

2024 PES Conference Schedule

April 24-27, 2024

Last Name	First Name	Full Name(s) of All	Title	Abstract	Presentation Type	How will you	Date	Time (EST)	Location
Adhikari	Jagannath	Jagannath Adhikari	Recreating spiritual practices in new locations among migrants – The case of Pokhara, Nepal and Perth, Australia.	My paper highlights how migrants, whether within the country or in foreign countries, recreate their spiritual practices based on the foundations of their practices in the place of origin but transforming them to suit the religious, cultural and ecological context in the new place. This process of recreation has led to better co-operation and understanding among the people in the community. This paper is based on my researches and experiences in Pokhara, Nepal, and in Perth, Australia. I have also personally experienced this process of spiritual recreation in these two locations.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/24/2024	2:00pm - 3:30pm	Sperry Room - Plenary 1
Magliocco	Sabina	Sabina Magliocco (she/her)	Cultural Appropriation in Modern Pagan Religions: Discourse and Praxis	This paper examines cultural appropriation in modern Pagan religions. Taking inspiration from Jackson's 2021 article, "On Cultural Appropriation," it defines appropriation as one of a spectrum of responses to intercultural contact and change that generally involves a power imbalance between cultures as well as a sense of grievance on the part of the colonized culture. It examines both the practice of cultural appropriation and the discourse around it – how contemporary Pagans talk about, discuss, and approach issues of cultural appropriation.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/24/2024	2:00pm - 3:30pm	Sperry Room - Plenary 1
Chattopadhyay	Sanskriti	Sanskriti Chattopadhyay	Being a Devotee: Image to Decolonial Decentralisation	What is the role of devotion beyond faith? - centred around this question, this paper intends to explore in depth how the idea of devotion and the position of devotee may become an important tool of resistance within the South Asian, especially Indian Bengali context. Taking a deep dive into Kamalkumar Majumdar's reconstruction of Bengali aesthetics, the paper will study the power of deception in terms of subverting the colonial hierarchy. In this subversion, I propose, a dismissal of the colonial rationality narrative may become possible.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/24/2024	4:00pm - 5:30pm	Sperry Room - Plenary 2
Chen	Yinuo (Norah)	Yinuo Norah Chen (She/Her)	Detaching from the Western Lens: Decolonizing Tantric Sex	Sacred sexual rituals occupy an important place in the Western imagination of Tantra. To decolonize "Tantric Sex", this paper explores the Western misappropriation of these rituals and how they came to be by critically assessing the impact of colonization, capitalism, and neoliberalism. Meanwhile, this paper also acknowledges the value and opportunities within Westernized Tantra, validating participants' lived experiences and spiritual traditions' ability to evolve. Finally, this paper suggests a paradigmatic approach as a decolonial path forward. One that encourages depth and breadth in the study of Tantra and prioritizes critical self-reflection and exploration on the part of the Western consumer/practitioner.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/24/2024	4:00pm - 5:30pm	Sperry Room - Plenary 2
Tillman	Patricia	Patricia Tillman	All Glories to the Assembled Devotees: Spiritual Names and Cultural Appropriation in Yoga and Devotional Culture in the West	In the present-day discourses around cultural appropriation and decolonization in yoga, a Western person, using an Indian spiritual name that they were given as part of a spiritual initiation, is often framed as an example of appropriation or orientalism. However, within the value system of some of these spiritual lineages themselves, the process of initiation is seen as a second birth, which supersedes the devotee's original national and cultural heritage. In this paper, I will examine traditional conceptions of initiation in Vaishnavism and Shaivism lineages, and explore the extent to which Western participants can enter into these lineages, without glossing over or spiritually bypassing larger histories of colonization and exploitation.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/24/2024	4:00pm - 5:30pm	Sperry Room - Plenary 2
HELLER	KYTHE	Kythe Maryam Heller (she/her)	Vision Lab Collective (Works 2018-2023)	Vision Lab Collective is an international socially-engaged art and research collective, based at Harvard Divinity School. We create artistic and literary works, performances, scholarly research projects, and other innovative spaces of engagement combining radically imaginative cross-disciplinary conversations and experiential practices spanning the areas of contemporary spirituality, social and environmental justice, technology, and literary and artistic practice. We have created and presented our work through public performances and workshops, residencies, conferences, and experiential retreats, in residence at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, and MIT's Experimental Collections. Check out our website at www.visionlabcollective.com to find out more about our previous work.	60 minute performance, Artistic display	Remote	4/24/2024	6:00pm - 7:00pm	James Room West
Mondragon	Delores (Lola)	Delores (Lola) Mondragon (she/her/Ella) Deborah J. Guerrero (she/her/hers) Carolyn Hartness (she/her/hers)	Contemporary Revitalization of Indigenous Spiritualities in Prisons, Treatment Centers, and Veteran Retreats: Using Drumming and Storytelling as Forms of Witnessing the Violence Away	Bringing together Indigenous Elders, drums, and Native American storytelling, we propose to demonstrate how bringing in ceremonies to spaces long deprived of Indigenous spiritualities has impacted those spaces. In the most natural ways possible colonized spaces often created for "rescue and correction," e.g. prisons, treatment centers, and veteran retreats have become places where Indigenous spiritualities are being revitalized through the use of ceremonies, drumming, and talking circles. We will demonstrate the ways we do this, share what were some of the outcomes, including barriers to introducing and incorporating the use of Indigenous healing modalities into spaces continuously colonized and decolonized.	60 minute performance	In-person	4/24/2024	6:00pm - 7:00pm	Sperry Room
Goldberg	Philip	Philip Goldberg Sneha Rao Jac O'Keeffe	Light and Shadow in the Transmission of Indigenous Indian Spirituality to the West	Having survived hundreds of years of colonial domination, India's indigenous spiritual traditions have, remarkably come to exert a powerful influence on the colonizing West. While the overall impact has been to deepen and broaden Western spirituality, the phenomenon also carries issues around coloniality and appropriation that threaten to discredit, dilute, and distort traditional precepts and practices. This presentation provides a balanced overview of the light and dark sides of the East-to-West transmission, highlights the means of transmission and the key players (Indian and Western), and proposes several issues of crucial importance for study and discussion.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	9:00am - 10:30am	James Room East
O'Keeffe	Jac	Jac O'Keeffe (she/her)	Exploring the Influence of Colonialism on Ethics and Accountability in Alternative Spiritual Teaching and Proposing a New System of Accountability	The contemporary spiritual landscape has witnessed a series of scandals and confusions involving spiritual teachers, prompting the inception of the Association for Spiritual Integrity (ASI). The ASI seeks to enhance the discourse, aiming for greater integrity and professionalism within the modern spiritual environment. This presentation will examine how the ever present impacts of colonialism have shaped the cultural status of power, leading to imbalances in the accountability and ethical aspects among alternative spiritual teachers. Many of these Western teachers draw their teaching from indigenous Indian teachings, some of which were brought to the West without the corresponding lineage support. ASI recognizes the vulnerabilities among unaffiliated teachers and their lack of established lineages, which traditionally address accountability and responsibility. However, the absence of any lineage support among Western alternative teachers has created a need for compensatory measures. The ASI proposes leveraging the Western affinity for psychology to fill this accountability gap.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	9:00am - 10:30am	James Room East

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Rao	Snehapriya	Snehapriya Rao (she/her)	Why the Guru Came to the West: Rethinking the Transnational Guru from an Indigenous Perspective	There are many ideas about why Hindu Gurus left India and came to the West to teach the spiritual traditions of Vedanta, Tantra, and Yoga. Some point to the large transnational institutions that Gurus created and suggest that fame and fortune motivate the Guru to proselytize in the West. Others suggest that it's simply a cultural exchange. This discourse around the transnational Guru rarely takes up the view of the Hindu in its musings, and even when it does, the voice of the Hindu is treated as less credible than that of the Westerner. This paper will explore the causes of this lacuna of the Hindu perspective. We will suggest that treating the voice of the indigenous Hindu as credible will lead to a new understanding of the transnational Guru and a more holistic spiritual engagement based on principles of discernment (Viveka) within lineages. We will suggest that this holistic engagement, based on respect for indigenous stewardship, can lead to real progress on entrenched issues, like sexual abuse, in the spiritual seeker communities, leading to healthier spiritual communities.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	9:00am - 10:30am	James Room East
