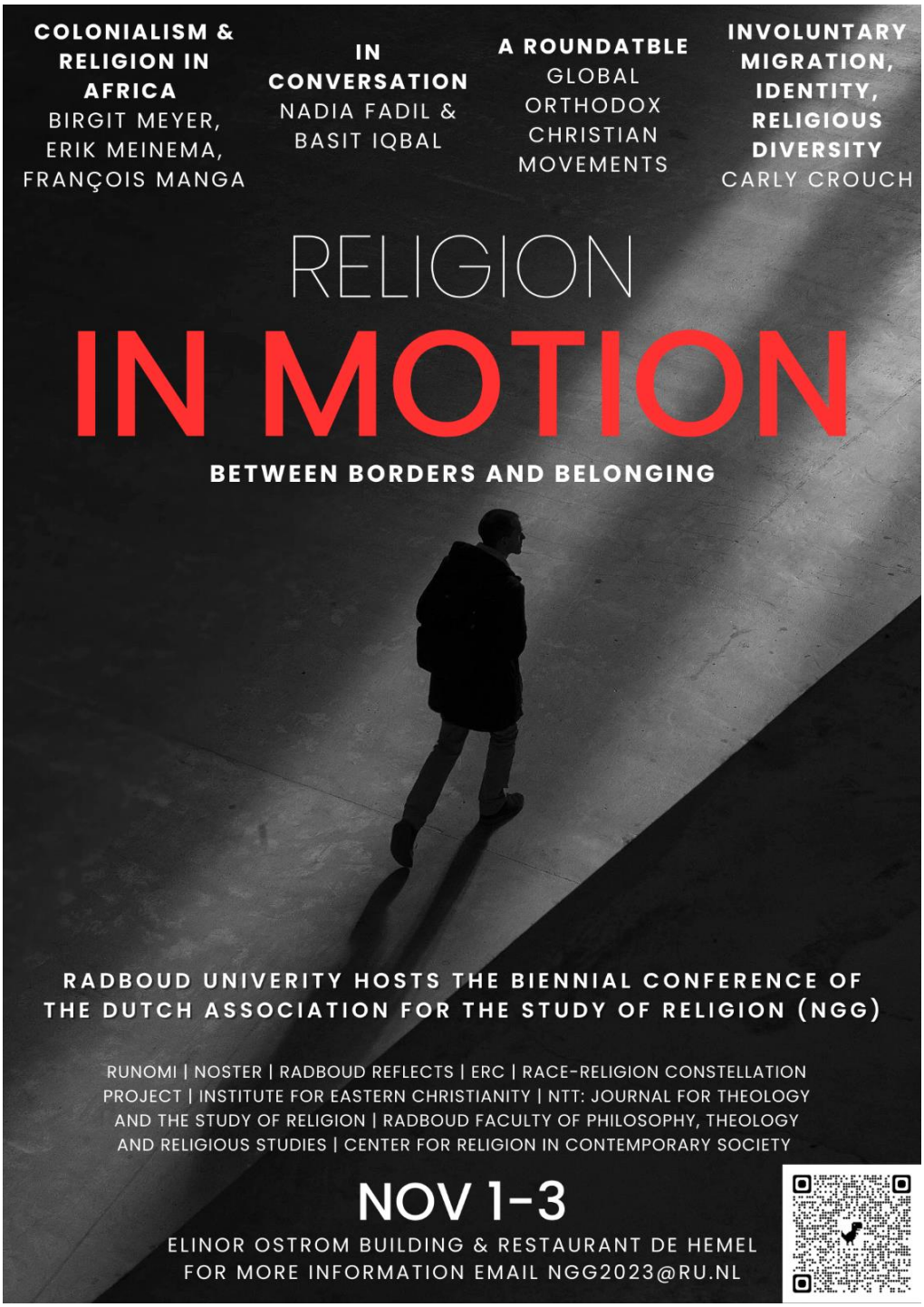
Radboud University

Program& Book of Abstracts

Religion in Motion – Between Borders and Belonging



Radboud University

Date 24 October 2023
Reference Book of Abstracts

Radboud University is home to Religion in Motion - Between Borders and Belonging: The biennial conference of the Dutch Association for the Study of Religion (NGG). From 1 to 3 November 2023.

Radboud University

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1 Religion in Motion: Between Borders and Belonging

From 1 to 3 November 2023 Radboud University is home to *Religion in Motion: Between Borders and Belonging*, this year's edition of the biennial conference of the Dutch Association for the Study of Religion.

Religiosity and mobility have been topics of research and debate for scholars working with different theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary approaches. In this conference, we explore how the study of religion might be transformed through a focus on mobility in its various forms.

We ask, for instance: How is mobility an integral part of religious traditions? How does religion inform experiences of belonging in migratory contexts? How do political, geographical, cultural, and religious borders shape people's lives? Their visions of the past and the future? Their experiences of home and belonging? Their aspirations and imaginations of destiny?

We examine how state and/or religious authorities classify migrants and consider the ends towards which such categorization works. We ask how different kinds of borders influence the lives and faiths of people on the move, and consider how these modern forms of mobility have historical roots across a range of sociopolitical and geographical milieus.

Bringing together scholars who work at the intersection of mobility and religion, this conference invites scholars of religion to converse with those working in anthropology and sociology; history, law, and political science; and the study of transnationalism, borders, migration, and refugees, to name just a few fields.

This conference therefore aims to broaden the theoretical and methodological repertoires for future studies of religion in motion whereby mobility and religion are analyzed not as separate themes, but as critical axes of people's religious experiences across traditions, times, and spaces, with mobility and religion acting as co-constitutive of beliefs, practices and socialities.

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We encourage graduate students, early career scholars, and established academics to use this meeting as an opportunity to think through research agendas, challenges, and inspirations for current and future research, particularly those that decenter Europe, or rather, locate Europe as only one yet powerful bulwark, goal, and trajectory in a global world. We also welcome contributions which explore less commonly explored religious and spiritual traditions, alongside those better studied.

Organizing Committee, Radboud University Nijmegen
Joud Alkorani
Justine Bakker
Jorge Castillo Guerra
Martijn de Koning
Christopher Sheklian
Eric Venbrux

2 Program

NOVEMBER 1 - Wednesday		
09:00-09:45	Arrival and Registration	Overloop EOS (first floor)
09:45-10:00	Opening Welcome by the Dean FPTR; chair NGG; organization committee	Theaterzaal C
10:00-11:30	Plenary I – in conversation Nadia Fadil & Basit Iqbal, about (im)mobilities, (End of) Politics and Futures	Theaterzaal C
11:30-12:30	Lunch	Overloop EOS (first floor)
12:30-14:00 (1.5 hour)	**Parallel I** 1. Spiritual Decline and Ascent 2. Theorizing (Im)mobility	EOS N01.170/N01.180
14:00-14:30	Coffee break	Overloop EOS (first floor)
14:30-16:30 (2 hour)	**Parallel II** 1. Religion on the move after the rise of populism: studying 21st dynamics of 'religion' on social media 2. Care and Community 3. Discrimination and Prejudice 4. Werkgroep Religiewetenschap en Onderwijs: Religieonderwijs in Beweging	EOS N01.170/N01.180/N01.350/ N01.310
14:30-16:30 (2 hour)	NOSTER Masterclass with Basit Iqbal	N01.360 (Closed Session)
18:30	Dinner at De Hemel	Restaurant de Hemel Franseplaats 1 6511 VS Nijmegen
20:00-21:30	Public Event, together with Radboud Reflects: Obedience and the Devil: Colonialism and Religion in Africa, with Birgit Meyer,	Restaurant de Hemel Franseplaats 1 6511 VS Nijmegen

	Erik Meinema, and François Manga	

NOVEMBER 2 - Thursday		
09:00-10:30 (1.5 hour)	**Parallel III** 1. Divine Movements 2. Diasporic Mobility and Belonging 3. Navigating Refugee Crises	EOS N01.170/N01.180/N01.350
10:30-11:00	Coffee break	Overloop EOS (first floor)
11:00-12:30	Plenary II: "Global Orthodox Christian Movements" (ERC project)	Theaterzaal C
12:30-13:30	Lunch	Overloop EOS (first floor)
13:30-15:00 (1.5 hour)	**Parallel IV** 1. Spatiality and Urbanization 2. Architecture and Material Culture 3. Rituals and Performance 4. Thinking Beyond 'Religion as Migrant Support Network': Subjectivity, Sociality and the Making of Religion in New (Sacred) Geographies	EOS EOS N01.170/N01.180/ N01.770/N01.780
15:00-15:30	Coffee break	Overloop EOS (first floor)
15:30-17:30 (2 hour)	**Parallel V** 1. Human Mobility and Identity Formation: Judaean/Jewish and Christian Voices from Antiquity 2. Upholding Confessional Borders in the (Early) Modern Netherlands: Movable Relics, Migrants, and Bastions of the Virgin Mary	EOS N01.170/N01.180/ N01.770/N01.780

	3. Global Minorities 4. The Medium and the Message	
19:00	Dinner at De Hemel	Restaurant de Hemel Franseplaats 1 6511 VS Nijmegen

NOVEMBER 3 - Friday		
09:00-11:00 (2 hour)	**Parallel VI** 1. Minorities, Freedom, and Governance 2. Race, Religion and Mixedness: Experiences of Difference among Mixed Couples in the Netherlands	EOS N01.170/N01.180
11:00-11:30	Coffee Break	Overloop EOS (first floor)
11:30-12:30	Keynote Carly Crouch "Involuntary Migration, Strategies of Identity Construction, and Religious Diversity"	Theaterzaal C
12:30-13:30	Lunch	Overloop EOS (first floor)
13:30-14:30	Closing Conversation	Theaterzaal C
15:00-17:00	Guided walk religious heritage Nijmegen	

3 Keynotes and Roundtables

Wednesday, November 1, 10:00-11:30, Theaterzaal C

(IM)MOBILITIES, (END OF) POLITICS AND FUTURES

Nadia Fadil
Associate Professor, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, KU Leuven

Basit Iqbal
Assistant Professor, Anthropology, McMaster University

In these puzzling times both migration and religion are at the forefront of attention in media, politics and academia. In this conference we want to explore modes of mobility and religion not as separate themes, but as critical axes of people's religious experiences across traditions, times, and spaces, with mobility and religion acting as co-constitutive of beliefs, practices and socialities. We ask, for instance: How is mobility an integral part of religious traditions? How does religion inform experiences of belonging in migratory contexts? How do political, geographical, cultural, and religious borders shape people's lives? Their visions of the past and the future? Their experiences of home and belonging? Their aspirations and imaginations of destiny?

In this *In Conversation* with anthropologists Nadia Fadil and Basit Iqbal we would like to open up these matters we have mentioned in our first Call for Papers for exploration and discussion by focusing on several themes such as estrangement, temporalities & futurities, and (Im-)mobilities, movements of migrants within Europe, (im)mobilities in refugee camps, and the politics and antipolitics of supporting refugees.

Wednesday, November 1, 20:00-22:00, Restaurant de Hemel
Public event, in collaboration with Radboud Reflects

OBEDIENCE AND THE DEVIL: COLONIALISM AND RELIGION IN AFRICA

Birgit Meyer
Professor Religious Studies, Utrecht University

Erik Meinema
Assistant Professor Religion and Heritage, Utrecht University

François Manga
PhD Candidate, Radboud University Nijmegen

Everybody knows that colonialism had, and still has, a major impact on the relationship between Africa and Europe. However, few people are aware of the role religion plays in this. Come and

listen to Birgit Meyer, François Manga and Erik Meinema who will explain how a Western definition of religion was introduced in Africa during the colonial era, and how this influences culture, religion and politics even today.

Africa: not having religion?
When Western missionaries and scholars came to study African culture and religion, they brought with them Christian concepts to define what they found. Hence, they emphasized belief, knowledge and community, at the expense of music, dance and the body. In fact, the whole idea of 'religion' as something that can be defined and set apart from other aspects of life is thoroughly European. According to Birgit Meyer, this was also used to describe Africans as 'not having religion' and thus in need of conversion.

Obedience and the devil
Theologian François Manga was a priest in Cameroon before coming to The Netherlands. In his opinion, the concept of 'mission' is in itself arrogant, because it is one-sided and lacking in mutual interest. What is more, certain aspects of Christianity were emphasized, such as obedience and the devil, to gain power. He sees these concepts still have an important meaning in African culture, with local clergy now acting as colonialists.

The difficult position of 'traditionalism'
Doing fieldwork in Kenya on the co-existence of various religious groups in a pluralistic society, scholar of religion Erik Meinema discovered 'traditional' religions often have a difficult position. Although officially recognized as equal to Christianity and Islam, they often struggle to be accepted as a religion at all. This marginalizes their position within interfaith co-operations and society at large.

Thursday, November 2, 11:00-12:30, Theaterzaal C

GLOBAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MOVEMENTS

A conversation about contemporary Orthodox Christianity as a global, mobile configuration of several Christian churches between members of the ERC-funded "Rewriting Global Orthodoxy" research project team, the Institute of Eastern Christian Studies (IVOC), and the the St. Irenaeus Orthodox Theological Institute, all hosted at Radboud University. Participants will include Dr. Heleen Murre-van den Berg, Dr. Christopher Sheklian, Jan Gehm, Matija Milicic, and Habtom Yohannes of the "Rewriting Global Orthodoxy" project, Dr. Alfons Brüning, Director of IVOC, and Dr. Michael Bakker, Rector of the St. Irenaeus Orthodox Theological Institute. In addition to presenting the work each organization and project does, the panel opens up questions of migrant religion, global formations of Christian denominations, and the role of geopolitics in contemporary Orthodox Christianity, among others.

Friday, November 3, 11:30-12:30, Theaterzaal C

INVOLUNTARY MIGRATION, STRATEGIES OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION, AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Carly Crouch
Professor of Hebrew Bible and Ancient Judaism and Chair of Department
Department of Textual, Historical, and Systematic Studies of Judaism and Christianity
Faculty of Philosophy, Theology, and Religion, Radboud University Nijmegen

This talk examines the construction of Israelite and Judahite identities after the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonian Empire in the 6th century BCE. It does so through the lens of involuntary migration, noting that this catastrophe was explained in different ways by different migrant communities. A group of deportees in Babylonia accounted for the disaster by focusing on the Israelites' failure to worship the Israelite God, YHWH, exclusively. A refugee community in Egypt, by contrast, blamed the people's failure to worship a goddess called the Queen of Heaven. Both efforts reflect interpretive strategies common among involuntary migrants, seeking to explain the situation with reference to the past and to reassert practices deemed central to group identity.

4 Abstracts Panels

The Chairs will need to introduce each speaker, providing their name, institutional affiliation, and paper title. You will then need to keep strict time in the interest of fairness to all presenters and the audience.

Each panel session is 90 minutes or 120 minutes. The presentation time allocated for each paper is usually 15 minutes (although there are a couple of panels where the presenters may run up to 20 minutes).

We recommend that papers be presented together first, leaving the final part of the panel for discussion with the audience. This ensures that all presenters receive their full allocation of time to present before turning to audience questions, and it facilitates integrative discussion across the papers.

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 1

SPIRITUAL DECLINE AND ASCENT
WEDNESDAY, 12:30 – 14:30

Chair: Harald Viersen

Dave Viegenthart	The Growing Popularity of Meaningless Spirituality: Crossing Cultural Borders in Metamodern Quests for Meaning in Neo-Advaita
Jenia Gorbanenko	Which way to Heaven?: New icons of spiritual ascent in the Space Age
Jamel Velji	Mahdis in Motion: Ibn Qasi, the Fatimids, and the End of the World

THE GROWING POPULARITY OF MEANINGLESS SPIRITUALITY: CROSSING CULTURAL BORDERS IN METAMODERN QUESTS FOR MEANING IN NEO-ADVAITA

Dave Vliegenthart
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Maastricht University

> "[T]he world and our apparent lives [are] not going anywhere and [have] absolutely no purpose or meaning […] All that is happening is meaningless, but it is so beguiling and fascinating that the mind is absolutely sure it has meaning and that it will lead somewhere."
> Tony Parsons

How can modern western spiritual seekers derive meaning in life from classic Asian worldviews that allegedly present life as meaningless? Western "satsang teachers" such as Tony Parsons (cited above) say that our lives lack meaning and purpose, but still draw more and more spiritual seekers who are searching for alternative sources of meaning outside of mainstream religions and sciences. Their "meaningless spirituality" can be traced back to the classic Indian tradition of Advaita Vedanta. A modernized version of Advaita was introduced to the West by Hindu-reformers in the nineteenth and twentieth century. In the twenty-first century, it has been further transformed into a "Neo-Advaita" by western satsang teachers. This Neo-Advaita crosses disciplinary and cultural borders, simultaneously belonging to different "secular" and "religious" domains and "eastern" and "western" traditions. Based on a critical discourse analysis of dialogues between satsang teachers and their students, this paper provides a threefold explanation of the paradoxical popularity of Neo-Advaita among western spiritual seekers. It shows that this meaningless spirituality can still offer a source of meaning because:

[1] it fits the definition of meaning, according to the fundamentality theory of philosopher Thaddeus Metz, [2] it fulfills the human need for meaning, according to the social psychological theory of Roy Baumeister, and, above all, [3] it seems to solve what sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann considered the main cause of the modern western "crisis of meaning." Based on cultural critics Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker's theory on metamodernism—its emphasis on (Eshelman's) performatism in particular—this paper finally suggests that the meaningless spirituality of Neo-Advaita may be a typical product of post-postmodern western cultures.

WHICH WAY TO HEAVEN?
NEW ICONS OF SPIRITUAL ASCENT IN THE SPACE AGE

Jenia Gorbanenko
University College London

Based on recent ethnographic fieldwork in the Russian Orthodox Church, this paper deals with two questions: 'where do cosmonauts fly to, if not to heaven?' and 'why and how do cosmonauts matter to the Church?'. Drawing on the Orthodox Christian understanding of *theosis* and the ontology of transcendence that underlies it, the paper, first, explains how outer space and heaven are ontologically different kinds of skies. It, then, highlights that the Church believes itself to have a duty of care to all Russian Orthodox Christians, the living and the dead. In parishes, like the Star City temple, where cosmonauts are members of the congregation, space exploration is just a regular fact of parish life. To care for the dead, in the post-Soviet context, the Church has also become a regular presence during memorial events dedicated to deceased cosmonauts, participating alongside museums and other secular actors, but keeping cosmonauts' memory the Orthodox way. Finally, this paper suggests that, aside from this duty of care, in the Space Age, cosmonauts become useful to the Orthodox for articulating the difference between outer space and Heaven. The advent of spaceflight has turned the old Christian analogy between vertical and spiritual ascent counterproductive for speaking about Heaven, so the Orthodox are finding new ways of explaining their cosmology. Whilst the underlying creation ontology remains the same, the language with which it is expressed is historically and socially situated and has shifted since the start of the Space Age. Cosmonaut biographies, in particular, are becoming increasingly useful for explaining this difference between vertical and spiritual ascent and for challenging atheist critique. In the post-Soviet Russian context, where the cosmonaut was historically held up as an icon of atheism (Smolkin 2018), the Orthodox re-appropriate the cosmonaut as an Orthodox icon.

MAHDIS IN MOTION:
IBN QASI, THE FATIMIDS, AND THE END OF THE WORLD

Jamel A. Velji
Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Claremont McKenna College

In 1144, the Muslim savior figure Abu-l Qasim Ahmad b. al-Husayn b. Qasi led a revolt to overthrow the ruling Almoravids, setting up his headquarters in what is now Portugal's Algarve.

While his military rule was short-lived, his writings had a transformative impact on major conceptions of Sufism and apocalypticism in Europe and beyond. Ibn Qasi's *Kitab khal al-na'layn*, or *Book of the Removal of the Sandals*, developed an original iteration of a present, mystical apocalypse inflected by a number of different intellectual strands, including mysticism, Christian and Jewish Neoplatonic philosophy, mahdism, and Ismaili thought. This text was the subject of a commentary by the "greatest shaykh" Ibn al-Arabi (d. 1240), and directly influenced the latter's theology.

