



## ASREC 2025 Graduate Student Workshop “Introduction to the Economics of Religion”



(2024 Participants)

**The Mercatus Center at  
George Mason University  
Arlington, Virginia  
March 7-8, 2025**



## Faculty

- Mark Koyama, George Mason University
- Avital Livny, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- Jared Rubin, Chapman University
- Jonathan Schulz, George Mason University

## Students

- Humoyun Abdumavlon, University of Pittsburgh
- Pavel Bacherikov, UC Berkeley
- Youn Baek, New York University
- Aditi Bhowmick, Harvard University
- Yuting Chen, University of British Columbia
- Ekin Dursun, Yale University
- BreAnne Fleeer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Josh Goetz, UCLA
- David Grace, University of Michigan
- Lucy Grinker, Aix-Marseille School of Economics
- Malik Hussain, George Mason University
- Davis Kedrosky, Northwestern University
- Etienne Le Rossignol, London Business School
- Julia Phelps, Arizona State University
- Corey Resweber, Purdue University
- Firat Seker, University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Juan David Torres, Stanford University
- Connor Warshauer, UCLA
- Triana Yentzen Toro, University of Michigan
- Aliah Zewail, University of Massachusetts Amherst



## THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2025

- 8:00-9:00 AM** Coffee/Tea and Pastries – **Freedom, Property, & Prosperity Conference Rooms**
- 9:00- 9:15 AM** **Welcome and Introductions**  
Jared Rubin
- 9:15-10:30 AM** **The Politics of Religion and Culture**  
Avital Livny
- 10:30-10:45 AM** Coffee Break
- 10:45-12:00 PM** **Religion and Growth**  
Jared Rubin
- 12:00-2:00 PM** Lunch (Local restaurants)
- 2:00-3:15 PM** **Cultural evolution, human behavior, and economic growth**  
Jonathan Schulz
- 3:15-3:30 PM** Coffee Break
- 3:30-4:45 PM** **The Economics of Religion**  
Mark Koyama
- 4:45-5:15 PM** Wrap-up / Debrief
- 5:15-6:30 PM** Drinks and Conversation at local bar -
- 6:30 PM** Dinner – **The Liberty Tavern 3195 Wilson Boulevard,**  
**Arlington, VA 22201**

## FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 2025



Session structure: In 4-paper sessions, each presenter has 15 minutes, followed by 5-10 minutes for discussion. In 3-paper sessions, each presenter has 20 minutes, followed by 5-10 minutes for discussion. The last presenter will chair the session and manage time.

Presenters are listed first and in bold.

**7:30 AM Registration - [Metre Hall, George Mason University 3351 Fairfax Drive, Arlington](#)**

**7:30 – 8:30 AM: Coffee/Tea Station - Van Metre Hall art gallery**

**8:30 – 10:15 AM: Parallel Sessions 1**

**1A: Religion, History, and Culture in South Asia**

Room: 111

Pox, Piety, and Paradox: The Economics of Vaccination in British India

- **Malik Hussain**, *George Mason University*

The Cursed Cuppa: The Persistent Labour Market Effects of Sri Lanka's Colonial-Era Tea Plantations

- **Sudaraka Ariyaratne**, *Rice University*

Lifeline to the Nation: Railway Expansion and Language Shift in the British Raj

- **Hanrui Zeng**, *University of Pittsburgh*

Male Sterilization and the Persistence of Violence: Evidence from Emergency in India

- **Sarah Vincent**, *Boston University*
- Aditi Singh, *University of British Columbia*



## 1B: In-group out-group

Room: 120

The Cultural Evolution of Parochial Morality

- **Mohammad Atari**, *University of Massachusetts Amherst*

Preference Transmission within Churches: Religious Leaders and Clusters of (In)Tolerance

- **Michal Bauer**, *CERGE-EI and Charles University*
- Julie Chytilova, *Charles University*
- Eric Ochieng, *IPA and Maseno University*

