

CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN RELIGION & SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 33 | 2024-2025

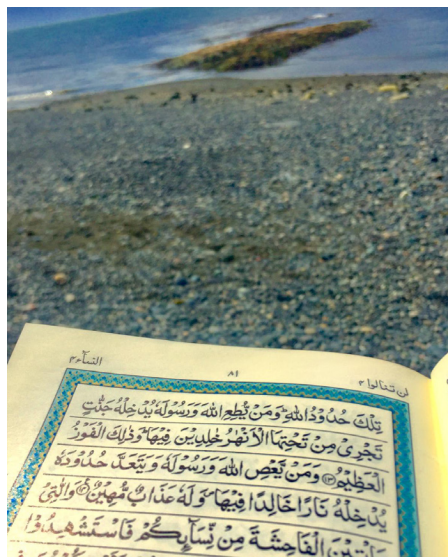
Belief and Belonging among Muslims in British Columbia

Zaheera Jinnah
Faculty Fellow

Muslims have been in Canada since at least 1854. Today, Islam is the second largest religion in Canada, and the fastest growing faith in the country. The demographic and spiritual backgrounds of Muslims are diverse, and their experiences on Turtle Island are nuanced and fluid.

Over the last decade, my work has traced how forms of migration and border control have politicized identities, creating new categories of who belongs and under what conditions. At the same time, I have been immersed in exploring the making and remaking of urban social communities on the 'margins', exploring how they grow and adapt in response to multiple and intersecting forms of precarity.

Working within Muslim communities and beyond, the primary aim of my project is to better understand the nuanced and fluid experiences of Muslims, and explore what it means to believe and belong in British Columbia. Using a land-based approach that nurtures relationality with people and places, and relying on available census and other datasets, as well as community reports and literature, this project will map out the demographic statistics of Muslims and their experiences as citizens, sojourners, and



Copy of the Qu'ran at Dallas Road beach in Victoria, BC.

immigrants in Canada and, in particular, in BC, to help identify and inform further research.

Across Europe and North America, immigrants of colour and Muslims, both citizens and newcomers, are considered a threat to national identity and security, and consistently othered through practices and policies that exclude and undermine their identities. In Canada, Muslims face pervasive forms of violent and everyday Islamophobia. Yet Muslim communities are thriving in big cities and small towns across the country. In B.C, Muslims live within and between a secular and liberal political context, and

deeply spiritual Indigenous communities. Nestled in this unique space, they are making community in ways that can challenge how we think about faith and identity today.

Borders, Boundaries, Frontiers and Borderlands in the Torah and Talmud

Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly
Faculty Fellow

In the Western World we have been associating territory with borders since the Peace of Westphalia in the 17th century, whereby territory is a 'technology' of power (Elden, 2013). In *The Birth of Territory*, Elden argues that it took centuries to constitute our contemporary form of territoriality. Interestingly, this particular form is nearly always understood as being primarily political and violent; indeed, it assumes sovereignty (the exercise of violence on people and territory), delineation and non-ingérence, and effective administrative control of the land and of the population over time. As the Correlate of Wars project (Joel Singer, 1979) demonstrates, with 800 wars documented since the beginning of the 19th century, this is rather complex.

For the last 20 years I have studied borders, and their role in the ways political entities, such as modern states, have asserted their power over territory. While at CSRS, I want to explore whether there are other rationales and ways of thinking about the relationship humans (people and communities) have with territory. In particular, how Jewish people, and how Rabbis specifically, understand borders in the daily activities of their people. At the core of my interest is research on Talmudic understandings of what borders (*G'vul* in Hebrew) are, and how borders and boundaries manifest themselves from the perspectives of Rabbinic discussions.

This is largely understudied. In the anglophone, French or Spanish languages too few social sciences and humanities scholars have spent time reading Talmud or Torah to understand 'borders' from the perspective of Rabbis. Yet, for instance, Talmudic Shabbat's laws in *Tractate Eiruv*, discuss territory, borders and prohibitions. For instance, there are labor prohibitions, specifically the act of *transferring an object from one domain to another*.

[CONTINUED ON P. 5]



Police at a mosque in BC.

CSRS UPDATES



Message from the Director

Paul Bramadat

Since my arrival in 2008, my annual newsletter columns have followed a certain pattern. I want to approach this newsletter a little differently, since my third term ends at the end of June, 2025.

I still hope readers will look at the last few pages of the newsletter to see how impressive and diverse our incoming group of fellows is. And you'll see an account of our major events, rendered beautifully by my friend and colleague Scott Dolff, who shepherds the newsletter (and so many other things).

Since this year is the culmination of my time as director, I worked with my friend and collaborator, Rachel Brown, to plan events and invite speakers that address some of the most interesting issues in the academic study of religion. For example, we will explore the challenge of orientalism (our We Should Know Better events); the ways we misunderstand religion by focusing on identity rather than life-ways (our Lansdowne lecture); the ways religious communities respond to environmental and urban affordability crises (our John Albert Hall event); and the ways end of life care is impacted by the rapidly growing numbers of people who are of no fixed religious address (our NonReligion in a Complex Future event). This year of programming brings to campus some of my favourite scholars, scholar-practitioners, and friends, from around the world. You are in for

a treat.

Universities often unintentionally ask us to instrumentalize our relationships and to be oriented toward a single objective: *more* (publications, presentations, donations, awards, committees, students, grants, notoriety, etc.). We do *more* quite well at the Centre, but with the help of our indefatigable assistant, Noriko Prezeau, we prioritize daily face-to-face engagements in which people are encouraged to bring their whole selves into “coffee talks” in our library, the hallways of Sedgewick, our public lectures, our specialist workshops, and to take what they learn beyond the ring road. This has enabled us to foster some superb research, and a great many enduring friendships. I realize I keep referring to friends. That is neither accidental nor incidental.

The broader spectrum of interactions we encourage is time-consuming and energy-intensive, and one learns things about people one never thought one would learn. Sometimes—rarely—it does not work, but that is an exception to the rule.

Generally it does work, and people see the value not just of exploring topics and methods they had previously never considered, but also of integrating data, theories, hunches, bodily experiences, and feelings that they had been almost required to bracket for decades. I am proud of the people and events we are bringing to UVic this year, and the books, collaborations, and grant applications that will be our part of the culture of *more*. But it is this ethos of openness, curiosity, respect, and—truth be told—love that I will miss the most when my term is over.

SSHRC Project Update

Paul Bramadat

I'm happy to report that my book *Yogalands: In Search of Practice on the Mat and in the World*, will be released into the wild through McGill-Queens University Press this year. This project was powered by SSHRC funding and allowed me to conduct a survey of US and Canadian practitioners, meet with teachers and students in seven cities, enrol in a teacher training program, attend dozens of classes, and conduct other forms of participant observation research.

I went into the field looking for the impact of specifically US and Canadian norms, policies,

and discourses on the postural yoga one sees in these countries. But ethnography and a wandering mind challenge all certainties. When I followed the new hunches, theories, and patterns that emerged during fieldwork, I became more interested in an oft-heard story in yogaland about the imperilled body in a world that is, more and more, running amok.

