

THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES  
 5C INTERCOLLEGIATE RELIGIOUS STUDIES PROGRAM  
 FALL 2023



Darryl A. Smith, Religious Studies, Pomona College

*Sine of Spirit: 47 Evocations*

2021-2022

Steel rods, mirrors, wood, rubber mallets, violin bow

36 x 66 inches

This project involved construction of a *Jammachrome* — a modified 19th-century instrument called a “Kaliedophone” — for recording illuminated vibration.

*What of sound patterns in myriad domains and expressions of sacred geometry?*

## **5C Intercollegiate Religious Studies Program - Religious Studies Faculty**

### **CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE**

[Claremont McKenna](#)

Esther Chung-Kim (World Christianity, European Reformation, History of Poverty), Chair  
Gastón Espinosa (U.S. Religions, Religion & Civil Rights, Religion & Film, Religion & Politics)  
Gary Gilbert (Jewish Civilization, Early Christianity, Jewish-Christian Relations)  
Cynthia Humes (South Asian Religions, Goddess & Guru Worship, Transcendentalism)  
Daniel Michon (Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Archaeology, Theory)  
Jamel Velji (Islamic Apocalypticism & Eschatology, Islam Intellectual History, Shiism)  
Mark Juergensmeyer (Religion, Violence, and Peacebuilding), Visiting  
Chloe Martínez (South Asian Religions, Hinduism, Sikhism, Literature & Poetry), Visiting  
Troy Mills (African American Religions), Postdoctoral Fellow and Visiting  
Daniel Watling (Islamic Theology, Intellectual History), Visiting

### **HARVEY MUDD COLLEGE**

[Harvey Mudd](#)

Erika Dyson (Religion & Science, Religion & Law, Gender)

### **PITZER COLLEGE**

[Pitzer](#)

Carina Johnson (Religion in the Early Modern World, Medieval Christianity, Gender), Coordinator  
Ahmed Alwishah (Islamic Philosophy, Medieval Philosophy, Philosophy of Religion, Islamic Theology)

### **POMONA COLLEGE**

[Pomona](#)

Oona Eisenstadt (Jewish Studies, Philosophy, Literature)  
Zhiru Ng (Buddhism, Chinese & Japanese Religions) Chair  
Erin Runions (Hebrew Bible, Gender & Sexuality)  
Darryl Smith (Philosophy of Religion, Black Religions)

### **SCRIPPS COLLEGE**

[Scripps](#)

Luis Josué Salés (Early, Medieval, Pre-modern Christianity, Postcolonial/Queer Theory), Chair

### **ON LEAVE**

Darryl Smith (Pomona) – On Sabbatical – Spring 2024  
Gaston Espinosa (CMC) – On Sabbatical – Fall 2023  
Esther Chung-Kim (CMC) – On Sabbatical – Spring 2024-Fall 2024  
Luis Josué Salés (SC) - On Sabbatical – Fall 2023

## 5C RELIGIOUS STUDIES COURSE OFFERINGS & DESCRIPTIONS FALL 2022

### Course Location & Sponsor

CM = [Claremont McKenna](#)

HM = [Harvey Mudd](#)

PO = [Pomona](#)

PZ = [Pitzer](#)

SC = [Scripps](#)

*For CMC students, non-RLST courses do not count toward RLST GE or major credit, unless pre-approved by the department chair*

### **RLST 02 PO – Ideas of Love (Eisenstadt, McWilliams) MW 1:15-2:30 PM**

We read texts from the Western canon and compare their presentations of love. Questions that might be raised include: How is love presented differently in different eras and why? Does love mean something different in philosophical texts and theological texts? And how have ideas of love supported conceptions of virtue, ethics, power, and meaning? Course texts include works by Plato, Augustine, Shakespeare, and Orwell.

### **RLST 37 CM – History of World Christianity (Chung-Kim, Staff) MW 1:15-2:30 PM; MW 4:15-5:30 PM**

Explores the history of Christianity from Jesus to the present in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Focus on key debates and conflicts over the canon of Scripture, orthodoxy versus heresy, the papacy, church-state conflicts, the crusades, Christian-Muslim-Jewish debates, the Protestant Reformation, Protestant feminism, liberalism, fundamentalism, evangelicalism and Pentecostalism, liberation theology, and key struggles over missions, colonialism, and indigenization.

### **RLST 45 CM – Sikhism (Martinez) TR 9:35-10:50 AM**

Sikhism arose in North India in the 15th century, and has since become a global religion with approximately 30 million adherents. This course will consider the historical context of Sikhism's emergence and development in the Punjabi homeland; Sikh theology, ritual, and practice; and the Sikh diaspora in the U.S. and elsewhere. Within these areas of inquiry we will also engage with key themes from the tradition, including scripture and authority; martyrdom and violence; identity (from gender and sexuality to caste, class, and the turban); and politics (including Partition, the Khalistan movement, 1984, and Sikhs in post-9/11 America). We will watch several films and will visit a local Gurudwara (a Sikh place of worship).