Despite his role as a military leader, mahdi, and Sufi, Ibn Qasi is understudied in the history of religions. Only one book-length study exists on him, *As sandalias do mestre* (in Portuguese), and Ibn Qasi's *khal al-na'layn* has not been translated. This paper will (1) excavate some of the specific features of his conception of a present apocalypse to show how the *khal al-na'layn* can be read as a powerful call for social transformation. I will then (2) illustrate how Ibn Qasi's interpretive method was in dialogue with that of a neighboring dynasty also inflected heavily by apocalypticism: the Fatimid Ismailis in North Africa. Ibn Qasi and the Fatimids were, in fact, part of a larger network of apocalyptically-charged movements dotting the Andalusian and North African landscape from the 9^{th}-13^{th} centuries. I will (3) conclude by reflecting on why apocalypticism served as such powerful symbolic currency within and between dynasties during this period.

THEORIZING (IM)MOBILITY
WEDNESDAY, 12:30-14:00

Chair: Arjan Sterken

Nathal M. Dessing	Portable Religion, Migration, and Belonging
Paschalina T. Garidou	Lessons from the Romans to enrich our understanding of borders: a dialogue between the border gods Janus, Terminus, Pluto, Mercury, and Trivia
Julie Cordeiro	Mission from the Margins: How Brazilian Migrants are Engaged in Informal Mission.
Rahul B N	Understanding the Role of Folk religion and its impact on the settlement of Kallar Communities in Madurai District, Tamil Nadu, India

PORTABLE RELIGION, MIGRATION, AND BELONGING

Nathal M. Dessing
Leiden University Centre for the Study of Religion

This paper will take major shifts in the study of language and diversity as its starting point. The study of language has seen a paradigmatic turn from assumptions of homogeneity, stability, and boundedness of languages to concern with mobility, mixing, language ideology, and contextualization. I will discuss the relevance of this turn for the study of religion in motion. For example, does it make sense, following language studies, to denaturalize the idea of distinct

religions? And if there are no "native speakers" of a specific religion, how can we then best study religious belonging? Also, when people travel, setting oneself apart and seeking like-minded people through religion might become important. Under what conditions do religious boundaries become important and how and why is religious identification in migration preferred? Is there something like portable religion and what are good-for-travelling qualities of religion? This paper aims to offer a deep comparison between language and religion and to provide on that basis new insights for the study of religion and migration. I will use examples from my research into lifecycle rituals and religious authority and belonging in migratory contexts.

LESSONS FROM THE ROMANS TO ENRICH OUR UNDERSTANDING OF BORDERS: A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE BORDER GODS JANUS, TERMINUS, PLUTO, MERCURY, AND TRIVIA

Paschalina Garidou
Nijmegen Centre for Border Research, Radboud University

Henk van Houtum
Nijmegen Centre for Border Research, Radboud University/University of Eastern Finland

Saskia Stevens
Ancient History and Classical Civilisation, Utrecht University

Luuk Winkelmolen
Nijmegen Centre for Border Research, Radboud University

What can we learn from the Roman heritage regarding the understanding of borders and cross-border mobility? This quest is inspired by a blooming trend in border and migration debates among various far-right, nationalist and populist politicians, misappropriating the Roman legacy by creating historically inaccurate connections between geopolitical borders and Roman civilization, to legitimise their political agendas. They embellish their political discourse with references to the illustrious Roman past, often providing a simplistic interpretation of the rich Roman border ideology, with borders as fixed, defensive and delineating devices, which is, implicitly, derived from the symbolic of Terminus, the Roman god of boundary stones (Madsen, 2021). To further forge their ethno-exclusionary and xenophobic argument, they reproduce the trope of ‘uncontrolled’ migration by referring back to the ‘fall of Rome’ allegedly caused by the ‘invading barbarians’, to defend in a similar fashion the European civilization from falling due to the ‘barbaric migrants (Winkelmolen, Garidou & Van Houtum, forthcoming). We suggest taking these predicative claims on borders and migration seriously, and to trace back the Romans’ own source of inspiration for their border ideology and territoriality: the border gods! Thence, we *conceptually excavate* an entirely different border philosophy than assumed and taken for granted by our contemporary politicians, by opening up a most insightful and stimulating arena of dialogue among the border gods Terminus, Janus, Mercury, Trivia, and Pluto, along with the plethora of border concepts and interpretations they bring along. This divinely inspired conceptual tool aims not only to criticize this reductionist view on borders, but also to provide a suggestion to further inspire this debate, transforming populist

reductionism into resourceful richness. It seems that the Romans have done quite a bit for us indeed, they brought us a divine inspiration for a much needed and timely comprehension of border complexity and mobility multiplicity.

BRAZILIAN AS CHRISTIAN MIGRANTS OR ECONOMIC MIGRANTS?

Julie Cordeiro
Protestante Theologische Universiteit (PThU)

Brazil is one of the most active missionary sending nations in the world by both (neo) Pentecostal and Historical churches (Campos 2017; Clark 2017; Mariz 2009; Prado 2005). Most of the academic research regarding mission from the global south to the global north has focused on economic migrants on common financial or past colonizing paths (Burity 2018; Kramer 2006; Lin 2020; Oro and Alves 2015; Oro 2019; Mariz 2017; Rosa 2017). On the other hand, global south to global south missions discourses seems to be surprisingly suggest spiritually motivation or even in a new Christianization tone (Freston 2005; Moreira 2014; Silva and Moreira 2022; van de Kamp 2012; van Wyk 2015). Additionally, research on Brazilian mission endeavors has predominantly focused on documented migrants or individuals sent by established missionary agencies, thus limiting the scope of research due to most scholars focusing on larger structures such as sending churches and agencies. In contrast, this research aims to emphasize the lived experiences of migrant Brazilian Christians. To accomplish this, the research engages in a concise review of existing literature on Brazilian missionary endeavors in both the global north and select African countries. Furthermore, it exemplifies through the account of the lived experiences of Christian Brazilians migrant residing in the Netherlands. These combined methods will allow for a comprehensive exploration of the experiences and perspectives of Brazilian Christian migrants in the Netherlands concerning their engagement in missions within the Global North context. In that way, this research not only sheds light to the discourse of missions but also opens up avenues to challenge conventional descriptions and research paradigms surrounding Brazilian missions in Western settings. Thus, the primary objective of this research is to uncover the ways in which evangelical Brazilian Christians, from the Global South, actively participate in the mission within the context of the Global North, particularly within the Netherlands.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF FOLK RELIGION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE SETTLEMENT OF KALLAR COMMUNITIES IN MADURAI DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU, INDIA

Rahul B N
Assistant Professor, Department of Liberal Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

Religion plays a very significant role in reinforcing unity and social stability of society in a pre-proposed manner through a standard set of beliefs and by the establishment of worship, which brings the people together. This further strengthens the social bond through communication and social interactions among the people in the society. The primary requirement of society is the

common possession of social values by which individuals control the action of the self and others and through which society is perpetuated. Religion helps shape an individual's character and moulds the individual's social life. It manifests the establishment of social norms and laws induced in society. On the other hand, migration refers to the permanent or temporary movement of people from one place to another to live and work. Migration may provide opportunities for developing new or hybrid religious beliefs, identities, practices, and ways of integration into the new society. This migration leads to adapting to new circumstances and creates tensions and divisions within previously solitary religious collectivities. Thus, this paper raises four aspects; firstly, to understand the settlement patterns of the migrants through the folk religious perspectives. Secondly, to elaborate on the role of the folk deities among the people and their impact on the people. Thirdly it signifies the various religious and social control measures adopted by the people. And lastly, to analyze cultural homogeneity through the folk deities worshipped among the rural migrants in the study area. The study is descriptively presented through the help of narratives from the Kallar Communities in the Madurai District of Tamil Nadu.

RELIGION ON THE MOVE AFTER THE RISE OF POPULISM: STUDYING 21ST DYNAMICS OF 'RELIGION' ON SOCIAL MEDIA
WEDNESDAY, 14:30-16:30

Chair: Ernst van den Hemel

Ernst van den Hemel	Who controls "Leitkultur"? Quantitative and qualitative challenges in the study of online religion in the Netherlands.
Kirsten Smeets	Cultural memory and the European far right: establishing borders between 'The Christian Europe' and Muslim immigrants on social media
Sakina Loukili	Social Media and the Emergence of the "Muslim" Political Parties DENK and NIDA in the Netherlands
Cedric Waterschoot	"Tis the Season to be Angry": Is There a Rise of Islamophobia during Christian Holidays in the Netherlands?

This panel starts from the hypothesis that the rise of conservative right-wing populism, aka the'turn to the right' entailed profound re-orientations of the role of religion across Western Europe. It catapulted 'Islam' to center stage as primary antagonist of 'the West', but it also presented (Judeo-)Christianity as a core reference point for national, cultural and ethnic identities. Contexts vary, but by and large these invocations of religion tend to mix notions of culture, religion, race, identity and nativism in a complex potpourri of polarization.

As a result, society and academia alike were faced with challenges to understand such dynamics. Are populist invocations of religion connected to 'real' religion (whatever that may mean) or merely culturalized, racialized or folklorized codified dog-whistles? How do such developments relate to processes of secularization and/or de-churching? And, in light of these

dynamics, how would one go about answering such questions in the first place? Who, in times of hyper-pluralist polarization, determines what religion means?

In this panel we explore these questions through the study of social media. Social media data offers unique opportunities to track and trace 21st century dynamics and to explore the formation of online religious affective publics. Yet, to properly analyze and understand social media data, a methodological update and discussion about its role in the study of religion is needed. We invite papers that focus on - the dynamics of an increasingly fluid notion of religion in the 21st century, - populist radical-right imaginaries of religions of self and other, - methodological challenges in studying religion on social media, - Islam-inspired responses on social media to the rise of populism, - reactions of institutionalized religion to the rise of populism, -various social media outlets and how they influence religion, - reflections on the relation between quantitative and qualitative approaches in the study of religion, especially against the backdrop of 21st century polarization.

CARE AND COMMUNITY
WEDNESDAY, 14:30-16:30

Chair: Iline Ceelen

Amy Casteel	(Dis)location—perspective in conversation between religion and migration.
Daan Oostveen	Rhizomatic religious belonging as dynamic belonging
Davide Bertelli	Transgressing Borders/Transgressive Boundaries: Liminal Belongings of LGBTQ+ Migrants of Faith
Elham Vatankhahan	The Generation Ties: Encountering Restraining Rules in Different Migrant Generations

(DIS)LOCATION
PERSPECTIVE IN CONVERSATION BETWEEN RELIGION AND MIGRATION

Amy Casteel
KU Leuven

The intersection between religion and the movement of people across the planet challenges locatedness. Academic discussions and popular conversations locate “here” as the perspective of where the speaker is located. Whether a person is coming into a space or going into a space depends on the perspective of the speaker. This point became evident in interviews with 64 youth about their religion (Muslim, Christian, Yezidi, Sikh) both before and after they migrated to a country in Europe. For many of these youth (ages 16-25), locatedness is not only about physical location. Locatedness is also existential, religious, social, economic, and on and on.

It is in these multi-dimensional ways that migration challenges boundaries. A religious identity, in most cases, transcends geographical borders. This characteristic, however, is ambiguous. A religious identity can be considered a bridge or a barrier.

Much research on religion and mobility has focused on physical locations and dislocations. Recent academic research uses ground-up methods to shifts the perspective to the experience of the person who has migrated or the communities of origin. In each of these approaches, one perspective is located while the other perspectives are dislocated. Multi-sited, multi-modal research, like the interpretive phenomenological analysis study in this paper, offers a way to approach the multi-located reality at the intersection of mobility and migration. Using life maps, relationship maps, and semi-structured interviews this project offered a glimpse into ways that youth with a migration experience express (dis)location specifically about religion and migration. This project suggests some potential areas for further research while also suggesting potential methods or accommodations to methods better suited to understanding the complexity of religion and migration.

RHIZOMATIC RELIGIOUS BELONGING AS DYNAMIC BELONGING

Daan F. Oostveen
Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Utrecht University

In the Western world, we are witnessing the emergence of hybrid forms of religiosity: individuals who do not identify or belong to one religious tradition, but identify with or combine elements from multiple religious traditions. Belonging has strong emotional connotations. But belonging in religious belonging is usually reserved for belonging to religious traditions only. The challenge to reimagine belonging is twofold: first, we have to imagine "belonging" beyond religious traditions; if people do not belong to religion: what do they belong to? Second, this new religious belonging should take into account that individuals connect to beliefs and practices from various religious traditions that understand each other as different and delineated. Religious traditions define borders of difference.

One suggestion has been to refer to this kind of religious belonging as transversal belonging; a belonging that cuts through various religious identities and is dynamic in nature. This can be a dynamic belonging to multiplicity of religious elements, in the words of Hent De Vries, religions' "words, things, gestures, powers, sounds, silences, smells, sensations, shapes, colors, affects and effects". In particular, the concepts of the rhizome and assemblage of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari function to reimagine such a dynamic religious belonging. Rhizomatic religious belonging describes dynamic connections cross transversally.

Religions are assemblages of a variety of heterogeneous religious elements. The multiplicity of religious beliefs and practices creates a new framework in which a sense of rhizomatic belonging is experienced, which is both beyond religious traditions and radically particular. Rather, it should be seen as the imagination of religious belonging to a community that is radically diverse but also interconnected. What I believe is emerging is a post-human religion, which, instead of being fragmented, individualised, or generally "lost", is a transformation towards new form of belonging, in which care, community, and play are elements. I will conclude that "belonging" is fundamental in understanding the challenges of our times and our communities, because it elicits sentiments of "feeling at home" in a dynamic world that feels in crisis.

TRANSGRESSING BORDERS/TRANSGRESSIVE BOUNDARIES: LIMINAL BELONGINGS OF LGBTQ+ MIGRANTS OF FAITH

Davide Bertelli
VID Specialized University, Norway

Histories of LGBTQ+ people on the move are often portrayed as individuals embarking on journeys of liberation from the homophobic oppression of heavily religious regimes in the 'East'/'South', towards the secularised, inclusive and homo-friendly democracies of the 'West'/'North'. While queer sexualities are often determining push factors for migrating (and indeed religion represents a form of systemic oppression for many LGBTQ+ people), religion tends to be acknowledged, if at all, in the context of migration and queerness as a mere source of oppression: however, this ignores LGBTQ+ people's spiritual journeys and personal experiences of religion on the move.

Taking an intersectional approach and drawing upon interviews conducted in 2021 in Oslo and London with 18 LGBTQ+ migrants, the paper aims to demonstrate how the migratory journeys LGBTQ+ people of faith embark on, not only constitute crossings of geographical borders, but also represent journeys across and through religion and sexuality. These journeys take sometimes painful directions, as, upon realising and accepting their queerness, people might momentarily question, distance, or altogether abandon religion, only to (re)approach it (often under re-adapted, negotiated or unorthodox forms) at a later stage of the journey.

I find that almost none of the interviewees fully belongs anywhere or to any specific community, whether religious, ethnic-national, or LGBTQ+. Belonging is instead partial and liminal: excluded because of their non-normativity, LGBTQ+ migrants of faith often find ways to bend, overturn, or transgress the borders/boundaries of national, religious and LGBTQ+ communities which they are excluded from. Combining elements from different religious traditions; refusing to identify themselves with a given religion or religious denomination, or to conform to a community; adopting and developing personal(ised) theologies, are just but some examples of how religion's boundaries are de-stabilised, transcended and ultimately queered. Finally, queer(ed) theologies are seldom permanent, but flexible, unstable, open-ended negotiations on the move.

THE GENERATION TIES: ENCOUNTERING RESTRAINING RULES IN DIFFERENT MIGRANT GENERATIONS

Elham Vatankhahan Esfahani
PhD Student in Persian Language and Literature, at the Institute of Humanity and Cultural Studies, Tehran, Iran

In this article, we will discuss the book, "Love Inshallah" (2013) to discover to what extent the religious restraining rules, in this case, Islamic commands, affect a migrant during the procedure of re-identification in a multicultural community. It is also notable if there is any difference or similarity between the first and the second generation in countering these rules. It is believed that the re-construction of selfness and otherness is directly affected by the contribution of

religion to the migrant's identity. On the other hand, it is assumed that there is a noticeable distinction in the procedure of re-identification between first-generation migrants and second-ones. As a result, the diaspora population does not show the same reaction to the domination of religion and its restraining laws. While religious statutes are a part of making the otherness in both generations, in the first generation, however, religious concepts generally appear as inhibiting factors by which the integration of the immigrant with the host culture decelerates. In other words, religious concepts and related rules and rituals are tied to the culture of the motherland, and the identity of the first-generation immigrant constantly stays hybrid and connected with the motherland through them. Contrary to the first group, the second-generation immigrant, who has more fragile ties to the motherland in comparison to the first-generation, redefines his identity in relation to the first-generation immigrant. This means that the concepts that work independently for the first group are objectified for the second generation in their previous generation. Based on this fact, the second-generation immigrant considered the 'other' for the host country, is in a permanent process of otherness facing the first generation. In this article, this notion has been examined in detail in the collection short story "love inshallah."

DISCRIMINATION AND PREJUDICE
WEDNESDAY 14:30-16:30

Chair: Paul Vermeer

Markha Valenta	Islamophobia on the Move: Local Repertoire, Global Flow
Paul Vermeer	From exclusion to inclusion? Shifting attitudes towards ethnic minorities and Muslims among Dutch evangelicals
Igor Mikeshin	Russian Jehovah's Witnesses community in Finland in the context of migration, persecution, war, and pandemic
Amisah Bakuri	Multiculturalism, Racism and Racialisation Ghanaian Christians and Muslims in the Netherlands

ISLAMOPHOBIA ON THE MOVE: LOCAL REPERTOIRE, GLOBAL FLOW

Markha Valenta
Utrecht University

Much like other transnational phenomena, Islamophobia is very much a ‘glocal’ dynamic. Islamophobic ideologies, discourses, and practices are exported from and imported to local sites, where they are adapted to specific contexts, by particular agents, as local projects in domination and denigration, extraction and expulsion for political and existential profit. This paper will consider how the dynamic between the local and the global in Islamophobia takes particular shape at particular sites by considering three such sites: the Netherlands, the United

States and India. All three are countries that have proud histories of pluralism, complex democracies, a significant Muslim minority, and an aggressive domestic market for political Islamophobia. At the same time, each of these have looked beyond their borders for Islamophobic repertoires while themselves producing Islamophobic 'influencers' of global & geopolitical significance. Engaging their similarities and differences gives insight into the agile adaptability of Islamophobia as a nation-hopping political technology under conditions of hyperglobality. At the same time, it suggests globalization's own religious dynamics by which Muslim minorities in highly varied sites are made into alien desecrators of the nation-state and its sacrificial victim.

FROM EXCLUSION TO INCLUSION? SHIFTING ATTITUDES TOWARDS ETHNIC MINORITIES AND MUSLIMS AMONG DUTCH EVANGELICALS

Paul Vermeer
Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, Radboud University

Religion is generally known to support ethnocentric attitudes. That is to say, religious people often tend to perceive people with a similar cultural background or of their own religious tradition in a positive way and migrants or people with another faith in a more negative way. Furthermore, ethnocentrism especially prevails among more orthodox religious believers and much less among liberal believers. This paper explores the ethnocentric attitudes, as well as their attitudes towards Muslims, of a specific group of Christians, which are mostly depicted as conservative and orthodox; viz. Dutch evangelicals. By analyzing recently gathered survey data among more than 1,100 evangelicals in the Netherlands, the following two research questions are addressed: (1) To what extent do Dutch evangelicals hold ethnocentric and anti-Muslim attitudes? and (2) Which decisive factors determine their attitudes in this respect? Results show that evangelicals are far from unanimous in this respect. Not only is their perception of ethnic minorities more positive than their perception of Muslims, but younger evangelicals again are more positive towards both groups than older evangelicals. On the basis of these results, the question is finally raised if this means that the evangelical movement in the Netherlands is gradually becoming more supportive of an inclusive society.

