

RELIGION / IMAGINATION

November 5-7 2025 Utrecht

www.ngg2025.nl



Utrecht
University



Nederlands Genootschap
voor Godsdienstwetenschap



noster

Netherlands School for Advanced Studies
in Theology and Religion

Imagination / Religion Conference 2025

Welcome to the Imagination / Religion Conference 2025. In this booklet, you will find a full programme of the conference.

Conference Venues

- Drift 13 - 3512 BR Utrecht
- Drift 25 - Universiteitsbibliotheek Binnenstad 3512 BR Utrecht
- Drift 27 - 3512 BR Utrecht
- Janskerkof 2 - 3512 BK Utrecht
- Janskerkof 3 - 3512 BK Utrecht

Organising Committee

Margreet van Es

Ernst van den Hemel

Johanneke Kroesbergen-Kamps

Erik Meinema

Birgit Meyer

PROGRAMME 5 NOV

10:00 – 12:30 <i>Janskerkhof 3, Stijlkamer</i>	NOSTER Masterclass James Bielo
12:30 – 13:00 <i>Janskerkhof 3, Stijlkamer</i>	Lunch for Masterclass participants
From 12:00 <i>Drift 27, 0.72, Eetkamer</i>	Registration
13:30 – 13:50 <i>Drift 13, 0.04</i>	Opening Ceremony

14:00 – 15:30	Parallel Sessions 1	
1A: Pathways to Knowledge in the Study of Religion: Ludism, Experiment and the Imagination <i>Drift 13, 0.04</i>		Kim Knibbe, Birgit Meyer, Welmoed Wagenaar, Rebecca Laura Anne Davis, André Droogers, Marleen de Witte
1B: Paneldiscussie Nederlands levensbeschouwelijk onderwijs: een spagaat tussen religiewetenschappelijke vorming en persoonsvorming <i>Drift 25, 0.03</i>		Gijs van Gaans, Markus Altena Davidsen, Juliëtte van Deursen-Vreeburg, Gerard Wiegers, Vera van Jaarsveld
1C: Immersion in the (Religious) Worlds of Others <i>Drift 25, 2.03</i>		Menno Kramer — The Inter-Religious Council of Uganda and the Creation of Religious Tourism: Imagining Coexistence and Shared Experience Benjamin Kirby — Making Immersive Worlds: Religious Envelopment in the Experience Economy Larissa Platz — To Stage a Spirit: Curatorial Immersion and the Limits of Modern Imagination Erik Meinema — Culture Safari in East Africa

15:30 – 16:00 <i>Drift 27, 0.72, Eetkamer</i>	Coffee Break
16:00 – 17:30 <i>Drift 13, 0.04</i>	Keynote Lecture James Bielo — Secondhand sacred: Collecting imaginations at play Chair: Ernst van den Hemel
17:30 <i>Drift 27, Lodewijk</i>	Drinks

PROGRAMME 6 NOV

09:30 – 11:30 <i>Drift 13, 0.04</i>	Plenary Round Table Wouter Hanegraaff, Birgit Meyer, Justine Bakker, Christian Lange — Religion and/as Imagination: In conversation with Wouter Hanegraaff Chair: Johanneke Kroesbergen-Kamps
11:00 – 11:30 <i>Drift 27, 0.72, Eetkamer</i>	Coffee Break

