Dr. **Tim Mosteller**, Professor, California Baptist University, USA

Why Callest Thou Me Good? From Commonsense to Good to God

The objective of this research is to demonstrate that commonsense ordinary experience produces moral knowledge which entails the possibility of theological knowledge. The methodology of this research is primarily philosophical and phenomenological. The paper has three parts. First, I argue, following Aquinas, that from direct empirical perception, it is possible to know the nature of existence understood as essential exemplification. Second, I argue that from a patient examination of the phenomenology of experience, it is possible to know that being and goodness are identical. Three, I then consider how knowledge of goodness understood as the completion of a possible essential perfection points to the possibility of knowledge of God. I will clarify how the inference here is related to Aquinas' "fifth way" or teleological argument, and I will show how an argument from moral knowledge to knowledge of God differs from contemporary moral arguments for theism. The findings of this paper are that moral knowledge arises from empirical experience and phenomenological reflections. The argument of this paper concludes that moral knowledge arising in this way points to theological knowledge.

Mr. **D. Malachi Walker**, Graduate Student, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

The Problem of Evil in Genesis 20

In discussing the problem of evil in the Tanak, many scholars draw upon wisdom literature in order to frame the Israelites' understanding of the relationship between God's existence and evil. Although some may find it surprising, Abraham's encounter with Abimelech in Genesis 20 affords opportunity to analyze the problem of evil from Elohist's perspective. Taking into account the wider Ancient Near Eastern context in which Genesis 20 was written, the Elohist authors develop salient themes which have import for theodicy. How does God act in the face of his followers sinning against those who do not follow him, as Abraham does against Abimelech? Why does God threaten death to an innocent man? This paper aims to analyze the actions of Abraham, as the elect of God, Abimelech as a non-elect agent, and God's differing relationship between the two. The first point of analysis is God in his relationship to

his elect and non-elect. How is it possible to harmonize God choosing Abraham, who is a sinful man? Why does God protect Abraham and Sarah in response to Abraham's fault? The answer to these questions is the Elohist's understanding of election, namely that election is used by God is order to provide goodness for creation as a whole. The second point of analysis is God's encounter with Abimelech. That God, who promises goodness to his creatures, threatens death to an innocent man, superficially seems inconsistent in the narrative. However, the Elohist shows God to actively stymie evil and protect the non-elect while being faithful to the promise to Abraham. This paper will examine the intersection of God's faithfulness to Abraham, Abraham's sinful actions, and the evil and goodness that come about as a result.

Mr. **Asger Trier**, Independent Scholar, Denmark

Love and Unity

Keywords: woke, platonism, love

The paper is a very mild criticism of the current ideas of Woke, and has an alternative to woke, that of platonic philosophy. The idea is, that where woke preaches diversity, Plato preaches unity and love. The paper is a truly theoretical piece. The ideas rest on a quite extensive work of research of the theories involved, and based on the public debate here in Denmark. The method is an existential process. Like Kierkegaard, I use myself as a kind of a lab. Using my own person as an example, trying to view the ideas from a personal view and the apply it on society in general, is the idea.

Ms. **Bohye Kim**, PhD Student, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, USA

The Scent of Respect: The Woman's Pouring with Perfume and Fragrance as Identity Design

Keywords: Pliny the Elder, anointing with perfume, olfactory experience, olfaction in theology, identity design

In Pliny the Elder's Natural History, we find examples of the Roman use of perfume: its origin, types of flowers and scents for fragrance, and its use in culture. People living in the first-century Greco-Roman world used perfume in various contexts of their social life: hygiene (cleansing and deodorizing), cosmetics (odor attraction), medicines (healing), and ritual and religious purposes (honoring the person of worship). The study of smell reemerged during the 1980s when anthropologists, such as Anthony Synnott, realized that olfaction

played "important but often unnoticed roles" in our culture (Synnott, The Body Social, 205). Socio-anthropological studies on fragrance and olfactory point out that smell is "a social phenomenon" which invests with "particular" meaning and values in cultures (Constance Classen, David Howes, and Anthony Synnott, Aroma, 3, 140). In this paper, I consider the theological significance of the sense of smell in the account of Jesus's anointing by a woman in Mark 14:3-9. First, the social description shows the first-century Greco-Roman thoughts on perfume. Second, through a socio-anthropological understanding of fragrance, it argues that the smell of perfume from the woman's pouring highlighted an elevated social identity upon Jesus. Thirdly, it argues that understanding the first-century Greco-Roman thoughts on perfume will help us read the New Testament olfactory passages with a theological sense of fragrance because smell mattered for what they meant.