### **PHIL 52 PZ – Philosophy of Religion (Alwishah) W 2:45-5:30 PM**

The philosophy of religion is concerned with philosophical reflection on a broad range of questions concerning religious belief. The nature of religious belief is quite varied across cultures. In Western theism belief in God and a belief in personal immortality are two central religious beliefs. So philosophy of religion in the West is largely concerned with explicating and clarifying the concept of God and life after death, as well as considering the alleged reasons for supposing God exists or that there is life after death. However, in other traditions belief in reincarnation and karma are central beliefs and so questions regarding the nature, meaning and justification of the concepts of reincarnation and karma are important for an Eastern philosophy of religion. In this course, we will examine similar philosophical questions from Western and Eastern religious traditions as well as African, Native American and a variety of other world religions.

**RLST 55 CM – Jewish Art & Identity (Gilbert) TR 1:15-2:30 PM**

The course examines Jewish history and constructions of identity through the art work produced by Jews from antiquity to the present. Jews have used a variety of visual artistic media (e.g., mosaics, paintings, architecture) to express their central beliefs, create spaces of holiness, articulate notions of Jewish identity, and formulate collective memories, an important process in the creation and maintenance of Jewish identity. Some of the topics covered are ancient synagogue art, Medieval illuminated manuscripts, Holocaust art, and modern European, American, and Israeli art, including the work of Oppenheim, Chagall, Shahn, Soyer, Rothko, Lilien, Rubin, Zaritsky, Ardon, and Nes.

**RLST 58 CM – End of the World As We Know It (Velji) MW 11:00-12:15 PM**

Apocalypticism remains one of the most potent and enduring dimensions of human religiosity. Apocalyptic symbolism has been implicated in the rise and renewal of major religious traditions, revolutions (of both secular and religious varieties) and major historical events. The events of the apocalypse have also provided material for some of the most creative expressions of artistic, literary, and cultural phenomena throughout human history. This course explores some of the ways in which the apocalyptic is expressed across Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and beyond while also addressing key theoretical concerns in apocalyptic studies.

**RLST 60 SC – Feminist Interpret of the Bible (Staff) R 2:45-5:30 PM**

Sampling from various literary families of the Bible, this course will carry out feminist analysis of biblical texts and explore their feminist interpretations and their political motivations. Through the exploration of different feminist perspectives, methods, contexts and social locations, the course will underline how these various factors shape feminist interpretations of the Bible.

**HIST 74 PZ – The Problem with Profit (Johnson) TR 2:45-4:00 PM**

This course examines changing attitudes towards profit and wealth in Europe from 1400-1650. As capitalism emerged in Europe, people responded to this controversial idea and the actual accumulation of wealth in their communities in many ways. We will examine theological, cultural, and political debates and practices involving wealth, profit, and the significance of money. We will then turn to exploring religious, social, and cultural responses to wealth inequality within early modern communities.

**RLST 93 CM – Religion and Politics in Israel (Gilbert) TR 2:45-4:00 PM**

Israel defines itself as a Jewish and democratic state. This course will examine how these two contrasting and sometimes competing understandings, the religiously particular and the secularly universal, have helped to shape Israeli history and society. The first unit of the course will survey the historical and religious connections between the people of Israel and the land of Israel, Jewish political theory, and how modern Zionist thinkers appropriated, modified, and rejected these understandings in developing their rationales for the creation of a Jewish state. The second unit will examine how religion influenced some of the founding policies and institutions of the state, including the Status Quo agreement, Law of Return, and the rabbinate. The final unit will examine the connection between religion and politics in contemporary Israel, and explore the complex and sometimes contested ways in which this connection manifests itself in family law, military service, the administration of holy places, the governing of territories and conflict with Palestinians.

**RLST 95 SC – Jesus, Paul, Early Chrstn Sexuality (Staff) M 2:45-5:30 PM**

Jesus, Paul, and Early Christian Sexualities. This course investigates a constellation of early Christian sexualities and their relation to Jesus and Paul, arguably the most influential figures in the trajectory of the religion. We will examine a range of texts, beginning with early Christian writings about Jesus and Paul's own writings, up to the tenth century and written in an impressive array of languages (available in English translation), including Greek, Latin, Coptic, Arabic, and Syriac. Our outlook will be primarily driven by critical-theoretical methods for the study of religion, including feminism, queer theory, post-/decolonial critique, disability studies, and

discourse analysis and will have one eye firmly fixed on how Jesus and Paul as figures and/or writers continue to influence society and sexuality today.