The body, and yoga spaces, become productive sites for resisting the damage inflicted on us by the societies in which we find ourselves. At the same time, I reflect on the ways postural yoga is meant to optimize wellness, promote specific beauty norms, deify certain charismatic practitioners in the past and present, and normalize claims about yoga's Indian essence.



image credit: Molly Cameron

I used the normal forms of data scholars of religion would expect, but I also used my own experience as a committed practitioner to bring into the foreground larger theoretical issues related to the risks and benefits of disenchanting the groups and experiences that inspire our research.

As readers will see [p.3], we are planning a major event for this year that extends a throughline in my *Yogalands*. That is, one often encounters in the western academy scholars of religion who know a great deal about the history of the selective (and often predatory) borrowing from Asian spiritual traditions and practices by western elites, and yet who nonetheless find themselves as devoted “scholar-practitioners”. But how does this work, and what can we learn from this about changing ideas around Asia, religion, spirituality, ownership, nationalism, gender, and the value of spiritual practices in a world in crisis?



We Should Know Better

Paul Bramadat

In the Fall (Sept 26-29, 2024), the Centre will gather a group of international scholars for a workshop we are calling “We Should Know Better”. This workshop constitutes one of the first meetings of scholar-practitioners with an interest in the tensions between their personal commitments to Asian practices (e.g. yoga, meditation, reiki, Sufism) and their awareness of the complex effects of western social and political forces (e.g., colonialism, capitalism, individualism, European patriarchal norms) on the religious traditions in question.

The workshop, subsequent book we will produce, and related public events we will host will provide a forum for western-trained scholars to reflect critically on their practice of Asian religious or spiritual traditions. It seems like decades of scholarship on cultural appropriation should reduce the enthusiasm of scholar-practitioners. But it doesn't. Why?

The keynote lecture in the workshop, “Why We Might Know Better: The Scholar Practitioner in Context”, by Spanish sociologist Mar Griera, will be featured in our public lecture series (see p.14 for the full lecture schedule).

Publications and Partnerships

Rachel Brown

We are thrilled to see the release (in 2025) of Paul's book *Yogalands*, which he describes elsewhere in this newsletter.

The second phase of the yoga project is now underway and involves a workshop

with western trained scholars who are also practitioners of various Asian spiritual practices and will result in a traditional CSRS edited volume that we will work on over the next academic year. We are just about to submit our edited volume *Opening and Closing Relations: Indigenous Spirituality in Canada*, edited by Paul Bramadat, John Borrows and David Seljak, to the University of Toronto Press and look forward to working with UTP over the coming year to bring this project to a close.

The CSRS continues to foster expansive international partnerships that result in collaborative research projects, events and publications. Paul is a co-investigator on a major project funded by the Australian Research Council on Australian Spirituality: *Wellness, Wellbeing and Risks*. As a part of this project, Paul will participate in the meetings of the International Society for the Sociology of Religion (in Lithuania) and the International Sociological Association (in Morocco) in early summer 2025. Paul also continues to collaborate with colleagues in Denmark on projects such as *Arctic Muslims and Beyond*.

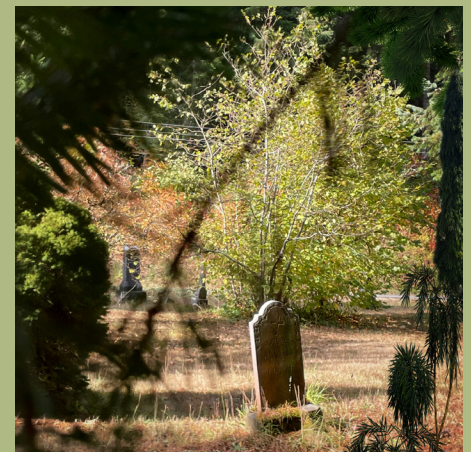
As Lori Beaman's *Nonreligion in a Complex Future* (NCF) project nears its end, we are pleased to be supporting that partnership in two ways. First, we will host the final visiting graduate student with the project, Hinna Hussain. Hinna will join us for her fellowship in February. We will also have the opportunity to host a research meeting for the NCF project at the CSRS and we are delighted to be able to facilitate this through a workshop on nonreligion and end of life care.

Finally, we are working with campus colleagues to offer several events in the

coming year. This fall, along with our colleagues in the Religion, Culture and Society program we will be hosting a Lansdowne lecture with Finnish scholar Titus Hjelm. Titus will give a talk titled “Religion and Spirituality Are Not Something We Have (Or Do Not Have), They Are Something We Do”. In the following week, with a group of colleagues from across UVic campus, we are co-hosting journalist Peter Beinart, who will preside over a series of events on the conflict in Israel-Gaza. In the Spring, we will help to host the annual MEICON conference here at UVic. We have invited Heba Mostafa, associate professor in the Dept of Art History at the University of Toronto, to give a Distinguished Lecture in Islam as the keynote address at the conference.

Nonreligion and End of Life Care

In March, we will host a workshop with our colleague Lori Beaman (U of Ottawa) as a part of the *Nonreligion in a Complex Future* project. While Christianity has historically shaped much of end of life care in the “West”, how is end of life care changing as these societies become more nonreligious and more religiously diverse? How does end of life care reflect religious social change, and what might (non)religiously diverse and inclusive end of life care look like? What are the legal issues surrounding end of life care and nonreligion? Are there realities of health care that should be taken into account when considering these issues? Is there information about nonreligion that would be helpful to end of life care providers? This workshop brings together scholars from different disciplines, and end of life care practitioners, to consider these questions in an innovative format.



RESEARCH

Nii 'Ntxo'ont'm (The Ones Who Feed Us): Indigenous Teachings on Spirituality, Ecosystems, and Harvesting the Animals Who Feed Us

Spencer Greening

Indigenous Research Fellow

Indigenous peoples on the Pacific Northwest Coast have stewarded rich ecosystems for millennia guided by spiritual customs and cultural law. Colonization has largely dismantled these customs and laws, yet they play a key role in the reevaluation of human relationship with nature today. To gain insight into the reparation of human relationships with the non-human world, my research looks to revitalize and document Indigenous knowledge and the spiritual traditions surrounding sustenance food harvests of my own people, the Gitga'at First Nation of the Pacific Northwest coast. I highlight how ancestral and spiritual ways of being create reciprocal relationships with local environments through harvesting, while challenging the mainstream misconception that it is an inherently human trait to have a net-negative impact on an ecosystem.

Globally, Indigenous peoples speak to balance in both caring for and harvesting from ecosystems through sacred teachings and deep time relationships with the non-human landscape. By documenting the origin stories and cultural harvest of several unique species within Gitga'at territory—mountain goat, bears, wolves, seals, seabirds, halibut, and salmon—I can share how the eco-centricity of Indigenous ceremony, harvesting laws,



Spencer, post-hunt with his dog. Photo: Cherill Vienneau.

and stewardship play an integral role in both human and ecological thought surrounding everyday decisions from an individual to a global scale. These firsthand accounts stem from years of harvesting and being involved in traditional ceremonies with my Elders and tribal politics, portraying how Indigenous cultures have been given a socio-political and spiritual rulebook on how to live well in today's political and environmental climate. Gitga'at spiritual and ceremonial traditions of harvesting emphasize a cornerstone philosophy in Indigenous thought: the interconnectedness of all things as the basis for human engagement with the natural world. Through this deep dive into our spiritual and legal processes surrounding hunting and fishing, there are clear lessons for the journey to a more ecologically conscious society.