Dr. **Dewaram Nagdeve**, Professor, International Institute for Population Sciences Mumbai, India

Family Planning Differentials among Religious Groups in India

Religion continues to play an important role in family planning differentials among religious groups in India. Muslim women having low use of family planning than Hindu and non-Hindu Muslim women in India. This paper examines family planning differentials among religious groups in India. The data has been analyzed from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) conducted during 2015-2016 in India. The analysis of data has done by using bi-variate, and multivariate analyses to observe the association between each of the dependent and independent variables. The analysis shows that religious family planning differentials exist even after controlling the effects of several major indicators of socio-economic development. The socioeconomic status does not necessarily have a positive impact on use of family planning, as is generally the case, implying that the effects of socioeconomic status may vary according to the religious context. A reason may be heavy reliance of India's family planning program on sterilization and Muslims preference for temporary methods over sterilization. Another reason may be heavy reliance of the program on public sector sources of supply of family planning and Muslims preference for private sector due to greater privacy needs. A third reason may be greater opposition to family planning among Muslims, which has indicated in survey as their main reason for not currently using and not intending to use family planning in the future. Multivariate analysis

on use of family planning show that use of family planning differentials among religious groups exist even after controlling for the other socioeconomic and demographic variables. The findings suggest that greater availability of modern temporary methods and expansion of private sector family planning services may increase use of family planning among Muslims in India. Education and motivation programs aimed at reducing opposition to family planning may also help achieve these objectives.

Mrs. **Rosalind Janssen**, Student, Archbishop's Examination in Theology, Lambeth Palace, UK

Taking Oral Testimonies from Anglican Women Religious: Pitfalls and Pickings

Keywords: Anglican women religious, feminist oral history, Actor Network Theory, feminist curriculum, female voices

From 1930 to 1970, Dalton House in Bristol functioned as the women's theological training college of the Anglican Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society (BCMS). Founded in 1922 as the result of an acrimonious split with the 'modernist' Church Missionary Society, BCMS remained staunchly evangelical conservative. Of relevance to this paper is that it was the only missionary society to oppose the 1928 Prayer Book. Over its forty years existence, Dalton House would train candidates for the mission field, alongside parochial 'lady workers' destined for home evangelism. Seeking to understand the daily experience of living and studying there, my interdisciplinary doctorate draws on oral histories. It utilises methodological tools drawn from feminist theology, feminist gerontology, and history of education theory. As a result of the fifteen testimonies taken from women who were students at Dalton House from 1957 onward, this paper presents findings concerning the college uniform and the college curriculum. An unanticipated discovery were the photographs, lecture notes and marked exam papers still retained by some of the women. This has provided primary source material totally absent from the official archives. Such female memorabilia will be deconstructed by means of Actor Network Theory (ANT). Ultimately, the rich multifaceted pickings – oral, written, and visual – gathered from these women religious far outweigh the potential pitfalls which I encountered. Not only has a feminist angle on oral history allowed for gaps to be filled in relation to the college uniform, but a 'reading against the grain' analysis of the female curriculum will disrupt BCMS male hegemonies. Equally significantly, feminist oral history has recovered lost female voices. The final reflections of my generous octogenarian and nonagenarian respondents confirm the notion of storytelling as a redemptive narrative whereby earlier life course events are rendered coherent.