UMOH	ADETOLO ELIZABTH	ADETOLO ELIZABETH UMOH(SHE/HER)	Sacredness and ancestral connection to Africa; Osun Osogbo Grove & its festival in Nigeria	The paper discusses the Osun worship and Osun Osogbo annual festival in Nigeria as an annual celebration of Osun, the goddess of fertility, prosperity, and healing. It discusses the significance of sacred grooves in Osun worship and the symbolic meaning attached to some of the cultural rites performed in the festival (e.g., Arugba (virgin maid to carry sacrifice), celebration of numerous local creative traditions, like as drumming, dancing, singing, wearing ornate costumes, Yoruba speaking, libation and praise poems, recitals customarily). Drawn from oral sources, textual analysis , archeology, interviews and documentary, findings suggest that the Osun Osogbo festival holds significant spiritual value as a religious and spiritual celebration. Second, Osun festival has played an important role as a sacred place for the Yorubaland, evident in the number of diaspora and foreigner visitors to the Sacred Grove as ancestral connection to Africa." The Osun Osogbo festival is a source for joy and friendliness for the people and a source of spiritual refreshing for visitors.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/25/2024	9:00am - 10:30am	James Room West
Fikiri	Deogratias	Deogratias Fikiri	Decolonizing Religions in Africa: The Profound Role of African Spirituality of Ubuntu	Title: Decolonizing Religions in Africa: The Profound Role of African Spirituality of Ubuntu In the intricate realm of African spirituality, a profound and unique concept known as Ubuntu emerges as a powerful force at the crossroads of decolonizing religions in Africa. In this narrative, we explore the rich tapestry of African spirituality, where the cosmic and human worlds converge to form a sacred channel connecting humanity with the divine. This paper endeavors to unravel the harmonious essence of African cultural and spiritual rituals, symbols, stories, and dances as they intertwine with the fabric of everyday life. It argues that the spirituality of Ubuntu, with its sacred cycle of birth, death, and rebirth intertwined with African ancestors' visible and invisible forces, should become an integral part of popular religiosity.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	9:00am - 10:30am	James Room West
UMOH	SAMUEL UWEM	UMOH SAMUEL UWEM (he/him)	African Tailor Made and Shembe Movement in South Africa	Drawing from the case of the Shembe movement, the paper discusses a case of South Africa's spiritual practices and movements labeled as 'esoteric' and 'New Age', from the lens of Syncretism as a combination of Zulu culture and Christianity. It examines how African traditional religion (ATR) is a fertile ground for the spread and amalgamation of Syncretism by tracing the history of the Shembe movement and the relevance of symbols in Shembe spiritual practice [zihlabelelo Za Manazaretha', 'sacred texts written by the founder Isaiah Shembe, cowskin/ leopard skin attires as church uniforms, ancestral honouring, animal sacrificing and 'Nhangakazi', the Holy Mountain of the Shembe]. It also highlights how the Shembe Church blends two seemingly incompatible philosophies of Shembe ideas and practices(culture) into religion. Data was generated from field study, visit to Shembe Ebuhleni Village, interviews, Focus group discussion oral source, documentary, observation and photovoice Also, Shembe typifies the African Independent Church as a strategy to decolonize Western spirituality and foreign influence as deonality of religion.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	9:00am - 10:30am	James Room West
Colin	Mathieu	Mathieu Colin	Hail Resistance: Spiritual Resistance to Christian Hegemony Within The Satanic Temple	Founded in the US by Malcolm Jarry and Lucien Greaves at the end of the year 2012, the Satanic Temple (TST) is both a non-theistic religion, a secularist group and a satanic group fighting for the strict separation of Church and State (Laycock 2020, Introigne 2016). The Satanic Temple aims at raising the question of the integration of non-Christians as respectful and respected citizens within the public sphere, thus negotiating the tensions at the core of the American national identity and of its civil religion, both heavily influenced by Christianity, with the help of Satan's symbol (Colin 2022, Cragun 2023). This paper will focus on the central contribution and inclusion of racial and sexual minorities in this group as part of the spiritual resistance strategy, in order to read both secularism and Satanism through a decolonial lens exploring tensions, power and empowerment in new complex social movements.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	9:00am - 10:30am	Sperry Room
Hjarnø Rasmussen	Rune	Rune Hjarnø Rasmussen	Policing Whiteness through Pagan Studies	A critical decolonial perspective on academic practice in pagan studies, possibly with relevance for the understanding of whiteness in the wider context of the Western world. I will show core patterns in the construction of whiteness, that have historically served to reject other-than-modern relational ways of knowing in the imposition of modern white self-image on euro-descendants. Today such discourse is mostly criticized, but I will show how it still lives in the application of paradoxical motifs ascribed through the pagan imaginary when the purpose is the policing euro-descended persons attempting to dissent from whiteness.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/25/2024	9:00am - 10:30am	Sperry Room

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Jae Liu	Rayner	Rayner Jae Liu (he/him)	Sacred Rage, Sacred Trickster: The Role of Eris in Decolonial Resistance and Celebration	This paper explores the relevance and potency of Eris, the Greek goddess of strife and discord, in disrupting colonial paradigms. Using the mythology and symbolism of Eris, I illustrate how celebration, resistance, and accountability inform Eris's metaphysically confrontational approach to decolonization. By exposing the unconscious motivations that underlie unjust power systems, Eris compels the colonial paradigm to undertake a spiritual and psychological inquiry process in which only transfiguration through chaos becomes sufficient to achieve peace. This paper also discusses how Eris' trickster nature, echoing Zen Kōan paradoxes and Taoist yin-yang cosmology, spurs humanity in a dialectical process toward decolonization.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/25/2024	9:00am - 10:30am	Sperry Room
Freimuth	Christopher	Christopher Freimuth	Decolonizing Garden Design: A Workshop on Ecological and Spiritual Resistance	This workshop will offer a case study in using garden design as a practical tool of spiritual resistance and decolonization, offering participants information and resources to do the same in their own homes and institutions. We will reference the garden that I have designed and am implementing at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, CT. The project, a kind of "living land acknowledgment" that is designed around a meditation labyrinth, is a project that models how to tangibly address the colonial history of the land on which many of our institutions are built.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/25/2024	11:00am - 12:00pm*	HDS Labrynth
Sundar	Sudarshan	Sudarshan Sundar, Judy Rodgers, Rita Cleary	Inner decolonization for a better world - Experimentation with the Brahma Kumaris philosophy for a return to self-sovereignty, dignity, and solidarity	The workshop will demonstrate the Brahma Kumaris practice of "Raja Yoga" - philosophy and exercises for the mind to become a self-sovereign - as a means of inner decolonization. The workshop will walk through the process of inner awareness and transformation to empower oneself with natural dignity and an attitude of serving. The motivation for this workshop is to offer a spiritual response to the glaring gap of decolonization efforts still leaving a lot to be desired. The workshop will be conducted by long-term practitioners of Brahma Kumaris, the largest women-led spiritual organization with over 5000 centers in 110 countries, who have held "Call-of-the-Time (COTT)" dialogues and Experiments-in-Silence retreats on all continents to provide inner support for leaders since the past 25 years.	60 minute interactive workshop	Remote	4/25/2024	11:00am - 12:00pm	James Room West
Cohen	Laura	Laura Cohen (she/her)	Navigating the Taboo: Tarot, Therapy, Transcendence, and Nature's Wisdom - A Journey into Intuitive Healing by a Licensed Healthcare Professional	In a transformative exploration at the crossroads of unconventional healing, this workshop delves into the synergies between Tarot, traditional therapy modalities, intuitive healing, and the profound wisdom of nature. Facilitated by a licensed healthcare professional with a commitment to holistic well-being, this one-hour session invites participants to uncover the healing potential that emerges when the realms of Tarot, therapy, intuitive practices, and nature's wisdom converge.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/25/2024	11:00am - 12:00pm	Sperry Room