11:30 – 13:00	Parallel Sessions 2
2A: Imaginations of religion and violence <i>Drift 25, 0.03</i>	William Arfman en Romy de Vos — Imagining Trauma: renewed attention for historical witch trial victims Lieke Schrijvers — Imaginations of Home among Mixed Jewish-Christian Couples Today Dzenita Karic — Religious imaginary in times of war and destruction: Ritual photography in the Bosnian War (1992-1995) Lucien van Liere — Imagining Evil and Violence: The Persistence of the Blood Libel Legend in Current Conspiracy Theories
2B: Ecologies of popular culture and religion <i>Drift 13, 0.04</i>	Claus Jacobsen — “We are all us” Shaman and game designer - Greg Stafford and his legacy of mythology, magic and religion in the shared imaginations of tabletop role playing games Mathilde van Dijk — Dune and Avatar : Visions of Religion in Contemporary Science Fiction Kees de Groot — Snow and water. Religion, nature and sacrality in Tintin and Habibi Kai Shmushko — Digital and Material Re-Forming of Chinese Goddess Mazu- The Political Clout of Collective Imagination
2C: Mobilizing the imagination: Religion and the dynamics of social and private life <i>Drift 25, 3.01</i>	Katja Rakow — Urban Imaginaries: Pentecostal Architectures of Power in Singapore Daniel Ellwanger — The Formation and Imagination of Catholic Hospitality Akindolie Akinwumi Ambrose — The dynamics of the imagination of social life and the role of religion among the Yoruba people of Southwest Nigeria Thor-Oona Pignarre-Altermatt — Unpleasant Meditations. Imagination and the Senses in Jan Mombaer’s Rosetum
2D: World-view, World-making, world-building: The worlds (non)religions shape (I) <i>Drift 25, 2.03</i>	Victor Cova — Bible Translation in Amazonia in/as world-building, world-making , and world-view Welmoed Wagenaar — The world-building practices of media fans: imaginary worlds, play, and subjunctive possibility Daan Sikkens — Making Scientology Real: Interpretive Drift and transmedial world-making
2E: Imagining Islam in Turkish Through Books: A Vernacular History <i>Drift 13, 0.03</i>	Yusuf Ünal — The Survival and Evolution of Risāla-i Hüsniya (Hüsniye) in Modern Turkey: Tracing Alevi Literary Heritage Through Ottoman and Republican Transitions Bahar Gökpınar — Mourning for Karbala with Turkish Literature: Fuzûlî and Hadîkatü’s-Suadâ

	Gökçen B. Dinç — Being Antinomian and “Truly” Islamic: Imagining the Shuttar Community and their Common Path of Aşk Urum Ulaş Özdemir — The Âşık of the Republic of Turkey: The Invisible Alevi and Bektashi Identity of Âşık Veysel
--	--

13:00 – 14:00 <i>Drift 27, 0.72, Eetkamer</i>	Lunch
--	--------------

14:00 – 15:30	Parallel Sessions 3
3A: Imaginations and the intimate self <i>Drift 25, 0.03</i>	Jedidja van Boven — In God’s Image: Imagining the Self in the Marketing of Christian Coaching Martin Eidrup — Imagined Marriage: Legal Consciousness and Lived Realities Among Syrian Men in Sweden Deniz Aktas — To Name, To Belong: Race, Religion, Secularism, and the Imaginative Labour of Parenting in Christian-Muslim Intimacies Eline Huygens — Religion, Sexuality, and Feminist Reimagining in Western Europe
3B: The Religious Middle Ages in the 21st-Century Imagination <i>Drift 13, 0.04</i>	Suzan Folkerts, Veerle Fraeters, Merel Jansen, Lieke Smits, Delphine Somers — Round table discussion
3C: Cosmology and the imagination <i>Drift 25, 3.01</i>	Bismark Agyapong — The “Supreme Being” of the Akan Cosmology: Either Myth or Imaginative? Magid Magid — Re-imagining Scripture: Creative Imagination and the Future of Qur’ānic Exegesis Tjalling Janssen — Bridging the World: Elemental Beings and the Ecological Imagination in Early Modern Europe Jonas Slaats — Imagining Spirituality: A Critical Rereading of a Classic in the Field of SBNR Research
3D: The politics of worldview <i>Drift 25, 2.03</i>	Guilherme Marques Pedro — Between Totalitarianism and Authoritarianism: The Concept of “Worldview” in the Thought of Eric Voegelin Todd Weir — From German Culture Wars to European Struggle of Worldview Ana Fernandez- Aballi — A pragmatic approach to ontological diversity for policy-making in the Anthropocene
3E: The Imagination and Religious Narrative: Building Religious Worlds <i>Drift 13, 0.03</i>	Uffe Holmsgaard Eriksen — Storytelling God(s): Metaleptic Relations between Author, Narrator and Character in Religious Hymns Klaziena Staat — Creating Belief through Religious Worldmaking: The Example of Late-Antique Hagiography