RUSSIAN JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES COMMUNITY IN FINLAND IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION, PERSECUTION, WAR, AND PANDEMIC

Igor Mikeshin
University of Helsinki

My paper is based on my project (funded by Kone foundation) on Russian Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) refugees in Finland. The community is labeled extremist in 2017, and since then believers face severe persecutions in Russia, including criminal convictions and lengthy prison sentences. Due to a close proximity to the Russian second largest city of Saint Petersburg, also a significant center of JW community in Russia before the ban, many JW attempted emigration to Finland. However, Finnish migration authorities were overwhelmed with the European refuge crisis of

2015, and most of Russian JW were rejected and faced a threat of deportation back to Russia and criminal persecutions.

My research is focused on the concept of eschatological tranquility that I developed while studying the reaction and response of Russian Baptists to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the unprecedented global crisis and a potentially deadly virus, evangelical Christians tend to quickly adapt to the situation of "Zoom fellowship" and restrictions. Their tranquility is based on the Christ's assertion that "no one knows the day or hour" (Matthew 24:36) of the end of the world, and hence all Christians should repent themselves and spread the Word to others no matter what happens in the world around them.

I scrutinize eschatological tranquility in the context of not only pandemic, but also war and persecution. In Finland, the Russian-speaking JW community includes refugees from persecutions in Russia and refugees from the war in Ukraine worshiping together.

The questions I seek to address with my research are: How do JW make sense of global pandemic, persecution, and war in the theological and especially eschatological context? How do they construct their identity for the migration authorities in Finland? What are the limits of eschatological tranquility?

MULTICULTURALISM, RACISM AND RACIALISATION: GHANAIAN CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Amisah Bakuri
Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam

Despite myths of colour-blindness in the Netherlands, Black people have noted experiences of various forms of marginalisation by mainstream racial and cultural homogeneity expectations. There has been increasing focus on the new forms of racism associated with the "new migration", especially from the global south. Ghanaians are seen as a ‘new migrant’ group in the Netherlands, many of whom claim to be religious. This paper shows the ongoing shifting nature of modern racisms as encountered by Ghanaian Christians and Muslims in the Netherlands. In addition, this paper tracks the specific kinds of racism Ghanaians based in the Netherlands encounter in their everyday life, especially concerning their religious lives and their varied responses to anti-Black racism. I explore the various coping methods people create to overcome difficulties encountered due to anti-Black racism as emphasised, individually and collectively, highlighting the significance of community and religious groups and transnational religious connections. Concentrating on responses to anti-Black racism is a critical aspect of understanding the actual effects of systemic racism and avoids portraying minority ethnic groups as passive recipients of racism. This paper also contributes to contemporary debates about multiculturalism. I argue that the current rhetoric on multiculturalism's failings should concentrate less on minority ethnic groups as the primary problem for inclusion and more on racism, discrimination, and structural disparities that permeate the lives of migrants living in the Netherlands.

WERKGROEP RELIGIEWETENSCHAP EN ONDERWIJS

RELIGIEONDERWIJS IN BEWEGING: BURGERSCHAP, IDENTITEITSVORMING EN VAKDIDACTISCHE VERNIEUWING:

VIER PROMOTIEPROJECTEN VAN DE NGG-WERKGROEP RELIGIEWETENSCHAP EN ONDERWIJS

WEDNESDAY, 14:30-16:30

Organiser: Markus Davidsen

NB: this panel is in Dutch

In dit panel presenteren vier promovendi uit de NGG-werkgroep Religiewetenschap en Onderwijs de voorlopige resultaten van hun onderzoeken. De eerste twee papers, van Angelique Heijstek-Hofman (TU) en Marije Verkerk (UU & HU), beschrijven hoe onderwijs over religie en levensbeschouwing een bijdrage kan leveren aan belangrijke, algemene onderwijsdoelen. Heijstek-Hofman reflecteert specifiek op de bijdrage van ons vak aan burgerschapsvorming en persoonsvorming van leerlingen – ook in het openbaar onderwijs. Verkerk onderzoekt hoe levensbeschouwelijk onderwijs kan bijdragen aan de mentale gezondheid van leerlingen, door hun existentiële welzijn te bevorderen. Een gezamenlijke noemer voor Heijstek-Hofman en Verkerk is dat goed religieonderwijs doelt op kwalificatie én persoonsvorming in samenhang. Dit vormingstheoretisch uitgangspunt werken Joël Valk (UU) en Gijs van Gaans (UvA) vakdidactisch uit. Joël Valk laat zien dat hoewel materiële/visuele cultuur van groot belang is in religieuze tradities, docenten er vaak geen raad mee weten. Er is dus behoefte aan een nieuwe beelddidactiek voor het religieonderwijs en een nascholingsaanbod voor docenten. Gijs van Gaans, tenslotte, presenteert een vakdidactische benadering tot zingevende en identiteitsvormende verhalen. Hij laat hierbij een kans zien voor vakoverstijgende samenwerking tussen de vakken godsdienst/levensbeschouwing en geschiedenis. Na vier korte presentaties gaan de panelleden in gesprek met de zaal rondom een aantal *hot topics* in het onderwijs die aan alle presentaties raken, waaronder de verhouding tussen het vakgebied levensbeschouwing en religie en de burgerschapsopdracht van het onderwijs. De NGG-werkgroep Religiewetenschap en Onderwijs bestaat sinds 2018, dus met dit panel vieren we ons eerste lustrum. De afgelopen vijf jaar is onze werkgroep een ontmoetingsplek en samenwerkingsverband geweest voor religiewetenschappelijk georiënteerde godsdienstdocenten en universitaire religiewetenschappers met belangstelling voor onderwijs. Heb je zin om mee te doen, kom dan naar ons panel of neem contact op met Markus Altena Davidsen.

De voertaal van dit panel is Nederlands. Voor vo-docenten en studenten die alleen voor dit panel komen en verder niet deelnemen in de conferentie, is toegang gratis.

RUIMTE VOOR PERSOONSGERICHTE BURGERSCHAPSVORMING IN HET OPENBAAR VOORTGEZET ONDERWIJS

Angelique Heijstek-Hofman
Tilburg University

Dit paper poneert dat persoonsvorming en levensbeschouwelijke geletterdheid fundamentele onderdelen zijn van burgerschapsvorming – wat door mij de *persoonsgerichte* kant van burgerschapsvorming wordt genoemd – en beschrijft het belang van burgerschapsvorming in

deze brede zin voor openbare middelbare scholen. Om als veerkrachtige, verantwoordelijke en bewuste burgers deel te nemen aan de steeds veranderende samenleving hebben jongeren levensbeschouwelijke vorming nodig. Het ontwikkelen van de eigen identiteit en een persoonlijke levensbeschouwing geeft jongeren richting en betekenis aan hun leven, en levensbeschouwelijke geletterdheid zorgt voor een stevige kennisbasis waardoor zij de samenleving beter begrijpen en hun overtuigingen, waarden en drijfveren kunnen uitdrukken en beargumenteren. In het openbaar voortgezet onderwijs wordt er echter geen structurele levensbeschouwelijke vorming aangeboden vanwege de associatie van het vakgebied levensbeschouwing en religie met het confessioneel onderwijs. Doormiddel van persoonsgerichte burgerschapsvorming, waarbij burgerschapsvorming dus breed wordt gedefinieerd en ook persoonsvorming en levensbeschouwelijke geletterdheid inhoudt, zou het voor het openbaar onderwijs mogelijk zijn om structureel aandacht te besteden aan levensbeschouwelijke vorming. Het doel van dit paper is om uit te leggen, aan de hand van een aantal adviezen van experts, hoe het openbaar voortgezet onderwijs ruimte kan maken voor persoonsgerichte burgerschapsvorming en daarbij kan voldoen aan de wettelijke verplichting van de brede burgerschapsopdracht, de maatschappelijke roep tot meer aandacht voor brede en persoonlijke vorming en de verwachtingen van de openbare scholen zelf om actief pluriform te zijn.

‘ALS JE MAAR BLIJ BENT MET JEZELF’: EXISTENTIEEL WELZIJN IN DE VERHALEN VAN SCHOLIEREN

Marije Verkerk
Universiteit Utrecht en Hogeschool Utrecht

In dit paper wordt het concept ‘existentieel welzijn’ geïntroduceerd als een geesteswetenschappelijk perspectief op mentale gezondheid. Ik beschrijf de toegevoegde waarde van dit perspectief en hoe vragen rond welzijn raken aan de onderwijspraktijk en doelen van levensbeschouwelijk onderwijs. Ik laat zien hoe het concept ontwikkeld is op basis van begrippen zoals positieve gezondheid (Huber, 2014), existentiële betekenisgeving en welzijn (Baumeister en Landau, 2018; Leijssen, 2004), ‘meaning salience’ (Hooker et al., 2018) en narratief (o.a. Freeman, 2015; Ganzevoort, 1991; Kenyon, 2000). Tenslotte beschrijf ik de eerste, voorlopige, resultaten van het empirisch onderzoek naar existentieel welzijn in de autobiografische teksten van leerlingen. Daarin komen bijvoorbeeld de volgende zaken naar voren: het belang van goede relaties met anderen en met jezelf, behoefte aan voldoening en rust, en het belang van perspectiefwisseling voor het verkrijgen van inzicht. Dit paper presenteert een onderdeel van het promotieproject ‘Vormende verhalen: zin in generatie Y en Z’, dat onderzoek doet naar het verband tussen zingeving en mentaal welzijn onder jongeren en jongvolwassenen in Nederland. De biografische teksten vormen hiervan het eerste deelonderzoek, dat inzoomt op de existentiële uitdagingen van jongeren in de middelbare schoolleeftijd, de wijze waarop zij hieraan betekenis geven, en hoe dat samenhangt met welzijn.

HOE KUNNEN DOCENTEN BETER OMGAAN MET WAT LEERLINGEN VAN RELIGIE ZIEN IN HUN LESBOEKEN?

Joël Valk
Universiteit Utrecht

Dit paper presenteert een aantal van de voorlopige conclusies van een deelonderzoek uit mijn promotieproject 'Religie in beeld: een vernieuwde beelddidactiek voor het vak Godsdienst/Levensbeschouwing' waarin ik docenten interviewde over hoe zij in hun lessen omgaan met foto's van religieuze materiële/visuele cultuur. Ik beschrijf hier wat de aandachtspunten zijn voor het lesgeven met religieuze materiële en visuele cultuur, waar inzichten uit de religiewetenschap nuttig kunnen zijn en hoe zo de vakdidactische praktijk kan verbeteren. Binnen het vak Godsdienst/Levensbeschouwing (G/L) wordt veel aandacht besteed aan de wereldreligies. Docenten G/L zijn echter vaak theologisch opgeleid, met in hun opleiding weinig aandacht voor andere religies dan het christendom en voor religiewetenschappelijke theorie en methoden. Zeker de zichtbare en tastbare aspecten van religie, zoals godenbeelden en cultische voorwerpen, komen in de lerarenopleiding beperkt aan bod. Als gevolg hiervan hebben docenten niet veel training gehad in pedagogisch/didactische vaardigheden om daar op een professionele manier mee om te gaan. Zo herkennen zij gevoeligheden rondom religieuze visuele cultuur niet altijd en voelen ze zich vaak onzeker over wat ze wel en niet moeten behandelen en hoe ze dat dan zouden moeten doen. Om de lespraktijk daadwerkelijk te kunnen verbeteren zal in de laatste fase van mijn promotieonderzoek via een professionaliseringstraject vakdidactisch ontwerponderzoek uitgevoerd worden. Centraal in dit professionaliseringstraject staat de manier waarop er in musea aan een divers leerlingenpubliek over die religieuze visuele en materiële cultuur onderwijs wordt gegeven. Zo zal dit onderzoek dan bijdragen aan een vernieuwd beelddidactisch kader binnen het vak G/L waarbij ook de zintuiglijke omgang, de religieuze ervaring en de verschillende religieuze en niet-religieuze houdingen ten opzichte van het beeld aan bod komen. Dit kader zal daarmee recht doen aan de complexiteit van de materiële/visuele cultuur van de in de lessen gerepresenteerde en behandelde religies, om zo leraren en leerlingen competenter te maken in hun kennis van en oordelen over afbeeldingen van religieuze materiële/visuele cultuur in de lespraktijk van het vak G/L, religieuze objecten in het klaslokaal, religieuze materiële/visuele cultuur die tijdens excursies te zien is in religieuze gebouwen en musea en de omgang met (representaties van) religieuze materiële/visuele cultuur in (seculiere) media en het dagelijks leven.

DE ZINGEVENDE EN IDENTITEITSVORMENDE FUNCTIE VAN BEELDEN DIE LEERLINGEN HEBBEN VAN EEN GEDEELD VERLEDEN

Gijs van Gaans
Universiteit van Amsterdam

Verhalen spelen in het leven van mensen een belangrijke zingevende rol, onder andere door verleden, heden en toekomst op een zinvolle wijze met elkaar te verbinden. In dit opzicht kunnen verschillende soorten verhalen worden onderscheiden, zoals persoonlijke levensverhalen en verhalen over een gedeeld verleden. Deze verhalen worden vanuit verschillende wetenschappelijke disciplines bestudeerd, waaronder geschiedenis en religiewetenschap. Inzichten uit beide disciplines worden echter zelden samengebracht. Dit onderzoeksproject verkent de mogelijkheden om methoden uit de geestelijke zorg in te zetten in de studie van verhalen over een collectief verleden. Aan de hand van opdrachten en

interviews wordt leerlingen uit 4HAVO en enkele docenten geschiedenis in opleiding gevraagd om de eigen narratieve beelden van dat collectieve verleden te vertellen. Deze doelgroep is gekozen omdat het onderzoeksproject bij wil dragen aan een antwoord op de vraag waarom bepaalde onderwerpen in de geschiedenisles gevoelig liggen of zelfs tot spanningen in de klas kunnen leiden. Mogelijk ervaren leerlingen bepaalde verhalen dermate verbonden aan hun fundamentele waarden en wereldbeelden, dat een gevoel van ontkenning ervan ervaren wordt als een ontkenning van henzelf. De data uit deze studie is kwalitatief geanalyseerd om inzicht te krijgen in hoe leerlingen deze verhalen gebruikten om zin te geven aan het leven en hoe ze deze gebruikten om zich te oriënteren in hun eigen leven. Deze data laten zien dat leerlingen en studenten met een meer expliciet geformuleerde sociale identiteit, meer coherente verhalen van het verleden vertelden en deze explicieter in verband brachten met hun kernwaarden en hun fundamentele wereldbeelden. In deze verhalen drukken zij een zinvol geheel tussen heden en verleden en soms ook toekomst uit; geschiedenis vertelt hen wie ze zijn en wat er belangrijk is. Bij deelnemers zonder expliciete sociale zelfidentificatie is dat verband ook minder te leggen. Dat verschil zou kunnen bijdragen aan ons begrip omtrent de verschillen in gevoeligheid van bepaalde onderwerpen in de geschiedenisles.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2

DIVINE MOVEMENTS
THURSDAY, 09:00-10:30

Chair: Arjan Sterken

Ankana Das	Migration of Gods across the Nation Border
Johanneke Kroesbergen-Kamps	The devil and the secular in African diaspora Christianity
Paul van der Velde	The Wondrous Whereabouts of Shri Nath
Thomas Quartier	Stability in Motion

MIGRATION OF GODS ACROSS THE NATION BORDER

Ankana Das
Department of Humanities and Scoial Sciences, IIT Delhi, India

Marked by its porosity, the Indo-Bangladesh international border is known for illegal cross border activities since the birth of the nation state of Bangladesh in 1971 and rise in religious fundamentalism. Migration of Hindu refugees to India during and after this time was largely undocumented, with the exception of the 1977 event, which gained wide political popularity. During and after this time, huge number of refugees settled in various parts of the Indian state of West Bengal, especially in the Sundarban delta, a region whose demography was shaped by Bangladeshi refugees. The settlement of these peoples brought along with them a distinct essence of faith and religiosity in the Sundarban, that both corresponds to and responds with the existing local religious groups.

The focus of my proposed paper is on the faith and religious transformation that the refugees brought to the Indian Sundarban, and its contemporary relevance to both Hinduism and Islam. Especially important is one particular forest deity known as Bon-Bibi, who was eulogised as a syncretic figure, but is presently being 'Hinduised' as Bon-Devi. Drawn from ethnographic explorations in the Jharkhali and Pathankhali islands of the Indian Sundarban, my paper dwells on this very context of faith in "syncretic" religious figures and subsequently ask a few questions about the nature of religiosity in the delta. Firstly, it enquires into what faith in syncretic deities mean for the migrants, especially, what does it mean for Hindu migrants to stay faithful to Muslim deities, after they've faced violence at the hands of their Muslim neighbours? Secondly- is Bonbibi an 'immigrant god' brought to the Indian Sundarban by migrants? And lastly, how does one stay religious amidst a violent refugee experience?

THE DEVIL AND THE SECULAR IN AFRICAN DIASPORA CHRISTIANITY

Johanneke Kroesbergen-Kamps
Universiteit van Amsterdam

In African Christianity, the actions of spiritual agents of evil often receive heavy emphasis. While attention for Satan is not uncommon in a context of Pentecostal spiritual warfare theology, in Western-European Christianity the devil generally plays only a minor role as a figure of symbolic relevance. In this paper, I will discuss the role of the devil in the faith of African Christian migrants in Europe, paying special attention to the relation between religion and the secular. The paper is based on a literature study of research into African diaspora Christianity.

In the first part of the paper, I will discuss how a belief in the devil helps Christian migrants. Migrants use their religious resources, which include a belief in Satan as a force that can cause problems, to make sense of their new context. In recent years, the importance of the devil in migrant churches has also evoked concern. Oftentimes, the power of the devil is embodied by members of the community who are singled out as being possessed or as witches. Reports have stressed the harmful effects of this demonization on children and youths. In the second part, I will argue that these reports are related, at least partially, to a secular understanding of religion as a source of danger and otherness.

Much more than the secularised Christians of Europe's traditional churches, migrants are open to hear the voice of God and perceive the actions of the devil in their lives. But the secular context in which these churches operate in turn influences their practices and belief systems. In the final part of the paper, I will discuss whether and how this secular context has also influenced the belief in the power of Satan.

THE WONDROUS WHEREABOUTS OF SHRI NATH

Prof. Dr. Paul van der Velde
Radboud University Nijmegen

Shri Nath is one of the most important images of the popular Hindu god Krishna under worship in North India. According to a medieval text, the 'Shri Nath Ji Prakatya Ki Varta', the image

was discovered in the Braj Area. Later it was installed in Brindavan. There have been tensions surrounding the image. Various Vaishnava denominations claimed it to belong to their particular group (sampradaya). Now it is in the possession of the Vallabha sampradya or Pushtimarga, founded by the Vaishnava saint Vallabhacarya . Later the image was threatened by the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb (1658 –1707). The image had to flee. At present Shri Nath is under worship in the temple of Nathdwara in Rajasthan. It was the decision of the image itself to remain there, so devotees claim. But Shri Nath still moves around, at least he does so in the eyes of his devotees. He does not remain in his temple, at least not always. He moves around to play with his devotees. In the past he could even go as far as Kabul. Yet he tried to be back in the temple for the daily rituals. There are many hagiographical accounts (varta) of devotees of Shri Nath who play with him outside the temple. In this presentation I will concentrate on the role of Sri Nath in the hagiographical accounts of the 'Do Sau Bavana Vaishnava Ki Varta' ($16^{th}/17^{th}$ century CE.), a collection of saints stories on the followers of Vitthalnath. In these accounts Shri Nath shows himself to be a 'living image' of Krishna who plays, acts and moves around freely. Due to these miraculous trips, movements and other acts the image is considered to be 'truly alive'.