Spencer holding a Tsimshian halibut hook showcasing the sea lion spirit. Photo: Rachel Dickens

Introducing Kikila Perrin-- Inaugural Scales Family Fellow

Peter Scales

PhD candidate Kikila (Chris) Perrin joins the CSRS in September 2024. His project, "Learning to Listen," explores culture change by attempting to shift how settlers in lək'wəḡən and WSÁNEĆ territories—Victoria and Saanich—experience their place in the world. Kikila sees this as an inherently spiritual process. He hopes that his work can help to shift how settlers understand their position in the world "from one of dominance and disconnection to one of holistic inclusion and relationality". Kikila intends to support non-First Nations people in becoming better guests on Indigenous territory, supporting Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination in ways that are meaningful to Indigenous people. Kikila wants to examine the functional, practical realities of ceremony, and how introducing ceremony into peoples' lives creates space for spirituality.

The word "Kikila" means "kettle" in the 'Ōlelo Hawai'i language. The name was introduced to him by fluke when he was a child. Later, he used the name full-time while working with Tongan apple pickers in Aotearoa/New Zealand; now he continues to use Kikila professionally and socially at UVic. While living in Montreal, Kikila was drawn west to the warmer climate and vibrant, Indigenous leadership in West Coast activism, and he sought ways to get involved in supporting decolonization. Using the name Kikila helps him to challenge views of what a name means as a marker of identity.

During three years of working for the Nature Conservancy of Canada ("the country's unifying force for nature, working to deliver large-scale, permanent land conservation") as a fundraiser, Kikila was inspired to start a doctoral degree. While at the CSRS, he will continue attempting to support Indigenous resurgence. At the same time, Kikila writes of a hope that his experiences "might be able to support my settler community in learning how to listen to Indigenous guidance, and to learn how to show up in support of Indigenous peoples in ways that are meaningful not to the Indigenous peoples inviting us settlers into relationships with, and not our careers, or the reputation of the organizations we work for". Kikila is the first recipient of the Scales Family Fellowship, which supports research in topics related to religion and spirituality in British Columbia.

[CONTINUED FROM P.1]



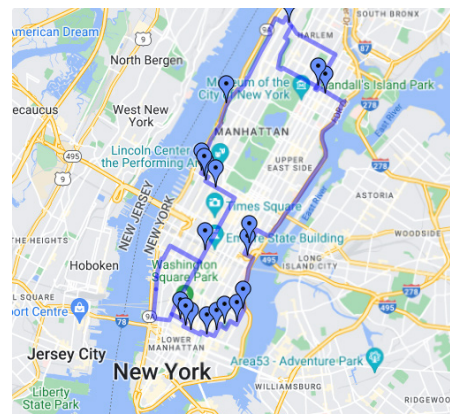
Erez Crossing, separating Israel and Gaza.

In *Tractate Eirubin* the act of carrying across three domains, the public, the private, and the Karmelit (a domain that is neither public nor private) is codified. There is also an 'exempt domain'. The Torah sets the private and public domains, and Rabbinic law set Karmelit. All are defined with references to spaces and activities or functions that condition life, and a sense that *specific activities can or cannot be carried out during Shabbat*.

Today those laws expand across urban neighborhoods and entire cities to create private spaces called Eruv, for instance Manhattan in New York City (US), Strasbourg (France), or Jerusalem (Israel) have such Metchitza (Halachik wall/border). These include or exclude specific areas and expand or limit specific activities or functions, raising the question of their relevance for larger spaces both conceptually and theoretically.

In Social Science, scholars have long agreed that the nature of the modern state system started with Hugo Grotius's suggestion in 1625 (*The Rights of War and Peace*) that foes could be at peace in a system that recognised both sovereignty and borders by treaty. Recently, scholars have focused on borders as *meaning and symbols, nations and their cultures, or controlling flows, mobility, and collecting taxes*. Most of those remain focused on the role of the State to promote territory as a container, yet literatures exploring colonial

and orientalist critics or sovereign claims, or globalizing markets, or transnational mobilities, all while focusing on *bordering functions* provide empirical and conceptual challenges, which I hope Rabbinic debates will further enhance.



Manhattan Eruv on [Google Maps](#).

Faith and Finance: Aligning Beliefs and Profits

Mohammad Ashraful Mobin
Visiting Research Fellow

In our modern world, money often holds a place of immense importance, sometimes seen as a deity itself. However, for many individuals, money serves a higher purpose, guided by the principles and instructions of their faith. Various major religions provide specific guidelines and restrictions on financial dealings. For instance, Islam, like some other religions, prohibits usury (*riba*), speculation (*gharar*), and gambling (*maysir*). Beyond theory, faith-based financial markets exist, catering to those who wish to align their financial practices with their religious beliefs.

Designing financial products that are free from usury is often more costly and can sometimes offer lower profits compared to conventional one. When the returns are equal, a person of faith is likely to choose the faith-based option. But what happens when the faith-based product offers comparatively lower profit? How does a faithful individual navigate their financial decisions in such scenarios?



There arises the question of how long a person can sustain choosing a lower return, faith-based financial instrument. Is there a threshold beyond which they might reconsider? Or is there a point of necessity, known in Islamic terms as "darurah," where the limitations of faith-based financial choices are tested?

We can call this dynamic "the financial cost of faith-based alternatives". Understanding the motivations behind these choices reveals a deep commitment to faith and principles that transcends mere financial gain. It highlights a fascinating aspect of human behavior where spiritual and ethical considerations take precedence over material benefit.

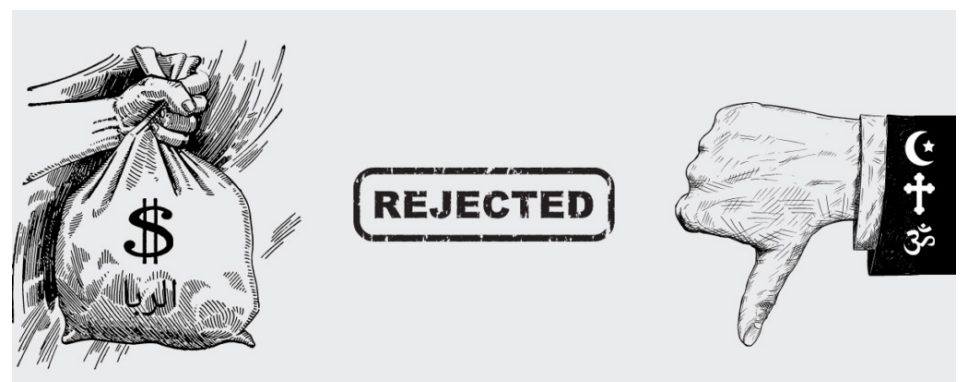


Image credit: Khalid Bin Mohd Fadzillah, Ethis.

RESEARCH



Charles I in Three Positions (1635-6). Anthony van Dyck. Royal Collection. Wikimedia Commons.