	Markus Altena Davidsen — Narratology, CSR, and the Religious-narrative Imagination
--	---

15:30 – 16:00 <i>Drift 27, 0.72, Eetkamer</i>	Coffee Break
16:00 – 17:30 <i>Drift 13, 0.04</i>	Keynote Lecture Sertaç Sehlíkoglu — Ways of Knowing: The Significance of Religious Imaginaries beyond Western Secularities Chair: Margreet van Es
18:30 <i>Djakarta, Lucasbolwerk 19</i>	Conference Dinner

PROGRAMME 7 NOV

9:30 – 10:45 <i>Janskerkhof 2-3, 0.13</i>	Plenary Reimagining Religion Arjan Sterken — Imagining the extra-social: a new definition of religion Martha Gabriela Sánchez Martínez — Imagining a Crip Study of Religions Isabelle Duval — I Would Prefer Not To: Religion, Propaganda, society as Gesamtkunstwerk and love Daan Oostveen — Reimagining the study of religion Chair: Erik Meinema
10:45 – 11:15 <i>Drift 27, 0.72, Eetkamer</i>	Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:45	Parallel Sessions 4
4A: Theorizing religion and imagination <i>Drift 25, 0.03</i>	Johan Bouwer — Imagination as bridge between leisure and spirituality: Pieper meets Bachelard Hermen Kroesbergen — How imagination is mobilized to make the unseen really real Roomet Jakapi — Philosophical Belief, Religious Imagination, and Group Identity
4B: Influencers, nuns and TikTok: Christianities and digital media <i>Janskerkhof 2-3, 0.13</i>	Liv Steinebach en Kinga Zeller — Tolerance as saviour of plurality or tool for undermining it? An analysis of the use of the term "tolerance" in Christian right-wing social media contents, its theological justification and possible counterparts Arjen Spijker — Bro, Literally Just Read the Verses Before lolñó: Anti-Protestant Catholic Apologetics on TikTok Gabriela de la Vega — Godfluencers: The Christian Influencers Shaping Christian Identity Worldwide Lisa Pais — Push Out the Demon: A Case Study of Catholic nuns in videos on Pornhub
4C: Sacred histories and the recognition of self and other <i>Drift 25, 3.01</i>	Amina Hadziomerovic — Imagining Martyrdom: Improvised Rituals, Sacred Narratives, and the Semi-Consecration of the Missing in Post-Genocide Bosnia Abdelmonim Elmoutassim — Imagining Female Saints: Gendered Hierarchies and Religious Imagination in Southern Morocco Markha Valenta — Who Gets a Pogrom? Sacred History and the Racial Economy of Recognition after the Amsterdam Riots Harriet Boateng Aduako — Resilience and Adaptability: Reimagining the Kwakore Abosomfie in Contemporary Ghana's Religious Landscape
4D: Beyond the Categorical: Social Imaginaries of Cultural Heritage <i>Drift 25, 2.03</i>	Ayşenur Korkmaz — "Fetih Ruhu ve Ecdad:" Neo-Ottoman Imaginaries of Heritage Martín Andrade-Pérez — Beyond Representation: The Role of UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Constructing Latin America's Catholic Social Imaginary

