

CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN RELIGION & SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Sabbatical and New Term

Paul Bramadat

It has been about thirteen years since my last sabbatical. As much as I am looking forward to a year of relatively protected writing time, I will miss the intellectual and social community that makes the centre such a distinctive place.

Indeed, the centre has so deeply influenced the way I think about religion that even when I am writing in my home office, at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Germany (in the fall), or on research trips to other far-flung places, I will never feel very far from my colleagues and friends here. During my sabbatical, I hope to catch my intellectual breath. In particular, I plan to work mostly on the Cascadia project, but also on essays on the political controversies surrounding yoga in North America, the philosophical and legal issues related to vaccine refusal and what we might learn about religion and society by studying post- or extra-religious environmental and social justice groups.



I am also pleased to have been appointed for another term as director and would like to thank the many people both near and far who supported the centre and me throughout the process.

Settler Colonial Ways of Knowing: Canadian Regulation of Indigenous Traditions

Daniel Sherwin *CSRS Graduate Fellow*

How have non-Indigenous people understood Indigenous ways of life? What are the dominant vocabularies about Indigenous political, spiritual and intellectual traditions and how have these vocabularies served the settler colonial state? These questions lie at the heart of my dissertation project, which surveys the history of Canada with the aim of identifying the changes and continuities in settler assertions of authority over Indigenous ways of life.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report denounces the Indian Residential school system as a form of cultural genocide. The schools were not the only means, however, by which the Canadian state sought to disrupt Indigenous spiritual, intellectual and political traditions. As a large body of comparative scholarship on settler colonies has now shown, Indigeneity itself — the ability to live as Indigenous people — was perceived as a threat and targeted for elimination, whether by laws criminalizing ceremonial practices, by the forcible imposition of colonial governance structures, or by restricting the economic and material bases of Indigenous life. In order to justify these interventions, settlers produced a range of understandings of Indigenous traditions — ranging from crude stereotypes to elaborate anthropological theories. These theories about Indigenous people form a crucial dimension of settler domination because they allowed settlers to decide on the "terms of debate". This colonial capacity to set the terms is challenged by the resurgence of Indigenous legal, political and spiritual orders.

Rather than participating directly in this resurgence, my scholarship begins from my own position as a settler on Turtle Island. Working within the tradition of Settler Colonial Studies, I seek to disrupt the dominant analytical vocabularies of Euro-Canadian society by offering a genealogical account of their political ascendancy.

My work analyzes this through a consideration of critical moments in the history of settler-Indigenous relations in Canada. For each moment, I excavate the dominant settler discourses which underpinned state action, exploring the relations between knowledge production and political power.

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Message from the Acting Director Christopher Douglas

I'm delighted to serve as acting director of the centre this year while Paul is on his much-deserved study leave. I want to welcome this year's many fellows who are coming to us from across the country and the globe.

I've previously been at the centre twice before as a faculty fellow. What I've come to appreciate most about the centre is the sheer range of its intellectual diversity. I continue to be amazed by the huge diversity of religious traditions, experiences, histories and beliefs our fellows study and by the wide variety of methodological approaches to their research questions. It's been richly and intellectually rewarding to learn about the fascinatingly precise research topics on religion and the secular pursued by the centre's fellows. 2018/2019 will be no different.

This year we have fellows from China, India, Norway, Turkey, Ontario and, of course, British Columbia, as well as other visitors and speakers from the United States and elsewhere. Our coffee talks continue to be a time for fellows to share questions and ideas. I invite you to join us at our weekly lecture series on Thursday afternoons at 5 p.m. to get a series of snapshots about the exciting range of academic work we're doing this year. The centre continues to move forward with its Cascadia research project on spirituality in the Northwest.

A highlight for the year will be our two John Albert Hall lecture series: the first, in November, is a panel discussion on "Gender, Justice and the Church" with Gina Messina, Cheri DiNovo and Jennifer Henry and the second, in January, features award-winning author Christopher Hedges, on the role of religion in U.S. politics.

My own research on the intersection of literature, religion and politics develops questions raised by my recent book [*If God Meant to Interfere: American Literature and the Rise of the Christian Right*](#). I'm pleased to have just received a SSHRC Insight Grant to bring down the conceptual wall separating contemporary serious, literary American fiction from (often much more popular) Christian fundamentalist fiction. Both bodies of religiously-interested fiction share an abiding question of how to justify the ways of God to humans and my method is to use the historical-critical scholarship of the Bible to tease out the theological tensions whose traces, after two or three millennia, have never really gone away.

I remain committed to pursuing "public scholarship" — research-informed exposition for non-academic audiences. This has included such topics as *The Handmaid's Tale* in the [Trump era](#), Carl Sagan's [faith](#), the dark [Gnosticism](#) of Cormac McCarthy, the [friendship](#) between Marilynne Robinson and Barack Obama, why the critique of [hypocrisy](#) has run out of steam and even the intersection between [fake news and religion](#).

As always, the strength of the CSRS lies in its Fellows — Faculty, Graduate Student, Visiting Research and Community Sabbaticant — and its Artists in Residence. It's going to be a fascinating and rewarding year.



We acknowledge with respect the Lkwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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One such critical moment with a particular connection to colonial history of British Columbia that I will research during my time at the centre is the 1884 amendment to the Indian Act which criminalized the Potlatch ceremony. The long history of anthropologist and missionary activism, judicial rulings and resistance that surrounds this law provides a lens through which to understand how the Canadian state has asserted its authority, not only over Indigenous people as individuals, but over the political, legal and spiritual traditions through which they organized themselves as peoples and nations.

I look forward to the opportunity to continue these investigations on Coast Salish territory, particularly on the lands of the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples and among the CSRS community.

Exciting Changes!

Sarah Grindlay joined the CSRS as Administrative Assistant in October 2017, where she lives and works on unceded Coast Salish territories. Sarah received her BA with distinction from UVic in 2015. She earned a double major in English and Writing and a minor in Professional Writing. During her undergraduate degree, she interned on the poetry board of *The Malahat Review*, while running a student literary arts journal, *The Warren Undergraduate Review*.



Sarah is the co-founder and website manager of *The Rabbit Hole Reading Series*, a performance arts collective which provides emerging writers and artists of all genres and identities with a platform to share their work in front of a live audience. She was previously self-employed as a graphic designer and has worked with UVic's English Department and various faculty members. Most recently she was employed as Assistant Manager of operations and customer service at TJX Canada, managing 40 employees and three direct reports.

She is a writer of both fiction and poetry and has been published in various print and online journals. Currently she is writing her first poetry collection. In her free time, Sarah is partial to swing dancing, hiking and hoarding books.

Fellowship Deadlines

UVic Faculty Fellowships

The CSRS offers fellowships to UVic faculty providing course-release time and centre office space to facilitate the pursuit of scholarly research projects. Fellowship recipients join other visiting, post-doc and graduate student fellows at the centre in a dynamic interdisciplinary research environment.

Visiting Research Fellowships

The CSRS offers fellowships to provide research space and an environment conducive to writing and reflection to scholars working on research projects related to our basic mandate. Proposals submitted outside of the regular application deadline schedule may also be considered at the discretion of the director.

Graduate Student Fellowships

The CSRS offers fellowships to graduate students valued at \$5,000-6,000 each.

