

Vaia Touna

Department of Religious Studies, The University of Alabama
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Citizenship: Greek
U.S. Immigration Status: H1B Visa

Education

2010 - 2015

Ph.D., University of Alberta
Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Program in
Religious Studies

*"Acts of Identification and the Politics of the Greek Past:
Religion, Tradition, Self."* Supervisor: Dr. Willi Braun

2008-2010

Ph.D, candidate, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece
Department of Theology, Study of Religion
(Transfer to University of Alberta)

2008

Master of Arts, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece
Department of Theology, Study of Religion
Overall Grade Earned: 9.93/10 (i.e., "Excellent")

Meden Agan: The Tragedy of Man in Euripides'
Hippolytus
Supervisor: Dr. Panayotis Pachis

2002

Bachelor of Arts
Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece
Department of Theology
Overall Grade Earned: 8.03/10

Teaching

2015

Instructor at the Department of Religious Studies at the
University of Alabama (Starting August 2015).

2010

Full-Time Instructor, Department of Religious Studies, University
of Alabama (Spring Semester); taught Introduction to the Study
of Religion (Honors class) and co-taught an upper level Seminar
on The Politics of Religious Authenticity.

2010

Instructor, Department of Modern Languages and Classics.
University of Alabama (Spring Semester); taught Elementary

Modern Greek (101 and 102), and Intermediate Modern Greek (201 and 202).

2005 - 2009 English Language Teacher (Elementary and High School)
Employer:
"Hadzopoulos" (i.e., foreign language centre), Thessaloniki
Greece.

Awards

- Dissertation Fellowship, University of Alberta, for 2014-2015 (total value of the award: \$22,000)
- The Andrew Stewart Memorial Graduate Prize, University of Alberta, for 2014 (total value of the award: \$5,000)
- The Izzak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship, University of Alberta, for 2012-2013; 2013-2014 (one of two Humanities awardees at the University of Alberta: total value of the award: \$70,000)
- The Provost's Doctoral Entrance Award, University of Alberta, for 2010-2011; 2011-2012 (total value of the award: \$16,434)

Language Competencies

- Primary: Modern, Classical and Hellenistic Greek, English, Italian, French (fluent speaking and reading competency)
- Secondary: Latin (i.e., reading competency)

Research and Teaching Specialties

Modern Social Theories of Religion; History of the Ancient and Hellenistic Worlds; Ancient Greek Religion and Society; Religions and Society of the Hellenistic and Greco-Roman Worlds; Ancient Greek Literature and Drama; Hellenistic Literature and Drama; Ancient Greek Myth; Early Christianity.

Scholarly Collaborations

Culture on the Edge: a seven member international scholarly working group devoted to a more dynamic understanding of identity formation. The collaboration involves a group blog, periodic working meetings and conferences, and two book series with Equinox Publishers, UK.

Publications

Edited Books

- *The Problem of Nostalgia in the Study of Identity: Towards a Dynamic Theory of People and Place* (Forthcoming with Equinox Publishers, UK); Projected publication date: Fall 2015.

Journal Articles

- "Paul and the 'Tradition' of the Founder-Figures: A response to James C. Hanges, *Paul, Founder of Churches, 2011.*" *Religion & Theology*, 20, 3-4 (2013-2014): 284-291.
- "The Manageable Self in the Early Hellenistic Era," *Bulletin of the Council of Societies for the Study of Religion*, Vol. 39, No 2 (2010): 34-37.

Book Chapters

- "Distinction, Domination, Privilege and the Role of Code Switching," in Monica Miller and Merinda Simmons (eds.), *Codes of Conduct: Code Switching and the Everyday Performance of Identity*. (Forthcoming with Equinox Publishers, UK)
- "What's New is Old Again: The Αναπαλαίωση of Tradition," in Monica Miller (ed.), *Claiming Identity in the Study of Religion: Social and Rhetorical Techniques Examined*. (Forthcoming with Equinox Publishers, UK).
- "Re-describing Iconoclasm: Holey Frescoes and Identity Formation," in William Arnal, Willi Braun, and Russell McCutcheon (eds), *Failure and Nerve in the Academic Study of Religion*, 218-227. Equinox Publishers, 2012.

Book Reviews

- Peter Gottschalk. *Religion, Science, and Empire: Classifying Hinduism and Islam in British India* (Oxford University Press, 2013). *Religion & Theology* 21 (3-4): 428-432.

Series Editor

- Working with Culture on the Edge Series
 - Russell T. McCutcheon (ed.). *Fabricating Origins*. (Forthcoming with Equinox Publishers, UK); Projected publication date: Spring 2015.