STABILITY IN MOTION
MONASTIC RITUALS IN CONTEMPORARY DUTCH SOCIETY

Prof. dr. Thomas Quartier
Full professor of Ritual- and Liturgical Studies Radboud University Nijmegen
Director Benedictine Centre for Liturgical Studies

Monastic life is traditionally based on the spiritual virtue of stability ('*stabilitas*'). According to the Rule of St Benedict from the 6^{th} century, the vow of monks and nuns implies to remain in the same community and at the same place ('*stabilitas loci*') for their entire life. Stability is constituted by rituals, especially the continuous ritual prayer. The motivation for this ritual commitment is both, social and spiritual. Socially, ritual practice enables the members to be independent of the requirements of changing situations outside the monastery. Spiritually, this freedom opens monks and nuns to be open for an eschatological fulfillment of life ('reign of God'). However, in contemporary society this idea of stability seems to be in crisis. Very few persons make the choice to commit themselves to this classical form because it seems to narrow their possibilities to lead a flexible life which is dominant today. People are in fact in motion during their lifepath, and this motion implies changes of their social network, the place where they live, and also their rituals. At the same time we see a growing number of lay-persons living outside monastery walls who still commit themselves to monastic stability ('oblates') and conduct their own forms of monastic rituals. How do they relate to the monastic virtue of stability of community and place? To be able to answer this question, we will rely on qualitative data we gained from 53 oblates affiliated to Dutch Benedictine abbeys. We will describe their experience of their (changing) social and spatial surrounding (1). In the second part of the paper we will investigate their ritual practices, their ritual needs and the challenges they experience (2). In the third part, we will reflect on the question how the monastic virtue of stability is affected by the context of its contemporary societal context, especially in a ritual sense (3).

NAVIGATING REFUGEE CRISES

THURSDAY, 09:00-10:30

Chair: Lena Richter

Hanna Berg	In the Afterlife of a Humanitarian Emergency Syrians' religious configurations of life and death in Azraq Refugee Camp, Jordan
Kholoud al-Ajarma	Negotiating narratives and religious practices: the experience of Palestinian refugees in Chile
Yasemin El-Menouar, Stephanie Müssig	Immigrant religion, discrimination, and support for refugees
Habtom Yohannes	The Impact of Forced Transnational Mobility of Diaspora Täwahədo and their Textual Practices

IN THE AFTERLIFE OF A HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY SYRIANS' RELIGIOUS CONFIGURATIONS OF LIFE AND DEATH IN AZRAQ REFUGEE CAMP, JORDAN

Hanna Berg
PhD candidate, Graduate Institute Geneva

This paper examines the role of Syrian Sunni Muslims' religiosity in configurating life and death in protracted displacement in Jordan. Humanitarian temporal logics of emergency (Brun, 2016; Gatter, 2023) limit attention to biological life – excluding, not only biographical life, but even more so end of life and death (Feldman, 2017). In this regard, through ethnographic research in Azraq Refugee Camp, this paper seeks to explore the relationship between temporariness of life and the temporality of humanitarian structure. It takes as point of departure the rejection of the Jordanian Government to build a cemetery inside the camp, on the basis that cemeteries are everlasting, as opposed Syrian refugees' stays there. When alive, due to bureaucratized mobility restrictions, residents of Azraq camp cannot easily share spaces beyond the camp with other residents in Jordan. Yet, once they have died, they can no longer share the space with residents in the camp – having to be buried elsewhere. Passing away, they do not only leave this world, but also Azraq camp. Seemingly, the refugee category, as well as its temporal and spatial contingencies, is only confined to this life, something that invites us to critically examine not only the temporality of displacement, but also of how it is understood in relation to the temporariness of life. Accordingly, attending to the word 'afterlife' as denoting both the protracted aftermath of a humanitarian emergency, and Syrian refugees' configurations of this world and the other world, this paper asks; How do Syrian Sunni Muslims in Azraq Camp navigate life and the afterlife, living in an outlived humanitarian setting? Asking this question allows for exploring the role of the extended life of humanitarian interventions in mediating refugees' religious configurations (or transformations) of life and death, who spend years of their lives in such condition.

NEGOTIATING NARRATIVES AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES: THE EXPERIENCE OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN CHILE

Kholoud Al-Ajarma
University of Edinburgh

The present study investigates the experiences of Palestinian Nakba-refugees, originally settled in Iraq, who were later displaced during the Iraqi civil war, and have since resettled in Santiago, Chile. This community is part of the broader Palestinian diaspora, which has been subjected to displacement and migration due to political upheavals and conflicts in their homeland. The Palestinian community in Chile, estimated to be between 350,000 to 500,000 people, is the largest Palestinian community outside of the Arab region and is predominantly Christian. The Nakba-refugees are all Muslims. The paper examines the struggles and challenges faced by the Nakba-refugees as they attempt to rebuild their lives in a new country, and how they narrate their own history in the face of ongoing displacement. The study analyzes the complex negotiation of identity and belonging in the context of multiple diasporic experiences, including the old diaspora community and the wider Chilean society. It also explores the religious practices of the Muslim diaspora and how these practices influence their relationships with both the Christian-dominated old diaspora and the Muslim minority community in Chile. The paper is based on ethnographic research conducted among the Palestinian diaspora in Chile which examines questions of identity and belonging in the context of ongoing displacement. This paper contributes to the broader scholarly discourse on diaspora studies, refugee studies, and the role of religion in shaping the experiences of displaced communities.

IMMIGRANT RELIGION, DISCRIMINATION, AND SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES

Yasemin El-Menouar
Bertelsmann-Stiftung, Gütersloh, Germany

Stephanie Müssig
Erlangen Centre for Islam and Law in Europe EZIRE, Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany

Inken Okrug
Erlangen Centre for Islam and Law in Europe EZIRE, Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany

During the so-called migration crisis in 2015, it was for thousands of volunteers, among them many immigrants themselves, that people seeking refuge in Germany have received help in the first days and weeks after their arrival. We look at the reasons for participation in refugee aid among Muslim and non-Muslim immigrants in Germany, and ask whether and how discrimination and religion contribute to this form of immigrant civic activity.

First, we aim to replicate previous conclusions about discrimination, its impact on religious identity, and support for refugees.

Second, we collect arguments why religiosity in the form of norm-adherence, belief, and experiencing the divine has an independent effect on civic engagement. By doing so, we add theoretical approaches from theology, economy, and the sociology of religion that have been rarely used to illustrate the relationship between religion and civic engagement. We arrive

to competing hypotheses about the effects of religiosity on civic engagement that we test subsequently with our data.

Third, we investigate how discrimination as real-world experience and religiosity as deeply-held belief system both shape how immigrants think about their relationship to their fellow citizens, about the responsibilities the state has towards its citizens and how this influences in turn their decision to get active in refugee aid. This is a new path in the study of discrimination, religion, and civic engagement that might help to understand the motivation of (dis)advantaged groups (not) to get active in civil society.

For the bivariate and multivariate analyses (logistic regression) we use the Religion Monitor 2017. This survey contains an oversample of immigrants living in Germany – Muslim (n = ca. 1.000) and non-Muslim (n = ca. 700) alike, as well as a sample of the general population of Germany (n = ca. 1.100).

THE IMPACT OF FORCED TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY ON DIASPORA TÄWAHƏDO AND THEIR TEXTUAL PRACTICES

Habtom Yohannes
PhD Candidate, Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, Radboud University

The impact of 'forced transnational mobility' on the Eritrean and Ethiopian Täwahədos in Europe is an understudied phenomena. The purpose of this study is to contribute in this field by exploring the impact of forced mobility on these religious communities, with a special focus on their textual practices. Pushed by the 1974 Ethiopian revolution that overthrew the last Täwahədo emperor Haile Selassie, hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians and Eritreans have been seeking refuge in Europe and beyond in search of security and future perspectives. After they settled in the host countries, these communities started to import religious materials from their home countries to replicate home in the diaspora. Various religious materials, including books, are imported from Eritrea, Ethiopia and marketed for higher prices in the diaspora amongst their own communities. Some books are produced outside Eritrea and Ethiopia, in places like Sudan, Egypt, Israel, the United States of America, and various European countries. Not only the published books but the process towards the publication is a mobility by itself. The author of a book resides in country x, the publisher in country y, the printing press in country z and the book is marketed across the world. Mobility is not a new phenomenon to the Täwahədo church and its elites. However, the 1974 revolution has made mobility a mass movement, exposing the faithful and the clergy to the influences of transnationalism and ecumenism. The forced mobility of the Täwahədos has been creating an increasingly conscious and affluent religious community that has been planting their churches across the world, and providing financial and material support to their churches back home. Mobility has become a preservation and reproduction of tradition. The disadvantages of living in exile, far from monasteries and holy Täwahədo places are compensated by imitating home in the diaspora.

DIASPORIC MOBILITY AND BELONGING
THURSDAY, 09:00-10:30

Chair: Kamel Essabane

Jing-Yi Magraw	Oost West, Thuis Best: Factors Influencing Migration and Relocation Permanency for Highly Skilled Migrants in the Leiden Region
Zahra Azhar and Seyed Masoud Noori	Enhancing Social Integration of Muslim Immigrants: Integration as a Religious Obligation
Napakadol Kittisenee	Welcome Tevoda at Right Time Zone: Celebrating Khmer New Year in Diaspora
Regina van de Wall	A New Armenia: Religious Life in the Midst of Trauma and Migration

OOST WEST, THUIS BEST: FACTORS INFLUENCING MIGRATION AND RELOCATION PERMANENCY FOR HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS IN THE LEIDEN REGION

Jing-Yi Magraw
Utrecht University

The increasing ease with which humans are now able to migrate internationally has seen Western European countries respond by favouring highly skilled migrants, resulting in a shift in immigration policies to allow this particular influx of international migrants to enter into countries such as the Netherlands, as these highly skilled migrants offer much needed talent for the host country. However, to encourage highly skilled migration, it is also necessary to understand what factors influence the permanency of a migrant's stay in their host country, due to successful talent recruitment usually requiring more permanent relocation. International centres have been established throughout the Netherlands in the hopes of assisting migrants with a smoother start to their new life, with one example being Leiden International Centre, which services the Leiden region. Focusing on Leiden International Centre's highly skilled migrant target audience, this paper examines the variable of religion as a push-pull factor in international migration to the Leiden region, as well as the impacts of host country national contact as a relocation permanency factor for those internationals who have made the move to the region. Through using both an anonymous survey and follow-up interviews, the experience of highly skilled migrants living in the Leiden region were collected and analysed. Results indicate that, when it comes to the importance of religion in the lives of highly skilled migrants, the sample's responses were similar to the World Values Survey 7's results for the importance of religion across the Netherlands – highlighting that highly skilled migrants are likely being drawn to countries that have similar religious beliefs to them, even in spite of there being different religious denominational make-up. Moreover, results found a correlation between the making of local (Dutch) friends and increased social life satisfaction, underlining the importance of host country national contact in relocation permanency.

ENHANCING SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS: INTEGRATION AS A RELIGIOUS OBLIGATION

Zahra Azhar
Shahid Beheshti University

Seyed Masoud Noori
Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, NYU Arts & Science

The integration of immigrants and refugees into their host countries poses a significant challenge to both the newcomers and the host country. This challenge continues even after the immigrant attains citizenship status in the host country, as citizenship does not necessarily guarantee social integration. When a person experiences a conflict between their religious beliefs and the laws of their new country, the integration process becomes more complicated. This conflict can result in the person feeling like an outsider and being unable to participate actively in their new country's social, cultural, economic, and political life. Even if they do not violate the laws of their new country, they may feel unable to be active citizens due to this inner conflict, resulting in social marginalization. The main question of the proposal is: **How can Muslim immigrants overcome the inner conflict that arises from a perceived conflict between their religious beliefs and the laws of their new country and become active and influential citizens in their new countries' social, cultural, economic, and political life?**

To address this issue, this article proposes that referencing the verses of the Quran related to migration, the theoretical basis for the permissibility and necessity of living in a free society, and the fatwas of some jurists can help Muslim immigrants overcome this inner conflict. This approach can enable them to become active and influential citizens in their new countries' life. Furthermore, this change will shift the entire integration process from a political or social obligation to a religious act or even a duty. In other words, the immigrant's religious beliefs and practices will become a central aspect of their integration into the new society. This shift can lead to a deeper understanding and acceptance of the immigrant's culture and beliefs, fostering greater social cohesion and integration. This article argues that Islam can accelerate the social integration of Muslim immigrants by drawing on the Quran, the actions of the Prophet, the theories of Muslim reformists, and the fatwas of jurists (*Fuqahā*).

WELCOME TEVODA AT RIGHT TIME ZONE: CELEBRATING KHMER NEW YEAR IN DIASPORA

Napakadol Kittisenee
PhD student, Department of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Khmer New Year is at the paragon of the life course ritual which has always been scheduled in the mid-April each year according to traditional astrological calculation. This similar festive rhythm and knowledge is also shared and sustained among the Thai, Laotian, Burmese, Sinhalese, and Nepali. What if one lives outside the country of origin with a different time zone? Should one stick to the homeland calendar and timing, or instead adjust to the date and time of the new home setting? How and when do the refugees/diasporic communities celebrate new year, since the meaning of home is challenged, redefined, and negotiated? This paper aims to address these questions.

This paper will attend to Khmer family ritual practice of welcoming Tevoda, an annual Hindu-Buddhist deity who descends to the Earth during Khmer New Year to secure peace and prosperity of the devotees. Drawing on varied practices shared by Khmers living in the diaspora in the U.S. as well as the reflection on my family ritual practice in a Chinese diaspora community in Thailand, this study will demonstrate how welcoming Tevoda is a window onto the larger projection of how home, belonging, and well-being are reoriented in the different time zones.

A NEW ARMENIA:
RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE MIDST OF TRAUMA AND MIGRATION

Regina van der Wall
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

The 1915 Armenian genocide had consequences for all Armenians in all walks of life. Some Armenians experienced the genocide in physically and culturally destructive ways. Consequently, aspects of their Armenian identity were annihilated. Some fled West-Armenia and settled in neighbouring countries where they created "new Armenian lives". East-Armenians were generally not directly affected, but they share the transgenerational trauma, i.e. the trauma passed down from generation to generation, of their Armenians counterparts. As Armenians migrated to the Netherlands, their Armenian Apostolic Orthodox faith migrated along with them. To Dutch Armenians, the Armenian Apostolic Church remains the cornerstone of their cultural and religious life. But what spaces does the Apostolic Orthodox Church facilitate? And how do Dutch Armenians take agency over these religious spaces to overcome the trauma of the genocide and the reality of migration?

This study investigated the role of the Armenian Apostolic Church in facilitating religious spaces for Dutch Armenians. Furthermore, it uncovered how Dutch Armenians use these spaces in dealing with the realities of transgenerational trauma and migration. Despite growing literature on migration of religion, findings are often limited to institutional religion. This paper, however, aims to shed light on broader aspects of religion by using the concept of lived religion, which is the sacredness, transcendence and existentiality in everyday life of action – that what people do. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with six Dutch Armenians between the ages of 18 and 35, and with various diasporic backgrounds. Insights were gained on how Armenians acquire and design their religious spaces. This study shows that the Armenian Apostolic Church is a place where Armenians can connect with their cultural background in an educational manner. It also demonstrated that the Church is essential in their lives and it represents a central meeting hub for those in diaspora.

SPATIALITY AND URBANIZATION
THURSDAY, 13:30-15:00

Chair: Ernst van den Hemel

Margreet van Es	Dining Out in the Super-Diverse City: Urban Religion and the Importance of the Private Sector

Narciss M. Sohrabi	Religious Lives of Migrants: Iranian Diaspora in France
Emine Enise Yakar	From Dichotomic Territorial Concept (Dār al-Islam-Dār al-Harb) to Monadic Territorial Approach (Dār al-Wāḥida)

DINING OUT IN THE SUPER-DIVERSE CITY: URBAN RELIGION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Margreet van Es
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Utrecht University

How to study religion in super-diverse urban settings? Based on ethnographic fieldwork in trendy, alcohol-free halal restaurants in Rotterdam, this paper proposes to pay more attention to the role of the private sector, and in particular to cafes and restaurants. Studies on urban religion tend to focus on interactions between the state, citizens, and religious organizations, overlooking the role played by the private sector. Meanwhile, studies on migrant entrepreneurship tend to focus on migration experiences and cultural diversity, but seldom pay much attention to religion. This paper raises the question of how the 'restaurant-scape' in a particular city or neighborhood gives shape to ordinary people's everyday encounters with religious diversity. Cafes and restaurants are crucial to contemporary social life. As their numbers keep increasing, cafes and restaurants have a growing impact on the cityscape. Meanwhile, in super-diverse cities, religion more and more often feeds into what is on the menu and what is conspicuously absent from the menu in a particular restaurant – whether it is because restaurateurs try to appeal to new consumer groups, or whether it is because of their own religious considerations. In Rotterdam, this applies most obviously to the growing availability of halal food, but depending on the location, one can also think of the growing number of Hindu vegetarian, Rastafari vegan, or kosher restaurants. As such, restaurants carry the potential to confront people with religious diversity, whether people actually sit down to enjoy a full dinner, or simply pass by and notice a particular crowd inside or a halal sign on the glass window. This raises all sorts of questions, including: to what extent can restaurant consumption and entrepreneurship be seen as practices of religious place-making? And what does this tell us about the role of the private sector in the politics of belonging more generally?

RELIGIOUS LIVES OF MIGRANTS: IRANIAN DIASPORA IN FRANCE

Narciss M. Sohrabi
Visiting researcher in the Université Paris Ouest - Nanterre - La Défense-Laboratoire LADYSS-UMR7533

France is one of the destinations of Iranians who have searched for the hospitality in different periods of Iranian socio-political movements and/or revolutions. Refugees that are searching

for a host can be divided into different groups of generation with different economic, social and political positions. From the late 1970s, France has hosted different groups of Iranian exiles, among of which, the first group included monarchists at the beginning of the Islamic Revolution. In the following, the second generation was revolutionaries more and less with opposed political parts who became refugees seeking to settle their political and ideological accounts of the 1960s. And after that until now, different groups for reasons such as Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), or after the events became exiles who migrated because of the political reasons. They have contacts directly and indirectly in the religious and non-religious programs.

This study tries to explore the space of such associations, including cyberspace and physical space, for multi-dimensional space recognition based on the ideas of David Harvey and Habermas on public space. To do this, a qualitative field study was conducted from May 2018 to October 2019 to answer the following questions. What is the situation religious lives in the in the process of house-making in France? Why are immigrants considered as translators or mediators among geographical and cultural spaces for being together?

FROM DICHOTOMIC TERRITORIAL CONCEPT (*DĀR AL-ISLAM-DĀR AL-HARB*) TO MONADIC TERRITORIAL APPROACH (*DĀR AL-WĀḤIDA*)

Emine Enise Yakar
Assaciate Professor in Islamic Studies Department, Recep Tayyip Erdogan University

Territoriality of a land was an established fiqh tradition within Islamic law. Pre-modern scholars were determined different provisions and conditions to identify whether the status of a land is *dār al-Islam*, *dār al-ahd* or *dār al-harb*. In the classical period of Islamic law, this classification of lands provided to regulate the relationship between states, the relationship between a Muslim ruler and his public, and the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims. After the twentieth century, the immigration of a substantial number of Muslim to the West, however, render the traditional classification of land dysfunctional.

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Muslim scholars engaged in territoriality issues to provide a functional classification that brings legal solutions to legal problems connected with territoriality concept. Especially, Muslim scholars who aim to design and develop the concept of the Islamic jurisprudence for Muslim minorities (*fiqh al-aqalliyāt*) engage zealously in territorial concept. Taha Jabir al-Alvani is one of the prominent figures in the current Islamic legal discourse on Muslims in the West and probably is the one who coined the term *fiqh al-aqalliyāt*. When Alvani introduced his concept of *fiqh al-aqalliyāt*, he underlined the substantial importance of redefining the concept of *dār* in the discourse on Muslim minorities in the West. A closer examination of Alvani's ideas on territoriality bring out that this issue is for him a matter of concern that goes beyond the minority context and is implicitly related to his call for renewal Islamic political and legal thought.