CSRS Artist in Residence Fellowship

The Chih-Chuang and Yien-Ying Hsieh Award for Art and Spirituality is valued at approximately \$6,000 plus space at the CSRS. The deadline is **April 1, 2019**.

Community Sabbatical Fellowships

The CSRS welcomes applications from interested members of the non-academic community to join us as short-term visiting members of our research community. Applications are accepted on an **on-going basis**.

The deadline for fellowships in the 2019/2020 academic year is **November 19, 2018**, unless otherwise stated.

All fellowships can include private office space at the centre and full access to the centre's thriving academic and social life of the centre.

For more information about the CSRS fellowships, please visit our [website](#) or contact us directly.

Appropriating the Past: The Russian Orthodox Church and Putin-Era Commemoration of the Victims of Stalinist Political Repression

Megan Swift *CSRS Faculty Fellow*

In Russia, the fall of 2017 turned out to be full of unexpected events. While the state chose to remain silent about the complex legacies of the 1917 Revolution in its centenary year, deferring to galleries, museums and interested academic societies for discussion and analysis of this landmark date, Putin did address a different painful event of the national past by opening Russia's two most prominent memorials to the victims of Stalinist repression. Both unveilings were presided over by prominent members of the Russian Orthodox Church, leading to observations that the Church was co-opting memorialization of the past, rewriting its own role and overshadowing the histories of repressions of Russia's other faiths.

On October 30, 2017, the Wall of Grief, a monument to the victims of Stalinist repression, was unveiled in the centre of Moscow, marking a turning point in the Putin government's erstwhile unwillingness to publicly come to terms with the darker moments of the Soviet past. Indeed, the state had until recently actively suppressed efforts to memorialize victims of the Gulag by closing a museum dedicated to this task, the Perm-36 Memorial Museum of the History of Political Repression and defunding its NGO in March 2015.

But what was most striking about the opening of the Wall of Grief in the Russian capital was that it was presided over by Metropolitan Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, signaling the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church has positioned itself at the head of the process of mapping and commemorating the national past. This is a crucial issue given the current close relationship between church and state that has developed under Putin — but it is also a controversial issue given the Church's complex Soviet history, which included suppression by an officially-atheist state but also moments of complicity with the Soviet secret police. Furthermore, the Church fell on the side of a suppressor of political freedoms in 2012 when two members of the group Pussy Riot, who had performed a punk rock song titled "Mother of God Take Putin Away" in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour that houses the Patriarchate offices, were sentenced to "hooliganism motivated by religious hatred."

Looking at the unveiling of the Wall of Grief and at the opening of the Garden of Memory on the outskirts of Moscow in late September 2017, also presided over by high-ranking members of the Church, I ask to what extent these memorializations of the victims of Stalinist political repression follow the state's agenda of highlighting the Stalin era, with its flaws but also its achievements and WWII victory, while leaving silent other important moments of the national past, and represent an appropriation of memory that leaves out Russia's other faiths, including Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and others.

This project brings together the methodologies of memory studies and cultural history with an analysis of the spatial and visual symbolism used in recent Russian sculptures, memorials and commemorative spaces dedicated to the victims of Stalinist repression.



Image: The unveiling of the Wall of Grief monument to the victims of Stalinist Repression on October 30, 2017 (Moscow). Pictured left to right are Patriarch Kirill, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, former Human Rights ombudsman Vladimir Lukin and President Vladimir Putin. [Source link.](#)

Structuring “the Other” through Rescue Home Missions

Grace Wong Sneddon *CSRS Associate Fellow*

Reeta Tremblay *University of Victoria*

Our research project on citizenship, multi-positionality and marginality of the Chinese community during the early state-formation of British Columbia suggests that political and social institutions can shed light on the processes of identity formation as well as transformation of identity. More specifically, we are researching rescue homes to save “female victims of male abuse”; these homes were a product of the work of Victorian women reformers and middle-class Protestant women during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The plight of prostitutes locally and regionally highlights a particular lens through which to view the significance of the gender component as it intersects with race, religion and class from the mid / late 1800s to early 1900s.

When Victoria was incorporated as a city in 1862, six per cent of the city’s population, about 300, were Chinese. The Chinese population grew rapidly and by 1886, fully 18 per cent of Victoria’s population, now 3000, were Chinese and were mainly male. By 1902, of the 3,283 Chinese residing in Victoria, only 96 were women.

Three Royal Commissions on Chinese Immigration in 1885, 1902 and 1914 defined the Chinese as a national and global problem and outlined Chinese “prostitutes” as a particular threat to the white population because of disease and their corrupting influence on “little boys”. According to the Royal Commissions, evidence can be found in the fact that “Chinese prostitutes are more shameless than white women who follow the same pursuit, as though the former had been educated for it from the cradle.” Under this premise, the *Missionary Outlook*, a publication of the Methodist Church of Canada, in 1887 suggested to its readers that the problem was two-fold. First, the Chinese immigrant women were victims of the gender system of traditional China; and second, prostitution was an imported problem, for the Chinese are the only people coming to Canada where the great bulk of the women are prostitutes. From the perspective of the white Christian community, these women needed to be saved from their own men and to be converted into “moral” citizens.

In 1886, John Vrooman Gardiner and Rev. John Edward Starr of the Methodist Missionary Society (MMS) first began rescuing Chinese girls by taking them into their homes. As the number of rescues increased, they rented a specific house referred to as the “Home”. It was relocated several times but was to remain in the heart of Victoria between Chinatown and the white business sector. The Home, which was originally called the Victoria Chinese Rescue Home, with a mission to rescue Chinese prostitutes, was to later change in size and focus and additionally to take in Japanese women and children. Thus, to reflect this broadened mission, its name was changed to the Victoria Oriental Home and School. The treatment of the residents (sometimes called inmates) was based on some common racial assumptions that associated Chinese and Japanese women with strong sexual proclivities, while the Anglo-Saxon race was much more capable of controlling their sexual instincts, so that any moral regulation would have to be externally taught.



Oriental Home and School

Source: Image C-07927 courtesy of the Royal BC Museum, BC Archives

The Methodist Missionary Board and the Women’s Missionary Society engaged in what they believed to be transformative projects of inclusion by molding Chinese and Japanese women into proper citizens so that they could enter Canadian society as Christian wives and as domestic servants. The Home did provide Chinese and Japanese women educational and work opportunities that otherwise might not have been available to them. A few Chinese women also found a safe space in the rescue homes by walking in voluntarily in order to escape the abusive patriarchal structures. Although not explicitly expressed, the Home had an evangelical mission locally and internationally. It advocated an open border policy of immigration between China and Canada so that the evangelical missions to China and Japan could continue and grow. The intersectionality of race, gender and class is complicated; the nature of the Home highlights the blurring and ambiguities in the minds of those in charge and those it “helped”.

Protection and Prophylaxis: Arabic Script Patterns and Magical Practices in Medieval Islam

Zahra Kazani *CSRS Graduate Fellow*

From time immemorial, material and visual culture provides evidence of human beings' need to take extensive (and even irrational) measures for the sake of three things: love, success and health. This need can be seen in objects from diverse time-periods and cultural traditions, including Babylonian incantation bowls for protection against demons; Byzantine wedding rings in the form of octagons to ensure success; hidden or occult properties of gems or herbs for healing ailments; as well as the power attributed to words or letters.

