is Class of 1943 University Professor of Near Eastern Studies. His focus is the formation of Islamic civilization and the role played by religious values in that process.

Rafaela Dancygier is Professor of Politics and International Affairs. She researches the domestic consequences of international immigration, the incorporation of immigrants, the political representation of ethnic minorities, and the determinants of ethnic conflict.

Mitchell Duneier is Professor of Sociology and Chair, Department of Sociology. He is the author most recently of *Ghetto: The Invention of a Place, the History of an Idea*.

Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi is Professor of Near Eastern Studies. Currently, he is working on a project on Mystical Modernity, a comparative study of philosophy of history and political theory of Walter Benjamin and Ali Shariati.

Eddie S. Gaude Jr. is James S. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor of African American Studies. His research interests include American pragmatism and African American religious history and its place in American public life.

Anthony Grafton is Henry Putnam University Professor of History. His interests lie in the cultural history of Renaissance Europe, the history of books and readers, the history of scholarship and education in the West from Antiquity to the 19th century, and the history of science from Antiquity to the Renaissance.

Eric Gregory is Professor of Religion. His interests include religious and philosophical ethics, theology, political theory, law and religion, and the role of religion in public life.

Jonathan Gribetz is Associate Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Studies and in the Program in Judaic Studies. He researches the history of Zionism, Palestine, Israel, Jerusalem, and nationalism in the modern Middle East.

Olga P. Hasty is Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures. She devotes herself primarily to poets of the nineteenth century and the modernist period (e.g. Pushkin, Pavlova, Pasternak, and Tsvetaeva).

Amaney Jamal is Edwards S. Sanford Professor of Politics. Her areas of specialization are the Middle East and North Africa, mass and political behavior, political development and democratization, inequality and economic segregation, Muslim Immigration (US and Europe), gender, race, religion, and class.

Michael Jennings is Class of 1900 Professor of Modern Languages and Professor of German. His research and teaching focus on 20th century European literature, photography, and cultural theory.

Beatrice Kitzinger is Assistant Professor of Art and Archaeology. Her research examines intersections of artistic media, of pictorial and liturgical space, and of historical, eschatological, and ritual time primarily in manuscript illumination between the eighth and tenth centuries.

Eve Krakowski is Assistant Professor of Near Eastern Studies and the Program in Judaic Studies. She focuses on social history of the medieval Middle East, with particular interest in women’s history, family history, and the history of religious practice.

Christina Lee is Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese. Her research examines Hispanic-Asian forms of religious devotions in the Spanish Philippines during the early colonial period.

Hendrik Lorenz is Professor of Philosophy. His research centers on Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics and Plotinus, focusing on issues in (moral) psychology and epistemology.

Carolina Mangone is Assistant Professor of Art and Archaeology. She specializes in southern Renaissance and Baroque art and is currently researching Gianlorenzo Bernini, the “Michelangelo of his age”.

Meredith Martin is Associate Professor of English. She specializes in anglophone poetry, historical prosody, historical poetics, poetry and public culture, and disciplinary and pedagogical history.

Jan-Werner Müller is the Roger Williams Straus Professor of Social Sciences and Professor of Politics. His research interests include the history of modern political thought, liberalism and its critics, constitutionalism, religion and politics, and the normative dimensions of European integration.



Undergraduate students at Carolyn Chen's October 24th event

Chika Okeke-Agulu is Professor of Art and Archaeology. He specializes in African and African Diaspora art and visual cultures, with a particular interest in the history of modernism in Africa and the intersection of art and politics in modern and contemporary art.

Elaine Pagels is Harrington Spear Paine Foundation Professor of Religion. She has published widely on Gnosticism and early Christianity and continues to pursue research interests in late antiquity.

Sara S. Poor is Professor of German. Her primary research interests are in the areas of Gender Studies and medieval German literature.

Jamie Reuland is Assistant Professor of Music. Her work focuses on music of the later Middle Ages: song, language, and philosophies of music.

Lauren Coyle Rosen is Assistant Professor of Anthropology. Her research and teaching interests lie at the intersections of legal and political anthropology, comparative religion and spirituality, aesthetics and consciousness, subjectivity and epistemology, and critical theory.

Carolyn Rouse is the Ritter Professor of Anthropology. Her work explores the use of evidence to make particular claims about race and social inequality.

Marina Rustow is Khedouri A. Zilkha Professor of Jewish Civilization in the Near East. She is a social historian of the medieval Middle East, who works primarily with sources from the Cairo Geniza.

Esther Schor is Leonard L. Milberg '53 Professor of American Jewish Studies and Professor of English. She is a poet and founding Chair of the Committee on American Jewish Studies. Her teaching interests

include British Romanticism and literature, Scripture, and religion.

Teresa Shawcross is Associate Professor of History and Hellenic Studies. She is a historian of the Byzantine Empire and the Mediterranean World in the Middle Ages who is currently studying medieval theories and practices of empire.

Nigel Smith is William and Annie S. Paton Foundation Professor of Ancient and Modern Literature. His interests include poetry, poetic theory, the social role of literature, literature, politics and religion.

Barbara White is Professor of Music. She is a chamber music composer whose scholarly writings address the coordination between sound and image, the relationship between creative activity and everyday life, and the impact on music of gender, listening and spirituality.

Tamsen Wolff is Associate Professor of English. She specializes in modern and contemporary drama and performance, gender studies, cultural studies, voice, directing, and dramaturgy.

Muhammad Qasim Zaman is Robert H. Niehaus '77 Professor of Near Eastern Studies and Religion. His research interests include religious authority in classical, medieval, and modern Islam; history of Islamic law in the Middle East and in late medieval and modern South Asia; learning in Islam; Islamic political thought; and contemporary religious and political movements in the Muslim world.