Dr. **DoVeanna Fulton**, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Norfolk State University, USA

Neo-Pentecostalism: Black Ambivalence and Social Change

Keywords: Black Pentecostalism, ambivalence, non-denominational, traditional African religious practices

Black American participation in established Christian denominations and the founding of their own churches and denominations date back to the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. After Emancipation, the development of Black Christian denominations increased in the American South with the founding of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church (1807) and the National Baptist Convention (1880). These denominations afforded African Americans authority and control of their religious institutions and worship practices that reflected Black cultural traditions and practices. In addition to Black church denominations that grew out of established white Christian denominations, African Americans were at the forefront of the development of Holiness and Pentecostal denominations where worshipers could praise and worship with spiritual expression and exuberance, demonstrating gifts of the Holy Spirit, with speaking in tongues as the foremost sign of spiritual anointing. Black Pentecostalism is a Christian denomination grounded in African religious practices that sustained African Americans and communities marginalized because of racism, classism, gender and sexuality subjugation. Furthermore, Black Pentecostalism afforded religious freedoms and created spaces where women assumed leadership roles as evangelists, elders, and founders of churches. Despite the freedoms and rich spiritual sustenance and history found in Black Pentecostalism, in the twentieth-first century there are increasing numbers of Black churches with worship practices similar to Pentecostal expressions but present themselves as "Non-Denominational, a term that is fraught with ambiguity." This paper uses The Mount, a non-denominational church, as a case study of non-denominational churches, or what I term "neo-Pentecostalism," and suggests an ambivalence toward Pentecostalism and its African roots whereby spirit-filled worship practices that energize and inspire congregants are adopted while the more extreme beliefs and practices are eschewed in favor of more flexibility and fluidity that are more inclusive and allow worshippers to engage in twenty-first century realities.

Dr. **Ronnie Azoulay**, Lecturer, Achva College, Israel

Milestones in the Development of Modern Islamic Extremism

Keywords: religion of Islam, the Arab world, extremism, Muslim Brotherhood, ideological crisis, Sayyid Qutb, Hassan Al-Banna

Main purpose of this dissertation is to examine the background and the atmosphere in the Muslim world which represented the ongoing ideological crisis in the religion of Islam. In addition, this study aims to explore how Sayyid Qutb's ideology opened the door to the use of Islamic violence. Methodology: a) The study has two sizeable data sets (one quantitative, one qualitative), with rigorous data collection and appropriate analyses, and with inferences made from both parts of the study. b) The dissertation integrates the two parts of the study, in terms of comparing, contrasting, or embedding conclusions from both the qualitative and the quantitative strands. Research findings: this study finds that the deep ideological crisis in the religion of Islam was one of the leading factors that led to the Islamic outbreak. In addition, the writings of Sayyid Qutb which written in prison, which were given a new interpretation by fundamentalist Islam that led to modern Islamic violence. Conclusion: The deep and ongoing crisis in the Islamic world led to the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood organization in Egypt in 1928. After the crisis in the Muslim Brotherhood, during the 1960s, the Muslim Brotherhood organization split into two main groups, one that supported Hassan al-Bana's path, meaning, that Islam should be spread only in peacefully ways and the other group that gave a unique interpretation to Sayyid Qutb's writings, which planted the seeds to modern Islamic violence.

Dr. **Roger Haydon Mitchell**, Honorary Researcher and Political Theologian, Lancaster University and Westminster Theological Centre, UK

The Capacity of Shared Stories to Function as Myth and Encourage Inclusive Participation

Keywords: myth, listening, story, inclusion, participation

Beginning with a description of the way the myths of incarnation and trinity function to encourage collaborative social participation in my own experience with the Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission (http://www.morecambebaypovertytruthcommission.org.uk/), the paper will attempt to show that shared stories operate as myths that transform corporate behaviour. In Timothy Stacey's words they "help people expand their imagination, overcome the instrumental lens through which they perceive their own lives, and revivify the spirit of

