

Curriculum Vitae- Giovanna Parmigiani

EDUCATION

2008-2015 (November) PhD in Socio-Cultural Anthropology, University of Toronto (with maternity leave).

2007-2009 MSc in Social Anthropology, London School of Economics and Political Science (London, UK, with maternity leave).

1995-2002 BA and MA in Humanities. *Laurea (quadriennale) in Lettere*, Università degli Studi di Milano (Italy).

EMPLOYMENT

Current affiliation and employment

2019/2020-present Lecturer on Religion and Cultural Anthropology, Harvard Divinity School, Harvard University

2021/2022-present Research Associate, Transcendence and Transformation Initiative, CSWR, Harvard University

2023/2024-present Lecturer, Harvard Extension School

2025 Inclusive Teaching Senior Fellow, Harvard University

A.a. 2025-2026 Guest Scholar, Center for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University

Previous affiliations, employment, and fieldwork

November 2023-June 2024 Visiting Professor at Arizona State University, School of International Letters and Cultures (SILC)

2019-2021 Senior Fellow, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University

31/08/2019-31/05/2020, Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Modern Languages (French and Italian) Bryant University

31/08/2017-31/12/2017 and 31/08/2019-31/12/2019 Adjunct Faculty, Italian Language and Culture ILCS University of Connecticut

2017-2019 Postdoctoral Fellow at the Science, Religion, and Culture Program at Harvard Divinity School (Harvard University)

01/06/2015-31/08/2016 fieldwork in Salento, Southern Italy

FIELDWORK

Southern Italy (Salento): 2011-present, almost 6 years in-person in the field

Arizona: 5 months, since December 2023

PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH

Books

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2019 *Feminism, Violence and Representation in Modern Italy: 'We Are Witnesses, Not Victims.'* 'New Anthropologies of Europe' series, Indiana University Press (October 2019).

<https://iupress.org/9780253043382/feminism-violence-and-representation-in-modern-italy/>

2024 *The Spider Dance: Tradition, Time, and Healing in Southern Italy.* Contemporary and Historical Paganism Series, Equinox Publishing [The Spider Dance](#) | [Equinox Religion Library](#)

Under contract *Lived Conspiratoriality. Researching Conspiracy Theories and Alternative Spiritualities.* Under contract with Routledge

Book proposal in progress (invited) *Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Paganisms*, Oxford University Press.

Book proposal in progress (invited) *Spellbound: Towards and Anthropology of Ordinary Magic*, Elements in Magic series, Cambridge University Press

Peer-reviewed articles

2025 *Pizzica e spiritualità in Salento,* invited book chapter for "*Paganesimo in Italia*" edited by Palmisano, Pannofino, and Castagnetto (in print).

2025 "Magic and Time." *West 86th*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2025, pp. 130–34, <https://doi.org/10.1086/737609>.

2024 "'We Are the Olive Trees.' Conspiracism and Environmentalism in Southern Italy: The Case of Xylella Fastidiosa." *Populism and Conspiracy Theory*, 1st ed., Routledge, 2025, pp. 113–34, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003474272-7>.

2024 *Are Pagans feminist / believe in equality? Is Paganism empowering for women, LGBTQ+ and minorities? Pagan Religions in Five Minutes*, edited by Suzanne Owen and Angela Puca. Sheffield: Equinox (to be published in 2024).

2023 "*Ulìa: Neo-animism and political activism in Salento (Southern Italy).* *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, 17(3), 368–386.

2023 "Separation, but not Division": A Southern Italian Perspective on "Lived Conspiratoriality". *Anthropologica*, 65(1). <https://doi.org/10.18357/anthropologica65120232597>

2022 "If You Dance Alone, You Cannot Be Healed": Relational Ontologies and "Epistemes of Contagion" in Salento (Italy). *California Italian Studies*, 11(1).

2021 "Magic and Politics: Conspiratoriality and Covid-19," *JAAR-Journal of the American Academy of Religion* [10.1093/jaarel/lfab053](https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfab053)

2020 "The Witness is Passing By: A Story in the Affective Politics of Objects in the Struggle Against Femicide in Italy." *Italian Culture*.

2019 "Spiritual Pizzica. A Southern Italian Perspective on Contemporary Paganism." *The Pomegranate, the International Journal of Pagan Studies* 21(1): 53-75

2018 "Femminicidio and the Emergence of a 'Community of Sense' in Contemporary Italy," *Modern Italy* 23(1): 19–34.