Shaping the Study of Religion



By listening to a variety of topics—ranging from reconstruction of memory in early modern Germany to worship of local deities in a Taiwanese island—in every weekly workshop, I became more able to appreciate diverse approaches to “religion,” a dynamic force in shaping substrata of cultures and societies.

—**Kentaro Ide**
Graduate Student Fellow



Being a CCSR Fellow has enabled me to think more capaciously about how religion operates in everyday life and across disciplines. In particular, conversing on the many manifestations “religion” can take allowed me to think about the racialization of religion and provided an invaluable framing for my dissertation.

—**Ferdose Idris**
Graduate Student Fellow



Up until my time as a CCSR fellow, I had spent much of my graduate time at Princeton among European historians. This year allowed me to expand my mind each week beyond history and beyond Europe. I found philosophical and anthropological approaches to religion enlightening, and learning about Buddhism and Hinduism in modern religious studies reframed how I use religion in my own work.

—**William Theiss**
Graduate Student Fellow

Center Events

Throughout the year, the Center sponsored many public lectures, discussions and symposia this year. We were able to return to hosting most events in person, many with an accompanying livestream. These events attracted the interest of students, faculty, and the wider community. Video recordings of most events are available on the Center's website. In addition to financial support from Princeton University, the Center's public events are funded through a variety of sources. Full sponsorship information is available on our website.



Clockwise from top left: Carolyn Chen and Lauren R. Kerby; Amod Lele and Charles Goodman; Beth Singler and Suzanne van Geuns; John L. Modern and Suzanne van Geuns

Participants at the workshop on C.W. Huntington's *What I Don't Know About Death: Reflections on Buddhism and Mortality*



September 9-10, 2022

A Workshop on C.W. Huntington's *What I Don't Know About Death: Reflections on Buddhism and Mortality*

Speakers including Jonathan Gold, Leora Batnitzky, Dan Arnold and William Edelglass spoke and led discussion groups with invited graduate students on C.W. Huntington's *What I Don't Know about Death: Reflections on Buddhism and Morality*. The Buddhist Studies scholar C.W. ("Sandy") Huntington—well known for his seminal work of Sanskrit translation and philosophical interpretation, *The Emptiness of Emptiness*—was writing a manuscript about a Buddhist approach to the meaning of death when he was diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer. The result is a deeply personal contemplation of the meaning of death in a Buddhist worldview, with philosophy and textual scholarship intertwined with

moving autobiography. Participants used Huntington's work to center questions about the place of existential questions in the study of religion, the various roles and obligations of academic scholars of religion, and the meaningful pedagogical modes of religious studies. They engaged presentations on Buddhism, existential philosophy, and religious studies pedagogy.

September 16, 2022

Doctrine and Practice beyond Borders: International Interactions in East Asian Buddhism A Numata Visiting Scholar Fund Workshop

This international workshop featured eleven speakers, including four from Japan: Bryan Lowe, co-organizer; Mayuko Kawakami, co-organizer; Michael Como; Paul Groner; Abigail MacBain; Lori Meeks; Moro Shigeki; Murakami Akiya; Ōtani Yuka; Jackie Stone; and

Xingyi Wang. This workshop placed Japanese Buddhism in a transnational perspective. The speakers argued that Japanese Buddhism was formed in dialogue with its neighbors and that these early exchanges had long-lasting implications. As such, the workshop stressed the need to consider Japan in relation to Korean and Chinese Buddhism. It also proposed that scholars consider Japan not only as a passive recipient of continental traditions, as has typically been the case, but also as an active participant in shaping an interactive East Asian Buddhism. The workshop focused especially on a formative period in the history of Japanese Buddhism: the sixth century through the ninth centuries. The period under study is arguably the most cosmopolitan period in Japanese history prior to the modern era. Buddhism entered Japan in the mid-sixth century. A king from Paekche, a kingdom on the Korean peninsula, sent Buddhist

Participants at “Doctrine and Practice Beyond Borders” workshop



texts and images to Japan as an official diplomatic gesture. From the beginning, therefore, Buddhism was tied to international relations. With the fall of Paekche in the seventh century, large numbers of people fled as refugees to Japan, bringing new Buddhist practices and ideas with them. Japan also began sending students to study abroad, directing many to China to learn from masters on the continent and import the latest texts and most reliable manuscripts. These official embassies ended in the ninth-century, marking a closing point to this especially cosmopolitan era. But the legacy of this exchange would continue to influence Japanese Buddhism for centuries to come. This workshop documented these developments and reflected upon models for how to understand these interactions. The workshop was well attended and introduced the latest research

on exchange between Japan and its East Asian neighbors.

September 29, 2022
Ochumaré’s Rainbow and the River Maid: Queerness in Black Atlantic Religion

A Crossroads Project event
 Khytie Brown, University of Texas at Austin, and Elizabeth Pérez, University of California, Santa Barbara, in conversation with Ahmad Greene-Hayes, Harvard Divinity School

October 16, 2022
Religion in Houston’s Pan-African Community: A Conversation with Charlotte O’Neal, Exiled Original Black Panther
 A Crossroads Project event

October 24, 2022
Work, Pray, Code: Religion and the Public Conversation with

Carolyn Chen, the University of California-Berkeley

Sociologist Carolyn Chen focuses on religion, spirituality, and work in the new economy, as well as Asian American religions. Her newest book *Work Pray Code* reveals how tech giants are reshaping spirituality to serve their religion of peak productivity. Silicon Valley is known for its lavish perks, intense work culture, and spiritual gurus. *Work Pray Code* explores how tech companies are bringing religion into the workplace in ways that are replacing traditional places of worship, blurring the line between work and religion and transforming the very nature of spiritual experience in modern life. CCSR Associate Research Scholar Lauren Kerby led Chen in a conversation about this work and its implications for the study of religion.