political participation." The paper will draw in particular on Stacey, Saving Liberalism from Itself: The Spirit of Political Participation (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2022); Julie Tomlin "The Spiralling dance of Wisdom" in The Kenarchy Journal 1.3, 2020 (https://kenarchy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Kenarchy_Volume1.3.pdf) and Sue Mitchell and Francisco Jose Eiroa-Orosa, "Love your enemy? An aesthetic discourse analysis of self-transcendence in values-motivated altruism" in Roger Haydon Mitchell, ed. Cultivating New Political Space (London and New York: Routledge, 2019). Stacey's applied research findings from his years researching among participants in the Metro Vancouver Alliance, Tomlin's work on the instatement of feminine myths and Sue Mitchell's iteration of the skills of dialogic listening are harnessed to substantiate the proposal that a greater recognition of the role of myth in contemporary society will encourage and facilitate genuine participation. The capacity of shared stories to offset the Western liberal tendency to see knowledge as a rational mathēsis by means of which experts induct the individual into a more or less passive role will be indicated. In conclusion some of the practical outcomes of Round One of the Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission will be outlined in evidence of the socially transformative potential of shared personal story telling.

Dr. **Michael Murphy**, Director of Choral Activities/Associate Professor, Stephen F. Austin State University, USA

Shifting the Cultural Stereotype of Threat to Imago Dei: The Musical and Poetic Symbolism in Joel Thompson's "Seven Last Words of the Unarmed"

Keywords: Imago Dei, black males, Joel Thompson

According to recent research, black males in the United States are nearly three times as likely to be killed by police than white males (Edwards et al. 2019). Within the black community there has been a myriad of ways to deal with this grim existential threat. Some have dealt with this stressful reality by protesting, while others have chosen to become involved politically. Many have turned to the arts to express their raw emotions. In 2014, Atlanta-based composer Joel Thompson composed a setting of the tragic last words of unarmed black men before they were killed by police. The gripping musical drama is set in seven movements and presents many blatant and subtle comparisons with "Christ's Seven Last Words from the Cross." Since the 16th - century "Christ's Seven Last Words from the Cross", taken from the four canonical gospels, have inspired many liturgical Christian services during the Lenten season, particularly Holy Week. Many musical settings and

exegesis have been created to portray and explain the inherent drama found within the crucifixion. This presentation will demonstrate that through the framework of the dramatic synoptic gospels account of "Christ's Seven Last Words from the Cross," Joel Thompson creates a powerful musical work in "Seven Last Words of the Unarmed" that brings awareness to racial stereotyping and profiling that occurs with black men and works to shift this perception that they are a threat to Imago Dei, "the image of God."

Dr. **Shahla Mehrgani**, Academic Tutor, University of Sheffield, UK

Insufferable Resilience

Keywords: Iran, resilience, persecution

This research shows how long and perpetual persecution can turn off the flames of motivation among the congregation of believers, unlike short-term persecution. After the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, The Universal House of Justice Spiritual and Administrative Head of the World Baha'i Community at the beginning forbid the Iranian Baha'is to leave the country and asked them to stay and resist all the executions and persecutions that the Islamic regime forced and imposed to the Baha'is. Since then, at least 200 Baha'is have been executed, all of them were expelled from their jobs, and they are not allowed to enter the regular universities in their own countries. For decades after the revolution, they couldn't even have passports. Gradually when the government with universal human rights force gave Baha'is the right to have passports The Universal House of Justice still encouraged Baha'is to stay and resist in Iran. Their logic was if they left their country, who would get their civil right back and announce their Faith to the others. Iran is the Cradle of the Baha'i Faith. Baha'is proudly resisted and tolerated all of the persecutions. They even established their own preschool, university, and many more establishments that were deprived of in the bigger society. The House called this " Constructive Resilience." After 43 years and three generations later, the Baha'i community is tired. Unfortunately, the third generation still tolerates the persecution. The government suspends most establishments, and the financial situation is generally and tragically a pressure on all Iranians, specifically Baha'is. Many of them have lost their motivation to resist the persecution. They are tired and poor, and they feel they have been left alone. In this qualitative research, I will interview ten third generations of Iranian Baha'is, some in Iran, some in the UK, and some who have experienced imprisonment. I will call their status politely: Insufferable Resilience. Now, most

Baha'i youth and even their families are looking for a way to leave the country. The situation is unbearable for them, and they have lost their motivation and cannot provoke it even through the letters of the UHJ anymore.