Litke	Tamara	Tamara Litke (she/her)	Place-Based Learning: Decolonizing Ecology: Native Plants and Settler Action	Learn how to unlayer the landscape! Our schools, homes and institutions are surrounded by essential kin. Come and learn how to see how the plants we surround ourselves with tell a story. The original local plants have been displaced by introduced species as we unravel the flora has mimicked the narratives of settlers in this place. When we take a small action to restore the ecology around us, there are many reasons for celebration. Place based learning helps us orient ourselves in a changing world. We can cocreate a practical physical account to reconcile and decolonialize the landscapes that surround us.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/25/2024	11:00am - 12:30pm	HDS Garden
Butler	Susan	Susan Farist Butler, RN, MSN, PhD	Eco-Restoration and Regeneration as Decolonization	Coloniality and expropriation have been central to the destruction of the environment. Climate stability is dependent on healthy, native eco-systems and the water cycles and carbon cycles they maintain. By restoring regenerative eco-systems, we are applying the principles of decolonization, reversing the damages of colonialization and extraction. This paper explores the needed shift in mentation, spirituality and behavior from colonial to decolonial, with reference to historic and present-day examples and opportunities for growth from understanding the climate in this context.	20 minute scholarly paper, Artistic display	In-person	4/25/2024	1:00pm - 3:00pm	James Room East
Sherwood Gonzalez	José	José Sherwood González (He/They)	Reimagining the Codex Tezcatlipoca (Fejérváry-Mayer): A Transdisciplinary Approach to Decolonizing Mesoamerican Cultural Heritage	This presentation delves into the Codex Tezcatlipoca (Fejérváry-Mayer) from the World Museum, Liverpool. Applying the Mesoamerican Futures framework, this paper explores decolonial theory, digital heritage and speculative methods to reinterpret the Codex's cultural significance to its source and diasporic communities. Critical museology is applied to recontextualize the Codex within a decolonising Indigenous framework. Collaborative research across Puebla, Oaxaca, Tlaxcala, Mexico City, and Liverpool informs this study. The presentation highlights the diverse perspectives on the Codex Fejérváry-Mayer's digital heritage, potential renaming, and speculated repatriation.	20 minute scholarly paper, Artistic display	In-person	4/25/2024	1:00pm - 3:00pm	James Room East
Sengupta	Jayita	JAYITA SENGUPTA	Exploring Spirituality as an Academic, Painter and Seeker	As an academic, painter and Kriya practitioner, my presentation would focus very briefly on the spiritual theories preached by the spiritual masters in the 20th Century India, and then move on to discuss the essence of what I have gained through academic study, as a spiritual seeker and artist. In this context I would be discussing my understandings of my readings of portions from Paramahansa Yogananda's selected works, briefly, along with the manuscript that I am editing by Shri Gurunath, a Kriya yogi. My intention through these discussions would be to address questions that arise in this process of awakening.	20 minute scholarly paper, Artistic display	In-person	4/25/2024	1:00pm - 3:00pm	James Room East
Ravi	Samir	Samir Ravi (she/they)	Slippery Relationality, Queer Buddhism, and Liberatory Praxis	My presentation will theorize Queer of Color engagement with Buddhist spiritualities as decolonial work, attending to spiritual experiences in the United States. Drawing on archival and ethnographic research and on critical theory, I will conceptualize "slippery relationality" as an analytic and as a mode of praxis that refers to the ways in which Queer of Color practitioners of Buddhism traverse normative boundaries of affiliation, cultivate healing, and reckon with colonial violence. My development of slippery relationality engages with fields of inquiry as wide-ranging as queer studies and ecocritical theory, and ultimately raises questions about its role in sustaining liberatory politics.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	1:00pm - 3:00pm	Sperry Room
Voiles	Amber	Dr. Amber L. Voiles	The Benefits of Surrogate Interviewers in Research with Indigenous Peoples: Fostering Cultural Appreciation	This presentation unveils a novel method for comprehending alternative spiritualities within Indigenous communities. Utilizing a surrogate deeply connected to the Kágaba (Kog) and He (Ahuaco) communities, interviews were conducted efficiently, transcended language barriers, and fostered immediate trust. The presentation advocates for future researchers working within Indigenous communities representing different cultures to adopt this approach. As a methodological innovation, it serves as a testament to cultural sensitivity, appreciation, and ethical research practices, providing a distinctive avenue to navigate the intricate landscape of alternative spiritualities in Indigenous communities.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	1:00pm - 3:00pm	Sperry Room

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Avalos	Natalie	Natalie Avalos	A Native Teleology: Indigenous Stewardship and the Sovereignty of Plant Medicines	The growing popularity of Indigenous plant medicines for therapeutic use are a cause of concern in Indigenous communities (Ceidwen et al 2023; Negrin 2020). A decolonial approach to the use of Indigenous plant medicines for therapeutic use would not only satisfy existing calls to center Indigenous protocols of care in their navigation (Ceidwen et al 2023) but also provide an entry point to dismantle the extractive dynamics that define human-plant relations within settler ecologies. I draw on contemporary Indigenous stewardship movements and decolonial theory to discuss how plant agency, personhood, and even sovereignty can be restored within the social body.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/25/2024	1:00pm - 3:00pm	Sperry Room
Gebara	Maria Fernanda	Maria Fernanda Gebara, Nani Kateyuve Yawanawá and Isku Kuá Yawanawá	What is medicine? Integrating indigenous with scientific ontologies in ayahuasca research	The revival of psychedelics in Western research raises issues about the underappreciation of ayahuasca's sacred significance and the Indigenous wisdom associated with it. Such oversight reflects a broader disconnect from the communal and spiritual practices integral to Indigenous knowledge, a gap that also contributes to our current environmental and health crises. This presentation looks at the Yawanawá tradition to critique the reduction of ayahuasca to mere scientific data, advocating for a synthesis of Indigenous and modern scientific approaches to enrich future research and therapeutic practices.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/25/2024	1:00pm - 3:00pm	Sperry Room
Beaudette	Jessica	Jessica Beaudette	Mindful Conservation: Reimagining Contemplative Spirituality and Conservation Science	In a time of climate upheaval and biodiversity loss, scientists recognize that to generate social and ecological change, the practice of science requires new vision. Today, conservation biologists are integrating contemplative spiritual principles into scientific practices. Contemplative approaches have been shown to improve scientific processes, enrich cross-cultural dialogue, and improve environmental outcomes. Contemplative encounters can also obscure normative boundaries between scientific discovery and theological inquiry, evoking questions about Divine Nature beyond name and form. Drawing on conservation research and theological scholarship, this paper presents contemplative spirituality as vital to the practice of environmental science in the Anthropocene.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	1:30pm - 3:00pm	James Room West
Good	Jennifer Ellen (Jenellen)	Jenellen Good	Spirituality, Degrowth and the Earth	As a dogma that fundamentally guides our relationship with all that surrounds us, arguably there are few more essential forces that shape our spirituality than the economy. The earth was once alive and a place of spirit. Acquisition, however, was and is the imperial, colonial, enterprise: a vast global mission to find new lands and acquire more of the earth's abundant "natural resources," perhaps best exemplified by the Doctrine of Discovery. These are the foundations of the endless growth capitalist market economy. The path to positive change is twofold: economic degrowth and embracing the earth as a place of interconnected spirit.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	1:30pm - 3:00pm	James Room West
Powell	Russell	Russell C. Powell (he/they)	Pantheism's Violent Depths: Spinoza, Pragmatism, and Authoritarianism in Dark Green Religion	Benedict Spinoza is a choice reference of contemporary practitioners of what Bron Taylor has named "dark green religion," a popular alternative form of spiritual practice that treats nature as worthy of reverent care. This paper will explore Spinoza's pantheism for the ways it inspires what gives dark green religion its shadow side, according to Taylor: its troubling compatibility with authoritarian politics. Relying on pragmatist philosophy, I will argue for the need to abandon metaphors of depth in alternative nature spiritualities (e.g., "deep ecology," a signal influence on radical environmentalism) and the violent, imperial politics that metaphor effects.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	1:30pm - 3:00pm	James Room West
Kariko	Sarah				hold for performance or workshop	in person	4/25/2024	3:30pm - 5:30pm	James Room East