Manuscripts under review and in preparation (peer-reviewed)

2025 Italian translation of Bron Tylor's book *Dark Green Religion* (under review)

2025 *Conspiratorial Schisms and Continuities: A Southern Italian Perspective on the Study of Conspiracy Theories and Alternative Spiritualities.* FOCAAL, special issue curated by Dr. Giacomo Loperfido

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2025 invited discussion on my book, *The Spider Dance*, in the author-meets-reviewer section, in *Religion and Society*

2026, "It is not true but I believe in it." Insights on Mis/Disinformation from the Anthropological Study of Magic, invited chapter to the volume *The Anthropology of Misinformation and Disinformation*, edited by Maxime Polleri for Routledge

2026 Speaking Light Language: UFOs, E.T., and a Theopolitics of Healing Among Contemporary Spiritual Communities

2027 Times of Divination: Tarot Cards as a Technology of Desire, to be submitted to the journal *Current Anthropology*

2027 "Anthropology of History and Historicities," with Dr. Helen Cornish. Article to be submitted to *History and Anthropology*.

Miscellaneous and Book Reviews (invited)

2024 Invited book review of Beres, Derek, et al. *Conspirituality: How New Age Conspiracy Theories Became a Health Threat*, for *Religion and Society* (forthcoming)

2023 "Research companion to language and country branding," by Irene Theodoropoulou and Johanna Tovar. Abingdon: Routledge, 2021. *Language in Society*

2023 "Pop Pagans: Paganism and Popular Music," by Donna Weston and Andy Bennett. *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*

2021 "Italian Women's Experiences with American Consumer Culture," 1945–1975: The Italian Mrs. Consumer, by Jessica L. Harris, Cham, Springer International Publishing AG (Palgrave Macmillan)," *Modern Italy*, 1-2.

2020 "The Psychology of Women under Patriarchy," edited by Holly F. Mathews and Adriana M. Manago." Invited Review by *American Ethnologist*.

2019 "Food, Festival and Religion. Materiality and Place in Italy by Francesca Ciancimino Howell, Ph.D." Invited Review by Bloomsbury Academic, Bloomsbury Studies in Material Religion series.

2003 "L'ispirazione biblica nell'opera giovanile di Zelda." *Acme: Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università degli Studi di Milano* 56(2), 2003: 219-244.

PANELS AND CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

2026 HEALING WITH MORE-THAN-HUMANS: ENVIRONMENT, HISTORICITIES, AND SACRED MATERIALITIES, Symposium organized with Emily Pierini and Giovanna Capponi for the HEAL network in collaboration with the Yale Religion, Ecology and Expressive Culture Initiative.

2025 SPIRITUALITIES AND HEALING IN GLOBAL AND TRANSHISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES, conference jointly organized by the Centre for Comparative Studies of Civilisations and Spiritualities (Cini Foundation), the Center for the Study of World Religions (Harvard Divinity School) the Center for the Study of Lived Religion (Ca' Foscari University), and the HEAL Network for the Ethnography of Healing

2020 CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN FEMINIST VOICES, double panel, accepted for the American Association of Italian Studies Annual Conference (AAIS/AATI Conference, Annual Meeting in Tucson, AZ, suspended for Coronavirus)

2017 ART, ACTIVISM, AND ANTHROPOLOGY: ENGAGING SENSORY/SENSIBLE POLITICS. Panel for the 2017 AAA (American Anthropological Association) Annual Meeting, organized with Dr. Manuela Pellegrino (Brunel University)

2015 VIOLENCE AND REPRESENTATION IN NEOLIBERAL 'SEMI-PERIPHERIES': NEGOTIATING FAMILIARITY AND STRANGENESS

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Panel for the 2015 AAA (American Anthropological Association) Annual Conference (November 2015), organized with Salvatore Giusto (University of Toronto).

INVITED PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS.

2026 (March) Spiritual Pizzica, Healing With More Than Humans Conference, HEAL Network, Yale University

2026 Invited Visiting Professorship, 7 days residency, Scripps College

2025 (November) Roundtable on The Spider Dance, AAR annual meeting

2025 (November) Roundtable participant, Towards an anthropology of disinformation, AAA annual meeting

2025 (November) Ordinary Magic: Sensing Knowledge and Writing Anthropology in the Legacy of Paul Stoller, AAA meeting, New Orleans

2025 (November) Beyond Truthers and Truth-Defenders: Ethnographic Reflections on Conspiratoriality, 'Truthers' and 'Truth Defenders': Understanding Conflicts over Conspiracy Theories conference, Lund University, Sweden

2025 (October) Beyond stories: conspiracy theories and sense-making, invited presentation for the workshop "*How Do We Know? Religion and Contestations of Institutional Truth*" organized by Mar Griera (UAB Barcelona) and Marian Burchardt (Universität Leipzig), Berlin.