**RLST 100 PO – Worlds of Buddhism (Ng) MW 2:45-4:00 PM**

Worlds of Buddhism. An introduction to Buddhism as a critical element in the formation of South, Central, Southeast and East Asian cultures. Thematic investigation emphasizing the public and objective dimensions of the Buddhist religion. Topics include hagiography, gender issues, soulcraft, statecraft and the construction of sacred geography. (HRT I)

**RLST 102 CM – Hinduism & South Asian Culture (Michon) TR 11:00-12:15 PM**

Explores the main ideas, practices, and cultural facets of Hinduism and Indian culture. Emphasis on the historical development of the major strands of Hinduism, from the Vedas to the modern era.

**RLST 112 HM – Engaging Religion (Dyson) MW 9:35-10:50 AM**

This advanced-level seminar uses case studies to explore what counts as religion in a variety of contexts: media, law, academia, economics, politics, etc. How do people recognize religion? What consequences are there for recognizing or denying the legitimacy of religious practices or beliefs? How is that legitimacy judged? How is it narrated? By approaching a few case studies from multiple perspectives, students gain insight into how the lenses used to assess religion can enable, deepen or limit understanding. HSA Writing Intensive: Yes

**RLST 114 HM – Prophecy, Apocalypse (Dyson) W 1:00-4:00 PM**

This course looks at American configurations of the End Times, including, but not limited to, the 2012 end of the Mayan calendar, Ghost Dance religions, technocalypses, The Church Universal and Triumphant, Heaven's Gate, the Left Behind books and movies, and varied interpretations of book of Revelation in the Christian Bible. Students taking this course will become familiar with various forms of American apocalyptic thinking as well as literature from new religious movement or cult scholarship, in order to explore the enduring appeal of End Time scenarios and to question what makes these scenarios persuasive to individuals at varied points in American history. HSA Writing Intensive: Yes

**RLST 122 JT – Arab Cultural Histories (Frangieh, Velji) M 6:00-9:00 PM**

This co-taught class examines the cultural and Islamic religious histories of the Arab world. From food to the family, from coffee to Umm Kulthum, from early Islamic coins to contemporary notions of gender, this survey class will be multidisciplinary, covering a wide swath of intellectual and cultural terrains. A series of guest speakers will provide a multiplicity of perspectives to enhance our study of the region. No previous study of religion, Arabic, or the Middle East is required to enroll in this course. Also listed as ARBT122 JT.

**RLST 128 PO – Religion of Islam (Staff); TR 9:35-10:50 AM**

Introduction to the Islamic tradition; its scripture, beliefs, and practices and the development of Islamic law, theology, philosophy, and mysticism. Special attention will be paid to the emergence of Sunnism, Shi'ism, and Sufism as three diverse expressions of Muslim interpretation and practice, as well as to gender issues and Islam in the modern world.

**RLST 142 AF – Prob of Evil: Afr-Amer Engagements (Smith) M 7:00-9:50 PM**

Thematically explores the many ways African-Americans have encountered and responded to evils (pain, wickedness and undeserved suffering) both as a part of and apart from the broader Western tradition. We will examine how such encounters trouble the distinction made between natural and moral evil and how they highlight the tensions between theodicies and further ethical concerns. (CWS, PRT)

**RLST 148 PO – Sufism (Staff) TR 2:45-4:00 PM**

Sufism. What is the Muslim mystics' view of reality? How is the soul conceptualized in relation to the divine being? What philosophical notions did they draw upon to articulate their visions of the cosmos? How did Muslim mystics organize themselves to form communities? What practices did they consider essential in realizing human perfection? (PRT)

**RLST 150 AF – Eye of God: Race and Empire (Smith) M 1:15-4:00 PM**

In mythic cycles from the "Western Tradition," there has been a sustained intrigue over the relationship between the human eye and the heavenly sun. From the Cyclops of Homer's *Odyssey* to its refiguring in D.W. Griffith's "The Birth of a Nation," the powers of the eye are equated with those of its celestial counterpart. This intrigue has been reshaped but not lost with the advent of modern visual surveillance techniques. In this course, we will examine a range of manifestations of the solar eye, paying particular attention to the relationship(s) it bears to reality and the ways in which the solar eye operates in schemes both great and small of confidence and illusion. We will consider works by Plato, Foucault, Ellison and Morrison; documents in government policy; and movies like "The Fly," "Cube," "9" and "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy. (PRT). Letter grade only.

**RLST 156 CM – Revolt/Reform Early Mod Europe (Staff) TR 4:15-5:30 PM**

This course examines the origin and development of various reform movements in early modern Europe, including Protestant (Lutheran, Calvinist, Swiss Reformed, Anglican) and Radical groups (Hussites, Swiss Anabaptist, Mennonite, Socinian, Anti-Trinitarian, Spiritualist), as well as Catholic (Capuchin, Carmelites, Jesuit, and Spanish vs. Italian movements) and Humanist groups (Italian Renaissance and northern European versions). It will analyze key religious figures, major political events, and social controversies in order to understand the ways in which the religious reform prompted, supported or resisted social change in early modern Europe.