Dr. **Ann Strahle**, Associate Professor, School of Communication and Media, University of Illinois Springfield, USA

Flag Waving Doesn't Help When the Bullets are Coming Down the Line: The Duality of Faith and Ethics with Military Chaplains

Keywords: military, chaplains, religion, ethics, philosophy

This research explores the chaplaincy from a critical-cultural communication model, focusing on how the representation of the military chaplain has been understood within culture, how chaplains understand their role today, and how they communicate their messages to military members in light of growing religious diversity. The focus of this work was on chaplains within the U.S. National Guard; a highly underrepresented area within research and provides unique opportunities for examining the duality of responsibilities (those who work full-time outside the military, live amongst those not in the military, but are still a large part of the military community). This particular article examines what makes a soldier kill or fight for his/her country if it goes against religious/ethical values, and more specifically, how that dichotomy is dealt with in the Chaplain Corps through their work and communication with members of the military. The article begins with a chaplain's experience as a conscientious objector, and then weaves together 'just war' theory and the real-life experiences of the chaplains. The heart of this research is in-depth, qualitative interviews with National Guard chaplains and those responsible for their training. After sending an email to all chaplains in the state of Illinois, six agreed to an in-person interview. Another six interviews took place at the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School in Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Since the reliability and veracity of the key informants are crucial for the ethnography, every observation made by key informants was triangulated with inputs from others in order to assess accuracy. Talking to the key informants pointed to people who may provide further information. In this way, the collection of data progressed through observations and chains of conversations and informants, and the emphasis was on identifying events and people that contribute to the narrative.

Dr. **John T. P. Lai**, Professor of Religious Studies, Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

"Sacred Book" of China: "Operations of God" in James Legge's Translation of the Yijing (Book of Changes, 1882)

Keywords: James Legge, Yijing (Book of Changes), Confucian classic, translation, inter-religious dialogue

James Legge (1815–97), arguably the most prominent missionary-sinologist in the 19th century and the founding Professor of Chinese in Oxford in 1876, produced an English translation of the Yijing (Book of Changes), the highly venerated and influential Chinese classic, in 1882. This translation was included in Max Müller's monumental Sacred Books of the East series. Perceiving the Yijing as a Confucian classic with profound moralistic connotations, Legge even revered it as a "sacred book" containing the divine revelation of Shangdi, the Chinese name for the Christian God. Although Legge drew upon the Latin translation produced by a group of Anti-Figurist Jesuits in the early 19th century, he claimed that the Chinese term di or shangdi meant "God–our God–the true God," insisting that "God" was the "correct" translation of (shang)di, "the Lord and Ruler of Heaven;" and that the operations of nature in the various seasons, as denoted by the trigrams, are the operations of Shangdi. This paper examines Legge's pioneering attempt of introducing and translating the Chinese classic to the West, which engendered profound inter-religious encounters and dialogues between the Yijing and the Bible, and between Confucianism and Christianity.

Ms. **Jochebed Hin Ming Wu**, PhD Student, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

Rewriting the Neo-Confucian Cosmology: Lü Liben's Cross-Textual Interpretation of the Taiji Theory

Keywords: The Yijing (The Book of Changes), Lu Libien, Jesuit Figurism, cross-textual hermeneutics, interfaith dialogue

Until very recently, the vast majority of readers and even scholars of Jesuit figurists have assumed that their ideas were short-lived and far from influential. The discovery of the Yijing benzhi 易經本旨 (Original Meaning of the Yijing, 1774), however, may suggest the otherwise. Deposited in the Zikawei Library for centuries without attracting much scholarly attention, Yijing benzhi constitutes a unique piece of Christian literature produced by the Chinese Catholic believer Lü Liben 呂立本 in the Qing period. Following in the footsteps of