2025 (October) Magical consciousness and environmentalism: reflections from Southern Italy, Witchcraft and Ecospirituality seminar, Center for Applied Ecological Thinking (CApE), University of Copenhagen

2025 (June) Spiritual Pizzica, paper for the Spiritualities and Healing in Transhistorical Perspective, Fondazione Cini, Venice

2025 (June) Book presentation *The Spider Dance*, EASA, NAOH Network

2025 (May) Lecture, International PhD program, RECUPL (Religion, Culture and Public Life)

2025 (February) The Spider Dance, book presentation on Angela's Symposium, YouTube channel

2025 (January) Victims, Martyrs, Witnesses: Representing Violence against Women in Contemporary Italy. Invited speaker, IRCPL's Patriarchal Violence Series, Columbia University

2024 chair for the panel (*N)ethnographies of contemporary Paganism*, AAR Annual Meeting, San Diego

2024, Book Presentation *The Spider Dance*, Harvard University, CSWR

2024 (April), Mainz (Germany) Dark Green Religion in Europe (conference)

2024 (April), Tallinn (Estonia) invited presentation for "Breaking the Silence: An Interdisciplinary Exploration into the Complexities of Violence" (day seminar)

2023 (October). Lived Conspiratoriality." Researching Conspiracy Theories and Alternative Spiritualities, Invited lecture at the University of Regina (Canada)

2023 (November) Invited author for the discussion of my book *Feminism, Violence, and Representation in Modern Italy*, at the seminar Corps et Sciences Sociales - Présentation Critique d'Ouvrages en Présence de Leurs Auteurs, organized by CRESPPA (Centre de Recherches Sociologiques et Politiques de Paris) and by the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme-Paris Nord

2023 (November) I Am Another You. "Lived conspiratoriality" among contemporary Italian Pagans and New Age practitioners, paper for the 2023 AAA conference in Toronto

2023 (November) Respondent for the panel *Agency, Affects and Imagination: Language, Chaplaincy and Conjuration in Pagan Practice* at the 2023 AAR conference in San Antonio

2023 (November) Chair for the panel *Interactions between Human and Divine in the Ancient and Modern World* at the 2023 AAR conference in San Antonio

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2022 invited participant in the roundtable *A World of Hidden Masters: Conspiracy Theories, Religion, and the Occult* organized by prof. Egil Asprem and dr. Christa Shusko for the AAR annual meeting

2022 *Spider Dance. Tradition, Time, and Healing in Southern Italy*. Lecture for the Last Tuesday Society <https://www.thelasttuesdaysociety.org/event/giovanna-parmigiani-the-spider-dance-tradition-time-and-healing-in-southern-italy/>

2022 *Ulía*: Neo-animism and political activism in Salento (Southern Italy), paper for the panel organized by Dr. Helen Berger and Dr. Caroline Tully on “Ecological Spiritualities” (Harvard University, Inaugural Conference, Program for the Evolution of Spirituality, Harvard University)

2022 *As Above, so Below – Conspiracism and Environmentalism in Southern Italy: The Case of Xylella Fastidiosa*,” PACT conference on *Conspiracy Theories and Left-Wing Populism*, Tübingen (Germany)

2022 Coming to the Center with Giovanna Parmigiani, Cherry Hill Seminary

2021 Respondent to Prof. Tanya Luhmann (Stanford University), Transcendence and Transformation seminar, CSWR, Harvard University

2021 invited panelist on a roundtable on “Pagan Ethics,” AAR annual meeting.

2021 speaker at the Colloquium on methodologies for studying marginalized alternative spiritualities, Program for the Evolution of Spirituality, Harvard Divinity School

2021 respondent at the Stendhal Symposium, Harvard University

2021 Chair of the panel “Contemporary Italian Feminist Voices,” AAIS annual conference.

2021 “The Spider Dance. Music, Tradition, and Healing in Southern Italy.” Invited lecture organized by the Department of Anthropology, the Transdisciplinary Italian Seminar, and the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program at the University of Connecticut.

2020 Guest Lecturer. *The Spider Dance*, Harvard Divinity School.

2020 Feminism, Violence, and Representation in Modern Italy. ‘We Are Witnesses, Not Victims,’ guest lecture at Wake Forest University, organized by the National Italian American Foundation and the WFU Women’s Center.