Knight	Kimberly	Kimberly A Knight	Rewilding Spirituality	This interactive session explores ecological rewilding as a model for the evolution of spiritual practices. Rewilding spirituality, akin to ecological rewilding, involves habitat restoration, process thought, keystone species, connectivity, and adaptivity to foster a holistic approach to spirituality. Conducted outdoors, this session integrates forest therapy and spiritual practices, inviting participants to experience their place in the web of interbeing as sacred. Delving into parallels between ecological and spiritual rewilding, the discussion will explore how ecological rewilding might inform the evolution of spiritual practices by questioning harmful frameworks, challenging dominant narratives of human superiority and reimagining spiritual practices.	90 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/25/2024	3:30pm - 5:30pm*	American Academy of Arts and Sciences
Lombardi	Denise	Denise Lombardi	Native fascination and neo-shamanism in Europe	The exotic imaginary and the indigenous fascination it conveys as a saving narrative possibility have their roots in the primitivist aesthetic trend of the early 20th century. This tropism of mythologized thought from the past is becoming a driving force behind cultural production today. Today's native is often seen as the last survivor (of a multitude that never really disappeared) of a culture that is always on the verge of vanishing. This symposium will be an opportunity for me to analyze in depth how the fascination with the image of the native has been fundamental to the process of diffusion of neo-shamanic practices in contemporary France.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	3:30pm - 5:30pm	Sperry Room
MacDonald	Melissa	Melissa MacDonald (she/her)	Praying in the cracks: postactivist animism and the (r)evolving worship of the Unknown	How might a valuing—a worshipping— of the Unknown (r)evolve spirituality away from defensive epistemologies and towards pluriversal ontologies that foster peace and response-ability with all beings? Does the concept of postactivism offer emerging animisms a decolonial fugitivity that escapes the flattening "knowings" of Whiteness? This paper will conceptualize postactivist animism and consider how worshipping the Unknown may conjure a humility able to corrode coloniality. As animism seeps back into Western consciousness, perhaps it might shed the armor of knowledge and find refuge and ritual in the warm, dark waters of Unknowability and the dissolution of a identified self.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	3:30pm - 5:30pm	Sperry Room
Maheswar	Ghimire	Maheswar Ghimire	Animism and Ecological Restoration (Century Old Tradition of Indigenous Community)	The century old practices of people in mid hill region of other parts of Nepal on the areas of natural resource management is either guided by animistic approach or some sort of religious philosophy. Both animism or religious belief on natural resource management has several aspect of similarities and harmony. The entire practices of natural resource management is guided by a spiritual belief system which states each living beings possess soul and interlinkage to the family deity and ritual. This encourage the people of different group to consider protecting these all for the people and planet.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/25/2024	3:30pm - 5:30pm	Sperry Room

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Hubbard	Reggie	Reginald Hubbard (he/Him)	Pure Sound to Ground - An Exploration of Sonic Spiritual Practice	Pure Sound to Ground will use gongs, crystal bowls, Tibetan Sound bowls, chimes and other instruments as a means of shepherding higher states of meditation and transcendence. But this is not transcendence in terms of escapism or spiritual bypass, but attunement with one's true nature in community. Given all the collective stress, grief, sorrow, trauma and sadness we have witnessed in recent memory, words will not solve the problems created by words. But since sound is pre-cognitive and primordial, it connects with essential parts of our nature – beyond ego-centric identity (a hallmark of colonial spiritual systems and methodologies). Pure Sound to Ground will use gongs, crystal bowls, Tibetan Sound bowls, chimes and other instruments as a means of shepherding higher states of meditation and transcendence. But this is not transcendence in terms of escapism or spiritual bypass, but attunement with one's true nature in community. Given all the collective stress, grief, sorrow, trauma and sadness we have witnessed in recent memory, words will not solve the problems created by words. But since sound is pre-cognitive and primordial, it connects with essential parts of our nature – beyond ego-centric identity (a hallmark of colonial spiritual systems and methodologies).	60 minute performance	Remote	4/25/2024	6:00pm - 7:00pm	James Room West
Ray	Ricky	Ricky Ray (he/him), possibly Sophie Strand	Cultivating Kinship: The Art of Becoming an Ecosystem	In a blend of lyric essay, poetry and spiritual storytelling, this performance seeks to investigate the lineage of ecological movements—creative and destructive, evolving and transformative—into which we emerge as humans, and whose life-giving music we learn and honor to our collective flourishing, or ignore and abuse to our collective peril. Drawing lessons from the plant world—where native, invasive and naturalized species shape, threaten and seek refuge in their ecosystems—and drawing parallels in the lives, movements and deaths of ecosystems themselves, it examines the embattled processes of nativity and colonialism, often entwined in the same species and creature. It then offers a path toward intentional integration into our places, where, once aware of our endangerments and practical means of alignment, we can begin to cultivate the art of reciprocity: living as ecosystems inhabiting people as much as people inhabiting lands.	60 minute performance	In-person	4/25/2024	6:00pm - 7:00pm	Sperry Room
DAS	RITUPARNA	Rituparna Das (She/Her)	The Coiled Snake: The Goddess of the East and the Satan of the West A Workshop on Jungian Psychoanalysis and Kundalini Yoga	The workshop shall be divided into three parts 1. The first part shall briefly discuss the Western Colonial notion of Hindu philosophy, emphasising Jung's view of it. 2. The second part shall throw light on how many of Jung's ideas correlate to ancient Indian philosophical concepts (giving special attention to Jung's lecture series on Kundalini yoga: The psychology of Kundalini yoga: Notes of the seminar given in 1932 by C. G. Jung). 3. The final part shall be comprised of a short session on a specific type of Kundalini yoga and meditation (there are numerous ones) incorporating certain Jungian psychoanalytic techniques. The objective of the workshop is to identify the East, namely the ancient Hindu tradition, as an active ingredient in the dynamic process of knowledge creation—not just a passive bearer of it. It is more than restoring the due credit to the age-old civilisation, it is about enhancing the horizon of this already expansive philosophy and assimilating the theories by one of the great masters of Western psychology within its scope.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/26/2024	9:00am - 10:00am	Garvin Room
Miura	Naohito	Alberto Quifuta Pereira (he/him) Naohito Miura (he/him)	Glorifying God in Angola and Japan: Decoloniality in Igreja Mundial do Messias through Prayer, Song, and Breath	This workshop explores decoloniality in relation to the practices of faith within Igreja Mundial do Messias Angola, the Angolan branch of Sekai Meshia Kyo, a Japanese new religion founded by Okada Mokichi (1882-1955), also known as Meishu-sama. Co-led by a church leader in Angola (Alberto) and a PhD candidate at Harvard (Naohito), the workshop draws insights from both the spiritual practices of Igreja Mundial do Messias and the academic study of religion. Audience members will be invited to join in prayer, song, and open-hearted dialogue about this new faith that started in Japan and spread to Angola via Brazil.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/26/2024	9:00am - 10:00am	James Room East
Katresna	M Rhaka	Reksi Adiwiguna (he/him), Napol Riel (he/him), Ahmad Syahrul (he/him), Lacharya (she/her), Barrballon Victoria Hanzael (he/him)	Keloid Reflections	Keloid Reflections is a compassionate effort towards the bodily experience of transmen in Indonesia. The performance is based on a novel titled "Keloid" written by Napol Riel. Through the transmedia method from novel into poetry and bodily performance, we reflected on the psychospiritual development of Napol as transman during his gender-affirming transition. The process includes reading the novel, collecting tangents or fragments for the poem, bodily interpretation of the poem and somatic inquiry. We learned that the spiritual and emotional struggle of transgender people is valid.	60 minute performance	Remote	4/26/2024	9:00am - 10:00am	James Room West
ealom	tayla	tayla shanaye (she/they)	DISRUPTION, RECLAMATION AND DELIGHT: A CRITICAL ORGANIC AUTOETHNOGRAPHY OF A BLACK MOTHER'S CHILDBIRTH AS LIBERATORY TRANSPERSONAL CONSCIOUSNESS	tayla shanaye presents her doctoral study of natural childbirth as an expanded state of consciousness which suggests that a birthing person may experience forms of personal transformation that result in healing from White supremacist, patriarchal, and anthropocentric ideologies. Anchored in an embodied feminist spirituality, this research serves to present a decolonial and sacralized childbirth approach in order to repair the personal and cultural wounds perpetuated by systems of dominance.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/26/2024	9:00am - 10:00am	Sperry Room