Adherence to Social Norms is Not Always Greater in More Collectivist and Tighter Cultures: The Case of Emotion Norms

- **Allon Vishkin**, *Technion - Israel Institute of Technology*
- Shinobu Kitayama, *University of Michigan*
- Maya Tamir, *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

Narratives and Market Exchange in Developing Countries

- **Pablo Balan**, *Tel Aviv University*
- Juan Pedro Ronconi, *Universidad de los Andes, Chile*

## 1C: Islam

Room: 121

Islam, Sultan, and the Printing Press: How Absence of the Printed Word Limited Development

- **Bogdan Popescu**, *John Cabot University*

Demand for and effects of Islamic law on European Muslims: Evidence from the Muslim minority of Northern Greece

- **Vaios Triantafyllou**, *Cornell University*
- Vasiliki Fouka, *Stanford University*

From Womb to Workforce: Exploring Early Origins of Earnings Inequality Using Tax Data

- **Timotej Cejka**, *UC Berkeley*
- Mazhar Waseem, *University of Manchester*

Conflict and Religion: Evidence from Ramadan

- **Humoyun Abdumavlon**, *University of Pittsburgh*



## 1D: Evolutionary Dynamics of Religion, Family Size, and Child Success

Room: 318

Religious Involvement is Associated With Higher Fertility and Lower Maternal Investment, but More Alloparental Support Among Gambian Mothers

- **John Shaver**, *Baylor University*
- Radim Chvaja (*University of Otago*), Laure Spake (*Binghamton University*), Jainaba Badjie (*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*), Andrew M. Prentice (*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*), Carla Cerami (*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*), Rebecca Sear (*Brunel University*), Mary K. Shenk (*Pennsylvania State University*), Richard Sosis (*University of Connecticut*)

Religious Parents Receive More Alloparental Cooperation in Rural Bangladesh

- **Theodore Samore**, *University of Otago*
- Richard Sosis (*University of Connecticut*), John Shaver (*Baylor University*), Radim Chvaja (*University of Otago*), Matthew Conrad (*University of Connecticut*), Anushé Hassan (*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*), Robert Lynch (*Pennsylvania State University*), Susan Schaffnitt (*Pennsylvania State University*), Rebecca Sear (*Brunell University*), Laure Spake (*Binghamton University*), Joseph Watts (*Canterbury University*), Mary Shenk (*Pennsylvania State University*)

How Does Religiosity Affect Fertility? A Test in ‘Two Bengals’

- **Mary Shenk**, *Penn State University*
- Saswata Ghosh (*Institute of Development Studies Kolkata*), Susan Schaffnitt (*Penn State University*), Nurul Alam (*ICDDR, Bangladesh*), Rebecca Sear (*Brunel University London*), Richard Sosis (*University of Connecticut*), and John Shaver (*Baylor University*).

**10:15 – 10:45 AM: Coffee/Tea Station - Van Metre Hall art gallery**



## 10:45 – 12:30 PM: Parallel Sessions 2

### 2A: Political Economy

Room: 111

Historical Narratives and Political Behavior in the US Historical Narratives and Political Behavior in the US

- **Diego Ramos-Toro**, *Dartmouth College*

Pay-to-Play: Political Donations and Kickbacks in Public Procurement

- **Juan Felipe Riaño**, *Georgetown University*
- Saad Gulzar, *Princeton University*
- Juan Felipe Ladino, *Stockholm University*

The Signaling Value of Government Action: The Effect of Istanbul Convention on Female Murders

- **Naci Mocan**, *Louisiana State University*
- Gunes Asik, *TOBB University*

Land Rights Institutions and the Scope of Cooperation

- **Jonathan Schulz**, *George Mason University*





## **2B: Immigration 1**

Room: 121

Designing an Ethnic Minority Social Integration Policy

- **Yujung Hwang**, *Johns Hopkins University*

Closing Ranks: Organized Labor and Immigration

- **Carlo Medici**, *Brown University*

Breaking Barriers, Building (on) Networks: Lessons from the Jewish Emancipation in Germany