Applying on the traditional legal precedents, Alvani produced a new territorial classification that is called *dār al-wāḥida* (unity of teritoriality). Firstly, the eleventh century Shafi'ī scholar Abū al-Hasan al-Māwardī (d.1058) identifies the free practice of religion as a decisive criteria in qualifying a territory to be Islamic (or *dār al-Islām*). Secondly, Māwardī's this thought is related by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalāni's *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, a multi volume commentary on the Sunni Ḥadīth collection Saḥīh al-Bukhāri. Abū Bakr al-Qaffāl al-Shāshī (d. 976) divided communities into *ummat al-ijāba* (the community of compliance and *ummat al-da'wa* (the

community of mission). This division of Shāshī is transferred by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209) in *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī*, a well-known classical exegesis and commentary on the Qur'an. Lastly, Ḥanafī jurist 'Alā' al-Dīn Abū Bakr b. Mas'ūd al-Kāsānī (d. 1191) comments on Abū Ḥanīfa's *dār al-Islām* and states that the Islamic rulings are built upon safety and fear in his *Badā'i' al-Ṣanā'i' fī Tartīb al-Sharā'i'*. In drawing on selectively approaches of these earlier Muslim scholars, Alvani coined the term *dār al-wāḥida*. Putting an emphasis on the unity of creation and mankind, Alvani negates any religio-political division (*dār al-Islām-dār al-harb*) drawn by earlier and modern scholars.

During the presentation, the influence of the three scholars' views upon Alvani's territoriality concept will be analysed by referring their intermediary role within the context of Muslim minority.

ARCHITECTURE AND MATERIAL CULTURE
THURSDAY, 13:30-15:00

Chair: Johanneke Kroesbergen-Kamps

Kai Shmushko	One belt, One road, One old horse: Trans-cultural Buddhist Heritage in China's oldest Temple
Lucinda Dirven	Mission, Movement and Material culture: The case of early Manichaeism
Elisabeth Becker and Paula Maria Arana Barbier	Exclusion after death: Trajectories of Muslims Un-belonging in Spain
Wouter Kock	Catholic monasteries as a new habit(us): new religious communities inhabiting old monasteries

ONE BELT, ONE ROAD, ONE OLD HORSE:
TRANS-CULTURAL BUDDHIST HERITAGE IN CHINA'S OLDEST TEMPLE

Kai Shmushko
University of Amsterdam, Department of Sociology

The establishment of the White Horse Temple (*Baima s*i 白马寺) in Henan Province by Emperor Ming (58-75 AD) marked the introduction of Buddhism into China (Yang & Wang, 2014). According to tradition, it is the first Buddhist temple in China, established in 68 AD. The main temple buildings, were reconstructed during the Ming and Qing dynasties, refurbished in the 1950s, and again in 1973 after the Cultural Revolution. A few more additions and renovations were completed in the past decade, and uniquely, the complex now includes temples designed and dedicated to Buddhist traditions of other countries beyond Chinese Buddhist traditions; namely: Myanmar, Thailand, and India. These architectonic, stylistic and cultural expressions raise several questions including: Why would the first Chinese Buddhist temple stress foreign Buddhist traditions? What stands behind the choice of these particular countries?

Since the early 2000s, the CCP has increasingly used various cultural heritage sites, including Buddhist ones, as soft power agents. Furthermore, In the context of the "One Belt,

One Road" (*Yidaiyilu*一带一路) initiative launched by President Xi in 2013, Buddhist temples, representatives, and practices have been harnessed to play a part in the People's Republic of China (PRC)'s agendas. In this context, the White Horse Temple, as part of cultural tourism in Henan, is facing new opportunities and challenges (Lin & Wei, 2022). The paper looks into the material particularities of the reconstruction of the oldest Chinese Buddhist temple in light of the trajectory described above, based on field notes from 2018. The author argues that the temple's unique spatiality and characteristics stress a double cultural message. The first is that the temple, as ancient Buddhist heritage, ties the Buddhist tradition with the Chinese nation, and history. This message is part of a broader endeavor for the Sinicization of Buddhism (佛教中国化进程). The sconed is that Buddhism is a collective Asian tradition, shared among the PRC's potential allies, and therefore a fruitful cultural common ground for economic and political collaboration.

MISSION, MOVEMENT AND MATERIAL CULTURE: THE CASE OF EARLY MANICHAEISM

Lucinda Dirven
Radboud University

The message of the prophet Mani (ca. 216-276 CE) spread with an unusual swiftness from Mesopotamia over large parts of the eastern Mediterranean and Central Asia. The new religion was forthright missionary and new methods were being used and developed for the spread of the new faith. As is well known, Mani readily adopted religious symbols from surrounding religions in order to spread his message. Another novelty was the prophet's introduction of a picture book, the so-called *Arzang* (Mid. Iran. *Ardahang*, Greek Eikon), illustrating his doctrine. A Middle Persian text states that Mani sent out a book illustrator to accompany his missionaries. Mani's own drawings are unfortunately lost, and the eldest Manichaean illustrations that have come down to us originate from Sogdia, date to the eleventh century and are heavily influenced by Buddhist art. Notwithstanding this lack of early material evidence, André Grabar postulated already in 1969 that the success of Mani's picture book in the eastern Mediterranean spurred the development of Christian art in the third century. A confirmation for the early existence of such a book is now provided by paintings from the mithraeum that was discovered in 1997 in Huarte (Syria) dated to the fourth century CE, that are likely based upon illustrations from Mani's *Arzang*. Departing from this case study, this paper sets out to theorize on the role of material culture in missionary activities and its ability to cross both borders and religious divisions.

EXCLUSION AFTER DEATH: TRAJECTORIES OF MUSLIMS UN-BELONGING IN SPAIN

Elisabeth Becker
Max Weber Institute for Sociology, University of Heidelberg

Paula Arana Barbier
Max Weber Institute for Sociology, University of Heidelberg

What happens when a person with religious convictions dies in a country where their religion is not mainstream? Burial practices may or may not be respected according to religious law, depending on the social and political constitution of the country of their residence. This has led to the normalization of "repatriation" after death, even when individuals would prefer to be buried in the places where they long lived. In his book, Dying Abroad, Osman Balkan traces the relationality of Berlin and Istanbul in the burial practices of Turkish-origin Muslims who reside in Germany, exposing the complex cultural, social and political webs surrounding the burial practices of Muslims in Europe.

In this article, we turn to the case of Spain in order to theorize exclusion after death. It is not widely known that Franco's army during the Spanish Civil War largely consisted of Moroccan origin soldiers. Even less known is that, at the time, Franco instated a structure for accommodating Islam, including the building of Muslim hospitals and the designation of Muslim cemeteries. Despite this historical precedent, however, today's Spain has insufficient infrastructure to satisfy the needs of its constantly growing Islamic population of around 2.5M people.

Based on archival research, interviews and data provided by the Spanish Observatory of Religious Pluralism, this article identifies social and political factors that lead to the contemporary normalization of repatriation practices while also shedding light on attempts to (again) carve out space for Muslim life—and death practices—in Spain. This article further maps the cemeteries habilitated for such aims from the Spanish Civil War until today and whether/where they are still in use, contested spaces, forgotten or repurposed.

CATHOLIC MONASTERIES AS A NEW HABIT(US): NEW RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES INHABITING OLD MONASTERIES

Wouter Kock
Phd Candidate, Faculty of Philosophy, Theology, and Religious Studies, Radboud University

Catholic monasteries are often surrounded by high stone walls which function as both a practical and a symbolic measure of seclusion from the outside world. Within these walls, religious rules, like the Rule of Saint Benedict, shape the ritual form-of-life of the monastic communities. In the Netherlands, secularization has led to a rapid decline of the monastic population and therewith to the closure of many of these secluded, religious spaces. They often gain a second life through adaptive (secular) reuse. And yet, the Catholic monastic tradition has not been defined by religious decline alone: in the past few decades new religious groups emerged that explored alternative ways of religious life outside of traditional monasteries. Interestingly though, since the turn of the millennium, the reverse is happening: a ''re-religionization'' of monumental monasteries has manifested itself as relatively new religious groups, both Protestant and Catholic, are ''returning'' to these secluded, religious spaces. This religious reuse is initiated both by local church communities as well as by groups with a strong international focus.

As monasteries have been built in order to sustain seclusion and enable a ritualized communal life of prayer, the question emerges how these new communities are impacted by and make use of the buildings' religious past and (social) architecture. The communities, moreover, have not come to these places to hide behind their walls, but to be actively involved

with their surroundings and, often, to evangelize. This paper therefore investigates how the new religious communities take inspiration from but also challenge the monastery as a secluded, religious space.

RITUALS AND PERFORMANCE
THURSDAY, 13:30-15:00

Chair: Eric Venbrux

Anna Niedźwiedź	Catholic women on the move: pilgrimages and retreats in Ghana
Shideh Khoshnoodi	Persian New Year or Nowrūz Ritual Performance among Iranians with Different Religious Affiliations in the Netherlands
Giovanna Capponi	Cleaning blood from the house: the ethics and hygiene of animal sacrifice in Afro-Brazilian religions and beyond

CATHOLIC WOMEN ON THE MOVE: PILGRIMAGES AND RETREATS IN GHANA

Anna Niedźwiedź
Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland

Various prayer groups and societies constitute a significant form organizing religious lives of many Christians in today's Ghana. In this paper I will discuss Roman Catholic women organizations and analyze some of their activities through the concept of mobility.
I will particularly focus on pilgrimages organized to Marian shrines in central Ghana where I conducted ethnographic fieldwork. Mostly designed in the past by the European missionaries, the Catholic shrines in Ghana are currently significant lived spaces of post-missionary African Catholicism. The shrines known simply as "grottos" were supposed in various ways to relate to the European shrine of Lourdes. They were also supposed to overshadow the power of shrines related to the so-called African traditional religions.

For today's Ghanaian Catholics the grottos function as important local and personal spiritual places. The paper will discuss (1) how Catholic women interact with these shrines during annual celebrations, religious conferences and retreats; (2) how these activities potentially empower and/or marginalize women in the context of contemporary African Catholicism and Ghanaian cultural norms; (3) how the materiality of the grottos collaborates with pentecostalized forms of prayer and the bottom up practices of the women pilgrims.
The visits by Catholic women to the shrines exemplify intimate connections between physical mobilities and changing gender roles as well as movements within social milieu (particularly important in multi-ethnic central Ghana inhabited by many migrants from the northern part of the country). These pilgrimages and lived spaces of the Catholic shrines also epitomize the ongoing transformation of African Christianity and specifically Catholic movement between its denominational global "center" and localized "peripheries".

PERSIAN NEW YEAR OR NOWRŪZ RITUAL PERFORMANCE AMONG IRANIANS WITH DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Shideh Khoshnoodi
Tilburg University

The relatively neutral nature of the Persian New Yew or Nowrūz is widely understood as the only tradition that is affirmed by all Iranians of different religions and ethnicities in Iran and diaspora. In this presentation I discuss my ethnographic research of how this diverse population celebrates Nowrūz in the pluralist setting of the Netherlands. By analyzing changes in Nowrūz in the Netherlands since Iranians' first arrival in the 1980s and subsequent migration waves, I hope to shed light on the changing meanings of performing Nowrūz rituals by Iranian Dutch people of diverse religious backgrounds.

CLEANING BLOOD FROM THE HOUSE: THE ETHICS AND HYGIENE OF ANIMAL SACRIFICE IN AFRO-BRAZILIAN RELIGIONS AND BEYOND

Dr Giovanna Capponi
University of Roehampton, UK

In recent years, Brazil has become a hub for multiple religious practices and denominations, especially within the realm of Afro-diasporic religions. This paper explores the arrival of a new religion called the "Cult of Yezam" in Brazil and its impact on the ongoing debates and controversies surrounding animal sacrifices. Led by a Cuban priest who settled in São Paulo in 2018, the Cult of Yezam claims ancient African origins and is highly compatible with other Afro-Brazilian religions. One of its main goals is to provide practitioners of Candomblé and Umbanda with the ritual knowledge to avoid and substitute animal sacrifice.

Using the Cult of Yezam as a case study, this paper analyzes how the practice of "cleaning the blood" from Candomblé and Umbanda rituals responds to changing sensitivities around animal rights and ethics in religions, especially among urban and middle-class practitioners. However, this shift also intersects with broader politics of hygienisation and racialisation of Afro-religious practices in the social and political sphere. This ambivalence converges with legislative and ethical issues, as well as contemporary dietary choices, not only in Brazil but also in Europe, where the Cult of Yezam is expanding.

By exploring the arrival of the Cult of Yezam and its developments, this paper sheds light on the changing dynamics of Afro-diasporic religions in Brazil and their transnational impact, raising questions on tradition, heritage, and changing ethical concerns, but also on the symbolic and racialized understandings of animal blood in different contexts.

THINKING BEYOND 'RELIGION AS MIGRANT SUPPORT NETWORK': SUBJECTIVITY, SOCIALITY AND THE MAKING OF RELIGION IN NEW (SACRED) GEOGRAPHIES

THURSDAY 13.30 – 15.00

Chair: Emily Hertzman

Carola Lorea	Does displacement make religion stronger? A thriving Dalit religious movement across national and maritime borders
Erica M. Larson	Indonesian Christian Students and Educational Migration: Religion and mobility in the transition to adulthood
Ranjana Raghunathan	A 'Biography' of Diasporic Religion: Tracing Social Worlds among Tamils in Singapore
Natalie Lang	New sacred geographies, conversion, and blessed mobility: Sri Lankan Tamil religious practices in Paris
Emily Hertzman	Becoming a Chinese Indonesian spirit-medium in Singkawang, West Kalimantan in the post-Suharto era

Organizer: Emily Hertzman

Religion plays important roles in processes of migration by providing structures that create community and offer mutual support under conditions that include uncertainty, transition, precarity, and trauma. Building on and going beyond that framework, this panel explores the ways that migrants, and communities created through migration, not merely rely on religion as social support, but are active agents in the making of their religious lives, which become expressions of new sacred subjectivities and geographies. While processes of migration create conditions in which migrants might need to create solidarity through shared religiosity, we argue that migrant religiosity cannot be reduced to that function alone, but also includes other important aspects, including multiple meaning making processes through which life is interpreted and given value, both individually and collectively. Each of the papers in this panel considers the intimate, subjective and embodied experiences of peoples' religiosity (in contexts of migration and diaspora) in relation to specific social worlds, aspirations and transgression. In each case this includes co-transformations of identities, geographies and religiosities. The case studies presented include Sri Lankan Tamil migrants in Paris, Matua practitioners from East Bengal in the Andaman Islands, Indonesian Christian university students in Singapore, Chinese spirit-mediums in Indonesia and Tamil Hindus in Singapore. Through this presentation, we contribute to scholarship on religion and migration, with recognition of the ways that individuals are active agents in the making of their religious lives, based on profound, meaningful, material and embodied sacred experiences that go beyond the strategic use of religion as a community structure.

DOES DISPLACEMENT MAKE RELIGION STRONGER? A THRIVING DALIT RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT ACROSS NATIONAL AND MARITIME BORDERS

Dr Carola Lorea

Junior Professor 'Rethinking Global Religion', Department of Religious Studies, University of Tübingen

The Matua religious movement emerged in 19th century East Bengal (now Bangladesh) to fight untouchability while borrowing from ecstatic forms of Bengali popular Vaishnavism. But Matua religion only became numerically strong (40 million members according to conservative estimate) after the severe displacement of its community members on several shores and borderlands of South Asia. Following the Partition of India and Pakistan (1947) and the Liberation War of Bangladesh (1971) millions of Matua followers migrated and resettled in various Indian states and on the Andaman Islands, an archipelago of the eastern Indian Ocean. Despite the territorial fragmentation, more and more families 'converted' by embracing a Matua guru in the '80s and again in the 2000s, in response to fears of statelessness, eviction, and deportation. Belonging to the Matua network today provides precarious citizens with a religious form of proxy citizenship.

When religion features in studies of migration, it is often to discuss inter-religious tensions in the host country, radicalization, religious impact on assimilation, and how transnational religious structures, like the Church, act for the support, aid and assistance of migrants (Levitt 2003, McLoughlin 2005, Pirouet 2006, Jaffrelot & Therwath 2011, Abbas 2012, Lauterbach 2014, Wilson 2014, Koser 2015, Eghdamian 2016, Mavelli & Wilson 2016). These works are useful to understand how Matua networks operate as support structures for refugees and their descendants, offering them a migration route, a sense of leverage, and a social network to rely upon in a new dwelling place, providing political paths to recognition.

But besides religious 'responses to' displacement, and religious 'resources for' displaced people, I consider the intersections of religion and displacement to understand how migration *makes* religion. Mobility shapes the contours of religiosity, contributing to the constitution of religious authenticity and authority; religions, at the same time, can generate mobility, inspiring and/or enabling travels and crossings (Werbner 1996; Lau & Cao 2014; Rangkla 2014; Tweed 2006). This is certainly the case of highly mobile and connected Matua gurus, performers and preachers, itinerant actors moving along the Matua network across terrestrial and maritime borders.

In this paper, I focus on peripatetic religious sounds and itinerant sacred substances like dust and water, to reframe debates on religious place-making. I build upon scholars of religion, embodiment and place-making in diasporic settings who argued that the exclusive focus on meaning (Vasquez 2005, 224) and cognitive truths (McGuire 2007) in religion has ignored the material and embodied aspects of place-making. Intersecting the materiality of Matua bodies, places and sounds, I contribute to this recent, growing scholarship that considers body, migration, ritual, and place-making as interconnected (Dudley 2010; Sheringham 2013; Vasquez & Knott 2014; Pedersen & Rytter 2018).

INDONESIAN CHRISTIAN STUDENTS AND EDUCATIONAL MIGRATION: RELIGION AND MOBILITY IN THE TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

Dr Erica M. Larson
Research Fellow, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

In this paper, I focus on Indonesian students' experiences of migration to Singapore for university to understand how they are intertwined with the transition to adulthood and processes of religious self-making. Religion is not a major deciding factor in educational migration for Indonesian students of varied ethnic and religious backgrounds, though it is for many a defining feature of their identity.

Indonesian students have built up informal and formal networks of support to help incoming students to settle and adjust to life at the National University of Singapore. The incoming students are religiously diverse (Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu) and often form multi-religious groups of friends among co-nationals. Religious student groups also take the initiative to get in touch with newly arrived students and invite them to join religious activities, services, and groups. These established relationships are important, but religion should not be reduced to a grounding network or anchoring force in migrant experience (as argued by Brown and Yeoh 2018). I propose that it is also important to understand the way in which students experience a transformed religiosity, and argue that this experience is defined both by mobility and the transition to adulthood.

Some Indonesian Christian students define their acceptance into what they cite as Asia's top university as a God-given opportunity rather than a personal achievement. This opportunity, with the conviction that it is not simply deserved on the basis of merit, provides motivation for religious practice among Christian students who report having increased or maintained a high level of religiosity and involvement in their respective churches. In other words, increased religious involvement is not simply a mode of integration into existing networks but must be taken seriously as it creates new religious motivations and shapes the religious trajectories of youth.

A 'BIOGRAPHY' OF DIASPORIC RELIGION: TRACING SOCIAL WORLDS AMONG TAMILS IN SINGAPORE

Dr Ranjana Raghunathan
Assistant Professor, School of Liberal Arts and Design Studies Vidyashilp University, Bangalore, India

Recent scholarship in religious studies, especially in immigrant and diaspora contexts, have shifted away from migrant adaptation, acculturation, and identity formations, to emphasize the intimate and everyday social practices. This paper is in conversation with these scholarly interventions and emphasizes the religious experiences and practices of Tamil diasporic subjects in Singapore. In doing so, the paper traces a portrait of an individual's life to make vivid the events, encounters, and details of her experiences with sorcery, possession and the sacred. Symbolic understandings of sorcery practices within anthropology have been supplanted by subjective experiences of psychological suffering, accusations, and selfhood. Furthermore, sorcery and possession experiences of women have been theorized as culturally sanctioned space for transgressions of gendered social norms. What kinds of subjectivity and sociality does sorcery mediate among Tamil diaspora women in the multicultural and secular city-state of Singapore?