CENTER EVENTS

October 25, 2022
Sovereigns as Bodhisattva and Cakravartin

Buddhist Studies Workshop with Mayuko Kawakami, Osaka University; Numata Visiting Scholar
 Since King Ashoka became a Cakravartin, after a long gap, sovereigns who became Cakravartin began to appear in various parts of Asia around the sixth century. In the same period, sovereigns who became Bodhisattva also began to appear, and China probably gives us the best example of this epoch in Asian history. The importance of Buddhism in foreign relations also emerged with the arrival of sovereigns who had acquired Buddhist legitimacy. This lecture will focus on the relationship between Buddhism and kingship in the 6th century and its influence on foreign relations.

November 4, 2022
Śāntideva: Utilitarian or Eudaimonist? Discussion between Charles Goodman, Binghamton University, SUNY, and Amod Lele, Boston University

What Western philosophical terms should be used to describe traditional Buddhist ethical reflection, and what is the value of using such terms? Charles Goodman and Amod Lele explored these questions through a discussion of the eighth-century Indian Buddhist philosopher Śāntideva (Shantideva), known as the Dalai Lama’s favorite philosopher and arguably the most systematic ethical thinker in classical India. In Goodman’s influential interpretation, Śāntideva is best described as a utilitarian. Lele rejects this interpretation and claims, contra Goodman, that Śāntideva is better described as a eudaimonist. In this conversation, the two scholars debated the merits of these respective interpretations.

November 15, 2022
AI and the Future of Religion Religion and the Public Conversation with Beth Singler, University of Zurich

Beth Singler explores the social, ethical, philosophical, and religious implications of advances in Artificial

Intelligence and robotics. A social and digital anthropologist, Singler has also produced documentary films as part of her public scholarship. Singler explored the AI landscape with CCSR Postdoctoral Fellow Suzanne van Geuns.

November 29, 2022
Human Morality in the Digital Age Religion and the Public Conversation with Molly Crockett, Department of Psychology and the University Center for Human Values

Molly Crockett studies how people learn and make decisions in social situations. Their lab’s recent work focuses on moral cognition—how people decide whether to help or harm, punish or forgive, trust or condemn—in the digital age. Crockett engaged in conversation with CCSR Graduate Student Fellow Enoch Kuo.

December 13, 2022
Ethnography and Black Religions A Crossroads Project event

Judith Weisenfeld, Princeton University, moderated this discussion with Judith Casselberry, Bowdoin College; N. Fadeke Castor, Northeastern University; KB Dennis Meade, Northwestern University; Eziaku Nwokocha, University of Miami; and Todne Thomas, Harvard University. These scholars from anthropology, religious studies, and African American studies use ethnographic approaches to explore African diaspora religions in North America and the Caribbean. They shared their exciting and important research projects, considered what ethnography offers the field of Black religious studies, discussed methods and ethics in ethnographic study of

Enoch Kuo interviews Molly Crockett



Black religions, and explored future directions for research.

February 10, 2023

Kōshiki and Music in Japanese Sōtō Zen

Buddhist Studies Workshop with Michaela Mross, Stanford University. Although Zen is often depicted as a silent tradition focused on seated meditation (*zazen* 坐禪), Sōtō clerics have performed a wide range of rituals featuring a colorful soundscape since the 13th century. Among these rituals, we find ceremonies belonging to the liturgical genre of *kōshiki* 講式, a genre that was developed in the context of Tendai Pure Land belief in the late 10th century and that represents a milestone in the development of a vernacular liturgy in Japan. Based on her new book *Memory, Music, Manuscripts* (University of Hawaii Press), Mross discussed the historical development of these rituals and their performance practice. After explaining how clerics vocalize the ritual texts, she analyzed how contemporary Zen clerics interpret the performance of *kōshiki* and the singing of liturgical texts. Mross suggested that we need to understand Zen as a bodily practice accompanied by a rich aural component.

February 13, 2023

Building a Community with Vertical Video: A Toolkit Event with Sophia Smith Galer

Sophia Smith Galer is a multi-award-winning reporter, author and TikTok creator based in London—making content for over 450,000 followers



Sophia Smith Galer

around the world. A former religion reporter for the BBC, she is now a Senior News Reporter at VICE World News covering Europe, the Middle East and Africa and is the author of *Losing It: Sex Education for the 21st Century*. Smith Galer shared her experience turning evidence-based research into accessible videos for a broad audience.



Right
Lively discussion at the “Mind and Representation” workshop

February 16, 2023

Medieval African Writing Technologies: Religion and the Public Conversation with Wendy Laura Belcher and Mehari Worku

Wendy Laura Belcher, Professor in the Department of Comparative Literature and Department for African American Studies, and Mehari Worku, a Ph.D. candidate at Catholic University of America, are collaborating on the Princeton Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Egyptian Miracles of Mary Project, interpreting original miracle stories about the Virgin Mary, written from the 1300s into the 1900s. They discussed the role of technology in the transmission of these stories, from the traditional Orthodox sung liturgy to writing in the language of Ge’ez.