My research takes the Arabic script as its starting point and its manipulation into a variety of patterns in medieval Islamic societies. The malleability of ligatures and letterforms of the Arabic script allow words to be visually represented in ways that are challenging to read and oftentimes indecipherable. The strokes and angles of the script take on a prominent visual character, rendering the composition better suited to be "viewed" rather than be "read." Such script patterns can be found on architecture and numismatics, scientific objects and treatises, objects of devotion and piety, as well as magical objects and manuals.

Acknowledging the multivalent nature of visuals, my research examines the presence of magical and esoteric ideas, beliefs and practices, as a system of understanding in the medieval world and subsequently, as a possible mechanism for articulating the script patterns. The employment of inscriptions in material culture during the late antique and medieval world reveal numerous associations with concepts of protection, healing, control and prediction. In Islamicate societies, the Arabic script is instrumental to the potency of magical objects, appearing in amulets, seals and talismans, to magic-medicinal bowls, mirrors and mundane tools. Such objects are consciously inscribed with script forms that are challenging to decipher, such as the use of angular script (Kufic), inscriptions in reverse, or the meaningless stringing of letter-shapes (pseudo-script). The prominent

role of script in magical objects and its deliberate rendition as illegible, highlights the material power of the letters as a mechanism for the object's efficacious nature. Numerous material evidences suggest that script in its visual form, irrespective of its verbal content, was viewed in medieval societies as prophylactic and magical.

Academic scholarship on the idea of magic, however, particularly in the medieval period, is still inchoate and there are as many definitions of magic as there are scholars working on the subject matter. Oscillating between the domains of religion and science, magic is oftentimes articulated as an intersection between the two, whilst other times, the subject is evaluated independently of them. The complex integration of magic in medieval societies, with its many roots in areas of medicine, science, philosophy, religion and literature, constitutes magic as a vital belief system, one with palpable effects in the realm of visual perception. My research at the CSRS this year will continue to build on the many ways in which script was manipulated in the visual realm, particularly its formation into geometric shapes and the interlacing of letterforms. By rethinking the ways in which such patterns were consumed in the medieval period, I aim to coalesce religion, scientific thought and magical practices.

Figure 1: Folio from Kitāb al-diryāq (Book of Antidotes), attributed to Northern Iraq, dated 595 AH/ 1198-9 CE. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, arabe 2964, 36.5 x 26.5 cm. (Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris)



This pattern presents a recipe of a Greek physician from antiquity, combining myrrh, laurel berries, bitterwort and crepe ginger, with honey (central medallion).



Figure 2: Magic-medicinal bowl, Syria, c. 1200 CE. Copenhagen, David Collection, Inv 36/1995. (Photo: David Collection, Copenhagen)

Engravings on the bowl include quotations from the Qur'an, magical formulas, a series of isolated letters, magic squares, Solomon's seal and images of snake, scorpion and mad dog. Healing occurs when a patient drinks the charged water from the bowl.

Forming Wisdom in Victorian Literature: Authority, Revelation, and the Question of Interpretation

Denae Dyck *CSRS Graduate Fellow*

Although the Bible retained substantial cultural currency throughout the Victorian era (1837-1901), this period saw much debate about its meanings and applications. The formerly accepted understanding of scripture as unified and as divinely inspired was challenged by the advent of the so-called “higher criticism,” which approached the Bible as a composite, historical and literary document. Emerging from the work of eighteenth-century German biblical scholars, this criticism was translated into English, distributed in Britain and applied by British scholars and clerics during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. While many Christians resisted the higher criticism, others embraced it as an opportunity for engagement with a dynamic Word that is not set in stone but always in formation. My dissertation examines the response to this interpretive shift by Victorian writers who, to varying degrees, distanced themselves from their Christian heritage but who nonetheless engaged rigorously with the Bible in their poetry, novels and nonfiction prose. I am interested in how these writers adapted the forms of biblical wisdom literature to participate creatively in the higher critical project of challenging conventional ideas about biblical authority, revelation and interpretation.

Wisdom literature is a flexible category in biblical scholarship, but I have chosen to consider it broadly, emphasizing Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes while venturing beyond these books to consider also the parables of Jesus in the gospels, as well as the apocryphal texts of Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon. As a genre, wisdom literature has several characteristics that make it an attractive and useful focal point for my study. This literature not only portrays the search for meaning as an ongoing pursuit but also positions itself less as divine dictation than as human poetry. Unlike prophecy, wisdom literature does not make explicit claims of verbal inspiration by God and it depends less on making pronouncements than on provoking questions.

In my dissertation research, I concentrate on Victorian texts that not only quote from or allude to biblical wisdom literature but also imitate or develop its characteristic forms. These forms include the dialogue, the aphorism, the parable and the hymn to personified wisdom. I analyze these forms for their capacity to shape a particular kind of didactic literature, one that does not prescribe fixed lessons but requires readers to interpret the text for themselves. To this end, my method combines a close attention to form in Victorian and biblical texts with insights from hermeneutic theory, from the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher and his contemporaries in the nineteenth century to that of Paul Ricoeur and other thinkers during our own time. Because it was during the nineteenth century that the discourse of hermeneutics changed from a set of rules for interpreting sacred texts to an understanding of all human endeavor as interpretive, the literature of this period offers an ideal opportunity to investigate points of continuity among biblical scholarship, philosophical hermeneutics and literary criticism.

My study of these Victorian texts, then, aims to understand what they show us about the transformative potential of biblical wisdom literature, particularly as a means of reconsidering writerly and readerly experience in the Christian religion. As my work thus far suggests, this potential includes shifting the grounds of authority from transcendent inspiration to dialogic community, re-framing revelation as a process of discovery and reclaiming the vital role of questioning, doubt and even skepticism within the biblical tradition. Beyond the agnostic recognition of the limits of knowledge, this wisdom literature suggests that the crucial issue is not merely how little we know but, more pointedly, what we make of our finite knowledge. I very much look forward to pursuing this work at the CSRS during the 2018-2019 academic year and to participating in this community’s interdisciplinary conversations.

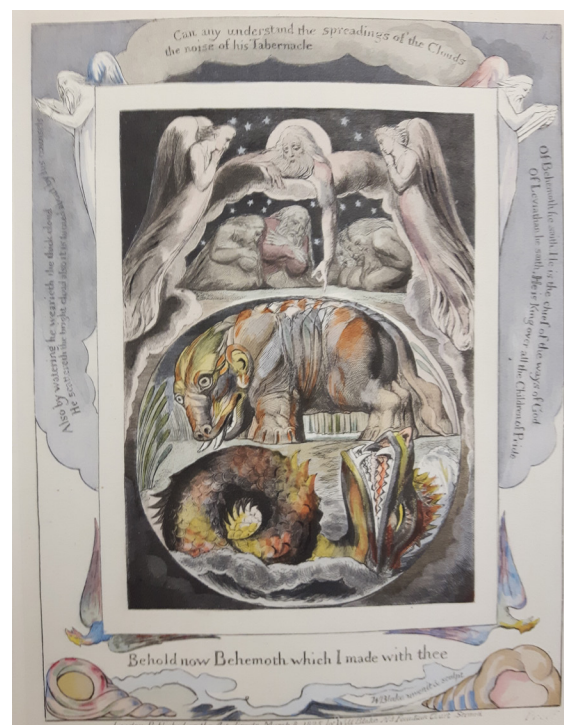


Image: Blake, William. “Behemoth and Leviathan.” Plate XV. *Illustrations of the Book of Job*. 1825. Blake’s visual interpretations of the Book of Job were an important precursor to Victorian engagements with biblical wisdom literature. Image courtesy of Special Collections, University of Victoria.