Guided by this broad inquiry, the paper emphasizes the consequences and effects of religious ideas and practices in the lives of those who struggle to create a meaningful life. It encompasses the everyday and the eventful, the mundane and sacred aspects of religious

encounters and experiences. The paper is based on the life story of Kamala (name altered) shared with me during my ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2017 and 2019. By invoking what Michael Herzfeld calls 'ethnographic biography', I focus on moments from Kamala's life, to make sense of Tamil social worlds. It demonstrates the entanglements of kin relationships such as marriage, friendship, divine kinship, and the social environments and histories of migration in a diasporic community. Her 'biography', situated within anthropological frames of embodiments and kinship, foreground the interplay of intimacies and religion in an individual life, and underscore the efficacy of the prism of intimacy to understand the social life of religion in the diaspora.

NEW SACRED GEOGRAPHIES, CONVERSION, AND BLESSED MOBILITY: SRI LANKAN TAMIL RELIGIOUS PRACTICES IN PARIS

Dr Natalie Lang
Centre for Modern Indian Studies, University of Göttingen

This paper examines the relation between religion and mobility by looking at how religious beliefs and practices guide migration and asylum-seeking processes, how forced migration impacts religious practices and orientations, and how religion and mobility are intrinsically connected. It is based on preliminary anthropological fieldwork on Sri Lankan Tamils in Paris, focusing on Tamil Hindu, Catholic, and Free Evangelical practices. Hindus create new sacred geographies by finding ways to install temples and conduct both public processions and very intimate rituals in the city center and in the suburbs, where most Tamils reside. By contrast, Catholics organize Tamil language Mass in several existing churches across the city, or they join Mass in French in churches close to their places of residence in the suburbs. In addition, they conduct pilgrimage to important Catholic pilgrimage sites in France, ascribing Tamilness to existing sacred geographies. As a rather recent phenomenon, a number of Tamil refugees and their descendants convert from Hinduism or Catholicism to Free Evangelical churches, which rent community halls for their Tamil language services in the suburbs of Paris. In this paper, I trace practitioners' lives pursuing these religious orientations, which often are not mutually exclusive. I ask how their religious beliefs and practices shape their migration experiences, how the civil war, the fleeing, and asylum-seeking processes impact their religious choices and practices, what challenges and new options they face in Paris, and what the dynamics are behind the recent popularity of conversion. The possibilities of agency Tamil women ascribe to their religious orientations, when it comes to marriage and to their possibilities of religious participation, reflect close links between their religious choices and their social aspirations. Furthermore, the importance of God's guidance in processes of moving and applying for refugee status reveals an intrinsic relationship between religion and mobility.

BECOMING A CHINESE INDONESIAN SPIRIT-MEDIUM IN SINGKAWANG, WEST KALIMANTAN IN THE POST-SUHARTO ERA

Dr Emily Hertzman
Research Fellow, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

After the fall of Suharto in 1998 and the removal of the assimilation program, Chinese Indonesian language, culture, religion, and social life have made a dramatic resurgence into the public sphere. Chinese Popular Religion (including forms of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, ancestor worship and animistic traditions) was framed as an impediment to the assimilation of the Chinese population into Indonesian society, and restricted on that basis. Now, over twenty years later, Chinese Popular Religion has exploded back into the public sphere with temple building and renovating, parades, gods' birthday celebrations and festivals. In Singkawang, West Kalimantan, a city known throughout Indonesian as the "city of a thousand temples" this religious expansion is most clearly characterized by a rapid proliferation of spirit-mediums, and house altars in which their possessing deities are recognized, respected and cultivated. In this paper, I describe the processes of becoming a spirit-medium in the current social and political context, arguing that the specific socioeconomic and historical profile of this Chinese Indonesian communities is one factor leading to a specific kind of subjectivity in which spirit-possession not only makes sense, but also offers several important social statuses that help in navigating inter-ethnic and interreligious belonging in the province and in the nation. By thinking of a spirit- medium as a conduit through which communications between different realms can take place, this paper also starts to develop an idea about long-range transnationally circulating gods and spirits and the ways they get temporarily embodied and emplaced.

HUMAN MOBILITY AND IDENTITY FORMATION: JUDAEAN/JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN VOICES FROM ANTIQUITY
THURSDAY, 15:30-17:30

Chair: Eelco Glas

Rosanne Liebermann	Divine presence, divine pain, and forced migration in the hebrew prophets
Jonathan Stökl	Yahwistic religion in the achaemenid persian period (c. 539–330 bce)
Heike Omerzu	The Book of Revelation read from a Migrant Theoretical Perspective
Pieter B. Hartog	Glocal Rome in Philo, Luke, and Philostratus
Eelco Glas	Canon-Switching and Cultural Competition: Performing Identities in Graeco-Judaean Literature from the Early Roman Empire (1st Century CE)
Ortal-Paz Saar	The Southern Italian Epitaph of a Jewish Migrant

Organizers: Dr Rosanne Liebermann (Aarhus University) and Dr Eelco Glas (Aarhus University)

In the modern globalised world, the impact of human mobility and migration on society is widely recognised and increasingly studied in diverse fields such as postcolonial studies, globalisation studies, religious studies, or transregional studies. Migration on this scale not only poses formidable challenges to our economies, social systems, and natural environments, but

also raises questions about our perceived cultural and religious identities, and the importance of human mobility and migratory ideas in processes of heritage formation. While some scholars have assumed that these challenges are a unique feature of contemporary times, historians have now demonstrated that human mobility cannot be confined to modernity: there were different but equally complex forms of migration in pre-modern times. In order to move beyond the problem of presentism that dominates the current debate, it is necessary to examine how the junctions between identity formation and human mobility were shaped in historical contexts that differ radically from our own.

Building on this basic observation, the main aim of this panel is to shed new light on the complexity of identity formation involving human mobility and migration from a deep historical perspective. It will bring together a group of specialists working on ancient Judaean sources (including those traditionally labelled "Christian" such as certain New Testament texts). Each contribution addresses sources that are produced by members from Judaean or Christian minority communities, responding to the political and cultural hegemonies of their time—Babylonians, Persians, Egyptians, Greeks, or Romans—and the migrations they provoked. New approaches (globalisation studies, migration theory, transnational studies; diaspora studies; pain studies) and understudied sources come to light in these innovative treatments of the topic. The issues addressed include whether exile always necessarily involved oppression; issues of homeland-diaspora relationships; religious identity formation outside of the homeland; and pluriformity of identity formation, among others. The proposed panel and the variety of approaches included in it will render a novel understanding of the role of human mobility on ancient Judaean and early Christian identity formation in their wider historical contexts. Furthermore, by broaching these issues from a premodern historical perspective, the panel will foster cross-disciplinary discussion with, and thereby advance the theoretical study of human mobility and identity formation in contemporary contexts.

DIVINE PRESENCE, DIVINE PAIN, AND FORCED MIGRATION IN THE HEBREW PROPHETS

Dr Rosanne Liebermann
Aarhus University

In each of the three "major" prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible—Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel—the eponymous prophets are described as experiencing pain as a direct result of Yhwh's divine presence with them (e.g. Isa 21:1-4; Jer 20:7-18; Ezek 3:14-15, 24-27; 24:15-27). These descriptions stand in contrast to the books' repeated assertions that Yhwh is a fair god, who punishes only those who are unfaithful to him; meanwhile, the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel act as his faithful messengers. Each of these prophetic texts is set during a period when the capital city of Israel or Judah falls at the hands of foreign enemies, who send the residents of those cities into forced migration (8th and 6th centuries BCE, respectively). The books' claims about Yhwh's fairness rest on the concept that the destruction of cities and ensuing diasporas are Yhwh's punishments justly meted out to the cities' inhabitants. In making this claim, the prophetic texts upend a tradition evidenced elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible—as well as in Mesopotamian texts—that a deity's presence in their city ensured that city's safety. Instead, the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel argue that Yhwh enacts the destruction of his own cities, meaning that his presence is not the comfort their audiences imagine it to be, but

rather can be experienced as pain and suffering. The prophetic texts demonstrate this via descriptions of the prophets' own bodies, which experience pain due to their especial closeness to Yhwh's presence. While this experience is unpleasant, it allows monotheistic Yahwism to adapt to the setting of colonization and forced migration the prophetic books address. By divorcing Yhwh from his role as divine protector of particular places and providing graphic descriptions of how the deity is painfully present with his prophets, the texts demonstrate that Yhwh moves with the prophets and their communities when they experience forced migration. Thus, descriptions of the pain experienced by the Hebrew prophets constitute an important aspect of Judean religious adaptation to the challenges presented by forced migration.

YAHWISTIC RELIGION IN THE ACHAEMENID PERSIAN PERIOD (C. 539–330 BCE)

Dr Jonathan Stökl
Leiden University

Through excavations at the island of Elephantine near Syene at the first cataract of the Nile in southern Egypt were found the remains of a settlement of a group of Judeans / Jews who worshipped their deity, Yahu in their temple. The evidence unearthed on the island allows us a close-up glance at a Yahwistic group of Judeans / Jews in their daily lives and interactions with other Aramaic speaking groups as well as with local Egyptians. Famously, their Yahwistic temple, was destroyed by an alliance of the priests of the local Egyptian patron deity Khnum and the commander of the local Persian governor, Vidranga. We possess some of the subsequent correspondence of the Judean / Jewish community, which show that the community in Elephantine was in direct contact with the Yahwistic communities in Jerusalem and Samaria. Interestingly, no traces of biblical texts or direct references to biblical texts have been found; on the other hand, deities other than Yahu are referred to, used to name children and invoked when blessing or swearing an oath. In short, it shows a Judean / Jewish community very different from the one residing in Samaria and Yehud (=Judah) as implied by the biblical texts. The questions that arises from this situation are: were the beliefs and practices of the community in Elephantine representative of Judaism at the period more widely, or did they differ markedly from those in the homeland? We can ask further whether this was caused by their specific location at the southernmost point of the Persian Empire, through their contact with other migrant or local populations or is the result of our sources that give us an insight into the practices of Judean / Jewish communities throughout the Middle East.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION READ FROM A MIGRANT THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Prof. Heike Omerzu
University of Copenhagen

During the past decades migration theory has proven useful for analysing modern phenomena of relocation, including, for instance, refugee movements and labour migration, but also for understanding mobility in the ancient world, including early Christianity (e.g., Bendemann/Tiwald, Nguyen, Dube, Solevåg, Omerzu) and more specifically also the Book of

Revelation (e.g., Hidalgo; Mata). While recent studies have convincingly argued that John negotiates the Christ believers' identity over against the Roman Empire as forms of "Utopian Scripturalization" (Jacky Hidalgo 2016) or "eschatological migration" (Robert Mata 2018 & 2021), i.e. employing a rhetoric strategy, this paper wants to demonstrate that, beyond other passages, especially the Seer's self-designation in 1:9 and the messages to the seven assemblies in Rev 2–3 reveal that both John himself as well as parts of his audience likely had a background as either voluntary or forced migrants.

GLOCAL ROME IN PHILO, LUKE, AND PHILOSTRATUS

Dr Pieter B. Hartog
PThU Groningen

The attitudes of Philo of Alexandria, Luke, and Philostratus towards Rome have been the subject of ample scholarly debate. Some scholars have noted an ambiguous attitude with these authors: on the one hand Philo, Luke, and Philostratus embrace or support Roman rule, on the other they nuance Roman power.

I aim to argue that the ambiguity that surrounds portrayals of Rome in Philo, Luke, and Philostratus can be understood as a case of 'subjective glocalisation'—an intentionally layered portrait of Rome that simultaneously stresses Rome's global aspirations and makes them dependent upon local expressions of Roman power. By promoting this image of a glocal Rome, Philo, Luke, and Philostratus craft a space for their own groups within the structures of the empire.

In this paper I will discuss several literary strategies that Philo, Luke, and Philostratus use to develop this glocal portrait of Rome, focusing on Philo's *Legatio ad Gaium*; the Acts of the Apostles; and Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*. These writings acknowledge Roman power over the *oikoumene* and the benefits of Roman rule. At the same time, they draw a mental map that relegates Rome to the periphery; locate the defence of Roman values and executing of Roman laws with its protagonists rather than with Roman rulers; and offer criticism on Roman officials, including the emperor.

Adopting a comparative approach to these writings, which are commonly classified as 'Jewish', 'Christian', or 'Greek', I also intend to draw implications from the results of this literary analysis for the existence and literary culture of a cultural elite within the early Roman empire, in which the cultural and religious distinctions that often inform our approach to these writings were not operative in any strong sense.

CANON-SWITCHING AND CULTURAL COMPETITION: PERFORMING IDENTITIES IN GRAECO-JUDAEAN LITERATURE FROM THE EARLY ROMAN EMPIRE (1ST CENTURY CE)

Dr Eelco Glas
Aarhus University

The corpus of Graeco-Judaean literature from the early Roman Empire contains the testimonies of three Judaean intellectuals—Philo of Alexandria, Paul of Tarsus, and Flavius Josephus—

who interpreted and disseminated their ancestral traditions as they travelled across the Roman Mediterranean. In 38 CE the philosopher Philo of Alexandria was forced to travel as an envoy to Rome, where he stayed for several years. Paul of Tarsus, the famous apostle, habitually moved from place to place while writing his letters, before travelling to Rome and dying there (62 CE). The historian Flavius Josephus settled in Rome after the Great Jewish Revolt (66–70 CE) and wrote 30 books in that city. Each of these intellectuals travelled the Roman Mediterranean widely and in the process promoted a Judaean cultural heritage in a world dominated by Greco-Roman intellectual traditions.

In this paper I will explore some of the literary strategies employed by these Judaean writers in order to bring their cultural heritage into conversation with competing Greek and Roman traditions. Based on a reading of passages from Philo's *Embassy to Gaius*, Josephus' *Judaean War*, and Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, I will argue that these writers position themselves as figures of mediation between Judaean, Greek, and Roman cultures. It will be shown that one of the main strategies used by these writers to achieve this is to switch between different cultural registers at will and in full view, underlining their unique ability to disclose local knowledge to an audience familiar with only one cultural register. In doing so, I will draw attention to the rhetorical and performative nature of identity formation in the selected corpus: from their self-positioning as mediators between cultures, Judaean intellectuals could enter into critical dialogue with their Graeco-Roman contemporaries and participate in Mediterranean-wide, intellectual networks of literary circulation, rather than reacting to a closed intellectual system as diasporic outsiders from a peripheral position.

THE SOUTHERN ITALIAN EPITAPH OF A JEWISH MIGRANT

Dr Ortal-Paz Saar
Utrecht University

This paper revisits a Hebrew epitaph uncovered at Lavello in Southern Italy, dating between Late Antiquity and the early medieval period. The epitaph commemorates a man named Poppo, who is said to have come from "the Land of Kittim". This is a highly unusual inscription, in terms of length, reference to the deceased and his family, and most importantly, the inclusion of two Talmudic quotations, BT Berakhot 17a and 58b. The paper examines the epitaph in light of Poppo's non-local origin, and surveys the atypical elements it contains.

The paper begins by discussing the homeland of the deceased, Kittim, and attempts its identification. Could Poppo have migrated from a region within Italy, or rather from another land? Second, the unusual information included in the epitaph is summarized and compared with the typical style known from other Jewish epitaphs from Southern Italy. Among other things, the deceased is said to have desired to go to the Temple, and to have done so. The question whether this was an actual pilgrimage from Lavello to Jerusalem, or a metaphorical one, is also raised. The paper refers to the evidence for travels to Jerusalem centuries after the destruction of the Temple, and asks whether Poppo's journey could have been part of this category.

Lastly, the paper analyzes the Talmudic texts and the divergences they displays from the standard version. What could be the reason for these divergences? Do they represent a paraphrase of the known passages from Berakhot, created by the person who composed Poppo's

epitaph? Or do they shed light on different versions of the Talmudic text that circulated in that region?

UPHOLDING CONFESSIONAL BORDERS IN THE (EARLY) MODERN NETHERLANDS: MOVABLE RELICS, MIGRANTS, AND BASTIONS OF THE VIRGIN MARY
THURSDAY, 15:30-17:30

Chair: Minou Schraven

Carolina Lenarduzzi	Relics on the Move: Conflicting Catholic Views on the Dislocation and Dispersal of Relics in the Dutch Republic
Pieter-Jan van Giersbergen	From Gothic grandeur to covert chapels: Aspects of motion in the Amsterdam Catholic Community 1578-1853
Minou Schraven	The Cult of our Lady of Halle in the Spanish Netherlands: Politicizing Pilgrim Badges as Markers of Roman Catholic Identity
Eelco Nagelsmit	Mary's Mobile Home: Mobilizing the Sacred at the Brussels' Minim Convent

Organizer: Minou Schraven, Amsterdam University College / Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

The Iconoclastic Fury of 1566 marked the beginning of a new reality in the Low Countries: within just a few decades, the territories were divided into a Dutch Republic, ruled by Calvinists, and the Spanish or Southern Netherlands, ruled by the Catholic Habsburgs.

This panel will investigate the short- and long-term impacts of this new confessional border separating religious landscapes, disrupting religious practices and uprooting communities. For starters, how did the Catholic community within the Dutch Republic adjust to its new role of religious minority deprived of its right to officiate in public? What happened to pre-existing Catholic cult locations and relics? How did the Catholic infrastructure of schuilkerken manage to operate within Calvinist society, and how can we access information about these Catholic communities, since most of these churches have been demolished?

While a Calvinist Republic took form in the Northern provinces, the Spanish authorities and their allies did everything in their power to upkeep orthodoxy on their side of the new confessional border. Their intolerance towards Calvinist sentiments caused a massive exile of human resources and capital towards the Republic. Once Albert and Isabella of Habsburg were installed as Archdukes in Brussels in 1599, they embarked on a rigid program of Catholic Restoration in their territories, most notably by reinstituting processions and by aligning themselves with the cult of the Virgin Mary, so vilified by protestants. How were old and new shrines of the Virgin Mary in the Southern Netherlands instrumentalized by these militant Catholic rulers against the backdrop of the Eighty Years' War, and after?

RELICS ON THE MOVE: CONFLICTING CATHOLIC VIEWS ON THE DISLOCATION AND DISPERSAL OF RELICS IN THE DUTCH REPUBLIC

Dr Carolina Lenarduzzi
Leiden University

Early modern Catholicism was a material religion, in the sense that matter as the locus of the divine resonated deeply in Catholic devotion. Relics, as tangible manifestations of holiness, played a central role in this material religiosity. In the sixteenth century, the Protestant derision of relic culture as 'papish superstition', led the Catholic Church to reassert relic veneration as the focal point of (Counter-Reformation) piety. However, the implementation of relic culture as a vibrant hallmark of Catholicism was not self-evident in a Protestant country such as the Calvinist Dutch Republic. By the early 1580s, the Northern Netherlands had banned all forms of Catholic worship and all activities associated with Catholicism from the public arena. Due to the reformed attacks on the localization of the holy, Dutch Catholics were also confronted with large-scale destruction of their sacred objects. As a result of their transportability, relics were relatively easy to save from Protestant violence. Yet this very mobility led to fierce debates within the Catholic community as to where the relics belonged. Some Catholics felt strongly that their relics should remain in the Republic, where they had been revered for centuries and where their thaumaturgic powers had materialized. Attributing agency to relics, they felt that the miracles worked by them proved that the relics themselves had chosen to stay in the Republic, even if this meant that they had to go underground. Others believed that relics were in jeopardy in the Calvinist Republic and kidnapped them to Catholic safe havens abroad, where they could be openly worshipped as trophies on the 'heretics', especially in Dutch exile communities. Tracing the trajectories of both hidden and trafficked relics, this paper addresses the transformation of relic veneration into a marker of minority Catholicism, particularly in relation to the debates caused by the transportability and mobility of 'holy bones' and the role of agency in these discussions.