The Literature of 'Anglican' Survivalism (1642-1660)

Gary Kuchar
Faculty Fellow

In 1642 the English parliament went to war with King Charles I in an effort to place the Crown under greater constitutional restraint, beginning what is now known as the British Civil Wars. After the breakout of hostilities, parliament initiated a series of sweeping religious reforms, disestablishing the Church of England as it had been known since the Elizabethan Settlement (1559-1571). This involved prohibiting the Book of Common Prayer (the church's liturgical manual for annual worship), reshaping the church's episcopal governance structures, and further ridding the church of practices perceived as Roman Catholic, particularly those associated with the church's two main sacraments: baptism and the eucharist. The overall intent of these reforms was to make the national church more thoroughly protestant, even puritan in orientation, thereby completing the reformation processes initiated in the sixteenth century. In pursuing this agenda, parliament sought to further transform national, parish, and personal identity, altering, in effect, how and in what context, one develops a relationship with God and his people.

In the wake of the military and legislative events unfolding in the early 1640s, many loyal to the pre-civil war Church of England began an activist campaign to sustain the old order, seeking to keep the practices and

values of the Book of Common Prayer and its associated traditions alive after proscription. Such loyalist resistance involved not only the relatively widespread practice of clandestine services, but also the circulation of a wide range of devotional, theological, and literary works supportive of the proscribed church. My current research primarily focuses on the role that poetry played in this broader cultural movement, including, for example, how poets turned to George Herbert's *The Temple* (1633) as a major resource for sustaining spiritual health and loyalist resistance in a time of civil war. One such writer is the Church of England minister Joseph Beaumont (1616-1699), who was exiled from Peterhouse College, Cambridge, on parliamentary

charges of religious malpractice. After his expulsion, Beaumont composed a large body of verse in which he helped shape the practices and attitudes characteristic of war-time Episcopalians. No less interestingly, Beaumont's lyric poetry shows him struggling with an inordinate same-sex affection for another man, a desire that he knew only too well would play straight into the hands of puritans who routinely associated loyalists like him, as they did Catholics, with sodomy and sodomites. To study his work and the broader context in which he wrote is to study how a once dominant cultural movement sustained its discipline and sense of identity at a time when it might easily have slipped into extinction, only to return and become dominant once more.

An Intellectual History of Pleasure in Sanskrit Literature

Shubham Arora
Graduate Fellow

My research traces the intellectual history of pleasure (*kāma*) as found in a tradition of theoretical texts on erotics (*kāmasāstra*) written in Sanskrit between 300 CE and 1300 CE. In premodern Sanskrit intellectual culture, the discipline of erotics (*kāmasāstra*) is an ideological and authoritative system (*śāstra*) that treats sexual-erotic desire (*kāma*) as one branch of intellectual pursuit alongside others such as aesthetics, ethics, and politics. More generally, the genre codifies rules, taxonomizes sexuality, and prescribes a wide



Shubham explaining erotic sculptures on the external wall of the Vishvanatha temple of the western group of Khajuraho monuments in Madhya Pradesh, India during a trip in 2022.



Kāmadeva, the green-complexioned god of desire, who kneels on his parrot-drawn chariot while aiming his flowery arrow of love. Source: Wikipedia.

range of affective practices for the pursuit of sexual pleasure, as well as the cultivation of bodily sensibilities, artistic and aesthetic refinements, and social sophistication.

Kāma is not a static, monolithic human life goal, unchanged in form or substance since the post-vedic period. Rather, it is a contested idea that bears a range of meanings: wish, desire, longing, love, affection, erotics, sensual pleasure, and sexual delight. No one universal definition can be generalized in the evolving tradition. Scholars have detailed the development of *kāma* as an idea and accounted for how it changed historically. The field of *kāma* studies has also taken a serious interest in philology, social and cultural histories, and critical studies.

My research contributes to this ongoing research in the intellectual history of South Asia by mapping out centuries of intertextual dialogues among Sanskrit theorists on the topic of pleasure. To this end, I examine five *kāmaśāstra* texts: the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsyāyana, the *Nāgarasarvasva* of Padmaśrī, the *Ratirahasya* of Kokkoka, the *Śṛṅgārarasaprabandhadīpikā* of Kumāra Harihara, and Yaśodhara's *Jayamaṅgalā*, a Sanskrit commentary on the *Kāmasūtra*. I seek to listen to these Sanskrit theorists on their own terms—how and why they theorized *kāma* the way they did. Once we have a better understanding of how and why *kāma* intellectuals wrote what they wrote, we can ask better questions of how the

understanding of pleasure, as a multi-layered domain of cultural activity, has impacted, and itself been impacted by, developments in the social, political, and religious spheres in South Asia, from its earliest historical phases until the present day.



An artistically talented woman (*citrīṇī*), one of the four types of women delineated in the *Ratirahasya*. Image from an illustrated manuscript copy of the *Anaṅgaraṅga* (c. 16th century CE) at Weston Library, Oxford. Source: This picture was taken by Shubham in November 2019.

Roots and Routes: What Is Lost Through Social Mobility?

Holly Loveday
Graduate Fellow

The Irish government established the *Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation* in 2015. By 2021, the investigation had documented the widespread abuses committed in

institutional homes during the 20th century. Most were run by Catholic nuns. The homes, which housed girls as young as twelve to women in their forties, were designed to hide and punish unwed mothers. All were folded into paternalistic, theocratic state care, where they performed unpaid domestic labor to work off their debt.

My grandfather was born in one such Mother and Baby home. Later raised by his aunt in rural County Tipperary, he lived adjacent to his birth mother but at arm's length. Literally a few fields over. He saw his family frequently but as cousins rather than siblings. Respectability in society took priority over an inclusive kinship structure. When he emigrated to the East End of London he sought social acceptance of a different kind, opportunity for financial security and a better quality of life.

Mother and Baby homes in Ireland are one institutional example of fractured kinship structures. Economic immigration is another. My grandfather's birth circumstances and subsequent emigration are instances of striving for greater capital, whether financial or social. Ireland has a long, rich history of emigrating for 'something better'. I want to understand the reverberating emotional and psychological effects of this upward search across generations, inclusive of my own experience. My project seeks to explore the forms of cultural knowledge, histories and relationships that have been severed—sometimes with love, other times with shame—in the name of upward mobility. It asks how to handle the shame of coming home, of wanting to mend those kinship structures, when success is measured in going away. These questions will guide my exploration through a series of personal essays and poems.



The site of a former Mother and Baby home in Tuam, county Galway, Ireland (AugusteBlanqui, Wikimedia Commons).



A Bodhisattva appearing as a joyful Devi. *Deva Offering Flowers* by Liu Songnian (1174–1224), Collection of National Taipei Museum, Taipei. Low-Level Image (1 million pixels).

Emotion and Feminism in the Buddhist Philosophy of Consciousness-only

Jingjing Li

Visiting Research Fellow

In popular culture, Buddhism is portrayed as the teaching about reaching internal serenity and reducing external concerns. Should this be the case, an ideal Buddhist practitioner would have no explicit emotion in their aspiration to transcend this-worldly affairs. Buddhist art, narratives, and doctrines challenge this popular view. Indeed, emotions, such as anger, shame, fear, remorse, and joy constitute crucial moments in Buddhist training. As advocated by proponents of socially engaged Buddhism, through their training, practitioners shall concurrently cultivate their inner minds of virtue and ameliorate their shared community.

While Buddhist moral psychologists have detailed the role of emotion in inner cultivation, the social and interpersonal aspects of emotion remain understudied. Filling this lacuna, my project furthers the philosophical framework of socially engaged Buddhism. To do so, I turn to the previously overlooked Buddhist school of Consciousness-only. This project, funded by NWO's VENI grant, is an integral part of my effort to draw from the resources of this school to develop a new version of Buddhist feminism.