Theodosaki	Zoe	Zoe Theodosaki (she/her)	Pre-Christian fertility rituals and new-year-welcoming of the indigenous peoples of Drama region, Greece, in times of global culture and orthodoxy.	This is a presentation of the new-year rituals of the "local" people of Drama region, Greece, for fertility and welcome of the year. The aim is to juxtapose them to the "colonial" (anthropocentric) practices of the orthodox church that imposes all other celebrations of the year, and is the mainstream religion of the region.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/26/2024	9:00am - 10:00am	Sperry Room
Gargiulo	Ara	Ara Gargiulo (she/her)	"Of Fairies, Fairy Doctors, and Witches: Witch trials in Spanish Sicily"	The magic-imbued landscape of Spanish Sicily and Sicilian Witches brought the image of the witch away from its Christian devilry and into the realm of Pagan traditional wonder. The donni di fori (Spanish doñas de fuera), "Ladies from Outside," challenged the diabolical-seeking Inquisition with new beings seemingly ready to tempt souls away from Christian belief. This essay explores "monstrosity" as a religious technique used by the Spanish Inquisition to Christianize and demonize traditional Sicilian folk belief. It further aims to investigate the dimensions of colonial religious violence as it entangles with the beliefs and practices of those under its occupation.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:00pm	James Room East

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Last Name	First Name	Full Name(s) of All	Title	Abstract	Presentation Type	How will you	Date	Time (EST)	Location
Rendlen	Chelsea	Chelsea Irys Rendlen (she/her)	A New Approach to a Traditional Girls' Summer Camp at YWCA VT Camp Hochelega: Embracing Spirituality while Centering Anti-Racism and Women's+ Empowerment	Summer camps are spaces for spiritual transformation, initiation, and development; acting as a rite of passage for many North American adolescents. Beyond the friendship bracelets and campfires, the origins of summer camp are rooted in Muscular Christianity, white supremacy, colonialism, and cultural appropriation. By acknowledging these facts and centering the YWCA's mission to, "eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all," YWCA Vermont Camp Hochelega has begun work to repair the harmful white-supremacist-neo-liberal-patriarchal and colonial origins of camp to create an integrated and holistic approach that can pave the way for a better society beyond campgrounds.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:00pm	James Room East
Rademaker	Laura	Laura Rademaker (she/her)	'A relationship with the land that western culture knows nothing of': sacred claims of First Nations Australia, 1960-1990	Over a period of only two decades, First Nations people transformed Australia's Christian churches from supporters of mining on Indigenous land to among its most vocal opponents, joining First Nations people in describing the land as 'sacred'. In this paper, I examine the ways in which First Nations people articulated their relationship to Country as religion to claim sovereignty over their lands. I seek to reveal the ways in which their articulations of occurred in dialogue, resistance to and entanglement with Christianity, with important insights for the ways First Nations people read settler cultures to create opportunities in the absence of other decolonial options.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:00pm	James Room East
Kanu	Ikechukwu Anthony	Ikechukwu Anthony Kanu	COLONIALISM, NEO-COLONIALISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	Climate change has severely compromised the livelihoods of people that are overwhelmingly dependent on the natural environment, particularly those in developing countries that are usually the least able to cope with the associated social and environmental risks. Sub-Saharan Africa is the region most vulnerable to climate change since warming will be greater than the global average, and agriculture, mainly rain-fed, is the primary source of subsistence for rural communities. A cursory glance at available literature reveals that several researches have been done on climate change in Africa, but with no clear-cut attention on the consequences of colonialism and neo-colonialism on climate change. This paper, therefore, studies the impact of colonialism and neo-colonialism on Sub-Saharan Africa's struggle with climate change. It discovers that the colonial period in Africa (1880s-1960s) was marked by the alteration of indigenous methods of mitigating ecological disasters. European powers also exploited natural resources for their economic benefits, often with little regard for the local environment and communities in Africa. With neo-colonialism (1961-2024) changing baton with colonialism, the exploitation of the environment in Sub-Saharan Africa through the activities of former colonial powers and multinational companies still endures. This research tells the story of Sub-Saharan Africa's experience of climate change in relation to her colonial and neo-colonial relationships. While the historical and hermeneutic methods of inquiry will be used for the analysis and presentation of data, the Igwebuikwe theoretical framework would be employed in the search for a holistic approach towards environmental sustainability in Sub-Saharan African.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:00pm	James Room West
Forchu	Ijeoma	Ijeoma Iruka Forchu (she/her)	Ala, the Eagle and the Kite: Narratives of Ecological Justice in Igbo Songs	Music scholarship in Igboland, southeastern Nigeria pays scant attention to indigenous Igbo ecological conceptualizations enshrined in Igbo music despite acute land degradation in that area and global interest in environmental sustainability. I aim to access how Igbo music explicates spiritual linkage of humankind and environment. Employing Ecomusicological approach, I argue that reciprocity and justice, embedded in the interaction of the proverbial Kite and Eagle, supervised by Ala, the mother-earth goddess, constitute the bedrock upon which conceptualizations of land and wellbeing of Igbo society are situated. This investigation decolonizes anthropocentric approaches to ecology and contributes new paths to global environmental discourse.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:00pm	James Room West
Chananiah	Pesach	Pesach Chananiah	Pathways of Teshuvah: Repentance, Return, and Reconciliation Across Time and Place	In the millennia since exile and the destruction of their holy temples, those tracing their heritage from the ancient Israelites have had a contentious relationship to land. All too often, our landlessness and our cosmopolitan adherence to scripture and law has left us alienated from the natural world. Yet, recent movements within the Jewish world have prioritized an ancestrally rooted relatedness to the Earth and a recommitment to theologies of stewardship. The horizon they point to invites our attention toward new possibilities for embodied ritual. This liberatory and ecopsychological Jewish autoethnography traces the impacts of exile on the (Jewish) psyche and explores modes of healing through connection to land. The Jewish Earth-based organization Wilderness Torah and the Palestinian farm Tent of Nations serve as fieldwork sites through which to approximate a practice of teshuvah, a Hebrew word most accurately translated as "repentance", "return", or "reconciliation".	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:00pm	James Room West
Matilde	Carbajo	Matilde Carbajo (she/her)	The making of the mainstream and the alternative: the colonial dimensions of spirituality during the Spanish colonisation of Táno' Láguas yan Gáni (the Mariana Islands)	The growth of European empires disseminated dominant religious traditions to places alien to Euro-centred spiritualities, transforming them into a means of imperial control. In the Pacific, the colonization of the Mariana Islands, home of the CHamorru people, and the establishment of a Catholic mission in 1668 turned a foreign, minority faith into the religious mainstream. This "spiritual conquest" involved the displacement of Indigenous spiritualities to the category of alternative. Here I examine how Spanish colonists weaponized the Catholic faith to re-shape Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of being, creating new socio-emotional communities more in accordance with the 17th century Ibero-Catholic ethos.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:30pm	Sperry Room

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Last Name	First Name	Full Name(s) of All	Title	Abstract	Presentation Type	How will you	Date	Time (EST)	Location