	<p>Irene Stengs — Amsterdam Arboreal Heritage. Rooted Imaginations of History and Identity</p> <p>Thao Nghiem — Kings, Goddesses, and the Fatherland: Religious Heritage and the Imaginary of the Vietnamese Nation</p>
<p>4E: Prefigurative Imagination and the past/present/future of religion</p> <p><i>Drift 13, 0.03</i></p>	<p>Suzan Sierksma-Agteres — Temporality, Eschatology, and Anti-Imperialism in the Gospel of John</p> <p>Peter-Ben Smit — Prefiguration as Subversive Religious Imagination in Orthodox Theology</p> <p>Marieke van der Linden — The (de)valuation of academic theology in the present Western social imaginary</p> <p>Maris Anastasios — The Subterranean Presence of Dionysus in Christ: Memory, Performativity, and Religious Identity in Contemporary Greek Orthodoxy</p>

<p>12:45 – 13:45</p> <p><i>Drift 27, 0.72, Eetkamer</i></p>	<p>Lunch</p>
---	---------------------

13:45 – 15:15	Parallel Sessions 5
<p>5A: Re-imagining religious heritage-making</p> <p><i>Drift 25, 0.03</i></p>	<p>Helena Wangefelt Ström — Catholic curating: The Early Modern Catholic church as collector and museum curator, and its impact on challenges facing museums today</p> <p>Christoph Baumgartner — The power of resonance and loss. Understanding social imaginaries including religion and religious diversity</p> <p>Sabina Rosenbergo en Élise Rouméas — Reimagining Religious Heritage: The Ethics of Displaying Religious Artifacts</p> <p>Wouter Kock — Living with the past: Religious heritage-making and new monasticism at the Sint-Agatha monastery</p>
<p>5B: The stories we live by: academic by training, human by default?</p> <p><i>Janskerkhof 2-3, 0.13</i></p>	<p>Jelle Wiering – Playing with fire: Becoming a firefighter, but at what cost?</p> <p>Amisah Bakuri – Sankofa after Babel: Exile, memory, and the stories that survive</p> <p>Lucien van Liere – Hybrid troubles: Why does my background keep creeping into my analyses, and why can't I shake it off?</p> <p>William Arfman – How a theater play got me back into academic writing (and how my mom gave me access)</p> <p>Suzanne Klein-Schaarsberg – Black magic and leaking boobs: Transversing worlds, transversing selves?</p>
<p>5C: Mediating religion and power</p> <p><i>Drift 25, 3.01</i></p>	<p>Rukayyah Reichling — Imag(in)ing the Hajj in the Netherlands: Visual Representations of Mecca in the Dutch Late Colonial Press</p> <p>Justine Bakker — Donning a Turban, Discarding a Turban: On LW De Laurence and “Hindoo” identity</p> <p>Amy Casteel en Sara Verbeeck — Dreams for diverse thriving: first stages of Coloring white habits</p>

	Arash Ghajarjazi — Wireless Islam: A Digital Humanities Approach to Muslim Political Imagination in 20th-century Iran, 1930 – 1950
5D: World-view, World-making, world-building: The worlds (non)religions shape (II) <i>Drift 25, 2.03</i>	Hugo Hogenbirk — Fichte on the relation between worldview (Weltansicht) and faith (Glaube) Dave Vliegenthart — Shifting Spirituality: From Modern to Postmodern to Metamodern Secular-Religious Worldviews Annelies Abelman — Two Ways of Looking Back: Illustrations of different Christian worldviews in the Netherlands, 1853–1939
5E: The Roundness of Loss: Relating artistic, spiritual and ritual imagination to experiences of grief <i>Drift 13, 0.03</i>	Lieke Wijnia — Curating Life after Loss: Imagination as a Necessity Brenda Matthijsen — Becoming Earth: Human Composting, Closure, and the Imagination of Continuity Daniel A. Siedell — Practicing Palliative Theology with Benhuset

15:15 – 15:45 <i>Drift 27, 0.72, Eetkamer</i>	Coffee Break
15:45 – 17:15 Janskerkhof 2-3 0.13	Final Plenary panel Margreet van Es, Ernst van den Hemel, Jeremy Stolow — Theming, designing, selling: Religion and the experience economy Chair: Birgit Meyer
17:15 Florin, Nobelstraat 2	Drinks