February 17, 2023

Mind and Representation: Approaches from German Idealist and Buddhist Philosophies

Organized by Postdoctoral Fellow in Philosophy and Religion Alexander

CENTER EVENTS

The Doll Lecture on Religion and Money



Rosalind Morris

February 23, 2023

The “Cross of Gold” Revisited: Money and Populism in the Age of Empire
The Doll Lecture on Religion and Money with Rosalind Morris, Columbia University

Morris painted for her audience a sweeping picture of the historical development of gold mining in South Africa at the turn of the twentieth century. She asserted that the history of the international gold standard, grounded in British and American colonialism in the long wake of slavery, is inextricable from the history of hydrocyanidization. In both metallurgical technology and the organization of the modern economy as a biopolitical project organized on the basis of race, separation was the principal strategy. The separation of gold from pyritic rock and the separation of workers by race were linked not just through analogy but epistemically, materially, and in every other way.

The Doll Lecture on Religion and Money was established in 2007 by Henry C. Doll '58 and his family. It reflects the family’s longstanding interest in the subject of philanthropy and its relationship with religion. The purpose of the lectureship is to bring distinguished speakers to Princeton University who will inspire students, faculty, and the campus community toward a greater understanding of the many—and often neglected—relationships between religion and money in our own time and historically.

Photograph of gold by Rosalind Morris



Right
Jenny Wiley Legath
interviews Mona
Oraby

Englert, this day-long workshop brought together a dozen invited specialists in Buddhist and Continental philosophy. The conversation alternated between close study of selections from German Idealist philosophers Fichte, Shelling and Hegel and selections from the Buddhist Yogācāra tradition, delving deeply into the common issues of mind, representation, emptiness, and the proper methods for coming to know reality. There was no formal requirement whatsoever that any given Buddhist or German philosophers be brought into comparison. Connections and divergences were expected, and, indeed, did emerge organically throughout the conversation. While the primary focus was on themes of how one relates to the world as a conscious being, the conversation opened into unexpected areas of discourse. By the end of the day, further resonances and tensions were uncovered regarding the nature of conceptuality, how one might conceive of liberation or freedom cross-culturally, and questions about how philosophical theory relates to practice.

February 27, 2023

Manyness in the Sanskrit Mahābhārata

Lecture by Neil Shapiro Hawley, Harvard University

Hindu Lecture Series, Co-sponsored with the Hindu Life Program

March 1, 2023

A Universe of Terms: Religion in Visual Metaphor
A Conversation with Mona Oraby

Mona Oraby is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Howard



University and Editor of *The Immanent Frame*, a digital publication of the Social Science Research Council that advances scholarly debate on secularism, religion, and the public sphere. She is the creator, with Emilie Flamme, of *A Universe of Terms: Religion in Visual Metaphor*. Organized around eight terms in the study of religion, the groundbreaking *Universe of Terms* combines text and image to examine the human as both catalyst of crisis and principal agent for its mitigation. In conversation with Associate Director Jenny Wiley Legath, and joined by Agate Brown and George L. Collord Professor of Religion and contributor Judith Weisenfeld, Oraby shared the creative process that produced this innovative text and speculated on the future for such multi-modal scholarly productions.

March 2, 2023

In Pursuit of Companionship: Hansen's Disease in the Jōdo Shinshū Moral Imagination
Buddhist Studies Workshop with Jessica Starling, Lewis and Clark College

In premodern Japan, Hansen's disease (or leprosy, as it is better known) evoked a mixture of fascination, pity, and awe, and was often described as a "karmic retribution disease." The discourse on Hansen's disease has since shifted to a more medical one, but those who visibly suffer from the effects of the *mycobacterium leprae* retain a powerful affective charge related to their perceived singular misfortune. Survivors, many of whom live in one of the country's thirteen state-run sanitariums, are still cast as objects for the moral practice of able-bodied, compassionate agents, whether Buddhist, Christian, or secular humanitarian. In this talk, Starling drew on ethnographic fieldwork among contemporary Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist volunteers at leprosaria across Japan to explore the tension between "solidarity and inequality" that inheres in charity work (Fassin 2012). In the Jōdo Shinshū, with its radical emphasis on the other-power (*tariki*) of Amitabha's vows, the prescribed response to suffering is in fact not one of compassion (*jihī* or *jizen*), but

CENTER EVENTS

rather companionship (*dōbō*). Truly egalitarian companionship is an elusive ideal, however, and Starling demonstrated how Buddhist ethics are actively negotiated by practitioners on emotional terrain.

March 23, 2023

Get to the Verb: How to Write for a Public Audience

A Toolkit Workshop with Lauren Kerby, Associate Research Scholar

Veteran writer of public scholarship Lauren Kerby led faculty, postdocs, and graduate and undergraduate students in hands-on exercises designed to turn scholarship into accessible prose structured for non-specialist audiences. Participants learned how to refine their ideas and how and *when* to pitch relevant op-eds to major platforms.

March 25, 2023

Art and Devotion: New Accounts of Religious Culture, Race, and Gender in the United States

Co-sponsored with the Department of Religion

Organized by Wallace Best, Hughes-Rogers Professor of Religion and African American Studies

This symposium was the second installment of the Princeton Graduate Book Forum. It featured *Lift Every Voice and Swing: Black Musicians and Religious Culture in the Jazz Century*, by Vaughn A. Booker and *Lifeblood of the Parish: Men and Catholic Devotion in Williamsburg Brooklyn*, by Alyssa Maldonado-Estrada. Six invited panelists all gave fabulous presentations on the books, after which the authors gave extensive responses to the presentations in addition to

responses to the thoughtful questions during the Q&A. This added an even greater dimension to the engagement with the books and provided an excellent example for the current graduate students, who are writing dissertations that are certain to become book manuscripts in a few years. The capstone of the day was the stirring "symposium summary" provided by Jonathan Lee Walton, new President of Princeton Theological Seminary. Walton brilliantly summarized all the perspectives on the books while making important and striking connections, not only to the field of religious studies, but also to the work of Princeton scholars of religion, a few of whom were in the audience. The stunning address was the perfect conclusion to an engaging event.