- **Israel Eruchimovitch**, *Brown University*
- Lukas Rosenberger, *LMU Munich*
- Assaf Sarid, *University of Haifa*

Cultural Exchange and the Birth of International Development

- **Youn Baek**, *New York University*

## **2C: Studies of Cooperation and Child Care**

Room: 318

Modeling alloparental care under the demographic transition

- **Elic M. Weitzel**, *Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History*
- Kurt M. Wilson, *Lawrence University*
- John H. Shaver, *Baylor University*
- Richard Sosis, *University of Connecticut*

Prestige, Religion, and Autonomic Regulation in the Evolution of Cooperation

- **Hillary Lenfesty**, *Arizona State University*

Deus Ex Dilemma: Experimental Evidence that Random Shocks Promote Solidarity and Superstition in Social Dilemma Games

- **Laurence Iannaccone**, *Chapman University*
- Aidin Hajikhameneh, *San Jose State University*





**12:30 – 2:00 PM: Lunch Break - Explore Arlington!**

**2:00 – 3:45 PM: Parallel Sessions 3**

**3A: Economic History**

Room: 111

Magna Carta

- **Desiree Desierto**, *George Mason University*
- Jacob Hall, *University of Pennsylvania*
- Mark Koyama, *George Mason University*

Razing the Church: The Enduring Effect of Nazi Repression in Poland

- **Volha Charnysh**, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*
- Ricardo Pique, *Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania*

From Vagabonds to Virtues: The Ideological Roots of Entrepreneurship

- **Tom Raster**, *London School of Economics*
- Lars Harhoff Andersen, *University of Copenhagen*

Historical Conflict and Social Preferences: Evidence from Europe

- **Sara Benetti**, *University of British Columbia*
- Felipe Valencia Caicedo, *University of British Columbia*



### 3B: Gender 1

Room: 120

Female Franchise and Female Voter Preferences: Evidence from 20th-century Germany

- **Mathias Buehler**, *LMU Munich*
- Navid Sabet, *Goethe University Frankfurt*

The Effects of Religious Communication on Gendered Political Attitudes: Experimental Evidence from Colombia

- **Radha Sarkar**, *Tecnologico de Monterrey, Mexico*
- Sofia Elverdin, *Yale University*
- Sebastian Lucek, *Stanford University*

Culture and Fertility: How Religion Mediates the Response to Maternity Benefits

- **Elizabeth Brainerd**, *Brandeis University*
- Olga Malkova, *University of California, Irvine*

Failing to forge the New Soviet Woman: Long-term effect of WW2-induced sex ratios on family formation

- **Vitaliia Eliseeva**, *Paris School of Economics*

### 3C: The Evolution of Religions: Phylogenic and Economic Perspectives

Room: 318

The evolution of religions, and the use of broad comparativism in the study of human culture.

- **Lance Grande**, *Field Museum of Natural History*

Phylogenetic versus Economic Models of Religious Change: Complements or Substitutes?

- **Paul Seabright**, *Toulouse School of Economics*

**3:45 – 4:15 PM: Coffee Break - Van Metre Hall art gallery**



#### 4:15 –5:45 PM: Parallel Sessions 4

##### 4A: Religion and Development

Room: 111

The Price of Faith: Economic Costs and Religious Adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa

- **Triana Yentzen**, *University of Michigan*
- Eduardo Montero, *University of Chicago*
- Dean Yang, *University of Michigan*

Religious Messaging and Adaptation to Water Scarcity: Evidence from Jordan

- **Giulia Buccione**, *Stanford University*

Building Socialism on Abandoned Land: Collectivization & Civic Engagement in Poland

- **Oliver Wach**, *Freie Universitaet Berlin*

##### 4B: Institutions

Room: 120

Religious Persecution and Identity Choice: Che Im Land Catholics, Orthodox, and Uniates in the Russian Empire

- **Dmitrii Kofanov**, *University of Pittsburgh*

The Making of Italians: Institutional Response to Disasters and Nation-Building

- **Caterina Alfonzo**, *University of Bologna*

Industrialization and National Identity: Turning Peasants into Workers

- **Stergios Skaperdas**, *University of California, Irvine*
- Patrick Testa, *Tulane University*



#### 4C: Immigration and Religion

Room: 121

Maximum Jews on Maximum Land?