I argue for perceiving emotion as an affective experience that is not only contextualized in a personal life story but also able to make this story coherent at an interpersonal level. Emotions, which arise from a context of personal and interpersonal experience, are never inherently positive or negative. If emotion is habitually contextualized in a shared mindset of ignorance to perpetuate exclusion, it can also be attentively recontextualized through a collaborative effort. To illustrate such recontextualization, I zoom in on narratives about Bodhisattvas, the advanced practitioners who postpone their own awakening to guide others on the right path. Interpreting these Bodhisattva as feminist killjoys, I explore how to skillfully enact emotion to promote inclusion and emancipation.

Called to the Bar: Religious Lawyering in the Secular Practice of Law

Paige Thombs
Graduate Fellow

My research explores how religious identity shapes legal practice among those practicing Canadian Common Law. I am most curious about the ways in which religious belonging both compliments and conflicts with legal practice. What I have learned so far, from the perspective of interviewees, is that faith and law work together far more than they work apart.

Why then, when I tell people about my

research, do they respond with confusion and even contempt more often than curiosity? People generally react in one of two ways: "Religious lawyers? Is that even a thing?" or "No! If you can't separate the two, then you have no business being a lawyer". The latter comment has come from both lawyers and people who are themselves religious. So, what is it about law and religion that so many imagine to be worlds apart? When I posed this question at a recent talk, one audience member replied with, "Because law is science and religion is magical thinking!" (In my opinion, he gave too little credit to religious belief and too much credit to law). However, in our increasingly secular world (yes, yes—we could debate the merits of that statement), religious belief has no space in the public sphere. This seems to be particularly felt when it comes to the practice of law. Perhaps a part of this is because we often see religion as working against liberal democratic values. I, too, have sometimes fallen prey to that way of thinking. What my



research indicates, however, is that religious lawyers find all kinds of ways to braid the two identities together in ways that work towards the public good.

Perhaps the most rewarding part of my research has been the number of people that have come forward to speak to me about their experience of balancing faith and law, something that many have told me they dare not speak about with other lawyers. I am thrilled to be able to provide a platform for them, and I hope that my work shifts the way we think about religious lawyers.

Reposturing the Self: Christianity and Yoga in British Columbia

Leah Mernaugh Bergman
Graduate Fellow

My research explores the innovative and sometimes controversial intersections of Christianity and yoga in British Columbia. At first glance, a fusion of these traditions is anything but intuitive. Christianity in North America—and especially evangelical Christianity—is known for its commitment to religious exclusivity, and yoga’s roots are deeply entangled with Hinduism. Many churches and Christian leaders have been



A cross and several yoga mats lean against a tree, setting the scene for an outdoor Christian Yoga class.

warning adherents about the dangers of yoga and other “New Age” practices for the past half century. How, then, can we account for this hybrid spiritual practices that mixes yogic postures, philosophies, and literature with Christian prayer, devotion, and worship?

An anthropologist by training, I approach this project from an ethnographic lens. My research has entailed participating in church-affiliated and church-adjacent yoga



A Christian Yoga practitioner stretches on a yoga mat decorated with a Bible verse. Photos by Leah Mernaugh Bergman.

classes, conducting interviews with yoga teachers and students in British Columbia who self-identify as Christian, and attending workshops and teacher training sessions offered by Christian yoga organizations. Most of my participants are active Christians in various Protestant denominations, while some have discarded a previous Christian identity in favor of other spiritual worldviews. All have had to navigate their religious and spiritual commitments in how they combine Christian and yogic practices and beliefs. Along the way, both their Christianity and their yoga have transformed one another in meaningful and interesting ways.

This project raises several questions. First, I want to understand how Christianity and yoga inform and transform one another for practitioners who sit at their crossroads. This includes, on the one hand, how Christians might adapt their yoga practice, and, on the other hand, how the influence of yoga might reshape practitioners’ understanding of Christianity. Second, I am interested in denominational differences, specifically how evangelical Christians might navigate yoga differently given their generally more exclusivist religious commitments. Ultimately, I hope the case study of Christian yoga will bring more insight into how mainstream religions like Christianity in North America interact with the broader spiritual marketplace that surrounds them.

AI Buddha?

Martin Adam
Guest Lecturer—UVic Faculty

The notion that machines might eventually attain a degree of complexity sufficient to qualify as conscious, and therefore possibly virtuous, turns on maintaining a conception of consciousness that does not require the presence of life *per se*. Interestingly, at least one early Buddhist text would seem to rule out such a possibility. Although operating with a very different set of premodern concerns, the Theravāda commentary *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* (6-8th century CE), outlines a conception of consciousness that precludes the possibility of its occurrence in a non-living environment. My present research is centered on Buddhist understandings of consciousness and virtue in relation to some of the claims presently being made for artificial intelligence, including those emanating from within contemporary Buddhist communities.



RESEARCH

Inking Diasporic Stories

Jacob Maddison
CSRS Artist-in-Residence

My art delves into the complexities within the Jewish community and its interaction with broader society, focusing on the diverse expressions of Jewish identity and spirituality. At the heart of this exploration lies a profound tension, notably embodied by two contrasting Eurocentric paradigms: Zionism, advocating for Jewish existence through an ethno-nationalist lens primarily centred on Palestine, and Doykayt, an Ashkenazi concept that emphasizes the intrinsic value of being present in one's current place, regardless of geographical location.

Doykayt, derived from the Yiddish word 'do,' meaning 'here,' encapsulates a deeply rooted connection to the land we inhabit, emphasizing the continuity of Jewish mysticism and traditions across diasporic landscapes. This philosophy underlines the significance of carrying our spiritual and cultural heritage with us, enriching our experiences in various global contexts.

In my project, I embark on a journey aimed at reclaiming the essence of my Jewish ancestors. This endeavour is not only a personal exploration but also a cultural excavation, seeking to breathe life into the silent voices of those who came before me. Through a delicate fusion of Jewish mysticism and embodied fiction, I hope to transform the mere names on historical documents into vibrant narratives of resilience, echoing through the corridors of time.



Scan of a Tallit - Gift 2001



Multiple exposure self portrait, John's Mamiya Sekor 35mm, Ilford fp4

Central to the project is the utilization of sacred objects as the foundation for printmaking. In a quest to root these artifacts in the soil of my diaspora home, I delve into the art of foraging for natural pigments, and sourcing minerals and plants indigenous to the land. The process of ink-making becomes a ritualistic endeavour, imbuing each mark with the sacred resonance of our shared heritage. Alongside these artifact-based practices, I intend to continue my research in making movable wood type to print snippets of poetry and prose, in English and Yiddish, using the facilities of the library to create the corresponding Roman and Hebrew typefaces.

In the sacred space of Doykayt, I find solace in the interconnectedness of all things, transcending the constraints of time and space to embrace a sense of belonging that spans generations.