Cascadia Research Project Update

Paul Bramadat *Principal Investigator*

By the time this newsletter is printed, the team of researchers associated with the SSHRC-funded Cascadia project — officially known as the Religion, Spirituality and Secularity in the Pacific Northwest project — will have finished gathering, transcribing and coding the project's qualitative and quantitative data. The data includes a fairly large survey of the region and also religious leader interviews, oral history interviews with families, archival sources and focus groups with millennials and members of religious and spiritual communities. This pool of data will be used by the chapter authors over the next year as we address some of the core questions of the project: why/how is this region different than the rest of North America? What differences exist between the Canadian and American components of Cascadia? What are the impacts on the broader society of the forms of secularization we see here? How is the region experienced and shaped by millennials? What might it be like to be religiously traditional in a region in which that is uncommon? The team includes scholars and students from the region, all of whom will meet next year in Seattle to discuss our conclusions and to critique our chapters prior to submitting the manuscript to an academic press.

Reflections on Reconciliation and Relationship: A Sustained Dialogue

Michelle Brown and Chelsea Horton

Since March 2018, the CSRS has been hosting a sustained dialogue among members of the CSRS community as part of the centre's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. Every second week, a coffee talk is dedicated to this dialogue. Called *Reconciliation and Relationship*, the purpose of this dialogue is to "deepen our understanding of current relationships between Indigenous and settler peoples in Canada." We've now completed eight sessions.

The dialogue is co-facilitated by Michelle Brown, a Cree poet, retired federal treaty negotiator and member of the CSRS Advisory Council; and Dr. Chelsea Horton, a settler Canadian historian who researches and teaches in Indigenous history. We invited participants to reflect on their experience thus far and are pleased to be able to share some of what we heard:



Photo: Michelle Brown

As I reflect upon what is forefront to me now, I think about what is required to do this work of reconciliation. I think about the false distance that is sought and developed in the academy between subject and object, that is, between a person and what it is that they learn and know. In reconciliation, that distance leads to falsely thinking that knowing and doing are separate and they mustn't be if a new way is to emerge.

I like that relationship is included in the name of this dialogue. As the weeks have gone by, the relationships that are being formed tweak and change the nature of the dialogue and that is good. I look forward to continuing these relationships and seeing where the dialogue leads us together.

It is hard to write about an experience that goes beyond words. I am left with the question: "How may I serve?"

Everyone asks for "feedback" these days and I confess I usually ignore the request! I find it very difficult to say anything meaningful in a few short sentences. However, I think the dialogues have been a useful exercise and it is particularly useful that Michelle has been able to express an Indigenous point of view.

I was reminded of this today at the Women's March. The first three women to speak were our Indigenous sisters and my heart grew with their stories, the ways in which they reference the world around them as well as the injustices of their histories. For me to more fully appreciate what reconciliation is about, I benefit most from narratives of the women I am just beginning to engage and to know.

There is a growing sense that we at CSRS are now more fully becoming a community and I attribute that to our commitment to listen, to be more fully present to one another and the histories embedded in each of us because Chelsea and Michelle have opened us to this.

As we move into fall 2018, we look forward to continuing to deepen and expand our circles of relationship, at CSRS, UVic and within Lekwungen and WSÁNEĆ territories more broadly.

The Influence of 19th Century French Jesuits on Modern Shanghai

Mo Wei 莫为

CSRS Visiting Graduate Fellow

My doctoral dissertation aims to illustrate how the Jesuit mission from the mid-late 19th century and the presence of the French Enlightenment have influenced modern Shanghai in the areas of gender, architectural design, art education and social well-being. Although Shanghai has and continues to experience major changes in the last century, the strong connection to French culture remains a large part of the city's charm and identity.

From the late 16th century onwards, there has been a continuous Catholic presence in China. In this period, the Jesuit offered insights about mathematics, astronomy and geography, in addition to philosophy or religion. However, after the Chinese Rites Controversy in the 17th and 18th century (related to the use of the name of God and the rituals that honored Confucius and the ancestors) and due to the suppression of Jesuits in other parts of the world, there was less intolerance towards the first generation of Jesuits in China.

The second wave of Jesuit migration to China occurred in 1842. It took some time after the restoration of the Society in 1814 before new Jesuits were sent to China. This was mainly due to the prohibition on Christianity and the exile of foreign missionaries under the Manchu government caused by the Chinese Rites Controversy and lasting until the Opium War in 1840. As a result of the territorial division of the Catholic Church in apostolic vicariates or prefectures in the 19th century, when the Jesuits returned to China, they served in nine different areas around Zi-ka-wei (徐家匯) in Shanghai and they were known as "French Jesuits of the Paris Province".

The Catholics in France were a major financial supporter of the global growth of Catholic missions in the 19th century. Although there were funding branches throughout various European countries, from 1822-1872, two-thirds of all funds for global Catholic mission work came from France. The resulting Sino-French treaty (Huangpu, 1844) allowed the French to establish churches, hospices, schools and cemeteries in the five Chinese ports that were opened for foreign residence, trade and naval vessels. Shanghai was the prominent port of the five. Similar to the first wave of Jesuit missionaries in 16th century in the province of Goa on the west coast of India, Shanghai became the centre of the Jesuit mission in the far east after Restoration.

French culture played a dominant role in the late 19th century Shanghai and this has continued into the 20th century. The French Jesuit compound in Zi-ka-wei was located next to the French Concession in Shanghai where the Jesuit missionaries had designed an independent community with dense French elements covering all fields of social function. These included the French mandatory educational system applies in Shanghai and a preference for Normandy-style architecture in the central part of Shanghai, due to its compatibility to the surrounding buildings built by French centuries before.

Jesuits missionaries have a tradition of making maps during their missions outside of Europe. During my fellowship at the CSRS, I found a very fragile map made by a French Jesuit in Shanghai (pictured below) in the UVic Special Collections that was helpful for my research. The map illustrated China as it was in the late Qing Dynasty and included many places where territorial disputes (mainly along the southeast coastline including Diaoyutai Islands in Chinese and Senkaku Islands in Japanese) still exist today.

I am very thankful to have access to the archives at UVic and for the supportive friends at the CSRS, all of which have inspired and helped me greatly in advancing my PhD thesis project.



Huang chao zhi sheng di yu quan tu. 皇朝直省地輿全圖
Publication Statement: Shanghai : Xu Jiahui, Hong Baoji dai yin, Guangxu jia chen [1904]
上海：徐家匯，鴻寶齋代印，光緒甲辰 [1904]
Other Author(s): Chevalier, Stanislas, 1852-1930, compiler.

The Story Behind the Award: An Interview with Dr. Yvonne Hsieh

Sally Lin Administrative Coordinator

Every year, the CSRS Program Committee and Advisory Council selects one or two artists from a highly competitive pool of applicants to be the Artist(s) in Residence at our centre.

We have welcomed artists working on creative projects in beading, playwriting, photography, painting, poetry, storytelling, creative non-fiction, fiction, installation art and performance art on wide-ranging topics.