Jesuit missionaries such as Joachim Bouvet (1656–1730), Lü represents a rare Chinese voice of the Figurist interpretation of the Yijing by claiming that ancient Chinese sages had received and recorded God's divine revelation in this venerated Chinese classic. Focusing on his interpretation of the locus classicus of Taiji 太極 (Great Ultimate) in the Xici Zhuan 繫辭傳 (The Great Treatise), this paper examines the ways in which Lü integrated and transformed the neo-Confucian metaphysical concepts of li 理 (Principle), qi 氣 (Matter), xiantian 先天 (Atemporality) and houtian 後天 (Temporality) to deduce the theological connotations of the trigrams/hexagrams in light of Catholic thought. By adopting Archie C. C. Lee's framework of cross-textual hermeneutics, this paper draws upon how Lü moved between two textual traditions – Chinese religious texts and Catholic missionary texts – in his exegesis. Making a pioneering analysis of Lü's manuscript, this paper attempts to locate the missing piece in the puzzle of the Chinese Figurist movement. By highlighting the importance of local context in shaping Christianity in China, it aims at going beyond comparative studies and interfaith dialogue, providing valuable insights into the dynamic interaction of Chinese culture and Christian faith in process of inculturation.

Ms. **Ankita Chakrabarty**, Research Scholar, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, India

Manasa from Myth to Mundane: A Contemporary Socio-Cultural Study of the Worshippers of Lower Assam

Keywords: lived religion, embodiment, folk religion

The encompassing relation between culture and religion though bears immense importance in understanding the lived experiences but the tendency of legitimizing certain practices or religious rituals as culture endows a paradigmatic status to the category of a set of religious practices and utterances producing knowledge. In this proposal, I would like to look into the role of Manasa, the indigenous snake goddess in influencing and organizing the lived experiences of the Bodo, Rabha and Koch-Rajbangshi worshippers along with the symbols embedded in the cultural system or religious practices peculiar to Assam. Having known a few instances in which the indigenous religious rituals, beliefs and myths of the diverse tribal communities in Assam have been amalgamated with the Brahminic system the proposal calls for the study of the socio-cultural background of the worshippers with concomitant religious dimension of their folk culture or folk cultural dimension of religion. Beginning with a functional analysis of religion the proposal explores symbolic order and phenomenological

experiences to accommodate the argument in question along the theoretical base of symbolic manifestation of body and experiences of embodiment. This study plans to reconsider individual-subjective and communal-social paradigm in terms of received cultural categories. The tradition of venerating Manasa among the Bodo, Rabha and Rajbongshi tribes if restricted to prototypical formulation of generalizing Indological and historical findings the realm of lived experiences might seem locked in a private world of sensation. Engaging with the aesthetics of religion as a methodological lens the study intents to resort to the sensory perception as a means of interpreting received meanings and preoccupations which underlie the religious experience of a specific community. In mapping the storyworlds of socially and culturally interconnected ethnic communities the paradigm of sensation, perception and embodiment enlarges on the significance of body.

Mr. **Brady Stimpson**, Graduate Student, Brigham Young University, USA

To Preserve or to Practice? Philosophical Underpinnings of Qur'anic Education Revealed through Hermeneutical Analysis of Key Passages of the Sahih Bukhari and the Qur'an

This study sets forth a Qur'an and Hadith-based teleology and pedagogy for Qur'anic education through a hermeneutical analysis and comparison of the Sahih Bukhari with the Qur'an. Key passages in the Sahih Bukhari discussing teaching and learning the Qur'an repeatedly prescribe a dialectic approach. This includes encouraging individual, inferential reasoning with a purpose of understanding and applying the Qur'an's message. Contemporary Islamic educators have often characterized the purpose of Qur'anic education as preservation through memorization. This practice stems both from the Qur'an's name (i.e., the recitation) and from its oft-repeated mandate for the prophet and others to memorize and preserve its message. However, the Semitic roots and verb forms in the Qur'an together with authoritative Hadith make a noteworthy distinction between teaching the Qur'an for the sake of preserving its original form and teaching the Qur'an to invite understanding and application among its students. The unique contribution of this study is the finding that the latter of these two approaches may be more strongly encouraged in the Islamic canon, particularly when considered in light of the Sahih Bukhari. These findings make a timely contribution to what previous scholarship has discovered about the purpose and pedagogy or Qur'anic education and give voice to an Islamic perspective into the perennial discussion of

education's purpose as more than a transfer of information, but a transformative act of becoming. The purpose of this article is not to suggest a change to time-honored methodologies of Qur'anic memorization or education. Rather, it invites a careful reconsideration of the intended purpose behind that memorization to go beyond preservation alone and include understanding and application. Furthermore, this teleological focus on understanding and application does not represent an innovation in islamic educational philosophy, but a move toward strengthened awareness of this deeper purpose behind teaching the Qur'an.