March 27, 2023

Religion, the Secular, and Machines in Between

Religion and the Public Conversation with John L. Modern, Franklin & Marshall College

John L. Modern is the author most recently of *Neuromatic; or, a Particular History of Religion and the Brain*. He is also the Principal Investigator for *Machines in Between* (2021-23), a multi-media project funded by the Henry Luce Foundation and the Center for Sustained Engagement with Lancaster. Modern and Postdoctoral Fellow Suzanne van Geuns explored together how the brain became the locus of who we are, taking the audience on a journey from Jonathan Edwards's imprint on cognitive science to electrical shocks being administered in the making of

both a heterosexual mind and the "normal" religious person.

March 29, 2023

Bhimrao Ambedkar, John Dewey, and the Evolution of Navayana Buddhism

Buddhist Studies Workshop with Scott Stroud, University of Texas

Bhimrao Ambedkar is well known for his roles in anti-caste activism in India and his work in orchestrating vital parts of India's democratic constitution. He was also famous at the end of his life for proffering a controversial new vision of Buddhism that was designed to create democratic communities and resist caste oppression. Uniting these concerns was a lifelong interest in themes, methods, and ideals from one of Ambedkar's most important teachers, John Dewey. In this talk, Scott R. Stroud discussed some of the themes in his most recent book, *The Evolution of Pragmatism in India: Ambedkar, Dewey, and the Rhetoric of Reconstruction*, and illustrated the extensive influence of American pragmatism on Ambedkar's development, along with his creative appropriation and rejection of parts of Dewey's thought to rethink Buddhism's social potentials.

March 29, 2023

Averting Cosmic Catastrophe: Ending the Intersectarian Debate between Arjuna and Aśvatthāman
Lecture by Shubha Pathak, American University

Hindu Lecture Series, Co-sponsored with the Hindu Life Program

Yin-Chen Distinguished Lecture in Buddhism

April 3, 2023

Theravada Buddhist Responses to Colonialism and their Modern Implications
Yin-Cheng Distinguished Lecture in Buddhism by Kate Crosby, Balliol College, Oxford University
With a response by Alicia Turner, York University

The warfare, disease and disruption to the status quo that came with European colonialism to the countries of Theravada Buddhism seemed to fulfill ancient predictions of the calamities that would attend the decline of the Buddhist religion. In their responses to the practical and conceptual challenges of colonialism, Buddhists took inspiration from the canonical and commentarial texts that contained both such predictions and potential countermeasures. These texts thus inspired

both adaptive and conservative responses aimed at preserving the Buddha's teaching and maintaining the availability of spiritual progress. Despite finding inspiration in the same texts, the resulting forms of Buddhism have often taken markedly opposite directions, ranging from secularized and modernist approaches on the one hand, to the reactionary and fundamentalist approaches on the other. Examples of adaptive responses include modern Mindfulness, the dismissal or reinterpretation of traditional cosmology and rebirth from Theosophy onwards, and 'common-sense' interpretations of Buddhist ritual or monastic rules. In contrast, all of these types of response have been the subject of non-Dharma/non-Vinaya, or 'heresy and malpractice', trials in modern Myanmar, with

defendants being found guilty for straying from the detailed teachings on these subjects found in the Pali canon, commentaries and Abhidhamma. Crosby's talk illustrated the different directions taken to protect Buddhism from colonialism in different Theravada countries and the ramifications for both Theravada and global Buddhism today.

Launched in September 2021, the Yin-Cheng Distinguished Lecture Series (印證佛學傑出學術系列講座) is a collaborative, multi-university partnership, established in honor of Venerable Cheng-yen 證嚴, founder of Tzu Chi, and her mentor Yinshun 印順 (1906–2005), with the goal of promoting topics in Buddhist studies.

Left
Kate Crosby
Right
Alicia Turner



CENTER EVENTS

Ariyanne Colston interviews LeRhonda Manigault-Bryant



April 4, 2023

Buddhism and International Humanitarian Law

A workshop with Kate Crosby, Balliol College, Oxford University

April 10, 2023

Black Girls Fly: Ruminations on Religion, Race, and Technologies
LeRhonda Manigault-Bryant, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Employing research that straddles the disciplines of religion, anthropology, art, music, and media, Manigault-Bryant explores how Black women throughout the Diaspora engage religion and spirituality to navigate the contours of life. Manigault-Bryant reflected on her scholarship and its intersection with the technologies of drone piloting and filmmaking with Religion Department graduate student Ariyanne Colston.

April 13, 2023

Finding your Way into the Web: A Toolkit Workshop with Suzanne van Geuns, Postdoctoral Research Fellow

The internet is central to public conversations but conspicuously absent from historical scholarship. This event presented practical tips and tricks for treating the internet as a public archive capable of shedding new light on the past forty years. Undergraduate and graduate students, along with faculty and fellows, participated in this hands-on workshop.

April 13, 2023

Mahābhārata Storytelling as Therapy for Contemporary Veterans
Lecture by Rodney Sebastian, Manhattan College

Hindu Lecture Series, Co-sponsored with the Hindu Life Program

April 20, 2023

"Grieve Not" Admonitions Against Grief as Voiced by Key Characters in the Mahabharata
Lecture by Shiv K. Subramaniam, Emory University

Co-sponsored with the Office of Religious Life Hindu Life Program

April 24, 2023

A Book Talk on Heathen: Religion and Race in American History
Kathryn Gin Lum, Stanford University

Co-sponsored with the Effron Center for the Study of America
 In the sweeping historical narrative of her recent book, Kathryn Gin Lum shows how the idea of the heathen has been maintained from the colonial era to the present in religious and secular discourses — discourses, specifically, of race.



