

Borders and Boundaries: ‘Religion’ on the Periphery

Call for Papers

Joint Conference between the British Association for the Study of Religions and the Irish Society for the Academic Study of Religions

3–5 September 2018, Queen's University, Belfast

Held in Association with the Religious Studies Research Forum at the Institute of Theology and the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics.

Keynote Speakers

Gladys Ganiel (Queen’s University, Belfast)
Naomi Goldenberg (University of Ottawa)

Borders and boundaries define limits and margins, centres and peripheries. They demarcate territories, and separate entities and bodies and, as such, they function to guard space, limit action and exclude. They are, however, also contact zones and places of exchange, the ‘limen’ or threshold, the in-between, and the places of temptation and transgression. In the current political context when Ireland and the UK are faced with the dilemmas, paradoxes and implications of Brexit, this special joint conference of the British Association for the Study of Religions (BASR) and the Irish Society for the Academic Study of Religions (ISASR) invites paper, research slam, panel and roundtable proposals on the theme of *Borders and Boundaries*. Scholars based outside the Republic of Ireland or the UK are invited to submit proposals related to this theme regardless of whether their work relates to these islands. Scholars who are based in the UK or the Republic of Ireland and are working on religion and related categories are welcome to submit proposals on any topic whether or not it relates to the conference theme.

Deadline for proposals for papers, panels and the research slam: **27 April 2018**

See overleaf for further details. A small number of bursaries for postgraduate students and ECRs will be available.



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Borders and boundaries of states, religions and identities have played a defining role in relations between Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and Great Britain, perhaps most significantly the boundaries between religious communities. The negotiation between different religious lifeworlds, worldviews, constructs and dogmas takes place across perceived borders, whether real or imagined. Of concern amongst these for scholars of religions are the distinctions drawn between 'religion' and related categories, and between the 'insider' and 'outsider', which require the scholar to engage with the complexity of symbolic divides associated with identity, belief and belonging. In anthropological studies of religions, the crossing of borders or the 'limen' constitutes a transformational experience. Participation in ritual, pilgrimage and ecstatic practices often requires the crossing of thresholds between different states, between human and divine, human and animal, between different realms, of the living and the dead, material and spirit or otherworlds. Things that are normally kept separate, physically, conceptually and symbolically, meet at crossing points in the landscape, in ritual and in spiritual journeys.

These topics and more will provide the substantive content for this first-ever joint conference between these two member associations of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR).

Please note that papers should contribute to the aims of both societies, ISASR and BASR, specifically to advance research and education through the academic study of religions by providing a forum for the critical, analytical and cross-cultural study of religions, past and present. The conference will not be a forum for confessional, apologetical, interfaith or other similar concerns.

Paper Proposals: please submit title and abstract of 200 words.

Research Slam: A research "slam" is a quick succession of presentations of max. 7 minutes per presenter that gives a lively impression of a project, a programme, a network, or a collaboration the presenter is participating in. Please submit research slam proposals in the form of a title and brief (max. 150 words) abstract. It is possible to submit a research slam proposal as well as a paper proposal.

Panel proposals: please submit abstracts of 200 words for panel proposals. All panel proposals should include the name, title, affiliation, and email address of each presenter plus the chair and discussant (if applicable) plus abstracts for each of the papers on the panel.

Proposals to be submitted to isasrbasr2018@gmail.com by **27 April 2018** (please include name, title, affiliation, and email address). Confirmation of acceptance by **15 June 2018**.

Gladys Ganiel is a Research Fellow in the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation and Social Justice (ISCTSJ) at Queen's University, Belfast, working in the disciplines of sociology and politics. Her main areas of research are the Northern Ireland conflict, evangelicalism, Christianity in Ireland, the emerging church, and charismatic Christianity in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Naomi Goldenberg is Professor of Religious Studies in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa, Canada. Her specialties are in religion and popular culture, religion and gender, religion and psychoanalysis, and the construction of the category of religion and its relationship to other categories such as the secular and politics.