Mohammed	Dionne	Dionne A. Mohammed (she/her)	Indigenous Intergenerational Trauma and Stories of Healing Through Jesus - Decolonizing The Gospel of Christ	Through a storytelling/yarning methodology (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010) and experience centered narrative research (Patterson, 2008), three Indigenous followers of Jesus and original inhabitants of the lands currently known as Canada, shared their stories of healing. The storytelling/ yarning method (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010) is rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and fit seamlessly with the participants diverse Indigenous backgrounds and shared oral traditions. Through the experience centered research model, each participant engaged in meaning making of their personal narratives, reconstructed and presented their stories as their human lived experience, and finally, revealed their metamorphosis (Patterson, 2008) and contributions to Indigenous knowledges. The experience centered research framework utilized for knowledge gathering worked concertedly with the storytelling/yarning methodology as the healing stories presented here evolved not as stories of defeat, but of strength (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). Some key teachings and themes arising from their stories include trauma, forgiveness, resilience, family, healing, and hope. This study aims to reveal Indigenous stories of healing and cease the perpetuation of harm to Indigenous peoples who have declared Jesus as their source of healing. Furthermore, this study aims to situate the knowledges gathered through these healing stories within the academic body of Indigenous knowledges. (Mohammed, 2021)	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:30pm	Sperry Room
Ragui	Taimaya	Taimaya Ragui (he/him)	Decolonizing Spirituality of the Nagas in Northeast India	Abstract Colonialists, such as American Baptist missionaries and British administrators and/or ethnographers, rejected the Nagas' traditional-primal religion in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This blatant colonial rejection, I argue, has severe short-term and long-term consequences, as early converts began avoiding cultural events associated with traditional religion and as certain contemporary Naga Christians/theologians resist engaging with indigenous spirituality. Considering this prevailing reality, I argue for the decolonization of the spirituality of the Nagas in Northeast India to debunk the colonial imposition of their religious values and reclaim their indigenous spirituality, which is rooted in nature as well as their lived experiences.	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:30pm	Sperry Room
Tejedo	Joel	Carolyn Soliven Tejedo	Eco-theology, Spirituality, and Eco-farming of Spirit-filled Religion in the Philippines	Farmers are now the "dying breed" in the Philippine populace due to climate change and the agricultural crisis aggravated by geo-political conflicts, wars, and global economic inflations. But what do Spirit-filled religion do in responding to environmental degradation, ecological disasters, and species extinctions? How are they empowering local farmers to integrate and increase crops, livestock, fisheries, and fruit-bearing trees using civic education to respond to the critical issues of ecological crisis? How do they create sustainable on/off-farm and agricultural entrepreneurship job opportunities that generate income for small local farmers? This study uses biblical data to investigate the eco-theology and spirituality of Spirit-empowered religion toward creation care at times of ecological degradation. While this study predicts that fewer farmers engaging in agriculture in the future will aggravate food insecurity, leading to a food crisis, this study provides models and best practices of eco-farming by Spirit-filled people that perhaps refuel the interest of the farming industry in the Philippines. Keywords: Spirit-filled Spirituality, Eco-theology, and Creation Care	20 minute scholarly paper	Remote	4/26/2024	10:30am - 12:30pm	Sperry Room
Deniz	Dilsa	Dilsa Deniz	Conference Title: Unveiling and decolonizing Monotheism. Rediscovering the One-Goddess Era	The notion of monotheism, conventionally understood as the worship of a single male deity, has undergone extensive exploration. However, a remarkable and transformative narrative has been often overlooked - the era of monotheism, centered around a single Mother Goddess. This proposal seeks to illuminate this largely uncharted terrain, presenting compelling evidence for the existence of a prolonged era of monotheism preceding the rise of pagan polytheism and the subsequent emergence of monotheistic religions.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	1:00pm - 2:30pm	Garvin Room
Field	Tory	Tory Field	Seeing our reflection in the Venus of Laussel	This paper will explore my own simultaneously spiritual and academic wrestling with an identity formed around being a white descendant of colonizers and a deeper-time connection to pre-colonial, earth-honoring European ancestors. Beginning with some examples of how our connection to pre-colonial ancestral traditions and worldviews have been starved and severed over the generations, and also giving examples of ways people are trying to revive these connections, I will look at questions about the purpose and potential of this work within the larger work of ecological and decolonial healing and transformation.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	1:00pm - 2:30pm	Garvin Room
Stone	Mary Louise	Mary Louise Stone	The Andean Mother Pachamama: A Mothering Community Paradigm	The Andean Mother Pachamama, often called Mother Earth, undergirds a freedom struggle revitalizing the indigenous mountain spine of South America. In Lake Titicaca communities in Peru and Bolivia, farmers build relation with a Mother vast as well as immanent, celebrate with urbanites in explosions of spiritual art and music, and pilgrimage with Catholics and tourists to a site famed for millennia. Quick modern greetings overlook Pachamama as the profound core of Andean life for young and old. We could support an endangered spirituality that nurtures environments, gender-balance, and diverse peoples in mothering communities—as ancient Andean prophecy widely foretells.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	1:00pm - 2:30pm	Garvin Room
Axinto	Jemarc	Jemarc Axinto (They/She/He)	Recovering from ReActivism in The Spiritual Playground	Recover from ReActivism with Jemarc Axinto through a powerful somatic practice combining play therapy, visualization, and archetypal energies to safely feel and transmute difficult feelings and emotions. Engage with The Spiritual Playground, a profound practice that empowers you to become your own safe space and cultivate you innate qualities of Loving Kindness, Compassion, Joy, and Equanimity.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/26/2024	1:30pm - 2:30pm	James Room East
Arora	Alka	Alka Arora	The Politics of the Intimate in Alternative Spiritual Communities	This workshop will engage participants in creative dialogue around the politics of the intimate within alternative spiritual spaces. "Politics of the intimate" refers to how power operates within close-knit communities, where power can be leveraged to uplift and heal but is often abused. Intimate abuse is rooted in colonial hierarchies of gender, race, status, and caste and can take both sexual and non-sexual forms. Workshop participants will reflect on how power has been used to uphold or dismantle oppression within their spiritual communities. Our collective wisdom will generate principles and practices that support ethical uses of power in spiritual communities.	60 minute interactive workshop	Remote	4/26/2024	1:30pm - 2:30pm	James Room West

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DAS	RITUPARNA	Rituparna Das (She/Her)	Revival of the Ancient Vedic Practices in India: The Old 'Oriental' Wine in a New 'Occidental' Bottle	The majority of the Hindus of the Generation X and the Millennials of India do not possess any direct knowledge of the daily rites and rituals of Hinduism and are dependent upon the Brahmin Pandits for the interpretations of the scriptures. However, many of them are aware of complicated practices like yoga, pranayama and meditation and practise them not as a part of their religious behaviour, rather consume them as some lifestyle commodity or as a qualification for enhancing their status quotient. This has caused a sudden boom in the revival of the ancient Hindu practices in India. The paper argues that this revival has occurred not through any organic process of retracing one's past, but rather in the same way in which these practices were lost in the first place—holding the hand of the West. To highlight that, the paper shall analyse the result of a survey and try to identify the reasons behind this secondhand re-appropriation of one's own tradition and also show how this re-appropriation is a byproduct of Western cultural colonisation.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	1:30pm - 2:30pm	Sperry Room
Venugopal	Sivakumar	Sivakumar Venugopal	The Contemporary revitalization of Indigenous Spiritualities	India represents a unique case study of an indigenous spirituality that has managed to survive to this day compared to other major civilizations. Political and cultural subjugation of its land did not eliminate the spiritual roots of the culture that identified unity in the apparent polytheistic ceremonies in regions and sub-cultures spread across the length and breadth of the sub-continent. Political freedom has served to liberate and revitalize the ancient culture aided in no small measure by the rise of personalities considered to be contemporary saints who have successfully reached out to the diaspora as well. The philosophy that perceived the underlying unity amidst celebrating the apparent diversity could well show the way towards harmonious living.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	1:30pm - 2:30pm	Sperry Room