The Artist in Residence fellowship is generously funded by the Chih-Chuang and Yien-Ying Hsieh Scholarship for Art and Spirituality, which was established in 2010 by their daughter and retired UVic French professor Dr. Yvonne Hsieh.

The ten artists who have joined our community since have benefited from the financial and infrastructural support that this award brings, while also contributing to our rich and diverse community through their creative projects, thought-provoking ideas and engaging discussions.

Sally Lin, the CSRS Administrative Coordinator, sat down with Dr. Hsieh to learn more about her interest in the centre and this scholarship:

You named the scholarship in memory of your parents Chih-Chuang Hsieh and Yien-Ying Wang Hsieh. Can you tell me a bit more about them?

My parents were born in the 1920s in China and lived in Hong Kong for the first nineteen years of their marriage. My two siblings and I were all born in Hong Kong, but our whole family immigrated to Vancouver, Canada in 1970 as part of the first wave of white collar immigration from Asia.

My dad worked as a businessperson in Hong Kong and then at BC Rail once we arrived in Canada. Although he studied public administration at university, my father had a very strong appreciation for all the creative arts. I remember the time when I was a PhD exchange student in Paris in my early twenties and my father accompanied me on a ten-day tour of Europe. We went to lots of museums and cathedrals and I saw how much he appreciated the artwork and stained glass.

My mother worked as an elementary school teacher and office worker for several years prior to her marriage. She then devoted herself to the care of her three children. After settling in Canada, she nourished her passion for gardening. She had a naturally beautiful singing voice and an innate sense of harmony, proportion—colour coordination.

Why did you decide to donate this endowment to the CSRS? How has the centre impacted you personally or professionally?

I have been involved with the CSRS since the very beginning. In fact, I was a member of the first Program Committee and of the search committee for the first director of the centre, Harold Coward. This was back in the early 90s and I was a young assistant professor in the French department. I gained valuable professional experience being on the Program Committee because it was the first committee that I served on outside of my own faculty. Harold was very skilled at running meetings because he knew how to keep the focus on the agenda while being a good listener. I learned so much from Harold while I was on the Program Committee and these skills became particularly useful when I became department chair later in my career.

For a few years, I also chaired the French department's student affairs committee, which selected students for scholarships and other awards. From this experience, I realized that for an award to be truly impactful, the criteria had to be broad enough to ensure a wide pool of candidates and the funding amount had to rise with inflation and the cost of living. This is why I created an endowment for the Artist in Residence fellowship, so that the funding amount could grow over time. The eligibility is also open enough to encourage artists of various creative practices to apply.

I have so much admiration for artists. It is not easy to create something original when so much amazing art already exists in the world, yet they persist in furthering their craft. I have really enjoyed meeting all the Artists in Residence over the years and look forward to seeing more artists flourish during their fellowship at the centre.

If you are an artist and have an interest in a project related to religion and society, please consider applying in Spring 2019 for the 2019/2020 Artist in Residence fellowship, which is currently valued at \$6,000 for a full-year term, plus an office and social space in our vibrant community.

For more information, please visit <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/csrs/fellowships-awards/apply/artist/index.php>.



Photo of Dr. Yvonne Hsieh

An Inquiry into the “New Spirituality and Society”

Dvora Levin

CSRS Advisory Council Member and 21st Century Spirituality Inquiry Group Member

We would like to thank CSRS for its support and use of its library, a perfect setting for our exploration of spirituality in an emergent, rapidly changing world. In the past year, our group of five has held three series of intentional conversations to share varied world-views on a contemporary understanding of “spirituality”. Each series of four to five sessions took place over a period of two to three months with a break in between for us to better reflect upon and incorporate these intense and revealing conversations. A total of 19 guests were involved to date. Our intention has been to:

1. Engage together to explore what “spirituality” means today, viewed through different lenses
2. Encourage dialogue and reflection with each other and with invited speakers/guests,
3. Share resources and facilitate inquiry, a process based on curiosity, free of strategies and “fix it” mentalities
4. Seek innovative expressions for our learnings and insights (including graphic recording, CSRS coffee chat, poetry, art, storytelling)

Our guests were invited to share their perspectives on spirituality, where/how it resonates and contributes to their life and the world. We heard unique stories from a master gardener, ocean researcher, radical Catholic nun, student of paganism, musicians, biologist, astrophysicist, police officer, government senior manager, teachers of yoga and meditation, student of Jewish mysticism, hospice nurse, financial consultant, astronomer, massage therapist and life coach.

Their perspectives on their own journey were both amazingly varied and emotionally moving, including discussions of:

- the relationship between science and spirituality
- the body/somatic approaches
- the place of creativity and artistic expression
- connections to effective leadership
- opening into mystical avenues and spirit guides
- eastern traditions in the western world
- entering through nature, the land, the changing environment

These intimate, informal conversations have been both enlightening and deeply meaningful, both for our group and for our guests, who unanimously reported how much they appreciated this opportunity to discuss their experiences in terms of their spiritual essence. A number mentioned how telling their own stories revealed surprises for themselves.

Amidst the laughter, some tears and what can be called a sense of shared awe was frequently present. We heard wondrous stories: talking to trees before transplanting them, a bioluminescent dolphin appearing at night mid-Atlantic, a study of how meditation effects policing, a nurse imaging untying her patients’ fear knots, a child’s memories of Scottish fairies, how wealth/prosperity are found in the mind, a farmer telling his son choosing science is like “spending your life shovelling clouds” and so many more.

Everyone involved reported deepening insights and appreciation for the sacred space created by such mindful inquiry and open dialogue. It is apparent that there are many ancient and emerging avenues to those searching for a newly emerging spirituality to aid both their understanding and actions in the world they inhabit.

As always, our learning is ongoing as we continue the process of planning further steps in using the power of open dialogue to uncover the richness of shared spiritual exploration. As one of our guests declared, “For me, it’s the only game in town.”



Group Members from left: Peter Bell (Series 3), Diana Smith (Facilitator), Michael Keller, Jen Tafler, Dvora Levin, Lyle Fuller (Series 1 & 2, not pictured here)

Letters from the Trees: Mysteries and Devotions of the Irish Tree Alphabet

Miles Lowry

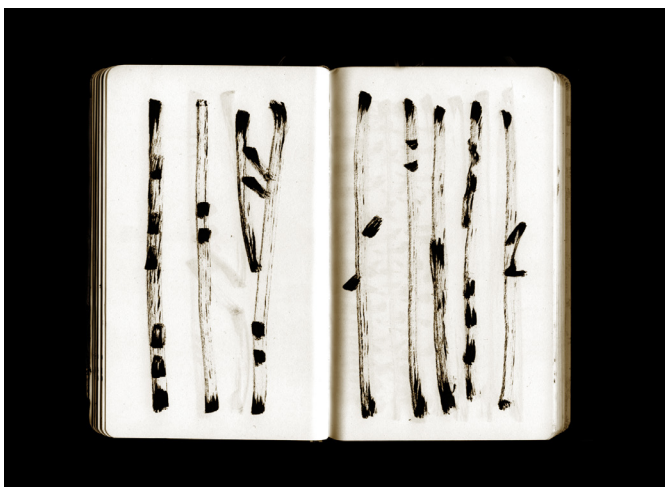
CSRS Artist in Residence

The Irish Ogham alphabet has been lost, found, saved from obscurity and disputed for centuries. The original alphabet is thought to be based on the ancient Irish language, honouring sacred trees and plants of cultural and symbolic significance. Its marks are constructed using a vertical baseline (the tree), with perpendicular marks (the branches) stemming from or crossing over this line horizontally or diagonally. While all surviving Ogham inscriptions are on stone, it was likely also inscribed on sticks, stakes and trees. Many stones were inadvertently damaged or fragmented by farmers who anchored their fences and tethered their flocks against stormy weather. Some excellent examples have been cloistered in museum collections such as those held at University College Cork.