THE "LIGHT TROOPS OF CATHOLICISM"?
THE FRENCH CHURCH AT NIEUWEZIJDS VOORBURGWAL AS A CASE STUDY OF CATHOLIC IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES IN AMSTERDAM

Pieter-Jan van Giersbergen, MA
Museum Onze Lieve Heer op Solder

In 1911, the Roman-Catholic Church of St. Peter and Paul, commonly known as The French Church, at the Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 312 in Amsterdam closed its doors forever. Its altar piece and apostle paintings, supplied by the celebrated eighteenth century painter Jacob de Wit, and its unique community were fond memories of the Amsterdam writer Joseph Alberdingk Thijm (1820-1889). He described its churchgoers as international, working-class and admirably pious (a defense against the prejudice that the church was only attended by the "light troops of Catholicism''). Yet in his day, the process of Dutchification was already in an advanced stage.

The French Church originally filled a vacancy for French-speaking priests in Amsterdam. The mission post opened in 1662 thanks to a French shoemaker and a French tailor and would never loose its working-class character. At this location, Discalced Carmelite

missionaries from France catered to the spiritual needs not of the wealthy French immigrants, but rather those of their chefs, tailors and other members of staff.

As junior curator at Museum Our Lord in the Attic, I research the collection that originated from clandestine Catholic churches in Amsterdam. Due to the demolition of most of these churches over the course of the 19th and early 20th centuries, these objects are the last eye-witnesses of these exceptional places. By researching the the origin and use of the objects, such as a vintage First Holy Communion print, allows us to reconstruct Catholic communities that managed to continue their religious practices despite anti-Catholic laws, international turbulences and internal conflicts. Using the French Church as a case study, I will highlight the social diversity of the Catholic community in Amsterdam, while discussing themes as migration, mission, social class and Dutchification.

THE CULT OF OUR LADY OF HALLE IN THE SPANISH NETHERLANDS: POLITICIZING PILGRIM BADGES AS MARKERS OF ROMAN CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Dr Minou Schraven
Amsterdam University College

During the first years of the Dutch Revolt, just after the first wave of the Iconoclast Fury, the Duke of Aerschot paraded through Brussels wearing a devotional medal from a local shrine, Our Lady of Halle, pinned to his hat. The Duke's initiative was a direct response to the Gueux, or Calvinist rebels, who a few months earlier had started wearing medals with beggar symbols in protest against Spanish repression. Delighted about the initiative, Pope Pius V (d. 1572) granted indulgences to all Catholics wearing these medals. This way, a mass-produced traditional pilgrim badge became a powerful indulgenced object that demonstrated the wearer's loyalty to both Habsburg rule and the papal authorities in Rome.

How does a medieval local shrine like Our Lady of Halle become a focal point in a confessional war? What was the impact of this political instrumentalisation on this pilgrimage site and the miracles that were associated with it? How does the material framing of the cult statue reflect these processes of political appropriation? To answer these questions, this paper will look into the cult of Our Lady of Halle from the late medieval period during the traumatic years of the Dutch Revolt, up to the public devotion of the newly appointed Habsburg Archdukes Albrecht and Isabella to this and other Marian shrines in the region (Louvain, Scherpenheuvel).

As is evident from the illustration in Justus Lipsius' Diva Virgo Hallensis (1604), the shrine by then was stacked with precious gifts from emperors, princes and popes alike. This way, the cult of Our Lady of Halle was firmly inscribed into the new political and confessional reality of the Spanish Southern Netherlands and its alliances, in every respect different from the Calvinist Republic as it was emerging up north of the new confessional border.

MARY'S MOBILE HOME: MOBILIZING THE SACRED AT THE BRUSSELS' MINIM CONVENT

Dr Eelco Nagelsmit
Leiden University

Loreto, a small town in the Italian Marche region, famously hosts the "Holy House", the very house in which the Virgin Mary supposedly grew up and where the Annunciation had taken place. Following the Muslim Conquest of the Holy Land, angels had transported it from Nazareth to its current location in Loreto. The seventeenth century saw a multiplication of copies of this Holy House of Loreto, particularly in regions on the frontline of Catholicism, such as the Spanish Netherlands. The mobility and formal replicability of the Lauretan cult had the unique capacity of sanctifying geographical space on various levels. By virtue of their sacred measurements, these shrines were conceived as powerful agents of change.

This paper will explore the establishment of a Loreto-replica in the context of the foundation of the Brussels' Minim Convent on the site of a former brothel (1621). The result of a complex exchange of interests between the monks, the city Magistrate, and the archducal court, this event was propagated with a moralizing rhetoric of change, tapping into the widespread fears of the wrath of God over the sin of promiscuity. By invoking the Virgin Mary as patron, the various actors involved in the foundation hoped to muster support for a process of urban renewal. Two specific cults were instated to engage distinct social groups and genders: that of the Holy Guardian Angel, and of the Virgin of Loreto, by carefully replicating her sacred image and her Holy House. Combining (art) historical and anthropological perspectives, the case elucidates how the monks and their patrons propagated the reform of sexual morals in the context of the Counter-Reformation, through urbanistic interventions and the agency of art and architecture. It will be argued that this was to engender a religious experience which centred on the spatial, material, and spiritual enactment of the Incarnation, mobilizing Marian piety across confessional boundaries.

GLOBAL MINORITIES
THURSDAY, 15:30-17:30

Chair: Jorge Castillo Guerra

Muhammad Shahzad	Religious Mobility as a "Win-Win" situation in Small Migrant Communities: A Study of Pakistani Muslim Migrants in South Korea
Magdalena Pycinska and Ida Balwierz	"Muslim" experiences in Kraków? Creating living spaces by a minority group
Dimitry Oparin	The formation of religious authority among Central Asian mullahs in Russia
Berna Arslan	Defining Alevism: Secularism, the State, and the Alevi Recognition in Europe
Francesco Cerchiaro	"Becoming a father". Masculinity, fatherhood and migration in the life stories of Muslim men married outside their religious group in Italy and Belgium

RELIGIOUS MOBILITY AS A "WIN-WIN" SITUATION IN SMALL MIGRANT COMMUNITIES: A STUDY OF PAKISTANI MUSLIM MIGRANTS IN SOUTH KOREA

Dr. Muhammad Shahzad
Assistant Professor in Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan

Religion serves as a cohesive force in the life of migrants where religious gatherings provide a source of belonging, unity, and sociability. Migrant communities are different in number and socio-cultural patterns in different countries. That is why, it is important to understand each migrant community in specific socio-cultural and political settings of the countries of reception. The present paper would discuss the case of Pakistani Muslim migrant community in South Korea which can be considered as a unique community on the basis of its socio-cultural makeup and a small number of individuals: 12440 (as per the sources of Pakistan Embassy in Seoul, Korea) scattered in different cities of Korean land. Specifically, I would discuss a religious organization namely "Dawat-e-Islami" which was originated in Pakistan and working in many countries of the world including South Korea. I argue that religious organizations and individual migrants in small migrant communities create a "win-win" situation which is a quite successful model for sustenance. It is to say that religious organizations continuously mediate the daily life experiences of the individual migrants to gather socio-religious, and financial support whereas the individual migrants consume religious expressions, become "pious" and stay away from the "hostile" others. In other words, the religious organizations desperately need individuals and the individuals need religious organizations. I would present the case of "Dawat-e-Islami" in South Korea to explain the phenomenon that how "Dawat-e-Islami" mediates the daily life of Pakistani Muslim migrants in South Korea through its preachers, what activities are performed by the organization, and how individual migrants consume, value, and perceive religious activities and congregations. This study is based on qualitative interviews during my PhD in South Korea and various informal meetings with the preachers of "Dawat-e-Islami" in Pakistan afterwards. I would use the theoretical framework of social capital to elaborate on it.

"MUSLIM" EXPERIENCES IN KRAKÓW? CREATING LIVING SPACES BY A MINORITY GROUP

Dr. Magdalena Pycińska and dr. Ida Balwierz
Institute of the Middle and Far East, Jagiellonian University, Poland

As Rogers Brubaker rightly points out, the distinction between categories of practice and analysis is indispensable, but the line between them is blurred. The category of "Muslim immigrants" to Europe, re-label variously represented populations as "Muslim", along with specific knowledge and policies based on that understanding. It at least emphasizes their perceived piety, that differentiates them from other populations and makes religion the main frame of reference, relegating other categories to the side-lines of social and political interest. The aim of this paper is to present our research findings regarding this issue, which was based on interviews with analytically categorised Muslims in Kraków but took into account its practical use by our respondents.

Our research questions tackled the problem in what way, if any, does religion inform experiences of belonging in migratory contexts and how those experiences inform their

relationship with religion? How "Muslim" people shape their lives in Kraków and how they experience their belonging to the city?

The presentation aims to understand the perspectives of "Muslims" representatives on their experience of living in Krakow. The research is based on constructivist perspective and qualitative approach, which uses the method of „living space maps" and semi-structured interviews.

We combine the method of "living space maps" that is based on a Martha Muchow's study with the research perspective that focuses on the so called "everyday Muslim" experiences (Samuli Schielke, Talal Asad, Nadia Fadil and Mayanthi Fernando). We focus on the space that is lived by "Muslims" as space in which the subjective (interpersonal, relational) and objective (physical and structural space) influence each other, and effect how the person *lives* his or her space and influence various interpersonal relations.

THE FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AMONG CENTRAL ASIAN MULLAHS IN RUSSIA

Dmitriy A. Oparin
Senior researcher, Laboratory UMR 5319 Passages (Université Bordeaux Montaigne and CNRS); HSE University

This presentation develops a new approach to contemporary religious authority among Central Asian migrants in Russia, conceptualizing such notions as *duty* and *loyalty* in the migration Muslim context. The study demonstrates the fluidity of the boundary between the *official* and the *unofficial* authorities using the configuration of the Muslim environment of migration urban destinations in Russia. The figures that caught my interest during this research were those of Central Asian mullahs, as viewed in the context of their interaction with the various actors present in the local Muslim space – with other mullahs (where the issue of *subordination* came to the forefront), with the djinns (where *sacral capital* would come into play), with official imams and mosque administration (focusing on issues of *loyalty*), and with fellow believers (touching on matters of *duty*) – and how it is that the protagonists of this study build up their authority through these interactions. When discussing religious authority, researchers tend to work with such concepts as knowledge, charisma, and legitimacy. I would like to bring the two further concepts of duty and loyalty into this discussion. I believe these two concepts to be key to understanding how religious authority is formed in this field, and that they are also vital to any attempts at describing the complex relationships between the various different authority figures and other actors of the Muslim space.

DEFINING ALEVISM: SECULARISM, THE STATE, AND THE ALEVI RECOGNITION IN EUROPE

Berna Zengin Arslan
Associate Professor of Sociology, Ozyegin University, Istanbul, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

My research focuses on the legal recognition of religious minorities and the management of religion in the EU and Turkey. Within this framework, I examine the case of Alevi belief by focusing on how Alevism is legally recognized as a religion in different European countries, and the legal rights Alevis have in Turkey. This research follows the theoretical argument that it is the state who ultimately decides what counts as religion, and it investigates how the actions of the state reconfigure religious life in accordance with a secular conceptual order. Departing from the conventional legal and sociological definition of secularism as the separation of state and religion, I explore how secularism, through the agency of the state, becomes integral to the self-conceptions, practices, institutions, and ideals of religious life.

Alevi recognition, which started in 2012 in Hamburg, Germany, and Basel, Switzerland, gave Turkish Alevism the same legal status as Sunni Islam for the first time. Currently, Alevism is also recognized in Austria, the UK, Sweden, Switzerland, and Denmark. Based on my preliminary ethnographic fieldwork—at the *Fédération Union des Alévis en France* (FUAF) and the *Centre Culturel des Alévis* in Paris, and the Berlin Cemevi in Kreuzberg—my talk focuses on the Alevi organizations in France and Germany and comparatively discusses their politics of recognition. I first show that even though the majority refuse to define Alevism as a "religion", distinguishing themselves from sharia-based Shia and Sunni Islam, the process of recognition in Germany ironically pushed Alevis to institutionalize themselves as a religion. Relatedly, I demonstrate how this process triggered an intensified debate within the Alevi community in Europe and Turkey on the definition of Alevism. Secondly, I show how these organizations represent themselves differently -- as a religious community in Germany and as a secular Alevi organization in France -- in parallel with the legal and normative secular framework of each state.

This study contributes to debates on larger questions that concern Europe and other countries today, such as the limits and future of liberalism and secularism and the integration of immigrants. It also challenges the multiculturalism literature, which merely defends the recognition of minorities as a matter of democratic rights and the freedom of religion.

"BECOMING A FATHER": MASCULINITY, FATHERHOOD AND MIGRATION IN THE LIFE STORIES OF MUSLIM MEN MARRIED OUTSIDE THEIR RELIGIOUS GROUP IN ITALY AND BELGIUM

Francesco Cerchiaro
Assistant professor at the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies, Gender and Diversity Studies, Radboud Social Cultural Research Institute, Faculty of Social Sciences, Radboud University, Nijmegen

Differences between Muslims and non-Muslims regarding the interpretation of family, parenting and gender roles are often seen as a particularly salient field of cultural conflict. The interpretation of this conflict particularly involves migrant Muslim men and their life trajectories. The strategies adopted by Muslim men to deal with public discourse – which often represents women and kids as passive victims of a patriarchal and fundamentalist Islam – particularly challenge the masculinity of such men married outside their own religious group. Based on biographical interviews held in Italy and Belgium with mixed couples where the man has a migrant-Muslim background and the woman an indigenous-Christian one, the paper

focuses on the connection between masculinity, fatherhood and migration. The analysis shows how these migrant fathers experience ambivalent emotions and constantly struggle in mediating their double presences and absences as fathers: on the one hand, they have established, thanks to the native partner, a privileged closer relationship with the new context, but, on the other, they may experience a sense of "dissonance" in the management of their masculinity and of "loss" in the transmission of the self to their children.

THE MEDIUM AND THE MESSAGE
THURSDAY, 15:30-17:30

Chair: Justine Bakker

Anat Shapiro	Divine Boundaries in the Book of Jonah
An-Ting Yi	Manuscripts on the Move: Codex Reuchlin, Book of Revelation, and Chinese Bibles
Hamideh Amiryazdani and Joachim Kügler	Role of the Holy Scripture in the context of Migration; a qualitative case study of Bamberg child migrants through the lenses of Comparative studies of Bible-Quran
Justine M. Bakker	Tracing De Laurence: Esotericism, Race, and Power

DIVINE BOUNDARIES IN THE BOOK OF JONAH

Anat Shapiro
PhD fellow, Aarhus University, Denmark

The biblical Book of Jonah addresses issues of the power relations between an individual and their god (and by extension – authority in general), by telling the story of an Israelite prophet attempting to flee his god and the duty of prophecy over the city of Nineveh. The story takes the form of a travel narrative and depicts the protagonist's movement across space. Throughout the narrative, borders and boundaries are constructed as traced around and in relation to Yahweh's authority. This is reflected in both the story level and the theological level. On the story level, Yahweh is the one who determines Jonah's placement and trajectory through space, as well as manages and controls space itself. Theologically, regarding the perception of the divine reflected in the text, the book presents a view of Yahweh's authority as boundless and universal – as opposed to other views expressed in the HB, which perceive Yahweh as a local deity with a defined territory. In addition, the spatial-cosmological conceptualization reflected and constructed in the story is organized around Yahweh as a cosmic center. In this paper, I wish to examine the ways in which these notions combine in the narrative from a literary perspective. I will show how this view of Yahweh as a deity with unlimited authority is shaped in the text through and by the notion of borders and the limitation of the human characters' movement and the control of space on earth. This examination will focus on the various boundaries and constraints – both physical and conceptual – in the text, and the ways in which

they are constructed and maintained. Combined with Jonah's characterization as an isolated individual both socially and ethnically, these aspects prove meaningful in the shaping of the narrative's messages and the narrative context in which the story should be read.

MANUSCRIPTS ON THE MOVE: CODEX REUCHLIN, BOOK OF REVELATION, AND CHINESE BIBLES

An-Ting Yi
Faculty of Religion and Theology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Like the emergence of material approaches in the study of religion in the past few decades, a similar "material turn" can be seen in numerous recent studies of textual criticism. As scholars of religious studies now approach religious books by emphasising their materiality, likewise many textual critics started studying manuscripts by regarding them as artefacts. Particularly in biblical textual criticism, special attention is given to individual manuscripts and the stories surrounding them. This paper follows the current trend to investigate how biblical manuscripts were produced, used, and received by certain religious groups and individuals, and how these objects "migrated" over the centuries, literally and metaphorically. Codex Reuchlin, a medieval Greek manuscript containing the Book of Revelation, is used as a case study. Highlights are the three layers regarding its reception. The first layer concerns the creation of the manuscript and its use during the Byzantine period. Plenty of traces remained on the manuscript, illustrating its premodern users and their reading practices. The second layer deals with its transit from Byzantium to Basel at the turn of the printing era. Specifically due to this move, the manuscript was loaned to Erasmus for composing the text of Revelation in the first-ever printed Greek New Testament edition. Consequently, the manuscript's text became part of the received text and thus influenced many vernacular Bible versions thereafter. The last layer focuses on the manuscript's metaphorical move to China in the nineteenth century when Protestant missionaries arrived with their own societal and theological milieus. Through the Bibles they translated, the manuscript in a way caused lasting impacts on Chinese Christians' understanding of "the Word of God." In short, through the lens of Codex Reuchlin, this study invites us to revisit several historical encounters between various groups that held great geographical and cultural diversity.

ROLE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF BAMBERG CHILD MIGRANTS THROUGH THE LENSES OF COMPARATIVE STUDIES OF BIBLE-QURAN

Hamideh Amiryazdani and Joachim Kügler
Otto-Friedrich University of Bamberg

Europe is a neglected research area which has high potentially to be discussed in the subject of Child Immigration. Europe historically has been made, unmade, and remade through the movements of peoples3. Despite today's view of Europeans as a rather sedentary and socially immobile population – particularly when compared to the highly mobile spatial and social patterns of North Americans – contemporary Europe has essentially emerged out of a crucible

of local, regional, and international population movements over the centuries. This project innovatively broadens and deepens those early explorations by adopting a framework that enables a more comprehensive, comparative, and theoretical synthesis with the new perspective of comparative holy scripture studies with focusing on Germany as part of Europe society. The fundamental question in this project is how to frame the relation between migration and reading/applying Holy Scripture with focusing on double-identities/hybrid identities of the child Christian-Muslim immigrants in the city of Bamberg/Germany. Adopting this perspective, this research aims to answer two questions: Which transcultural experiencing of "self" have immigrants in the process of their mobilities to new destination (Bamberg-Germany)? What roles does Holy Scripture (Bible/ Quran) play in immigrants' transcultural experiencing of home? Avtar's Brah's words are particularly apt here: when does a location become home? What is the difference between 'feeling at home' & staking claim to a place as one's own? this project articulates how Scriptures (Bible/Quran) can help or hinder child immigrants to shape their personality in the process of socialization. How their perception of the Scripture undergoes serious changes during the immigration gradually.