- **Hannah Ridge**, *Chapman University*

Between Arab and White: Syrians and the Naturalization Law

- **Donia Kamel**, *Paris School of Economics*

Missionaries on the Nile: Exposure to Protestant Missionaries and Women's Developmental Outcomes and Social Values in Egypt

- **Ashrakat Elsnehawy**, *Stanford University*

#### 4D: Theory and Data for the Study of Religious Change and Differences

Room: 318

The Seshat Global History Databank

- **Jakob Zsombok**, *Complexity Science Hub*

Why Pew Research Center is changing measures to measure change in our forthcoming demography of religion studies

- **Conrad Hackett**, *Pew Research Center*

Using the ARDA to Study Trends and Regional Variation in Religion

- **Roger Finke**, *Pennsylvania State University*



**6:00 – 7:00 PM**

## Keynote address



**Robert Boyd**

Arizona State University

***“How to think about culture “***

**7:00 -9:00 PM: ASREC Welcome Reception**  
**Van Metre Hall - Multipurpose room**



## SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2025

7:30 AM: Registration - [Metre Hall, George Mason University 3351 Fairfax Drive, Arlington](#)

7:30 – 8:30 AM: Coffee/Tea Station - Van Metre Hall art gallery

8:30 - 10:15 Parallel Sessions 5

### 5A: Identity

Room: 111

Threat to Identity and Populism: Evidence from Francoist Street Names

- **Iker Arregui-Alegria**, *Lund University*

The Age of Mass Migrations and the lifespan of people with disabilities: Sweden (1894-1919)

- **Alice Dominici**, *Bocconi University, IMT Lucca*
- Nicoletta Balbo, *Bocconi University*
- Danilo Bolano, *University of Florence*
- Lotta Vikström, *Umeå University*
- Johan Junkka, *Umeå University*

The Gender of Names

- **Eli Locke**, *Boston University*
- Katarina Fedorov, *Boston University*
- Martin Fiszbein, *Boston University/NBER*
- Sam Bazzi, *University of California, San Diego /CEPR*



## 5B: Violence

Room: 120

Reassessing the Relationship Between Religiosity and Political Violence: Evidence from Afghanistan

- **Mohammad Isaqzadeh**, *Chapman University*

Safer but poorer in numbers: Violence and spatial misallocation in the Jim Crow South

- **Thilo R. Huning**, *University of York*
- James P. Choy, *University of York*

Fiestas and the Dynamics of Violent Collective Action: Evidence from Mexico

- **Jenny Guardado**, *Georgetown University*
- Edgar Franco-Vivanco, *University of Michigan*
- Gema Kloppe-Santamaria, *University College Cork*

Crimes and Privatization

- **Natalya Naumenko**, *George Mason University*
- Michael Poyker, *UT Austin and IZA*

## 5C: Theory

Room: 121

Incubation and the Emergence of Identity-Based Organizations

- **Michael Sacks**, *Clarkson University*

Faith-Based Organizations as Platforms

- **Amma Serwaah-Panin**, *University of Louvain*
- Emmanuelle Auriol, *Toulouse School of Economics*
- Eva Raiber, *Aix-Marseille School of Economics*
- Paul Seabright, *Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse and Toulouse School of Economics*

**10:15 – 10:45 AM: Coffee/Tea Station - Van Metre Hall art gallery**





## 10:45 - 12:30 PM Parallel Sessions 6

### 6A: Education and Identity

Room: 120

The Educational Cost of Beef Bans in India

- **Farhan Majid**, *University of Pennsylvania*
- Wafa Hakim Orman, *University of Alabama*