On Teaching: A Conversation with Rebekka King

Rachel Brown
CSRS Program and Research Coordinator

Academic conferences are funny places. We attend them for various reasons, whether it is to get our work out there and receive feedback from respected colleagues, to hear about new and exciting research in the field, or simply to spend time with our academic besties. Many years ago, after arriving in Ontario for one such conference, I

hopped into the back of a car, with our very own Director Paul Bramadat sitting in the passenger's seat, driven by a brilliant young Canadian Religious Studies scholar named Rebekka King. We started chatting about our work, teaching, being young scholars in the field with academic giants as supervisors, and the conversation has never stopped. What follows is a snippet of one such conversation.

Rebekka, can you tell our CSRS community a bit about yourself and your work?

I am a professor of Religious Studies at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) and a Faculty Fellow at the MTSU Honors College. With a background in cultural anthropology, my research primarily explores Christian hybridity and how contemporary believers engage with religious texts. My first book, *The New Heretics* (NYU Press 2023), delves into the experiences of Christians who identify simultaneously as atheists or agnostics, often arriving at these views through biblical interpretation. During my time at the Centre, I will be focusing on my next project, which investigates contemporary receptions of the Book of Enoch.

We've been reflecting together lately about the value of teaching religious studies in a world that is anything but alright. What do scholars of religion have to think about when they enter the classroom these days?

Given the challenges of climate change, rising right-wing fascism, enduring impacts of a global pandemic, economic pressures such as inflation and increasing debt, and pervasive

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

mental health issues and social alienation, one might ask: Is anyone truly alright? Religious studies provides a distinctive space in academia, encouraging what we call a



Rebekka King

‘hermeneutic of suspicion.’ This approach not only allows us to question the notion of being ‘alright’ and explore its meanings but also prompts us to critically examine the implications of such questions. It pushes us to consider where these questions originate, who benefits from them, and who might be marginalized by the discourse they create. In the classroom, this means engaging students in discussions that are deeply reflective of the current socio-political landscape and encouraging them to think critically about the layers of complexity in every issue.

You’ve been teaching in Tennessee for ten years now. What has teaching RS in that context revealed to you about our field? How might that be different from experiences in Canadian classrooms?

One significant difference is the prevalent assumption that studying religion is inherently valuable. This assumption spares me the effort of having to convince students, administration, or community members of the importance of religion. However, exploring the diverse reasons why people believe religion matters is fascinating.

When I was hired to help start a religious studies program at MTSU, we were entering an era where many humanities and social science disciplines were concerned to demonstrate their relevance. It was highly rewarding to have the freedom to imagine

what religious studies could be in our context. We weren’t constrained by legacy course requirements or traditional approaches, which gave us the liberty to innovate and tailor our curriculum to our students’ needs.

Many of our students are the first in their families to attend university, face financial challenges, and have overcome significant obstacles to pursue higher education. Their concerns, and often those of their families, about post-graduation opportunities, influenced our curriculum design. Rather than adopting a world religions model or methodology model, we focused on developing key competencies categorized into three areas: description, analysis, and critique. These skills are not only central to the academic study of religion but are also transferable to various future educational pursuits, career paths, and roles within the community.

When reflecting on your research, how do the kinds of projects that you work on, land in the classroom? Do they?

My students are the best humans! I can’t imagine not sharing my work with them. I often integrate a draft of an article I’m working on into my upper-level courses. As you know, sharing your work in progress is an act of vulnerability. I believe it’s important for faculty to engage in this way, creating a less one-sided dynamic in terms of feedback and critique.

This past year, I was part of a memorable classroom experience involving a chapter on deconversion from my book. As part of a book review assignment, each student read an ethnography and selected one chapter to assign to their peers. That student then leads the class through a conversation about the book as a whole with a discussion about the assigned chapter. I chose to sit at the back of the room, participating only when directly addressed

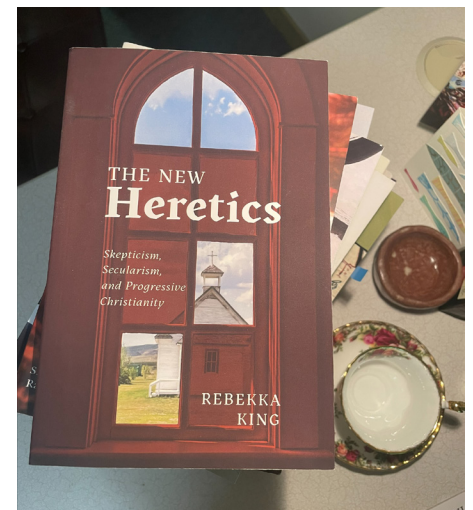
It was a really powerful experience for a couple of reasons. They selected a chapter I wouldn’t have thought to assign, and it led to an incredibly intimate conversation among the students. The discussion centered on loss of faith narratives, prompting many students to describe and analyze their own experiences with religious doubt or crises of faith. The level of maturity and compassion they exhibited towards each other was profound. While I’d love to take credit, it was truly their achievement. This experience, among countless others, has taught me a

great deal about empathy and kindness from this generation of students.

What are you most looking forward to about your time as a visiting research fellow at the CSRS?

When I think about my upcoming fellowship at CSRS, two things come to mind. First, I’m particularly excited to launch my new research project, which I’ll be discussing publicly for the first time during the CSRS lecture series. The ‘Scholars in the Square’ format is thrilling—it transforms traditional academic lectures into dynamic, intimate dialogues. I can’t wait to dive into these conversations, both my own and those in the entire fall lineup!

Second, I’m actively involved in a project at MTSU aimed at making our university the most community-engaged in the state. This



Rachel’s desktop, on any given day.

initiative includes developing resources for faculty and staff engaged in community-based teaching and research and revising our tenure and promotion guidelines to better recognize these efforts. The competitive nature of obtaining a sabbatical at my university—only seven or eight grants are awarded annually—meant that emphasizing the CSRS’s renowned community-engaged programming was crucial in securing my application.

I invite members of the CSRS and participants in its programs to connect with me and share your experiences with the Centre. Your insights will be invaluable as I seek to adapt innovative ideas from the CSRS for our community engagement efforts at MTSU.

2024-25 FELLOWS

REV. HEATHER J. LINDSTEDT & DR. BRIAN A. POLLICK GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOW



Holly Loveday

(University of Victoria)

*Where Faith, Kinship Structures,
and Social Mobility Meet*

IAN H. STEWART GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWS



Shubham Arora

(University of British Columbia)

*An Intellectual History of Pleasure
(kāma) in Sanskrit literature,
300–1300 CE*



Hinna Hussain

(University of Ottawa)

*Social Integration as an Aspect
of Muslim Participation in
Environmental Issues*



Paige Thombs

(University of Victoria)

*Religious Lawyers in the Secular
Practice of Canadian Law*

CSRS GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWS



Leah Mernaugh Bergman

(University of Victoria)

*Yoga and Christianity: A Stretch, or
a Perfect Match?*



Aminat Muibi

(University of Victoria)

*The Role of Rituals in Meaning
Creation with Audiences in
Gambling Organizations*

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE



Jacob Maddison

*Sacred Ink: Weaving Diasporic
Stories Through Print*



Terry Marner

*Searching for Home-Finding
Fingerposts in Neuroscience*

WINNIFRED LONSDALE GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOW



Laura Gillis

(University of Victoria)

*The Emissaries of Divine Light in the
Twentieth Century*

SCALES FAMILY FELLOW



Kikila (Chris) Perrin

(University of Victoria)

