



CENTER FOR
LATIN AMERICAN
& LATINO STUDIES

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY | WASHINGTON, DC

RELIGION AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN CROSS-REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

A workshop organized by American University's Center for Latin American & Latino Studies (CLALS) with support from the Henry Luce Foundation
March 31-April 1, 2016

WORKSHOP AGENDA

Day 1: Thursday, March 31

9:15am Depart Hotel (Shuttle Service Provided)

Courtyard by Marriott Chevy Chase
5520 Wisconsin Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

9:30am-10:00am Coffee and Pastries

Battelle-Tompkins, Room 228 (Humanities Lab)

10:00am-10:45am Welcomes and Introductions

Eric Hershberg, Robert Albro and Evan Berry

10:45am-12:00pm Session 1: Religion and Climate Change as a Cross Regional Question

Topic: Participants are asked to reflect on the basic framework outlined for this project, specifically the emphasis on systematic cross-regional comparisons and special attention to various scales of religious engagement with climate change. In this session we seek to sharpen our thinking about methodological coherence, including 1) the comparison of religious developments at the international scale to local circumstances, in particular, the role of religion in environmental mobilizations; and 2) the comparison of religious responses to shared environmental changes across different geographical regions.

12:00pm-1:00pm Catered Lunch

Mary Graydon Center, Room 247

1:00pm-2:15pm Session 2: Religious and Climate Change in the Public Sphere

Topic: In this session we consider how best to interpret the responses of religious institutions and

organizations to climate change, including their involvement in national and international climate change politics and policy. We seek to draw comparisons across regions and religious traditions and to explore the diversity of religious responses, with the goal of generating analyses that capture the different ways religions operate in the public sphere.

2:15pm-2:30pm Break

2:30pm-3:45pm Session 3: Religious Sources of Environmental Knowledge

Topic: Building on past efforts to document how religion shapes conceptions of the natural world and the place of humans in it, this project focuses on the religious frames through which societies are coming to terms with climate change. We are particularly concerned with how religion informs the cultural contexts and moral reasoning of communities affected by climate change, and how religious belief and practice provide an array of ideas, practices, values and moral positions about nature and the environment.

3:45pm-4:00pm Break

4:00pm-5:15pm Session 4: Climate Change as a Driver of Religious Change

Topic: We seek to address how religious traditions are addressing climate change, with specific attention to the ways religious actors are re-evaluating theological positions and considering the development of new kinds of spiritual practices attentive to the consequences of a changing environment. In this session we explore how climate change may be reshaping religious life across a variety of scales, with the goal of identifying cases that highlight these transformation aspects.

6:00pm Dinner (Shuttle Service Provided)

Please note: The shuttle will be available to transport participants from the workshop venue to the restaurant and from the restaurant to their hotel.

Day 2: Friday, April 1

9:15am Depart Hotel (Shuttle Service Provided)

9:30am-10:00am Coffee and Pastries

School of International Service building, Room 300

10:00am-11:15am Session 5: Linkages across Priority Areas and New Questions

Topic: During this second day, we hope to synthesize key discussion points from day one to refine our project framework. To this end, this session is focused on how best to understand the relationships among the project's several moving parts, focusing specifically on our comparative analysis across three types of vulnerable environments (mountains/glaciers, islands/sea level rise, and cities/water stress) while also evaluating relative fit with respect to our three modes of analysis (public sphere, environmental knowledge, religious change). A further goal of this session is to clarify additional questions or topics absent from our current framework or that have emerged over the course of this workshop.

11:15am-12:30pm Session 6: Opportunities for Study: Traditions, Settings and Features of Climate Change

Topic: Our comparative framework includes attention to diverse religious traditions, particular regions of the world, and multiple features of climate change. As we undertake to organize the practicalities of this project, we will begin to identify a set of specific cases to consider in greater depth as topics for commissioned research. We will also seek institutional partners for academic workshops and public outreach efforts in the Andes, the Caribbean and India. We invite participants to help us think constructively about these next steps.

12:30pm-2:00pm Catered Lunch

Mary Graydon Center, Room 247

Workshop adjourns.

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Participants:

Robert Albro, American University
Kelly Alley, Auburn University
Marlene Attzs, University of the West Indies
Evan Berry, American University
Ken Conca, American University
Georgina Drew, University of Adelaide
Maarit Forde, University of the West Indies
David Haberman, Indiana University
Jeff Haynes, London Metropolitan University
Eric Hershberg, American University
Natasha Kuruppu, International Institute for Global Health
Paul Manuel, American University
Jorge Recharte, The Mountain Institute
Raul Pacheco-Vega, CIDE

Staff:

Inés Luengo de Krom, American University