Dr. **Nasser Hussain**, Postdoctoral Scholar, Princeton University, USA

Cab Driving in the Spirit of Islam

Keywords: Islam, Britain, Secularism, Ritual, Migration

This paper, based on ethnographic research, looks at the building of a religious community (Muslim) in secular-modern Britain. Modern, free market conditions are supposed to lead to the demise of communal existence, including for religious communities. But this paper finds that, in the case of Muslim cab driving, far from weakening communal bonds, cab driving strengthened them because of the specific way this mode of labor articulated with Islamic religious traditions. The paper explores the role of ritual and family in these pious Muslims' lives, and specifically, the central role of the cab driver as a cultural authority in this religious community.

Dr. **Perwaiz Hayat**, Part-time Teaching Faculty, Concordia University, Canada

Shamsi Guptis: Revisiting the Concept of Taqiyya

Keywords: Shamsi Guptis, Nizari Ismailis of India, taqiyya, Hinduism and Islam, conversion

This presentation intends to revisit the concept of taqiyya (dissimulation) as understood by various scholars in the context of Gupti Ismailis (lit., Ismailis who were hidden). It will focus on the Shamsi Guptis of Punjab (lit. the veiled followers of Shams), a smaller group of the Gupti Ismailis of the Indo-Pak subcontinent. Shamsi Guptis used to exist as a Hindu community in the northern part of India, they had lived as Guptīs until the beginning of the last century, despite having been converted to Islam by one of the Nizārī Ismā'īlī dāīs, Pir Shams, in the 14th century. A few scholars believe that this 'guptiness'(hiding) was due to

the fear of persecution. Hence, Shamsi Guptis remained in hiding in the garb of Hinduism until they were told by their Imam (Aga Khan III) in 1910 to come out from the veil of Hinduism and openly declare their Muslim identity. This presentation will critically examine the reasons provided by the scholars for the hiding of Nizari Ismailis and would offer various other reasons which should be considered while studying Guptis of India in general and specifically Shamsi Guptis of Punjab.

Dr. **Doron Avraham**, Head, General History Department, Bar Ilan University, Israel

From Lutheran Dogmatism to Religious Toleration: German Pietism and Jews' Conversion

Keywords: Pietism, Lutheranism, Judaism, Orthodox, Conversion

My paper seeks to demonstrate how the German orthodox dogmatic theology of Lutheran Protestantism had been transformed since the late seventeenth century into a "religion of the heart" (Herzens-Religion), with the emergence of the German Pietist movement. I will argue that toward the late seventeenth century, a growing number of Protestants accommodated enlightened and tolerant values that could relief tension between rival German Protestants and Catholics. Yet my paper will further focus on the more practical meaning of Pietism, which deviated from the orthodox theory. Encouraging personal religious devotion and individual renewal, Pietists developed a new posture toward Jews and their conversion. When the emotional, social, and educational feature of religiosity became the essence of piety, Pietists like Hermann August Francke, Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, Philip Jacob Spener, and still others changed their prospect about Judaism's future. Drawing on texts and correspondence of these Lutheran Pietists, I will show that although they wished the Jews' change of heart, eventually they realized that mass conversion was impractical, and will remain as a chiliastic expectation. Instead, they advocated the acceptance of Jews as a particular people, whose love for God still make them followers of divine order. Coercion of other religion on someone who adheres to certain belief, was immoral for some of these devotees. While current scholarship emphasizes the Pietists' efforts at Jews conversion as a preliminary step toward salvation, my thesis shows that already in the first years of the Pietist movement, many of its members assumed different strategy toward Judaism and Jews which was a derivative of their new religiosity. Tolerance and acceptance were the main thread of German Pietists who thus anticipated the renewal of the individual and the church, rather than continuous effort to bring about Jew's acknowledgment of Christ as the Messiah.