The Decline of National Identity in Multiethnic Societies: Religion and Nation in Iran and Belgium

- **Ramin Jabbarli**, *University of Washington*
- Steven Pfaff, *Chapman University*

Cognitive consequences of insecure national belonging

- **Joseph Flavian Gomes**, *University of Louvain*
- Amma Panin, *University of Louvain*
- Ritwik Banerjee, *Indian Institute of Management Bangalore*
- Emmy Lindstam, *IE University*

The Persistence of Female Political Power in Africa

- **Sahar Parsa**, *New York University*
- Siwan Anderson, *University of British Columbia*
- Sophia Du Plessis, *Stellenbosch University*,
- James A. Robinson, *University of Chicago*



## 6B: Social learning & Norms

Room: 121

Optimization and Social Learning in Static and Dynamic Environments

- **Jared Rubin**, *Chapman University*
- Erik Kimbrough, *Chapman University*
- Ryan Oprea, *University of California, Santa Barbara*

Pluralism Breeds Tolerance

- **Erik Kimbrough**, *Chapman University*
- Folco Panizza, *IMT Lucca*
- Eugen Dimant, *UPenn*
- Alexander Vostroknutov, *Maastricht*

Do Individualists and Collectivists Cooperate Differently?

- **Aidin Hajikhameneh**, *San Jose State University*
- Erik Kimbrough, *Chapman University*
- Brock Stoddard, *Appalachian State University*

Morals favored by previous moral choices are always safer

- **Oeivind Schoeyen**, *UIT: The Arctic University of Norway & Stanford University*

## 6C: Science & Innovation

Room: 318

Race and Science

- **Gaia Dossi**, *University College London*

In the Name of God! Religiosity and the Production of Science

- **Lars Harhoff Andersen**, *UCPH*
- Jeanet Sinding Bentzen, *UCPH*

Individualism, Creativity, and Innovation

- **Katharina Hartinger**, *JGU Mainz & UC Berkeley*

**12:30 – 2:00 PM: Lunch Break**



## 2:00 – 3:45 PM: Parallel Sessions 7

### 7A: Religion, the State, and Welfare

Room: 111

#### Religion and State

- **Paul Seabright**, *Toulouse School of Economics*
- Julia Hofer, *Toulouse School of Economics*

#### Social Foundation of Religion and State

- **Hilton Root**, *George Mason University*

#### Analysis of Jewish Occupational Attainment in the Antebellum United States: Filling a Gap in the Literature

- **Barry Chiswick**, *George Washington University*
- RaeAnn Robinson, *George Washington University*

#### Does Religiosity Make Communities More Economically Resilient? Evidence from the COVID-19 Pandemic

- **Christos Makridis**, *Arizona State University*
- Byron Johnson, *Baylor University*



## **7B: How are Values Formed?**

Room: 120

Migration and the Making of the English Middle Class

- **Vasiliki Fouka**, *Stanford University*
- Theo Serlin, *Princeton University*

Markets Make Humans WEIRDer: Evidence from 1850-1920 United States

- **Itzhak Raz**, *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*
- Max Posch, *University of Exeter*

Bridging or Dividing: Which Cultural Dimensions Shape Intergroup Interactions?

- **Alain Schlöpfer**, *Stanford University*
- Vasiliki Fouka, *Stanford University*
- Edith Zink, *University of Copenhagen*

## **7C: Evangelical Christianity and American Religion**

Room: 121

Political Talk Radio and Rural Conservatism

- **Heyu Xiong**, *Case Western Reserve University*

Praying for Prosperity: Religious Activity and the Lottery

- **Lester Lusher**, *University of Pittsburgh*
- Scott Carrell, *University Texas, Austin*

Crimes against Nature: The Colonial Roots of Homophobia in Sub-Saharan Africa

- **Jon Denton-Schneider**, *Clark University*
- Teevrat Garg, *University of California, San Diego*

**3:45 – 4:15 PM: Coffee/Tea Station - Van Metre Hall art gallery**



## 4:15 - 5:45 PM: Parallel Sessions 8

### 8A: Missionaries

Room: 111

Culture and the Deep Roots of Innovation in the U.S.