Left to right:
Tao Jiang, Curie Virág, and Stephen F. Teiser

April 26, 2023
Emotions and the Composition of Personhood in Early Medieval China
Buddhist Studies Workshop with Curie Virág, University of Edinburgh

Curie Virág is a specialist in the philosophy and intellectual history of early and middle period China, working on ethics, epistemology, and moral psychology, especially in relation to the emotions. She is the author of *The Emotions in Early Chinese Philosophy* and is at work on her second monograph, tentatively titled *Emotional Worlds: Self, Community and Cosmos in Medieval China*. Tao Jiang, Rutgers University, offered a response.

June 2, 2023
The Sonic Souls of Black Folk: Sacred Sound and Black Religion in America
A Crossroads event

This hybrid event at Stanford University featured panelists Vaughn A. Booker, Dartmouth College; Ralph Craig III, Stanford University; Ambre Dromgoole, Yale University; James Hill, University of Oklahoma; Alisha Jones, University of Cambridge; Alphonso F. Saville IV, Princeton University; Maurice Wallace, Rutgers University.

Throughout American history, the rich sound of black sacred expression has colored the American cultural landscape. Sacred sound

has been a medium through which black communities have raised protest, advanced social movements, challenged ideologies, mourned injustices, and given praise. Various forms of black sonics—instrumental music, vocalized and chanted sermons, gospel choirs, percussive repetitions, poetry, and shouts of agony and exuberance—constitute black sacred sound. This collective reflection explored how the category of “sacred sound” enables new understandings of black religion in America. Panelists considered what sets of data, resources, repositories, and methods of study are most useful for theorizing the category of black sacred sound and considered how the study of black aural traditions enables new ways of understanding relationships between gender, sexuality, performance, and religion. The Sonic Souls of Black Folk symposium offered a dialogical exchange with both contemporary and ancestral interlocutors, aiming not only to invoke previous generations of scholarly wisdom but also to cast new visions for the future of African American religious studies.

June 13-15, 2023
Ritual and Materiality in Buddhism and Asian Religions International Conference, sponsored by the Glorison Global Buddhist Network

Performance, ritualized actions, and praxis are central to Buddhism and the religions of Asia, and recently, scholarship has begun to appreciate the importance of objects and the human body in ritual. This multi-day conference, organized by Stephen F. Teiser, D.T. Suzuki Professor in Buddhist Studies, and Shih-shan

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Susan Huang, Rice University, was intended to foster work that explores the connections between ritual and different forms of materiality, including manuscripts, printed liturgies, paintings, images, statues, talismans, other ritual implements and technologies, and bodily

engagement. LIU Shu-fen, Academia Sinica, gave the keynote lecture, “The Arhat Cave Belief in Four Stele Inscriptions and the Daitokuji Paintings of *Five Hundred Arhats*.” Laurel Kendall, American Museum of Natural History, and Justin McDaniel, University of Pennsylvania, served

as respondents for the panels in which 21 scholars from Asia, Europe, and North America discussed their pre-circulated papers. In addition, 20 Ph.D. students from across the globe received funding to travel to Princeton to take part in the discussion.



Clockwise from top left: Shih-shan Susan Huang, Echo Weng, and Shu-fen Liu; Stephen F. Teiser; Graduate Student workers: Kentaro Ide, Junbin Tan, Sinae Kim, and Echo Weng; Participants dined and heard student presentations in the Chancellor Green rotunda

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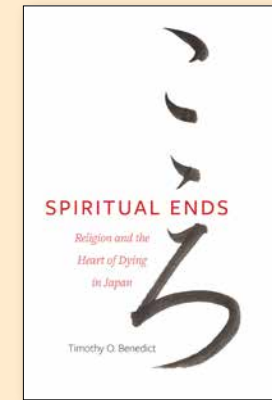
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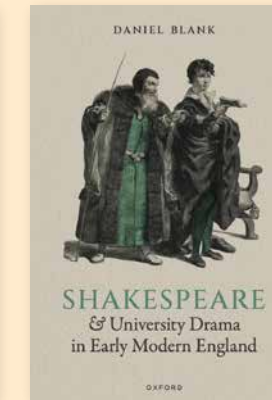
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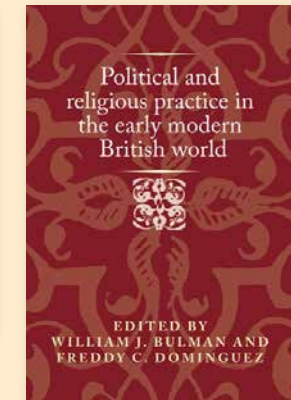
Timothy O. Benedict