Davis	Kimberly	Kimberly J. Davis	Soulistic Healing: (Re)membering Black Women's Bodies	Black women have the innate power to heal debilitating physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual trauma resulting from slavery, colonization, poverty, and abuse by reclaiming and reconnecting to the power of spirit. We are in the midst of an age of enlightenment, which is seeking to unveil hidden inconvenient truths about how systemic oppression rooted in racism, sexism, and capitalism is destroying the planet, in particular its Black and brown inhabitants. As the atrocities are exposed and truth is revealed, Black women have a clearer lens in which to unveil and articulate the roots of our oppression. We are discovering that our exploitation has been sustained by ideologies that keep us separated from and in constant conflict with the source of our innate power—Spirit. And thus, African American women are rediscovering the power to heal our bodies by reclaiming a connection back to our indigenous spiritualities.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/26/2024	3:00pm - 4:00pm	James Room East
Mixon	James	James William Mixon (he/him)	The Role of Spirituality in Peacebuilding in Laikipia, Kenya	In Laikipia, Kenya, a conflict between pastoral communities and conservation escalated into violent clashes until a ceasefire orchestrated by the 'Mshipi' Council turned combatants into collaborators. Spiritual dialogue and eco-conscious negotiations birthed a groundbreaking grazing program, curbing violence and empowering marginalized groups. Ongoing research delves into cultural and spiritual influences on the conflict's origins, resolutions, and evolutions. Through stakeholder interviews, this study offers profound insights into decolonial spiritualities' role in peacebuilding. Aligned with the HDS Evolution of Spirituality conference's theme, it presents a nuanced exploration in a scholarly presentation and film, capturing the intricate dynamics of this transformative peace initiative.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/26/2024	3:00pm - 4:00pm	James Room West
Magus	Simon	Simon Magus	Rider Haggard and the Imperial Occult: Christian Egyptosophy, Romanticism, and Theosophy	This paper critically examines the literary oeuvre of H. Rider Haggard, and considers the interface of occult spirituality and mainstream religiosity. More especially, it considers the historical topos of the British Empire, and religious dynamics under colonialism. It analyses the syncretic processual mechanisms and discursive religious constructions which resulted from an attempt to accommodate religions from the colonies to the Empire as Christendom. To do this I have employed the over-arching concept of what I have termed the 'Imperial Occult', by which British occultism is understood to be an epiphenomenon of an influx of religious ideas from the colonial periphery.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	3:00pm - 4:00pm	Sperry Room
Kucab	Mateusz	Mateusz Kucab (he/him)	'In the name of the Bee': Emily Dickinson and Earth Spiritualities	In my paper, I would like to read Emily Dickinson's poems from the perspective of environmental spirituality, for which the key elements will be spiritually inspired by the earth, taken from pagan practices and ecofeminist works (Merchant, Shiva, Starhawk) as well as my pneumotheological method, a methodological perspective influenced by ecocriticism, postsecularism and the feminist ethics of care. The objectives of the present study are to define a new model of biosemiotics prescribing subjectivity of non-human nature and its meaning in textual and cultural discourse; to characterize poetical mechanisms deconstructing the religious narration.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	3:00pm - 4:00pm	Sperry Room
Jenkins	Auds	Auds H Jenkins (she/her)	The Collective Voice: Chanting for Liberation	This workshop is an interactive chanting experience in which participants will explore the collective voice as a site of solidarity, power, and liberation. In a cultural context where "sacred music" often means the music of predominantly white Christian churches and the "Western" classical canon or "exotic" chants from some "world religion," this workshop explores chant as embodied, decolonial practice. Using chants in English and Korean, the presenter will lead participants in chants that expand our definition of sacred music. It will be cacophonous. It will be harmonious. Most of all, it will ground participants in their own bodies as instruments of healing and change.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/26/2024	4:30pm - 5:30pm	James Room East

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Last Name	First Name	Full Name(s) of All	Title	Abstract	Presentation Type	How will you	Date	Time (EST)	Location
Rodriguez	Tanya	Tanya Rodriguez	Decolonization, A guidebook to settlers living on stolen land	<p>Goal of the workshop is to provide students with a common definition of decolonization and uncolonization. To provide useful, real life tools to interrupt narratives that confuse the terms, uncolonization with decolonization at the expense of indigenous peoples globally.</p> <p>We will using two articles for reference in the workshop</p> <p>Decolonization, A Guidebook for Settlers Living on Stolen Land</p> <p>https://tresrosa.medium.com/decolonization-a-guidebook-for-settlers-living-on-stolen-land-57c4e4c04bbb</p> <p>Decolonization is not a metaphor by Tuck and Yang</p> <p>https://clas.osu.edu/sites/clas.osu.edu/files/Tuck%20and%20Yang%20202012%20Decolonization%20is%20not%20a%20metaphor.pdf</p> <p>We will also be using three slides during the presentation.</p> <p>Slide one is class description, Slide two is low self awareness, Slide three is, tools for uncolonizing</p>	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/26/2024	4:30pm - 5:30pm	James Room West
ANDRABI	Ruhail	Ruhail Andrabi	The Political Life Of Dead Bodies, Divine Sovereignty, and Indian Empire: The Question of Islam in Kashmir.	<p>My paper focuses on indigenous sensibilities which is largely shaped by the orthodox sufi Islamic practices(mysticism) which are not recognized by Islamic revival movements such as Ahle Hadith and Jamaat-e-Islaami. Rather its the combination of Islamic practices, and some local cultural practices that constitute an important part of people's indigeneity. For example, singing in funerals, forms of intimacies, poetry as well as visiting graveyards of martyrs, and sprinkling the flowers over them. It also entails how the people are attached to shrines and practice Islam according to their local traditions rather than Islamic scriptures. In doing that, I demonstrate how secular power seeks to regulate and govern these religious subjectivities which are largely immersed within the local cultural practices of mourning.</p>	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	4:30pm - 5:30pm	Sperry Room
FATIMA	UMMEL KHAIR	Ummel Khair Fatima	Sufi Traditions and Spiritual Resistance: Mapping South Asian Muslim Alternative Spiritualities	<p>This comprehensive study investigates the intricate facets of alternative spiritualities entrenched within the socio-cultural and religious tapestry of South Asian Muslim nations. It explores the profound role played by these alternative spiritual practices, serving as conduits for celebration and resistance against dominant hegemonic structures while striving to establish accountable frameworks within the complex landscapes of colonial and decolonial contexts prevalent in the region. Primarily centered on South Asian Muslim nations, this research explores the inception and evolution of alternative spiritual practices. These encompass a diverse spectrum, ranging from venerable Sufi traditions to mystical interpretations of Islam, alongside grassroots movements. It meticulously scrutinizes the pivotal role of celebratory rituals, communal congregations, and artistic expressions deeply embedded within these spiritualities. Such components provide invaluable insights into their profound capacity to affirm identities and nurture a deep sense of belonging amid the enduring shadows of colonial legacies.</p> <p>This research rigorously examines alternative spiritualities by employing an interdisciplinary lens that integrates insights from Islamic studies, cultural anthropology, religious studies, postcolonial theory, and linguistic topography. It endeavors to unravel their intricate negotiations with colonial imprints, shedding light on their contributions to fostering decolonial approaches. Moreover, this investigation delves into endeavors to resurrect indigenous spiritual practices rooted in Islamic traditions. Emphasizing the pivotal significance of cultural resurgence and heritage preservation, these efforts stand as potent mechanisms to assuage historical trauma and reclaim lost narratives.</p> <p>This study contributes novel perspectives regarding the transformative potential inherently embedded within alternative spiritualities in South Asian Muslim-majority nations. It meticulously examines their multifaceted roles, from celebrating the rich tapestry of cultural diversity to staunchly resisting the enduring shackles of colonial legacies. Moreover, it delves into their active role in nurturing accountable frameworks that are inherently integrated within the framework of Islam itself.</p> <p>The distinct focus on the South Asian context lends a unique depth to this research, aiming to offer a nuanced comprehension of alternative spiritual expressions. Emphasizing their pivotal role in navigating the labyrinthine paths of colonial histories, this study elucidates how these spiritualities are catalysts in shaping decolonized futures for the multifaceted Muslim societies entrenched within the region.</p>	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/26/2024	4:30pm - 5:30pm	Sperry Room