*Learning to Listen: Cultivating
Settler Support for Resurgence*

FACULTY FELLOWS



Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly

(University of Victoria)

*Borders, Boundaries, Frontiers
and Borderlands in the Torah and
Talmud*



Zaheera Jinnah

(University of Victoria)

*Believing and Belonging in
British Columbia: Sketching the
Demographics and Experiences of
B.C. Muslims*



Gary Kuchar

(University of Victoria)

*Defiant Obedience: The Literature
of Anglican Survivalism (1642-
1660)*

VISITING RESEARCH FELLOWS



Mohammad Badamchi

(Institute for Cultural, Social and
Civilizational Studies, Tehran)

Hijab as Patriarchal Technology



Dietrich Jung

(University of Southern Denmark)

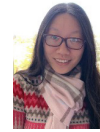
*The Arctic Muslim. Islamic
Traditions and Modern Subjectivity
in the Western North*



Rebekka King

(Middle Tennessee State University)

*Re-Excavating Enoch:
Contemporary Receptions of an
Ancient Text*



Jingjing Li

(Leiden University)

*Emotion and Feminism in
the Buddhist Philosophy of
Consciousness-only*



Mohammad Ashraf Mobin

(Ifintell Business Intelligence)

*Exploring Religious Perspectives on
Alternative Monetary Systems*



Daniel Orogun

(University of Pretoria)

*Religion, Spirituality and Healthcare:
African and North American
Perspectives*



Braden Russell

(University of British Columbia)

*Kinship and Enoughness in Queer
Jewish Cultural Production in
Germany*

HAROLD COWARD INDIA RESEARCH FELLOW



Zohra Batul

*Gender and Religion in Kashmir's
Contentious Politics: The Spatial
Significance of Sacred-Sites*

COMMUNITY SABBATICANT FELLOWS



Patricia Lane

*The Climate Crises and Faith
Communities*



Ashley Moran

*The Spiritual Health Provider's Role
in Ethical Clinical Decision Making
in Palliative Care*



Folawiyi Kareem Olajoku

*The Role of Religious Institutions
in the Selection Process of Political
Leadership*

2024-25 FELLOWS

ASSOCIATE FELLOWS



Angela Andersen

Islamic Architectures: Muslim Spaces of Prayer, Ceremony and Learning Beyond the Mosque



Jim Cohn

Deals with the Devil: The Faust Theme in Marlowe, Goethe, and Mann



Harold Coward

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



Michel Desjardins

Food: Connector to People's Spiritual Worlds



Erica Dodd

Treasures of the Early Christian Church



Robert Florida

Ethical Issues in Modern Buddhism



Nicola Hayward

The Reception of New Testament Stories in Late Antique and Renaissance Art



Victor Hori

The Modernization of Buddhism in Global Perspective



Ambreen Hussaini

Art of Qur'anic Calligraphy and Material Culture: Investigating the Use of the Qur'anic Text in Contemporary Pakistan



Lesley Jessop

Courtyard Spaces around the Cathedral of Notre Dame in the Middle Ages



Françoise Keating

Innovative Aesthetics and "Unusual Christianity": The Re-Imagined Society of King René d'Anjou.



Todd Klaiman

Taiwanese Soft Power During the Vietnam War



Tim Knowlton

The Languages of Ritual Healing in Indigenous Mesoamerica



Francis Landy

Utopia, Catastrophe, and Poetry in Isaiah



Estraven Lupino-Smith

Landscape Liturgy: Weaving as Land-Based Ritual



Robin Mazumder

How the Urban Landscape influences Both Individual and Collective Psychology



Lytton McDonnell

Tuneful Trances: Music, Mysticism and Re-enchantment in Modern America



Graham McDonough

Catholic Schooling and Religious Pluralism



Catherine Nutting

Rubens and the Stoic Baroque: Stoic Ethics, Rhetoric, and Natural Philosophy in Rubens's Style



Brian Pollick

Art and Moral Identity in the Global Middle Ages



Justine Semmens

Dangerous Liaisons: Sex Crimes and the Courts in Catholic Reformation France, 1500-1700



Devyani Tewari

The 'Other' in the Matrimonial Context: Women with Invisible Disabilities in India



Reeta Tremblay

Missionaries, Colonial Imageries and Modern Kashmiri Muslim Identity



Carolyn Whitney-Brown

Hopeful Actions: a Graphic and Narrative Exploration



Grace Wong Sneddon

Chinese Canadian Spirituality in the 21st Century



Katherine Young

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



Jessica Ziakin-Cook

The Romantics are Prompting: Modern Art, Craft, and Catholicism in the Saint John's Bible



Thursday Public Lecture Series

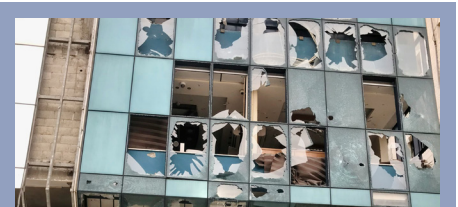
The CSRS lecture series features our fellows and special guests in our exciting new Scholars in the Square format (see p.3). They are held from 5:00-6:00pm Pacific Time on Thursdays during the academic year, with the exception of certain special lectures (see dates below with an **asterisk*** for exceptions). For further lecture details, links and registration information, visit our website at: uvic.ca/csrs/events/.

September 12, 2024	Rebekka King	Enoch's Modern Echoes
September 19, 2024	Paige Thombs	Called to the Bar: Religious Lawyering in the Secular Practice of Law
September 26, 2024	Mar Grier	Why We Might Know Better: The Scholar Practitioner in Context
October 3, 2024	Martin Adam	AI Buddhas and Other Delusions on the Techno-Enthusiast Path to the Future
October 10, 2024	Amy Verdun and Zoey Verdun	Well-being of Bangladeshi Migrants in Italy: Religion, Economic Challenges
October 17, 2024	Jingjing Li	Emotion and Feminism in the Buddhist Philosophy of Consciousness-only
October 24, 2024	Titus Hjelm	Religion and Spirituality Are Not Something We Have (Or Do Not Have), They Are Something We Do
*October 29, 2024 (Tuesday)	Peter Beinart	Protest, US Politics, and the War in Gaza
November 7, 2024	Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly	Borders, Boundaries, and Frontiers in the Torah and Talmud
November 21, 2024	Daniel Orogun	Health Merits and Demerits of Religious Fasting
November 28, 2024	Gary Kuchar	Defiant Loyalty: The Literature of 'Anglican' Survivalism
December 5, 2024	Ashraf Mobin	Faith-Driven Economic Choices: Principles and Trade-Offs
January 9, 2025	Leah Mernaugh Bergman	Yoga and Christianity: A Stretch, or a Perfect Match?
January 16, 2025	Shubham Arora	An Intellectual History of Pleasure in Sanskrit
January 23, 2025	Holly Loveday	Family Breaking or Building: The Catholic Church in Ireland
January 30, 2025	Spencer Greening	Nii 'Ntxo'ont'm (The Ones Who Feed Us): Indigenous Teachings on Spirituality, Ecosystems, and Harvesting
February 6, 2025	Laura Gillis	Religion in BC: The Emissaries of Divine Light
February 13, 2025	Kikila Perrin	Cultivating Settler Support for Resurgence
February 27, 2025	Youcef Soufi	Homegrown Radicals
March 6, 2025	Hinna Hussain	Muslim Approaches to Environmental Stewardship in Canada
March 13, 2025	Lori Beaman	How Nonreligion Changes End of Life Care
*March 22, 2025 (Saturday)	Heba Mostafa	Architecture of Anxiety: Body Politics and the Formation of Islamic Architecture
March 27, 2025	Jacob Maddison	Inking Diasporic Stories
*April 26, 2025 (Saturday)	John Albert Hall Symposium	Religion and the Natural and Built Environments

Israel-Palestine Lectures

We are pleased to welcome journalist, professor, and author Peter Beinart to Victoria this Fall. Peter will join friend of the Centre Neilesh Bose to discuss "Protest, US Politics, and the War in Gaza" on **Tuesday, October 29th**, 5:30-7:00pm in the David Lam Auditorium

(MAC A144). On **Wednesday, October 30th**, 6:00-8:00pm, Peter will give a presentation at Congregation Emanu El titled "Does Progressive Zionism Have a Future?". Expect nuanced and deeply informed discussions of one of today's most pressing geopolitical conflicts.