As a multidisciplinary artist, I have a history of drawing from the wealth of mythology and storytelling of my Gaelic and Pre-Celtic roots. I have for several years been seeking refuge and retreat at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre in Ireland, a large wooded estate on a lake flanked by farmlands. My paintings of this landscape have formed a significant part of my Irish-themed work portraying trees and their visual impact on the land. It didn't take long to find myself collecting lore from the locals who have a strong sense of the ancestral memory inherent in the landscape.

My devotion to mark-making and the invention of ciphers has expanded in recent years while working in collaboration with calligrapher Georgia Angelopoulos. Her own love and connection to Greek texts provided a ground for me to take a new look at how the Irish Ogham alphabet shares a connection with calligraphy, has been used for musical notation and has a history of use expressing prayers, protective spells and significant names and places.

I am fascinated by the notion that trees, their symbolism and their distinct personalities can be used to portray ideas, inspire hidden communications and reflect spiritual investigations. For my fellowship, I will research a meaningful contemporary expression of the Tree Alphabet by enlisting the possibilities of painting, drawing, sculpture, media, the written word and any other intersections of thought available in the university setting. So I welcome you to the School of Ogham, a laboratory investigating the ever-evolving language of the trees - past, present and future.



Ogham, the White Book (2017)
ink on paper-bound volume



Amfora (2016)
sculpture and painting by Miles Lowry,
calligraphy by Georgia Angelopoulos
cast and painted cotton fibre, silver leaf, mineral pigments



Naming the Light (2007)
paper pigment wax and wood



Nature Ecstasy (2005)
- triptych -
paper pigment wax and wood



Parrish Yews (2015)
- diptych -
paper pigment wax and wood

CSRS STUDENT FELLOWS

Farewell for Now: An Interview with 2017-2018 Graduate Fellow Zabeen Khamisa Sally Lin *Administrative Coordinator*

During Zabeen's last week as Graduate Fellow, I sat down with her to hear her reflections on her time at the CSRS. Zabeen is a PhD candidate in the joint Laurier-Waterloo Religious Diversity in North America program.

How did you hear about the CSRS and the graduate student fellowships?

If you're studying religion in Canada, you know Paul [Bramadat] and the centre. So it was always in the back of my mind. Then I met Paul at a conference a while back and talking to him directly really made me want to come. Even in that initial meeting, Paul gave me feedback on my research that I was able to incorporate into my presentation the next day. I could immediately see why people would want to be at the centre if that was the type of feedback they would get. It was so invigorating to know that he was invested in my topic before I was even a fellow.

Why did you decide to apply to for the fellowship?

I applied to the fellowship because I wanted to get this kind of feedback from Paul on a regular basis. I love conferences and being around other academics who are studying religion in Canada, so the thought of being at a place where I feel like I am at a conference every day really appealed to me. I love ideas. I love talking about ideas. It really helps my writing, especially because I do not have a cohort at my institution. So there it is a huge draw to come to a place with a wide range of experts at different points in their career.

What did you hope to get from the CSRS fellowship experience when you applied?

Before I came here, I thought I was really going to be challenged on the theories that I'm using and that I was going to be tested on my knowledge. So I was ready to defend my ideas and to be challenged on them. I also hoped to write everyday, because that can be really hard to do when I am back home in Waterloo.

Was the fellowship different than what you expected?

I really wasn't expecting how much the local community was actually involved in the centre. You hear a lot about "community engagement" in academia, but I really didn't realize how much it can actually engage the public. Seeing this really changed my attitude about the CSRS and that it wasn't merely an academic environment. I was challenged

here, but not in the way that I expected. I was challenged in how to translate my ideas to a public audience that wasn't familiar with my research, and to talk about it from that perspective rather than quoting theorists.

What were your most memorable or impactful moments of being at the CSRS or in Victoria?

My public lecture was the most memorable moment, especially the reaction that people had to the social media component of my research. I won't forget the gasps from some of the seniors in the audience when I said that you can make money on social media. It reminded me that as much as my work is academic, there are still large portions of the public who don't know about the concepts that I take for granted. Other memorable moments are the informal conversations in the hallways. Those were really grounding conversations for me. I really appreciated how the conversations don't have to only be from 11:00-12:00 during the coffee talks, but they can continue beyond that.

Being in Victoria is like living in a different era. My research is so contemporary, so it was interesting to be in a place that looks like it's frozen in time. It was hard to wrap my mind around the colonial imprint of this place when so much of my work is about decolonization or the people I'm studying are challenging the imperial system. So it was impactful to be in a place that still retains those colonial elements and being able to learn how these decolonization movements work in a place like this. The Sikh and Indigenous communities have had such a long history in BC and it was through field trips with Peter [Scales, 2018 CSRS Community Fellow] to early Sikh settlements in Paldi and Duncan that I am better able to contextualize my work.

What's next for you after you finish your fellowship?

One of the biggest things I finished here was my ethics clearance so I will be doing fieldwork, writing, finishing articles I started while I was here, as well as teaching my first course – "Intro to Sikhism" at the University of Waterloo – in January. I'm excited to show students the pictures of the gurdwara in Paldi that I took during my fellowship here. Meeting a local BC historian like Peter also made me more interested in utilizing local archives. So now I can get my students to look up stuff in the archives as an assignment instead of just assigning readings.

Do you have any advice for incoming graduate student fellows?

I would encourage grad fellows to take initiative to make the most of your time here. Share your skills with other fellows. Get to know faculty outside of the CSRS. Recognize that your time can go beyond the CSRS, so build bridges for yourself, which can also build bridges for the CSRS with other faculty on campus.



On Scripture: Exploring the Place of the Bible in Mainline Christian Churches

Jane Dawson *CSRS Associate Fellow*

Although the Christian Bible has been a major influence in western religious and cultural thought across the millennia, with the overarching prevalence of the secular imaginary in the past century, many people within mainline denominations are now uncertain about how to think about the Bible and its place in church life. Some see the Bible as a vestige of the past that no longer connects with what they believe or why they still come to church. In this view, the ancient stories of scripture reflect an outmoded worldview that does not align well with current cosmologies and moralities. In a world predominantly shaped by scientific understandings, the Bible tells of supernatural events that strain credulity. Moreover, it has been used over the ages as a “text of terror” to instigate or condone numerous prejudices and atrocities. The question arises about whether the Bible’s time has perhaps come and gone.

In contrast with this critical view, however, others continue to value the Bible as an enduring source of spiritual authority that remains central to their identity as Christians. From this perspective, the Bible is seen as a personally and socially transformative text that affirms principles of social justice, salvation and love for others, and stands as a powerful counter-narrative to the dominant ethos of individualism and the excesses of consumer capitalism.

