

Religious Research Association

Call for Papers

2012 Annual Meeting, November 9-11

Phoenix, Arizona
Hyatt Regency Phoenix

Creating and Remaking the Sacred: Sacralization in Religious Organizations and Other Social Settings

Scholars from a number of different disciplines have explored the contours, causes, and consequences of sacralization, the process whereby social things become invested with ultimate meaning. Recent research on prayer, God images, ritual practice, and scriptural interpretation have all advanced scholarly understandings of this important process. However, there remains much work to be done on this front. Religious organizations have long specialized in sacralization, and our meetings will provide a forum for asking what congregations, denominations, and other religious institutions are currently doing to sustain their members' devotion to the sacred, however defined. We will also have the opportunity to pinpoint successful strategies and failed ventures aimed at breathing sacred life into mundane phenomena. And yet, religious organizations do not have a monopoly on the sacred. Innovative approaches to the sacred have also been undertaken by upstart religious movements and spiritual entrepreneurs. Consequently, our discussions will not be confined to conventional religious organizations or paradigms. We will also explore how sacralization occurs in otherwise secular social settings, and how religious organizations seek to gain a foothold in venues that are often not explicitly religious, such as civil society and popular culture. Our meetings in Phoenix will permit us to reconsider the various ways in which this most vital cultural resource is used by faith communities and how it can be enlisted by other social actors.

The 2012 RRA meeting solicits proposals for sessions and papers on this theme and related topics.

- ❖ Sacralization in religious versus secular settings
- ❖ Cross-cultural and global variations in defining the sacred
- ❖ The (il)legitimacy of "the sacred" as a conceptual category
- ❖ New theoretical insights and paradigms for understanding sacralization
- ❖ Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches for studying the sacred
- ❖ The de-sacralization and re-sacralization of objects and icons that have fallen from grace
- ❖ The role of symbols and rituals in creating and remaking the sacred
- ❖ Successful and unsuccessful organizational strategies of sacralization
- ❖ Antecedents and outcomes associated with attitudes toward sacred things
- ❖ Sacralization in the crucible of gender, racial-ethnic, and cultural difference
- ❖ Resistance, subversion, and counter-mobilization against the sacred
- ❖ The adaptation of religious institutions to changing views of the sacred
- ❖ Generational differences in definitions and experiences of the sacred

As always, papers on all topics related to the social dimensions of religion, particularly those linked to organized religions, denominations, and congregations, are also welcome. Submit all session and paper proposals through the online portal found at the following link, choosing the RRA option.

<http://www.sssrweb.org>

Session and paper proposals open: 1 February 2012
Paper proposals due: 31 March 2012

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