John Albert Hall Lecture Series

Paul Bramadat and Brendon Neilson

The John Albert Hall Lectures are a joint initiative of the CSRS and the Anglican Diocese of Islands and Inlets of British Columbia. The lectures are made possible through generous financial support from the John Albert Hall Trust.

Each year the CSRS collaborates with colleagues at the Anglican Diocese of Islands and Inlets, to offer programming of interest to both scholars and members of the local Christian community.

This year our day-long workshop on April 26th, 2025 will involve theologians and secular scholars in a moderated public conversation about crises that beset the natural and built environments.



Catherine Keller discusses Christian faith and the natural environment in April 2025.

Highlighting our panel on the natural environment is Catherine Keller of Drew University in New Jersey. Catherine will discuss the most current thinking about how Christians do, can, and must connect their faith lives with the plight of our global climate. We will then invite a panel of local experts and practitioners to engage her on

how the broader conversation connects to our particular context.

In our second session, we turn our attention to challenges being faced by many cities and regions: how to reimagine the environments we build in a manner that makes our communities more affordable, beautiful, sustainable, and conducive to good mental and spiritual health. Guests will include senior architect, Franc D'Ambrosio, city planner and neuroscientist, Robin Mazumder, and Executive Director of the



Franc D'Ambrosio's award winning atrium design brings together the natural and built environments.



Fan Tan Alley in Victoria, BC.

Anglican Diocese, Brendon Neilson, who is the 'owner' representative on the Christ Church Cathedral Precinct 'Building for the Future' initiative.

This one-day event will allow audience members not just to witness leading scholars and activists discussing issues of great importance to the planet as well our cities, but also to engage our guests and one another, to share a meal, and to become more effective members of civil society.

We look forward to hosting this conversation and invite you to hold the date to join us. Check our [website](#) for registration details.

Saying Goodbye to Alan Batten

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Alan Batten, long-time and much beloved friend of the CSRS, in August 2024. Alan was a faithful contributor and advisor to the Centre from its inception, and functioned informally throughout as our 'scientist in

residence'. He will be remembered for his ever present wisdom, warmth and wit, and deeply missed by all. Look for announcements in September as we organize events to celebrate Alan's life and honor his memory.



GOVERNANCE AND STAFF



Our People

Paul Bramadat (Director)
Rachel Brown (Program and Research Coordinator)
Scott Dolff (Program and Communications Associate)
Noriko Prezeau (Administrative Assistant)

Program Committee

Paul Bramadat, Chair (History/CSRS)
Evanthia Baboula (Art History and Visual Studies)
Shamma Boyarin (Religion, Culture and Society)
Patrick Boyle (Music)
Maneesha Deckha (Law)
Amy Verdun (Political Science)

Ex officio:

Fraser Hof (Social Science, Associate VP Research)
Peter Scales (Chair, CSRS Advisory Council)
Oliver Schmidtke (Political Science/CFGS)

Advisory Council

Peter Scales, Chair (Unitarian chaplain)
Peter Beyer (University of Ottawa)
Rory Dickson (University of Winnipeg)
Pearl Gervais (Victoria Catholic Community)
[cont'd]

Chris Goto-Jones (University of Victoria)
Lynn Greenhough (Rabbi at Kolot Mayim Reform Temple)
Alison Marshall (Brandon University)
Kate Newman (Anglican Diocese of BC)
Rubina Ramji (Cape Breton University)
Gurdeep Singh (Victoria Sikh Community)
Grace Wong Sneddon (University of Victoria)

Fellowships

The 2025-2026 fellowship deadline is **Monday, November 11, 2024**. For more information please visit: uvic.ca/csrs/fellowships. All fellowships include office space and membership in our dynamic, interdisciplinary research environment.

UVic Faculty Fellowships

For UVic faculty working on scholarly research projects related to some aspect of religion and society. Includes course-release.

Visiting Research Fellowships

The CSRS offers research space for scholars working on projects related to our mandate.

Graduate Student Fellowships

Includes research space and an award of \$6000.

Scales Family Fellowship

An award of \$6000 for research related to religion in British Columbia.

Rev. Heather J. Lindstedt & Dr. Brian A. Pollick Graduate Student Fellowship

An award of \$6000 given to a graduate student in Art History and Visual Studies.

Artist-in-Residence Fellowship

The Chih-Chuang and Yien-Ying Wang Hsieh Award for Art and Spirituality is valued at approximately \$6000. The deadline is **Monday, April 14, 2025**.

Community Fellowships

For members of the broader public to join our research community on a short-term basis. Applications accepted on a rolling basis.

Indigenous Arts and Research Fellowships

Fellowships include support for faculty, graduate students, and artists working on projects related to religion/spirituality and reconciliation.

Harold Coward India Research Fellowship

Support for faculty, senior doctoral and post-doctoral students at Indian universities to pursue research at the CSRS.

Associate Fellowships

For local scholars who are actively engaged in research and interested in scholarly community, but who may not need office space. Applications are considered on an **on-going basis**.

Giving to the CSRS

The CSRS has always been supported by the generosity of individuals and groups. The charitable giving of our donors helps young scholars achieve their life goals, provides a productive intellectual home for established scholars from UVic and all over the world, advances public dialogue towards greater critical understanding of the role of religion in society and assists in the creation of scholarly publications that inform public policy. Any and all contributions are appreciated. Those interested in making a donation can visit uvic.ca/csrs.

A charitable bequest directed to the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society is a tangible option for contributing to the success of the centre. Given through your will, a bequest can include gifts of cash, real estate, art work, or other property. Designating the centre as the beneficiary of your RRSP, RRIF, or insurance policy can also have significant tax advantages for your estate. To discuss how you could leave a legacy for future generations, please contact Leitha Cosentino, Director of Faculty Development, at directorfacdev@uvic.ca, or **250-415-8304** for a confidential conversation.

Contact Us

Mailing address:

Centre for Studies in Religion & Society
University of Victoria
PO Box 1700 STN CSC
Victoria BC V8W 2Y2 Canada

Phone: 250-721-6325

Email: csrs@uvic.ca

X: [@UVicReligioNews](https://twitter.com/UVicReligioNews)

Facebook: facebook.com/uvic.csrs

Web: www.uvic.ca/research/centres/csrs