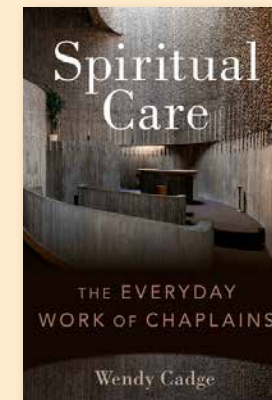
Daniel Blank



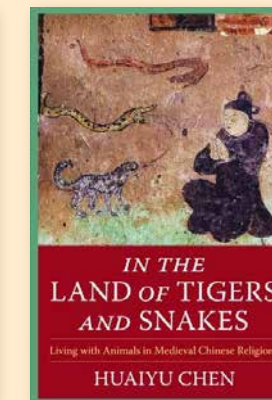
Holly Borham



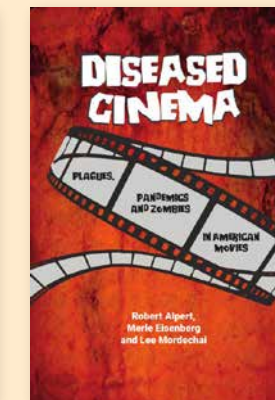
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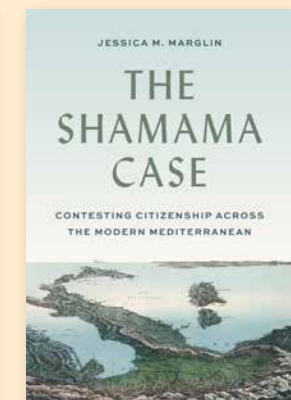
Wendy Cadge



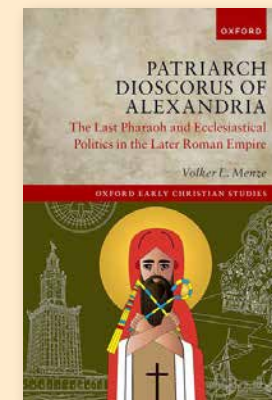
Huaiyu Chen



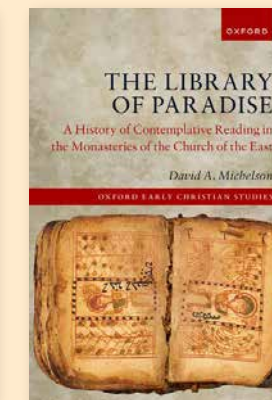
Merle Eisenberg, Robert Alpert and Lee Mordechai



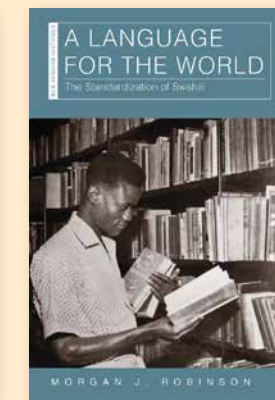
Jessica Marglin



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Next Year

Visiting Fellows

Alphonso Saville IV and Suzanne van Geuns both continue their work at CCSR in 2023-2024.

Tenzin Bhuchung

As an ethnic Tibetan, Bhuchung has pursued both traditional and modern academic training in Buddhist studies. Before receiving his doctorate at Emory, he trained at the Central University for Tibetan Studies, India, studying Buddhist philosophy, Sanskrit and classical Tibetan. His dissertation, “Gampopa’s Mahāmudrā: View, Meditation and Conduct,” explored the Mahāmudrā tradition’s doctrine, corresponding meditative practices and foundational ethics. At Princeton, Bhuchung will pursue the reception of Gampopa’s doctrines in Tibet, examining the main critiques and how his tradition responds to them.



Lauren K. McCormick

Lauren K. McCormick will be joining CCSR this Fall as a Postdoctoral Research Associate. McCormick works with written and visual sources from the biblical world, using emergent imaging technology to detect and reconstruct paint on ancient artifacts, increasing the data through which they may be analyzed. At Princeton she will create a video podcast using ancient figurines as a proxy to discuss issues

affecting today. McCormick has worked to expand the parameters (iconographic, material, affectual) through which Judean Pillar Figurines are understood by digitally restoring their paint. In each episode, she will interview a trailblazing scholar about a topic that these figurines or their study invite. Subjects of interest include gender diversity and pronouns, the timelessness of emotions, intellectual honesty in AI-based research, the popular appeal of nude art through time, racism in the recolorization of ancient artifacts, and new materialism. The video podcast will explore various cutting-edge technologies, approaches, and ideas currently driving Religious Studies, aiming to help the audience navigate sensitive social issues as they interrogate the production and dissemination of knowledge today.

AI fresco conversation following Amod Lele and Charles Goodman’s conversation.



Graduate Student Fellows

Akrish Adhikari, French and Italian, “Teledrumming (1922-1971)”
Kim Akano, Religion, “The Scramble for African Students: Religion, Race, and African Migration to the United States, 1890-1970”

Michael Brill, Near Eastern Studies, “Ba’thism in One Country: The Political Life and Afterlife of Michel ‘Aflaq in Iraq”

Rachel Brown-Weistock, Sociology and Social Policy, “Navigating the Narrative Rupture: How a Bible Belt Community Negotiated America’s ‘Racial Reckoning””

Aysenur Cam, Religion, “Nature and Meaning: Approaching a Qur’anic Epistemology”

Kelly Carlton, Religion, “Children in Medieval Chinese Buddhism: Discourses on Ethics and Practice”

Emily Chesley, History, “A Social History of Women in Late Roman Syria, 5th-8th c.”