Between these divergent perspectives, many hold views of the Bible that are ambivalent, or mixed. Some are simply indifferent, or have drifted away from thinking about the Bible as a personally significant or influential text at all. Reasons for continuing church attendance are motivated more by social relationships or commitments to outreach activities than by a desire to engage deeply with the ancient sacred texts of the tradition.

The situation is further complicated by the nature of much modern biblical scholarship, which makes a point of setting aside the concept of scripture as holding any particular status as being sacred or divinely inspired, placing instead a disciplinary emphasis on studying biblical texts as historical and literary documents like any other. While this approach has contributed a wealth of knowledge to understanding the historical and compositional aspects of the Bible, it has raised many questions about how it continues to play a role in personal belief and worship practice. If the stories of the Bible reflect multiple authors, competing political interests, contradictory theologies and mistakes in transcription and translation, how do they continue to hold meaning for people as an authoritative source of insight and inspiration? What does the Bible “look like” for church leaders and adherents, in the context of such a range of interpretive possibilities?

The purpose of this research project is to conduct a qualitative investigation into how ordained and lay church leaders are thinking about and engaging with the Bible in their worship and ministry and in their own spiritual life, given this divergence in possible orientations to biblical texts. My primary focus is on mainline Protestant church denominations that allow for a more liberal approach to scriptural authority than other so-called “Bible based” churches that lay special emphasis on the Bible as the inerrant and infallible word of God.

In the project I am undertaking at the CSRS, I explore questions of if, how and why the Bible plays a role in contemporary congregational and spiritual life. I address such themes as how sacred texts are selected for and employed in worship services, how seminary training informs congregational practice, the presence or absence, character and scope of bible study classes as a facet of congregational ministry, and the current state of personal Bible reading and study.

The aim of the research will be to explore common and divergent themes, looking less for denominational comparisons than distinctive features of the shared landscape. The primary objective is not to offer conclusive answers to the questions raised, but to take such questions into a selection of church venues to find out what kinds of answers a small sample of church leaders might give. These insights will provide a lens to reflect more broadly on the place of the Bible in a contemporary context where, due to aging populations and declining attendance, many churches are facing serious questions about their future.



2018-2019 FELLOWS

SCHOLARS-IN-RESIDENCE who form the heart of our community

HAROLD COWARD INDIA RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP



Ramesh Bairy

(Indian Institute of Technology Bombay),
Querying the "Religious": The Martha, Caste and the Contemporary

IAN H. STEWART GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWS



Hairong Huang

(MA Cand., UVic History),
Popular Religion and Guangdong Politicians: Political Mobilization over Populace during the Mid-19th to the Early 20th Centuries



Daniel Sherwin

(PhD Cand., U of T Political Science),
Settler-Colonial Responses to Indigenous Resistance: A Critical Examination of Euro-Canadian Political Thought

VANDEKERKHOVE GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWS



Denae Dyck

(PhD Cand., UVic English),
Forming Wisdom: Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Work of the Sage in Victorian Britain



Kefen Zhou

(PhD Cand., UVic History),
Mission to Modernize: The Contributions of Canadian Missionaries in China

HEATHER J. LINDSTEDT & BRIAN A. POLLICK GRADUATE FELLOW



Zahra Kazani

(PhD Cand., UVic Art History and Visual Studies)
Belief Embodied: Uncovering the Relationship of Script, Geometry and Magical Ideas in Medieval Islamic Societies

WINNIFRED LONSDALE GRADUATE FELLOW



Liang Han

(MA Cand., UVic History)
The Integration of Religions in Victoria's Chinatown from 1858 to 1930

RELIGIOUS STUDIES TEACHING FELLOW



Rachel Brown

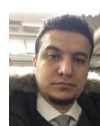
(UVic Religious Studies)
Consuming Identity: Food and Maghrebine Muslim Experience in Paris and Montreal

VISITING FELLOWS



Michael Glowasky

(St. Paul's College, University of Manitoba),
Discerning the Divine: Christian Scriptures and Religious Identity in Augustine of Hippo



Kasra Ghorbaninejad

(PhD Cand., Northeastern University),
"Protesting Shias, Popish Sultans? Cross-Religious Alliance Building Across the Mediterranean in the 1600s"



Helen Jennings

(PhD Cand., The Arctic University of Norway),
Religion, Tourism and Indigeneity



Mo Wei

(PhD Cand., Shanghai Normal University),
Sparkling Light of Renaissance and Religious Art in Zikawei (Xujiahui)—T'ou-Sè-Wè (1847-1949)

ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE



Miles Lowry

Ogham - The Tree Alphabet



Terry Marner

Searching for Home-Finding Fingerposts in Neuroscience



Marina DiMaio

Points of Resonance

UVIC FACULTY FELLOWS



Sara Beam (UVic History)

The Origins of Single Motherhood in Europe During the Reformation Period: Links with Canadian Policies Toward Single Mothers Today



Megan Swift

(UVic Germanic and Slavic Studies)
Appropriating the Past: The Russian Orthodox Church and Putin-Era Commemoration of the Victims of Stalinist Political Repression

ASSOCIATE FELLOWS



Angela Andersen

Cemevleri: An Examination of the Historical Roots and Contemporary Meanings of Alevi Architecture and Iconography



Harold Coward

Word, Chant and Song in the Major Religions: Spiritual Transformation



Jane Dawson

What About the Bible? An Exploration of Current Practices



Erica Dodd

Treasures of the Early Christian Church



Scott Dolff

Evangelicalism and the Environment in the United States



Robert Florida

Ethical Issues in Modern Buddhism



Andrew Gow

Secularism in Christianonormative Secular Societies



Mona Goode

The Evolution of the Muslim Zakat Tax as an Obligatory Act



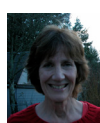
Nicola Hayward

*The Use of Funerary Art for Commemorating Social Identity:
The Case of the Via Latina's Samaritan Woman*



Victor Hori

The Modernization of Buddhism in Global Perspective



Lesley Jessop

*Students or Tailors?
A Re-evaluation of the Sculptures on the Routh Transept of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris*



Francis Landy

The Book of Isaiah



Graham McDonough

How Catholic Schools can be Thought of as Sites of Inter-Religious and Ecumenical Dialogue



Brendon Neilson

Post-Christian Diaspora: How Millennials are Making Meaning after Leaving the Church



Jordan Paper

Theology Throughout Most of the Human Past: The Spiritual Life and Understanding of Gathering-Hunting Peoples



Jarrad Reddekop

Relating to the Forest in Amazonian Quichua Philosophy; Relational Ontology, Selfhood, Ethics and Aesthetics



Anna Tsurkan

Islam and Politics in "Arab Spring" Countries from an International Community Perspective



Carolyn Whitney-Brown

The Meaning of Founding Stories: Jean Vanier and L'Arche Communities Around the World



Grace Wong Sneddon

Chinese Canadian Spirituality in the 21st Century



Katherine Young

The Divyaprabandham, Canonization and Śrīvaisnava Formation: Musical Tropes and Identity Negotiations

THURSDAY PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

These CSRS lectures feature our fellows and special guests. They are held from 5:00-6:00pm on Thursdays in Clearihue C112 (Sept. - Dec. 2018) and in the David Strong Building C122 (Jan. - April 2019), except for our IdeaFest event on Mar. 7th, 2019 in Hickman 105. The John Albert Hall lectures are from 5:00-6:30pm and are held in MacLaurin A144 (Nov. 29, 2018) and Hickman 105 (Jan. 17th, 2019).