Everson	Bart	Bart Everson (he/him), George Cawley (he/him)	Decolonizing the Mind Through Gaian Song	<p>Bart Everson performs a series of songs from a Gaian ritual context and recounts the narrative of his journey from conservative Christian indoctrination to Gaian practitioner. Accompanied on guitar by George Cawley.</p>	60 minute performance	Remote	4/26/2024	6:00pm - 7:00pm	James Room West
Seavey	Gail	Rev. Gail Seavey Azura the Bard	"Robin Hood takes the Sheriff of Nottingham Deep into Sherwood Forest: a journey in story and song." Rev. Gail Seavey and Benjamin Seavey aka Azura the Bard.	<p>"Robin Hood takes the Sheriff of Nottingham Deep into Sherwood Forest: a journey in story and song." Rev. Gail Seavey and Benjamin Seavey aka Azura the Bard.</p> <p>"Two generations of settler Sherwood descendants share their spiritual journey starting with mythical creation, to legendary enclosure of Sherwood Forest, through historical enclosure of colonized lands, resting in present ecological crisis caused by people shaped by these stories. Along the way they face their own enclosed souls, tear down enclosures inside and out, and call upon the powers of healing ancestral and community traumas through original songs and storytelling."</p>	60 minute performance	In-person	4/26/2024	6:00pm - 7:00pm	Sperry Room
Sanchez King	Juan Pablo	Daniela Luna, Juan Pablo Sánchez King, Anna Mirgazizova, Diego Durazzo Cejudo, Sarai Cortés	Revisiting Mexico's Ancient Spiritual Traditions: A Path to Inspire Modern Life and Overcome Colonialism and Patriarchy	<p>Mexico's Ancient Nahuatl Spirituality is a belief system rooted in a sacred relationship with nature. This millennial spirituality has been preserved through a myriad of rituals, such as Cacao Ceremonies. Due to the pre-colonial nature of Nahuatlism, it honors values opposed to the European patriarchal mindset that led to Colonialism. Through this presentation we want to celebrate and share the Nahuatl tradition by a) presenting a paper of this rich cosmology and its relevance in the colonial and decolonial contexts; b) present an artistic performance through a Cacao Ceremony; c) present an interactive workshop celebrating the human heart.</p>	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/27/2024	9:00am - 10:00am	James Room East

2024 PES Conference Schedule

April 24-27, 2024

Last Name	First Name	Full Name(s) of All	Title	Abstract	Presentation Type	How will you	Date	Time (EST)	Location
Balliett	Suzu	Suzu Balliett, Kathleen McGoe, Momo Freehill	Title: "Beyond Colonial Entanglements: Embracing Daoist Philosophy & Qigong for Liberating the Mind"	"Title: "Beyond Colonial Entanglements: Embracing Daoist Philosophy & Qigong for Liberating the Mind" Introduction of the entangled mind principles. Exploration of how one can embody Daoist philosophy to unravel colonial mindsets. Furthermore, we will explore the path to liberation through the Qigong movements. The audience can watch or follow along with guided meditations & simple movements uniting the breath with Qi. The participants will experience a transformation leading to a deeper understanding of interconnectedness and harmony. Then we will close with an opportunity to share the experience & reflect.	60 minute interactive workshop	Remote	4/27/2024	9:00am - 10:00am	James Room West
Røstvik	Camilla	Dr Camilla Mørk Røstvik (she/her)	Hag Mountain: A History of the Absence of Witch Memorials in Kristiansand, Norway (or, why Kristiansand is not Salem)	Many places in the world memorialize witch trials through sculptures, shops, and lore. Kristiansand in Norway does not. Despite its violent history of witch-burnings, little attention has been given and no official place of remembrance exists. Why? I begin by examining the role of Indigenous struggles in the history of Norwegian witch-hunts, especially how the killings of Sámi shamans during the period complicates the narrative. Second, I introduce the case of 'Hag Mountain' in Kristiansand, a well-documented site of burnings. Finally, I analyze the lack of memorials, and what this might mean for spiritual practitioners in Norway and Sápmi today.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/27/2024	9:00am - 10:00am	Sperry Room
Smith	Ryan	Ryan Smith (he/him)	Confronting White Supremacy in Nordic Spirituality	If there's one thing that is widely associated with modern Norse spirituality, it is this form of Paganism's long, ugly history with white supremacists and the far-right. A lot, however, has changed in the past decade thanks to anti-racist Nordic Heathen practitioners effectively confronting and rolling back white nationalist influences. Join Ryan Smith, author of The Way of Fire & Ice and "Subcultural Antifascism: Confronting the Far Right in Heathenry and Heavy Metal", for a presentation on how this was accomplished, the ways other spiritual traditions can learn from the experiences of Heathenry, and the future for Nordic spirituality.	20 minute scholarly paper	In-person	4/27/2024	9:00am - 10:00am	Sperry Room
Lovett-Graff	Shir	Shir Lovett-Graff (they/them) Francesca Rubinson (she/her)	Storytelling As Tool for Dismantling Embedded Theologies: Wrestling with Zionism	In this interactive workshop, we will model and discuss the Wrestling with Zionism Storytelling Workshop, which we have used to support Jewish individuals in dismantling embedded theologies of Zionism. As anti-Zionist Jewish activists and scholars, we know that building a decolonial future is impossible without grappling with the ideologies that split the Jewish world. Over the past three years, we have learned the importance of sharing stories about learned Zionism in our anti-Zionist community-building work. This workshop provides a model that can be replicated in faith-based communities (Jewish and otherwise) to open up space for deconstructing embedded theologies. This workshop is open to all and will include participatory storytelling in a modified version of the workshop.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/27/2024	10:30am - 11:30am	James Room East
Khalsa-Baker	Nirinjan	Bhai Baldeep Singh, Francesca Cassio, Nirinjan Khalsa-Baker	Voicing Sikh spiritual sovereignty in musical practices and indigenous knowledges	Sikh musical heritage represents a pre-colonial system of knowledge in danger of disappearing. Established in the late 15th century by Guru Nānak, Gurbāni sangtī (the body of Sikh devotional repertoires) transmits Sikh indigenous knowledge through a spiritual-aesthetic praxis that unites self and other in interconnected oneness. However, the assimilative forces of colonialism, nationalism, and globalization have contributed to the process of homogenization, coercive transformation, and erasure of Indigenous knowledge and Sikh spiritual-aesthetic praxis. The participants in this panel have pioneered new approaches to the study and revival of Sikh musical heritage, by introducing decolonial stances in their scholarship, praxis, activism, teaching, and performances in India, the US, and Europe.	60 minute interactive workshop	Remote	4/27/2024	10:30am - 11:30am	James Room West
Viezca	Eduardo	Eduardo Viezca (he/him), Hector Zaragoza Valentín (he/him), Manuel Dominguez (he/him)	Decolonial Journeys: Queer Chicano therapists alchemizing suffering	This presentation will include autoethnographical accounts of three therapists who also self-identify as queer/two-spirit and mestizo (of the indigenous Mexican diaspora). They also share the archetype of the "healer" in their respective lives as they currently navigate the American mental health system as therapists. In their attempts to decolonize, they honor practices of ancestral and indigenous medicine and serve as guides to those who come seeking resolve from their suffering. These presenters will provide accounts of their personal trajectories and initiation into their path of healing, as well as their confrontations with colonialism and coloniality which they have had to contend with in as part of their journey towards spiritual decolonization.	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/27/2024	12:00pm - 1:00pm	Sperry Room
Mohinani	Urvashi	Urvashi Mohinani (she/her) Premchand Hombal (he/him)	Embodied Spirituality in Bharatanatyam: Unveiling the Symbiotic Relationship between Physicality and the Divine in Classical Indian Dance	Title: - Temporal Framing and Cultural Contexts: Bharatanatyam's Evolution through Artistic Periodization Abstract The study of Bharatanatyam's development through artistic periodization unveils its transformative journey within cultural settings and temporal frames. Influenced by colonial forces and subsequent decolonization, this dance form, deeply rooted in spirituality, underwent profound changes. Employing a qualitative approach involving historical scrutiny and critical discourse analysis, the research delves into the intricate interplay of spirituality, the arts, and socio-political dynamics. Colonial interventions obscured Bharatanatyam's spiritual essence, yet decolonial efforts sparked a deliberate resurgence, reclaiming its intrinsic spirituality and transcending imposed constraints. This exploration underscores spirituality's pivotal role, illustrating Bharatanatyam's resilience amid colonial suppression and subsequent decolonial resurgence, echoing the enduring bond between spirituality, artistic expression, and cultural identity across shifting eras. Keywords: - Dance, Bharatanatyam, Colonial, Decolonial, Spirituality	60 minute interactive workshop	In-person	4/27/2024	12:00pm - 1:00pm	James Room West
Woldemikael	Eve	Eve Woldemikael (she/her)	Who Broke the Sun Child's Heart? A lyric, musical essay	Is this required for performances as well? I believe that my description of the piece would be suitable as an abstract, however I would like more guidance.	60 minute performance	In-person	4/27/2024	12:00pm - 1:00pm	Sperry Room