Simon Conrad, Near Eastern Studies, “Reanimating Modernity: Mysticism in Modern Arabic Thought, 1919-1967”

Ipsita Dey, Anthropology, “Capacities for Life and Belonging on Indo-Fijian Farmscapes

Matthew Dowd, History, “French Catholicism and the Challenge of Industrialization: A Reinterpretation of Catholic Responses to Political Economy”

Matthieu Dutil, French and Italian, “Shamanism and Animism in

Contemporary French Literature: Re-voicing the Non-human Animal”

Eliav Grossman, Religion, “The New Mishnah: A Lost Literature of Jewish Late Antiquity and the Early Islamic Era”

Rebekah Haigh, Religion, “Scripting Identity: (En)Gendering Violence in the War Scroll and the Book of Revelation”

Hasan Hameed, History, “Ethics and Erotics: The reception of Persian literature and the remaking of Islam in colonial India”

Kentaro Ide, Religion, “Hōnen and the Buddhist Soteriology of Evildoers”

Manav Kapur, History, “Bounding Nations, Making Citizens: Partition, Property and Citizenship in Postcolonial South Asia (1947-1965)”

Navjit Kaur, Anthropology, “Between Islam and Finance: Futures of Saving(s) in Muslim Punjab, India”

Sinae Kim, Religion, “Preaching Buddhism in Medieval China: Sutra Lecture Texts and Performance”

Albert Kohn, History, “God’s Day of Rest: Jews, Christians and the Sabbath in High Medieval Europe”

Nura Sophia Liepsner, Religion, “Cosmologies of Unity in Late-Ottoman Islam”

Omri Matarasso, History, “The Confessionalization of Northern Mesopotamia between Byzantium, Sasanian Iran, and Early Islam (500-900 CE)”

Aleksander Musial, Art and Archaeology, “Immersion: Eastern

European transformations of hygiene architecture, ca. 1610-1830”

Sarah Norvell, Classics, “The Persistent Past: Memory, Material Culture, and Social Practice in Crete and Lakonia, c. 1100-480 BCE”

Jae Pi, Religion, “Buddhist Hermeneutics and Intention: A Reading of Vasubandhu’s Proper Mode of Exposition”

Mélèna Sims-Laudig, Religion, “‘Her Country’s Children’: African American Religion and Childhood in Slavery and Freedom”

Jordan K. Skinner, English, “Medieval Curfew: Poetic Space and the Governance of Time”

Jeremy Stitts, History, “How the West was Won: Emperors, Bishops, and the Creation of Christian Capitals”

Junbin Tan, Anthropology, “Moving Gods, Moving Time: Intimate Sovereignty and Cosmological Anxieties at Taiwan’s Border with China”

Constantine Theodoridis, History, “The Sultan’s Promise: European-Ottoman Rituals of ‘League and Friendship’ (1590-1780)”

Emma Thompson, Religion, “Indian Secularism and the Muslim Other: Queer Activism in Northern India”

Liya Xie, History, “In the Shadows of Rationality: Epistemic Fringes and Multiple ‘Easts’ in the making of Russian Modernity (1880-1930)”

Hanruo Zhang, East Asian Studies, “Imagine the Ideal Realm: Pure Land Buddhism and the Literati Culture in Song Dynasty China (960-1276 C.E.)”

NEXT YEAR

Events

Visit the Center’s website for additional events and further information.

September 13, 2023

Religion and the Public
Conversation with Janet Jakobsen
In conversation with Emma Thompson

September 22, 2023

Thinking Through Minshū Bukkyō:
Popular Buddhism and the Study of Premodern Japan
A Numata Visiting Scholar Fund Workshop

September 27, 2023

“Into the Forever and Beautiful Sky”:
Confronting Animal Brutality in a Galaxy of Limitless Capitalism
Doll Lecture with Andrea Jain

September 28

Toolkit event with David Dault

September 29-30, 2023

Black Buddhism Faculty Project

October 3, 2023

Missionary Approaches and Indigenous Responses: New France vs. New England with Emma Anderson and David D. Hall

October 6, 2023

Righting the American Dream: How the Media Mainstreamed Reagan’s Evangelical Vision
Conversation with Diane Winston

October 4, 2023

Religion and the Public
Conversation with Sarah Imhoff

October 26, 2023

Vodou en Vogue: Religion and the Public
Conversation with Eziaku Nwokocha and Manbo Maude Evans
In conversation with Mélena Sims-Laudig

February 22, 2024

Buddhist Practice Theory and Animal Ethics
Yin-Cheng Distinguished Lecture in Buddhism by Janet Gyatso

Martin Heijdra leads a tour of Firestone Library special collections for Ritual and Materiality conference participants





Hasan Hameed trains in the Digital Learning Lab

Media Team

Center Director Jonathan Gold created the Media Team as a means of training graduate students to share their academic research with a broad audience through the use of new digital media. Led by Religion and the Public Conversation Fellows Lauren Kerby and Suzanne van Geuns, the CCSR Media Team really took off this year. Working with Princeton University's Digital Learning Lab, team members learned how to shoot, edit, and produce films, including new episodes in the popular "It's Useful to Know" series.

"The graduate students on the media team, which I co-led, made great video content, but I am even more proud of the collaborative spirit and practical know-how—from script-writing and story-boarding to editing—we developed together."

—Suzanne van Geuns

"Being a part of the CCSR media team this academic year has inspired me to pursue my own goals in public-facing scholarship through content creation. I have learned so many invaluable skills—from smooth cinematography and vibrant edits, to engaging script-writing for a popular audience. I cannot wait to see how far our projects go!"

—Jeremy Stitts

Media Team Members

- Ipsita Dey
- Humza Azam Gondal
- Jonathan Gold
- Hasan Hameed
- Ferdose Idris
- Lauren R. Kerby
- Zainab Rashid
- Sucharita Ray
- Jeremy Stitts
- Suzanne van Geuns



Left: Jeremy Stitts takes a turn with the green screen
Right: Videos produced by the Media Team

Advisory Council

Courtney Bender *97

Lynn Davidman

Henry C. Doll '58

Jenna Weissman Joselit

D. Michael Lindsay *06

Katherine Marshall *69

A. G. Miller *94

Center Staff

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Associate Director: Jenny Wiley Legath

Manager: Jennifer Hemingway



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