**RLST 166B CM – Religion, Politics & Global Violence (Juergensmeyer) M 2:45-5:30 PM**

Examines the critical intersection of religious ideology, politics, and violence. In particular, it will analyze how Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, and Buddhists have used religious ideology, rhetoric, and values to justify acts of violence and calls for peace and reconciliation in the name of God. The course will explore case studies that include attention to conflicts in Europe-Northern Ireland and Bosnia/Serbia; the Middle East-Israel-Palestine and Iraq; Southeast Asia-Indonesia; the Indian Subcontinent-India-Pakistan; Africa-the Sudan and Rwanda.

**RLST 190 PO – Senior Seminar (Eisenstadt) MWF 10:00-10:50 AM**

Required for all senior majors. Advanced readings, discussion and seminar presentations on selected areas and topics in the study of religion.

**ASIA 82 PO – Confucius and His Interpreters (Poli) M 7:00-9:50 PM**

The legacy of Confucius in Chinese culture is overwhelming, inside and outside China. Within China, Confucius is presented as the father of the nation; Confucianism is described as a way of life, a philosophy, a religion, or all three combined. Outside China, "Confucius" is used as a synonym with "Chinese", as in the culinary TV show "Confucius was a foodie." Who was Confucius, and what did he really say? In this class, we will understand how the legend of Confucius was created. While the course focuses in particular on the texts associated with his figure, such as the *Analects*, the *Book of Odes*, and newly discovered manuscripts, we will also study depictions of Confucius and discuss the philosophical principles associated with him.

**HIST 12 PO – Saints and Society (Wolf) TR 1:15-2:30 PM**

A history of Christian sanctity from the first to the thirteenth centuries, predicated on the notion that you can tell a lot about a past culture by the way it conceived of its heroes. The bulk of the readings are saints' lives written by Christian hagiographers whose collective task it was to construct a timeless sense of Christian

perfection out of a seemingly infinite variety of individual cases. Learning how to read these curious texts for the information they contain about the late antique/medieval mind-set is the principal challenge of the course. Letter grade only. (Ancient and Medieval Mediterranean)

**HIST 55 CM – Middle East: Muhammad-Mongols (Ferguson) MW 9:35-10:50 AM**

This survey is an introduction to the pre-Modern history of the peoples of the classical Islamic lands, from North Africa to Central Asia. The course will cover the time period from the rise of Islam to the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century and their aftermath, examining topics such as geography and environment, relations between nomadic and sedentary peoples, the formation of Islamic law, science and philosophy, and the relation between the rulers and the ruled, the state and its subjects. Satisfies the General Education requirement.

**HIST 101AC PO – Dark Ecologies (Khazeni) W 1:15-4:00 PM**

An exploration of ecological histories in the era of the Anthropocene, the geological time period over the last 200 years when human societies have altered the Earth's processes and been the primary cause of planetary change. Beginning with the notion that ecological life on Earth is entangled and 'dark,' not pristine and 'green' nature, the course examines the mesh that interconnects environment and society in the Anthropocene. Topics range from the impact of modern science and transformations on global environments, ecological thought and perceptions, climate change, biological exchanges, and the ruins and landscapes left in their aftermaths. Readings include works by Timothy Moreton, Anna Tsing, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Amitav Ghosh, Anne Stoler, Timothy Mitchell, and a film noir series. Letter grade only.

**HIST 113 PO – Medieval Spain (Wolf) MW 1:15-2:30 PM**

It is widely appreciated that Christians, Muslims and Jews lived together (that is, experienced "convivencia") for significant portions of medieval Spanish history and benefited materially and culturally from such proximity. Of late "convivencia" has become the focus of increased attention, as people in the post-9/11 world turn to history for signs of hope that Christians, Muslims and Jews really can get along. In this course we will take a critical and nuanced look at the idea of "convivencia" and how it relates to the historical realities of medieval Spain. Letter grade only. Previously offered as HIST118 PO.

**PHIL 52 PZ – Philosophy of Religion (Alwishah) W 2:45-5:30 PM**

The philosophy of religion is concerned with philosophical reflection on a broad range of questions concerning religious belief. The nature of religious belief is quite varied across cultures. In Western theism belief in God and a belief in personal immortality are two central religious beliefs. So philosophy of religion in the West is largely concerned with explicating and clarifying the concept of God and life after death, as well as considering the alleged reasons for supposing God exists or that there is life after death. However, in other traditions belief in reincarnation and karma are central beliefs and so questions regarding the nature, meaning and justification of the concepts of reincarnation and karma are important for an Eastern philosophy of religion. In this course, we will examine similar philosophical questions from Western and Eastern religious traditions as well as African, Native American and a variety of other world religions.