- **Daniel Solon**, *Lincoln Memorial University*

Seeds of Market-Based Capitalism: Christian Missionaries and China's Modernization

- **Riccardo Di Cato**, *University of California, San Diego*
- Jiachen Li, *Renmin University of China*

Marco Polo and His Impact on China's Modernization through Christian Missionaries

- **Senhao Hu**, *The University of Hong Kong*
- Zhiwu Chen, *The University of Hong Kong*
- Xinhao Li, *The University of Hong Kong*

### 8B: Nations and Institutions

Room: 120

Pilgrims and Crusaders: Religion as a Political Double-Edged Sword

- **Felipe Valencia Caicedo**, *University of British Columbia*

Rents and Reformation

- **Mark Koyama**, *George Mason University*
- Desiree Desierto, *George Mason University*
- Marcus Shera, *Chapman University*

A Century of Religious-Service Attendance in 66 Countries

- **Robert Barro**, *Harvard University*
- Edgard Dewitte, *Oxford University*
- Laurence R. Iannaccone, *Chapman University*



## 8C: Social Values

Room: 121

International House: A Study in Cross-cultural Understanding and Social Capital Formation

- **Joan Ricart-Huguet**, *Loyola University Maryland*

Like A Good Neighbor: The Role of Neighbors in Career Choice

- **Mike Andrews**, *University of Maryland Baltimore County*
- Ryan Hill, *Northwestern*
- Joe Price, *Brigham Young University*
- Riley Wilson, *Brigham Young University*

Education and Preferences for Desired Traits in Children

- **Nur Orak**, *Louisiana State University*
- Naci Mocan, *Louisiana State University*

**5:45 – 8:00 PM: Farewell Reception**  
**Van Metre Hall - Multipurpose room**



**ASREC would like to thank the following organizations for their sponsorship:**



John  
Templeton  
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**Thanks to all who contributed to these presentations, including presenters, participants, the Mercatus Center events team, and ASREC officers.**

**ASREC Officers**

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**We hope to see you at our other events this year**  
**Call for papers out soon**

**ASREC Europe 2025 Copenhagen**

University of Copenhagen

18-19 September 2025

*Grad Student Workshop 17 September*

Keynote Speaker:

Ara Norenzayan

Local Organizers:

Jeanet Sinding Bentzen (University of Copenhagen)

Anne Sofie Beck (University of Copenhagen)

**ASREC 2025 Thematic Workshop**

Thessaloniki, Greece

Fall 2025

Local Organizers:

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Eleftherios Filippiadis (University of Macedonia)

Skerdi Zanaj (University of Luxembourg)

[www.asrec.org](http://www.asrec.org)

## Preserving and Providing the Best Religion Data and Resources

### The Best Religion Data. Always Free to Access.

Browse over 1,340 data files archived on the ADA including international surveys, US Church membership data, and US surveys of the general population, religious groups, or other subgroups.

#### Membership Reports

Explore interactive congregational membership reports with maps and charts for states, counties, and metro areas.

#### Religion Census

Download the 2020 or earlier iterations of the US Religion Census at the country or state levels.

#### National Profiles

Examine the religious composition and multiple social and political measures for hundreds of nations and dozens of regions.

### Other Resources for Researchers and Educators



#### Teaching Resources

The ARDA provides several interactive teaching resources designed to enhance research skills and religion knowledge. These resources assist educators and students in their understanding of religion data, histories, and contexts.

#### Ahead of the Trend

Each month, Dr. Ryan Burge, author and political scientist at Eastern Illinois University, publishes two columns highlighting the latest news in religion research. Articles include some of today's most notable questions on religion and culture, all drawing on religion data available on the ARDA.