Unpublished Translations

- Greek translation of Russell T. McCutcheon, *Studying Religion: An Introduction*, London, UK: Equinox (2007).

Unpublished Manuscripts

- *Μηδέν Ἄγαν: Ἡ Τραγικότητα τοῦ Ἀνθρώπου στὸν Ἰππόλυτο τοῦ Εὐριπίδη* (Meden Agan: The Tragedy of Man in Euripides's Hippolytus). M.A. Thesis: Aristotle University, Greece.

Invited Lectures

- "Re-describing Iconoclasm: Holey Frescoes and Identity Formation." Presented at the Religion in Culture Lunchtime Discussion at the University of Alabama (April 2010)
- Four guest lectures (May 2009), Department of Religious Studies, University of Alabama. Topics: History of Thessaloniki; Beginners Modern Greek Language; Private Religion and the City State in Ancient and Hellenistic Athens.

Conference Presentations

- Invited participant at the conference "Collaborations: Directions in the Study of Religion," at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA, October 2014. Presenting "A Technique of Cosmographic Formation: 'Tradition.'"
- Invited participant at the Code-Switching conference/workshop at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA, April 2014. Presented "Distinction, Domination, Privilege and the Role of Code Switching."
- "'Mystery Cults': The Technology of Producing Citizens." Presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies in Victoria, BC, June 2013.
- "The Meadows of Artemis and the Marginal Self." Presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Religious Studies in Victoria, BC, June 2013.
- "Paul and the 'Tradition' of the Founder Figures," a response to James C. Hanges, *Paul, Founder of Churches*, 2011. Society of Biblical Literature, annual meeting, Boston, November 2011.
- "Re-describing Iconoclasm: Holey Frescoes and Identity Formation." At a conference in honor of Donald Wiebe, at Trinity College in Toronto (October 2011).

- “Re-describing Iconoclasm: Holey Frescoes and Identity Formation.” Presented to the Annual Spring Symposium of the Interdisciplinary Program in Religious Studies at the University of Alberta (March 2010).
- “The Manageable Self in the Early Hellenistic Era.” Presented at a student conference in Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece (May 2009).

Blog Posts

- Culture on the Edge (<http://edge.ua.edu/identifiers/vaia-touna/>); Blog of an International Collaborative investigating identity and identification practices.
- Past Perfect (<http://www.as.ua.edu/pastperfect/author/vtouna/>); 2011 study abroad in Greece blog, University of Alabama (trip cancelled due to April 27, 2011 tornado).

Related Academic Experience

2014-Present Editor of the Series “Working with Culture on The Edge” published by Equinox Publishers, UK. (Forthcoming)

2012-Present Editorial Assistant for the journal *Method & Theory in Study of Religion (MTSR)*, published by Brill of the Netherlands.

2012-Present Editorial board member of Equinox Publisher’s book series *Culture on the Edge: Studies in Identification*. (<https://www.equinoxpub.com/equinox/books/browse.asp?serid=64>).

2012-2013 Instructor of modern Greek language and traditional dances at & 2014-2015 the Hellenic Language School of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

2012-2013 President of the RSGSS (Religious Studies Graduate Student Society), University of Alberta, 2012-2013. Under my initiative we obtained a grant to host Prof. Monica Miller as a guest lecturer.

2012 Teaching Assistant for Prof. Willi Braun, RELIG 211 (Introduction to Early Christian Writings), University of Alberta (Winter Semester).

2012-2013 Executive member of the International House Residence’s Council Committee.

- 2012 Indexer for William Arnal and Russell McCutcheon, "*The Sacred is the Profane*," Oxford University Press (2012).
- 2011-2012 Research Assistant for Prof. Willi Braun. University of Alberta.
- 2009 Co-organized a student conference at the Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece, which resulted in the publication of two of the presenter's presentations with responses from North American scholars, in the *Bulletin of the Council of Societies for the Study of Religion* Vol. 39, No 2 (2010).
- 2008-2012 Local Coordinator, Study Abroad Program, organized by Professor Russell McCutcheon, Department of Religious Studies, University of Alabama.
- 1993-1997 Co-editor of the quarterly cultural magazine, *Emmanuel Papas*.

Professional Affiliations

- Member of the Canadian Society of Religious Studies (CSSR).
- Member of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies (CSBS).
- Founding member of the Greek Association for the Study of Religion and Culture (G.S.S.C.R.).
- Member of the North American Association for the Study of Religion (NAASR).
- Member of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL).
- Member of the American Academy of Religion (AAR).