TRACING DE LAURENCE:
ESOTERICISM, RACE, AND POWER

Justine M. Bakker
Assistant Professor in Comparative Religious Studies, Radboud University Nijmegen

That the publications of Chicago-based author and publisher Lauron William De Laurence (1868-1936) were read, used, interpreted, and transformed in North America, the Caribbean, and Africa is evident. His books pop up in scholarship on orisha worship in Trinidad (Forde 2018; Herskovitz 1947; Rocklin 2015) and obeah in Jamaica (Brodber 1999; Elkins 1986; Gerbner 2023; Paton 2015; Polk 1999), where they remain banned until this very day. They pop up, too, in publications on hoodoo in the US South (Long 2001; Matory 2008) and Black esoteric religions in industrial cities in the North (Dorman 2009; Horowitz 2010). There is even evidence that, only a decade after De Laurence established his own publishing house in 1901, his catalogs and books circulated in Cameroon, Nigeria, and Ghana (Davies, 2009; Polk 1999). We know, then, that beginning with a republication of De Laurence's book *Hypnotism: A Complete System* in 1901, De Laurence, Scott & Co. shipped dozens and dozens of occult and esoteric titles to other cities, countries, and continents across the globe. Often, these works were pirated. This includes what remains perhaps his most often-used publication, *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* (1910), which has been traced back to mid-eighteenth-century Germany but would have a lasting influence on the practice of obeah in urban regions of Jamaica in the twentieth century. Yet, much more research needs to be done on how, precisely, communities used, interpreted, and transformed these texts in the context of local practice and belief (but see the work of Elkins, Brodber, Polk, and Davies). As a first stage in a project on De Laurence I am currently developing, this paper will explore the circulation of De Laurence's texts. In so doing, I hope to demonstrate and analyze the importance of "occultism in motion" for African and Afrodiasporic religions.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3

MINORITIES, FREEDOM, AND GOVERNANCE
FRIDAY, 09:00-11:00

Chair: Justine Bakker

Betül Yakar	The Influence of Divine Regulations over Slave Conditions
Sümeyra Yakar	The establishment of Muslim Community in Minority Context and Islamic jurisprudence for Muslim Minorities
Ely Orrego-Torres	Transnational Religious Groups and the Theory and Practice of Religious Freedom in the Americas
Britt van Duijvenvoorde	"Godless" resistance against "Christian" slavery: the role of religion aboard slave ships of the Middelburgse Commercie Compagnie
Marie Keulen	Negotiating Afro-Caribbean Religion in Nineteenth-century Suriname

THE INFLUENCE OF DIVINE REGULATIONS OVER SLAVE CONDITIONS

Betül Yakar
University of Necmettin Erbakan

The Roman Empire accepted Christianity as the official religion of the state with the Edict of Thessaloniki published in 380 AD. After the enactment of this edict, citizens belonging to the Christian religion were given a privileged status and people were encouraged to believe in this monotheistic religion. The regulations of Christianity inevitably changed the Roman society, their living standards and the legal status of slaves who were one of the building blocks of society. Before the birth of Christianity, it was seen that the slaves with miserable conditions did not have any right to live in the Roman society. However, after the revelation of Christianity, decrees containing the rights of slaves and prohibitions regarding the behaviour of slave owners were put into effect by the state. For example, Christian slaves were made easier to obtain their freedom than non-Christian slaves or slaveholders widely freed their slaves to gain God's love and to obtain forgiveness for their sins. Similarly, the legal status of slaves in the non-Islamic Arabian Peninsula, where slaves also played important roles, was no different from that of slaves in the Roman State prior to the adoption of Christianity. With the revelation of Islam in AD 610, the rights and status of slaves were gradually improved, as in the Roman state. Again, the deplorable status of slaves before Islam was tried to be improved with orders and prohibitions showing how people should treat their slaves. Additionally, Muslims were encouraged to free slaves to gain God's approval.

The research aims to examine the changing legal status of slaves, especially in terms of religious rules and makes comparisons regarding the treatment of slaves between Christian and Muslim societies. By applying descriptive and analytical methods, the article states that these

monotheistic religions increased the quality and right of slaves by emphasizing human characters.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN MINORITY CONTEXT AND ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE FOR MUSLIM MINORITIES

Sümeyra Yakar
Associate Professor of Islamic Law, University of Iğdır

The diversity of religious interpretations and practices has resulted, and still results, the emergence of various approaches even among the followers of the same religion. The religious regulations in Muslim majority countries can be different from the regulations in non-Muslim majority countries. It might be assumed that for the problems of minorities living in non-Muslim Western countries (including immigrants), Yusuf al-Qaradawi established a new jurisprudential method that is known as Islamic jurisprudence for Muslim minorities (*fiqh al-aqalliyyāt*). Although the methodology of the principle relies on the main sources of Islam (Qur'an and Sunna) in a similar vein with the classical method of Islamic law, the hierarchical structure and interpretation system of the principle differ from the classical understanding of law. Regarding the principle, the solution of the same problem might show diversities in Muslim majority and minority contexts. By contributing this principle and working voluntarily for the establishment of the European Council for Fatwa and Research (EFCR), the scholars aim to strengthen the Muslim identity of minorities, to represent the correct understanding of Islam in Western atmosphere, to maintain the unity of Muslim community in non-Muslim environment and to provide them applicable solutions in non-Muslim contexts.
The paper, therefore, intents to elucidate the legal mechanism of Islamic jurisprudence for Muslim minorities regarding the requirements for this principle settled by Qaradawi and mainly followed by the members of ECFR. The comparative analysis of the institutions' legal opinions clarifies the reliability and practicality of religious opinions among Muslim minorities and their influence over the protection of Muslim identity including immigrants. By applying descriptive and analytical methods, the paper sheds light on the establishment of a new jurisprudential methodology for the solution of Muslim minorities' problems and the protection of Muslim identity in Western countries.

TRANSNATIONAL RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE AMERICAS

Ely Orrego-Torres
Northwestern University

Religious freedom is an important concept in international global history, and yet, their definition has been frequently taken for granted in legal and political institutions worldwide. In this paper, I delve into the conceptualization of "religious freedom" at the Organization of American States (OAS). I turn to transnational and regional networks in the Americas, in particular, the discourses of religious freedom promoted and reinforced by transnational religious networks participating in the Organization of American States (OAS). I argue that, in

recent years, there is a tension between the official member states and civil society groups regarding the understanding of the right to freedom of religion or belief in the OAS. While member states and the international organization propose the notion of "religious freedom" merely as an individual human right; transnational religious networks dispute individual and collective ideas of religious freedom, acknowledging ideas of race, gender, and transnational elements embedded in the construction of political subjects in spaces of global governance. My research draws from ethnographic fieldwork in the OAS General Assembly and Summit of the Americas (2017-2023) as well as an interpretive approach to the participation of civil society groups in international organizations.

"GODLESS" RESISTANCE AGAINST "CHRISTIAN" SLAVERY: THE ROLE OF RELIGION ABOARD SLAVE SHIPS OF THE MIDDELBURGSE COMMERCIE COMPAGNIE

Britt van Duijvenvoorde
PhD Candidate, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

During the Dutch transatlantic slave trade era, the insulated but mobile slave ship space instituted and was instituted by Christianity. Not only was biblical scripture used to legitimize the enslavement of Africans through its positing of black individuals as lesser human. Slave ships' profitability was furthermore deemed to be dependent on God's will or divine prosperity. To reveal Christianity's close ties with slavery and the slave trade system, I take recourse to archival material from a Dutch free slave trading company, the Middelburgse Commercie Compagnie. Traveling through ships' logs, personal letters, and company instructions, examples of unritualized slave deaths, "ungodly" or "unchristian" slave resistance, and "divinely cursed" slaves are used to map out Christianity's role in shaping the ideas of human difference during the slave trade era. Drawing on Sylvia Wynter's analysis of the human, I expose the particular understanding of being human—Man—underlying these exclusionary conceptions of godliness and humanity, and, in extension, freedom. Since the archive itself was constructed from within this particular understanding of being human and of being religious, it is extremely difficult to find therein alternative attestations of humanity and religiosity by the enslaved. Still, aboard slave ships, acts of slave resistance could be read as infused with religion and, vice versa, religion as infused with resistance. To illustrate this, I draw attention to the act of jumping overboard. Diving into the Atlantic Ocean out of transmigratory beliefs or faith in the African lineage, captives' acts of drowning, I propose, question the intent of worship and the meaning of service—revealing the importance of faith for contesting and acclaiming humanity. Thus resisting their ostensibly divinely ordained places in the slave trade system, the enslaved contested the idea of the human underpinning this system and attested to humanity otherwise.

NEGOTIATING AFRO-CARIBBEAN RELIGION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY SURINAME

Marie Keulen
Radboud University

In the past decades, historians, anthropologists and other scholars have investigated the cultural and religious creolization that followed the forced migration of millions of Africans from Central and West Africa to the Americas in the Atlantic slave trade. Historians of slavery such as Vincent Brown, Randy Browne, and Gunvor Simonsen have shown how enslaved people in the British and Danish Caribbean used African-derived spiritual forces such as Obeah to survive slavery. Similarly, in Suriname, the contact between different African, Afro-Caribbean and Indigenous cultures merged into an Afro-Caribbean religion known as Winti, which was first studied by sociologist Charles Wooding. In the nineteenth century, however, these practices came under increasing colonial and missionary pressure. Colonial authorities and planters were increasingly concerned with the world views, social behaviour, and cultural practices of the Afro-Surinamese population, which led them to support missionary endeavours in their colony and on their estates. As Christian missions intensified, Afro-Caribbean religious practices were condemned, contested, and criminalized. This paper studies Afro-Caribbean religious practices within the context of these changing missionary and legal frameworks, asking how Afro-Surinamese people negotiated their religion. It does so by analysing moments of conflict and negotiation in colonial and missionary records, such as court cases of 'witchcraft' and idolatry, which provide detailed information on practices rather than the policies and representations governing them. While various scholars have shown how Afro-Caribbean religion became criminalized in colonial legislation, less is known about how people reacted to this. Tracing Afro-Surinamese people who were prosecuted for their religious and cultural practices through various colonial and missionary sources, this paper attempts to give a close-up view of the people who were involved in Afro-Caribbean spiritual practices, how they organised their work, and the difficulties they had to overcome.

RACE, RELIGION AND MIXEDNESS: EXPERIENCES OF DIFFERENCE AMONG MIXED COUPLES IN THE NETHERLANDS
FRIDAY, 09:00-11:00

Chair: Marianna Moyaert

Marianne Moyaert	Crafting a New Theoretical and Methodological Framework to Study Religio-Racialization in Europe
Deniz Aktaş	Racialization of Religion *and* Religionization of Race: The Case of Birth Rituals
Lieke Schrijvers	Religion, Privilege and the 'Black Box' of the Secular: Christian-Nonreligious Couples

VIDI project "Unequal Partners? An Ethnographic Study of Christian-Jewish and Christian-Muslim Couples in the Netherlands", hosted at VU Amsterdam 2021-2026

This panel presents qualitative case studies of the daily life of mixed couples in the Netherlands, where one partner embodies the societal religio-racialized majority and the other embodies a religio-racialized minority. Recent years have seen a growing awareness of the historical and philosophical intersections of ethnicity, race and religion (Anidjar 2008; Jansen & Meer 2020;

Topolski 2018). Significantly, qualitative research on how these constellations are enacted, negotiated or transgressed in everyday life is rare. In addition, most studies on 'mixed couples' focus on couples where one partner (recently) migrated and prioritizes the difference in national, cultural or racial identity. This panel proposes an in-depth theoretical and ethnographic study of (religiously) mixed couples in contexts of and beyond migration. Specifically, the panel focuses on Jewish-Christian, Muslim-Christian and Christian-Nonreligious couples. The case studies broaden the traditional focus on migration by exploring questions of belonging and boundary making in different minority contexts, on the impact of the cultural archive on contemporary experiences of Otherness as Jews or Muslims, as well as investigating the relation between secularity, Christianity and privilege. Through a focus on rituals and material religion, these issues are approached from an anthropological perspective. Moreover, the differences in religious upbringing and/or practice cannot be isolated from questions of race, ethnicity, class and gender. This panel specifically aims to further the understanding of these intersections of multiple forms of difference. Studying these couples' experiences allows for critical interrogation of normativity and boundary making in the Netherlands. The specific focus stems from the finding that mixed couples are microcosms for analysing societal norms, inequalities and social change (Arweck & Nesbitt 2010). The concept of 'mixedness' emphasizes that these couples to varying degrees deviate from social norms embodied by the majority, and it includes awareness of the historical and contemporary context as impacting experiences and perceptions of mixedness. The panellists demonstrate how the interlocutors deal with prejudice and privilege and which coping strategies they develop (if any). Its comparative approach enables the panellists to draw parallels and identify differences in how religio-racialized minorities creatively negotiate majority-minority relations.

CRAFTING A NEW THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK TO STUDY RELIGIO-RACIALIZATION IN EUROPE

Prof. dr. Marianne Moyaert
KU Leuven

With some exceptions (e.g. Fadil; De Koning), research into Islamophobia and antisemitism either consists of (comparative) case studies that map racist expressions but fail to contribute to theorization or luxuriate in theories that lack empirical substantiation. This paper proposes an innovative theoretical and methodological framework to study the dynamic interaction between people who belong to the secularized Christian majority and those who belong to a Christian, Jewish or Muslim minority. To better understand the way Jewish and Muslim minorities are affected by and negotiate the majority norm, three research fields - critical theory of religion, lived religion and mixedness scholarship - are creatively combined. The paper elaborates on why it is important to complement insights from the critical theory of religion with an ethnography of lived religion (practice) and especially the material and ritual practices of homemaking. Such an ethnography will provide insight into the extent to which collective memories and current patterns of Islamophobia and antisemitism figure in how these couples (do not) perform certain practices. It will also enable us to gain insight into the creative strategies these couples use to (re)make their 'household'. Finally, the paper turns to third wave mixedness scholarship, which theorizes that mixed couples provide both "a window for understanding larger societal normative processes" (Hondius) and offer societally important

creative strategies for dealing with diversity in a context marked by power imbalances (Cerchiaro, Aupers & Houtman 2015). The intersection between ethnicities, cultures and religions in these families is "an area of social interaction" (Arweck & Nesbitt 2010) that is attracting increasing scholarly interest. I suggest taking seriously the idea that (mixed) couplehood is doing, i.e., a way of living together (Lopez) that includes ongoing negotiation.

RACIALIZATION OF RELIGION *AND* RELIGIONIZATION OF RACE: THE CASE OF BIRTH RITUALS

Deniz Aktaş
VU Amsterdam

This paper explores a framework for talking about the intersections between the categories of race and religion in the Netherlands, particularly the ways it is configured within Christian-Muslim couples. It contributes a much-needed qualitative perspective to the study of race-religion constellation by adopting theoretical approaches from sociology of religion, critical race theory and postcolonial studies and then enriching them with empirical insights and data. Using qualitative ethnographic methods, the paper focuses on the couples' negotiations of birth rituals, specifically baptism and circumcision, and analyses how certain decisions are (not) made regarding such ritual practices. Birth rituals, specifically circumcision and baptism, involve (in/visible) signs separating an 'us' from a 'them', and are entangled in various discourses and practices of 'race-religion constellation'. They are particularly useful to probe how a normative distinction is made between 'good religion' (interiorized, spiritualized, and private) and 'bad religion' (ritualized, materialized, and public) (Nathan & Topolski 2016; Moyaert 2018; Tiemeier 2022). By taking the decision-making processes of the couples as an outlook to understand larger societal norms and systematic inequalities, this paper looks at the ways these couples navigate the effects of the cultural archives in their lives. It ultimately shows how normative 'secularized' Christian assumptions, the dominant white Dutch identity and current patterns of Islamophobia impact the way couples negotiate and reshape differences.

RELIGION, PRIVILEGE AND THE 'BLACK BOX' OF THE SECULAR: CHRISTIAN-NONRELIGIOUS COUPLES

Dr. Lieke Schrijvers
VU Amsterdam

In studies on mixed couples, the partners usually embody multiple forms of difference, including migration background, race, ethnicity and religion. In such research, Christian secularity represents the dominant hegemony against which religious/racial Otherness is defined and regulated. However, the contents and impact of (post/Christian) secularity on everyday life is somewhat of a 'black box'. This paper compares the outcomes of the two case studies (paper 2 and 3) with the conceptualization of 'hegemonic' secularity, Christianity, privilege and whiteness. It builds on insights from critical race theory where a call was made to not only focus on minoritized groups, but also on modes of privilege (Lauwers 2022). In addition to the comparative reflection, this paper presents an extended case study of religion,

secularity and whiteness in the context of Christian-nonreligious couples. The paper analyses how a distinction between ‘secular’ and ‘religious’ is performed and discussed by these couples. The couples expressed a concern for differences in terms of medical and sexual ethics, as well as ontological framings about creation and individual choice. While religious difference for the other two case studies usually simultaneously implies difference in ethnicity and/or race, the couples studied for this paper did not phrase it as such. The fact that race seemed to be a ‘non-issue’ in the case of these couples, but highly discussed in the cases of Christian-Jewish or Christian-Muslim couples, confirms the argument that Christianities and non-religiosities both benefit from white Christian privilege. I argue that the silence about race is emblematic of the Christian-secular hegemony in Europe. This paper studies where and how these couples experience and negotiate structures of religious/racial privilege, how they give meaning to the concept of secular/Christian and how their experiences reflect on white secular/Christian.

5 NGG & Radboud University

The Dutch Association for the Study of Religion
The Dutch Association for the Study of Religion (*Nederlands Genootschap voor Godsdienstwetenschap,* NGG) is one of the oldest national organizations for the study of religion worldwide. It was founded in 1947 on the initiative of Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890-1950), professor of Phenomenology of Religions at the University of Groningen as of 1918. In 1945, van der Leeuw became Minister of Education, Arts and Sciences under the first Dutch government after World War II, and he was instrumental in the reorganization of higher education in the postwar era. He saw the foundation of the NGG as a necessary step to provide a solid institutional basis for scholars of religion to engage in interdisciplinary conversation. The NGG was subsequently instrumental in the foundation of the International Association for the History of Religion (IAHR). In 1950, the Netherlands hosted the international congress in Amsterdam during which the IAHR was institutionally founded, with Gerardus van der Leeuw serving as the first president. The NGG is also a member of the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR) and hosted the EASR Annual Conference in 2014 and will do so again in 2027.
For more information, see: https://godsdienstwetenschap.nl

The organizing committee and Radboud University
Radboud University (Nijmegen) hosts the 2023 NGG conference. The organizing committee consists of Joud Alkorani, Justine Bakker, Jorge Castillo Guerra, Martijn de Koning, Chris Sheklian and Eric Venbrux. The members of this committee represent the Center for Religion and Comparative Religion (CRCS) and the Departments of Comparative Religious Studies, Islam, Politics and Society, and Empirical and Practical Religious Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies. Four of them are also member of the Radboud University Network on Migrant Inclusion (RUNOMI), comprised of 120 scholars from across the campus. Radboud University, a special university born out of the Catholic emancipation movement of the early twentieth century, was established in 1923. At that point in time, Catholics in the Netherlands were strongly under-represented in such areas as public administration, the legal profession and the medical sector. Radboud University was considered a ‘scientific workplace’ and ‘the scene of fruitful intellectual collaboration and interaction’, where ‘dissenting opinions are discussed with seriousness and objectivity’. Even today, this university attracts a relatively large percentage of first-generation students: students whose parents did not complete a university degree. Radboud University, celebrating its centenary, remains committed to the emancipation of social and cultural minorities.

6 Venue

All meetings take place at:
Elinor Ostrom Building (EOS).
Heyendaalseweg 141
6525AJ Nijmegen

Plan your journey: Google Maps

Bus stop: Erasmus Building (Easy to reach from Nijmegen station with Line 10 Heyendaal shuttle, which departs near the Mercure hotel)

For additional information on public transport, see https://9292.nl/en

See also the page of Radboud University: https://www.ru.nl/en/about-us/the-campus/buildings-and-spaces/elinor-ostrom-building

More information

For more information, please consult our website: https://www.ru.nl/en/about-us/events/religion-in-motion-between-borders-and-belonging

When: Wednesday 1 November 2023, 9 am - Friday 3 November 2023, 5 pm

Organisation: Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, Center for Religion and Contemporary Society

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