All lectures are free and open to the public. For lecture details, visit the our website at <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/csrs/events/index.php>.

Sept. 13 2018	Christopher Douglas	<i>The Christian Right in American Literature and Politics</i>
Sept. 20 2018	Kevin Lewis O'Neill	<i>The Unmaking of David Roney</i>
Sept. 27 2018	Grace Wong Sneddon	<i>Rescue Home Missions: Institutionalizing Race, Gender and Class</i>
Oct. 4 2018	Kasra Ghorbaninejad	<i>Protesting Shias, Popish Sultans: Cross-Religious Identification in the Seventeenth Century</i>
Oct. 11 2018	Angela Andersen	<i>Emblems of Unresolved Matters: Contemporary Islamic Architecture in Turkey</i>
Oct. 18 2018	Megan Swift	<i>Putin and the Patriarch: Appropriating Russia's National Past</i>
Oct. 25 2018	Helen Jennings	<i>Religion, Indigeneity and Tourism in British Columbia</i>
Nov. 1 2018	Adrienne Williams Boyarin	<i>Converts, Cleaners and Cannibals: Jewish Women in Medieval English Books</i>
Nov. 8 2017	Jerald Sabin	<i>Faith and Race in Canadian Politics: Language, Media and the 2017 NDP Leadership Election</i>
Nov. 22 2018	Zahra Kazani	<i>The Theatrics of Script: Material Culture and Magical Practices in Medieval Islam</i>
Nov. 29 2018	Cheri DiNovo, Jennifer Henry, Gina Messina	<i>Gender, Justice and the Church</i>
Jan. 10 2019	Daniel Sherwin	<i>How does Settler Colonialism Control the Boundaries of Debate?</i>
Jan. 17 2019	Christopher Hedges	<i>Christian Fascism and the Rise of Donald Trump</i>
Jan. 24 2019	Denae Dyck	<i>Forming Wisdom: Reinterpretation and Dialogue in A Drama of Exile</i>
Jan. 31 2019	Miles Lowry	<i>Letters from the Trees: Mysteries and Devotions of the Irish Tree Alphabet</i>
Feb. 7 2019	Hairong Huang	<i>The Taiping Rebellion: Christian or Political?</i>
Feb. 14 2019	Jordan Paper	<i>The Religion of Humans for the First 95% of Their History</i>
Feb. 28 2019	Kefen Zhou	<i>Christianity and Social Mobility in Late Qing and Republic China, 1880-1950</i>
Mar. 7 2019	IdeaFest Panel	<i>Religious Rights in Canada: New Realities after Law Society of BC v. TWU</i>
Mar. 14 2019	Rinku Lamba	<i>The Meaning(s) of Religion in India</i>
Mar. 21 2019	Liang Han	<i>The Integration of Religions in Victoria's Chinatown from 1858 to 1930</i>
Mar. 28 2019	Sara Beam	<i>How the Reformations Created Single Motherhood</i>
Apr. 4 2019	Ramesh Bairy	<i>Thinking Religion Regionally: Hindu Institutions in Contemporary South India</i>

The 2018-2019 John Albert Hall Lectures

Scott Dolff

CSRS Research Associate

The CSRS, in collaboration with the John Albert Hall Trust and the Anglican Diocese of BC, will host two major public events in the coming academic year.

The first, a panel discussion on “Gender, Justice and the Church,” will take place on **November 29th, 2018**, at UVic in MacLaurin A144. The three panelists, Gina Messina, Cheri DiNovo and Jennifer Henry, are long time advocates of social justice in the church and society. The event will be moderated by Michelle Slater, Lead Minister at Oak Bay United.



Gina Messina (www.ginamessina.com) is a feminist scholar, Roman Catholic theologian, public intellectual and activist from California. She is associate professor of religion at Ursuline College and author of *Rape Culture and Spiritual Violence: Religion, Testimony and Visions of Healing* (2015) and *Jesus in the White House* (2018). She has done extensive work at the intersection of gender, religion and politics and is the co-founder of [Feminism and Religion](#), an online project “exploring the F-word in religion and the intersection between scholarship, activism and community.”



Cheri DiNovo (www.cheridinovo.ca) is an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada, former member of the Ontario Legislature and author of the award-winning *Qu(e)rying Evangelism: Growing a Community from the Outside in* (2005). She officiated the first legalized same sex marriage in North America and passed private member bills that banned conversion therapy, recognized trans rights as human rights, legislated parent equality and created an annual Trans Day of Remembrance—all first of their kind laws for North America.



Jennifer Henry is an educator, activist and preacher, currently Executive Director of KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives. There she leads a 32-person staff team dedicated to Indigenous rights, gender, ecology and migrant justice and directs *Women of Courage*, a global initiative that unites women human rights defenders. An ecumenical witness at TRC national events, she serves on the Primate’s Commission on the Doctrine of Discovery, Reconciliation and Justice of the Anglican Church of Canada and has just completed a master’s thesis entitled “Contrite Hearts for Solidarity Action: Elements in Settler Ally Biblical Theology.”

The longstanding and systemic mistreatment, underpayment and sexual abuse of women has been firmly in the public spotlight this past year thanks to movements such as #MeToo and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). But what is the view from within Christian churches and para-church organizations? How have Christian communities wrestled with these issues? Have there been gains in equality, empowerment and safety for women in Christian institutions? Come hear these experienced “insiders” reflect on the struggle for justice in church and society.



The second John Albert Hall Lecture will feature Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and NY Times best-selling author, **Christopher Hedges**.

Hedges, one of North America’s most prominent public intellectuals, will comment on the current state of religion and politics in the US in his free public lecture, “Christian Fascism and the Rise of Donald Trump.” The talk will take place at UVic on **January 17th, 2019**, in Hickman 105. Hedges’ perspective is shaped by decades of experience as a foreign correspondent in war-affected Central American and Middle-Eastern countries, ordination to social work and ministry in US prisons and critical engagement as an adjunct professor at some of North America’s most renowned universities. His latest book, *America: A Farewell Tour*, is due out in August, 2018.



University
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Centre for Studies
in Religion & Society

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Photo: John Sakaluk

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GIVING TO THE CSRS

The Centre for Studies in Religion and Society has, from the outset, been supported by the generosity of individuals and groups. Through their charitable giving, our donors help young scholars achieve their life goals, help create a productive intellectual home for established scholars from UVic and all over the world, help create venues for public dialogue towards greater critical understanding of the role of religion in society and assist in the creation of scholarly publications that inform public policy. Any and all donations are appreciated. Those interested in making a donation can visit <https://extrweb.uvic.ca/centre-for-studies-in-religion-and-society>.

For many people, a charitable bequest directed to the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society is a realistic option for contributing to the success of the centre. Given though your will, a bequest can include gifts of cash, real estate, art work, or other property. You can also designate the centre as the beneficiary of your RRSP, RRIF, or insurance policy and there can be significant tax advantages for your estate. To discuss how you could leave your mark for future generations, please contact Chrystal Phan, Development Officer, at 250-853-3893 or at humsdev@uvic.ca for a confidential conversation.

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