2020 Guest lecturer, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, Georgetown University

2020 “*Avevamo il mostro in casa e non ce ne siamo accorti.*” An ethnographically informed reading of “*Ferite a Morte*” by Serena Dandini (accepted paper for AAIS/AATI Conference, suspended for Coronavirus)

2019 “The Politics of Desire Among Southern-Italian Neopagans”, paper for the Contemporary Pagan Studies Unit presented at the 2019 American Academy of Religion meeting in San Diego.

2019 “‘We are witnesses, not victims.’ The affective politics of representation in the struggle against *femminicidio* in Italy.” Paper presented at the American Association of Italian Studies Conference (AAIS) at Wake Forest University

2018 “*Tarantarsi*” Today: Ethnographic Reflections on Pizzica as a Spiritual Practice among a Neo-Pagan Community in Contemporary Salento (Italy), paper for the Contemporary Pagan Studies Unit presented at the 2018 American Academy of Religion meeting in Denver.

2017 The role of representation in the struggle against femicide in Italy. Paper for the panel Art, Activism, and Anthropology: Engaging with Sensory/Sensible Politics. 2017 AAA Annual Meeting.

2017 Imagining and embodying possible futures: ‘fare-come-se’ as a political practice among Salentine feminists, VIII LANGSA annual conference, University of Connecticut.

2017 Interpreting *tarantate* as a ‘deep play’. Anthropology, Healing, and the Patrimonialization of Women’s Bodies in Contemporary Salento (Italy). Paper presented at the 3rd Annual SRC Symposium, Harvard University (May 15, 2017)

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2016 'Re*presentation as a 'horizon of struggle': aesthetics, dissensus and the politics of becoming among Salentine feminists'. Paper for the panel Horizons of an Otherwise: Engaging and 'Evidencing' the Politics of the Re*, 2016 AAA Annual Conference In Minneapolis.

2015 Affective Politics of Representation in the Struggle Against Femicide in Italy', presented 2015 AAA (American Anthropological Association) Annual Conference in Denver.

2015 'Objects and affects. The emergence of gendered violence as a (contested) matter of public concern in Italy,' paper presented at the AES (American Ethnological Society) Spring Conference in San Diego.

2008 Respondent to Girish Daswani's paper 'The Ghanaian Pentecostal Diaspora in London: Transcending Race and Culture' in the Social-Cultural Linguistic Discussion Paper Series of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Toronto.

2002 Guest lecture at the *Università degli Studi* of Milan on 'The Bible and Russian Symbolism in Zelda's Early Poems' (invited by prof. Mayer Modena)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2025 The Anthropology of Spirituality (Harvard Extension School)

2025 Religion, Materiality, and the Senses (Harvard Divinity School)

2025 Magic, Today (Harvard Divinity School)

2024 Magic, Today (Harvard Divinity School)

2024 The Anthropology of Spirituality (Harvard Divinity School)

2024 The Anthropology of Spirituality (Harvard Extension School)

2023 Magic, Today (Harvard Extension School)

2023 Religion and Healing (Graduate and Post-Graduate Seminar)

2023 Magic, Today (Graduate and Post-Graduate Seminar)

2022 Religion, Materiality and the Senses. An Anthropological perspective (Graduate and Post-Graduate Seminar), Harvard Divinity School

2021 Religion and Healing (Graduate and Post-Graduate Seminar) Harvard Divinity School (Graduate and Post-Graduate Lecture Course, online)

2020 Earth-Based Spiritualities. An Anthropological Perspective (Graduate and Post-graduate Seminar, taught both online and in person) Harvard Divinity School

2020 Magic in the Contemporary World (Graduate and Post-Graduate Lecture Course, online) Harvard Divinity School

2021 Magic in the Contemporary World (Graduate and Post-Graduate Lecture Course, online) Harvard Divinity School

2019 Italian Language and Culture(s) (For undergraduates) Bryant University

2019 Italian Language and Culture(s) (For undergraduates) University of Connecticut

2020 Italian Language and Culture(s) (For undergraduates, taught both online and in person) Bryant University

2017 Italian Language and Culture(s) (For undergraduates) University of Connecticut

2004-2007 teacher of Italian as a Foreign Language, Italian Literature, Ethics, and Latin (Middle school and High school) at the European School of Varese (Italy)

OTHER SPECIALIZATIONS AND TRAINING

1996 Academic Course in Pedagogy, *Università degli Studi* di Milano.

2003 Venice and one off-campus section of the European Master in InterMediterranean Mediation. Investments and Integration, *Università Ca' Foscari* of Venice.

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2003 Summer Course of Specialization for Teachers of Italian as a Second and Foreign Language, Università Ca' Foscari of Venice.

2004-2006 European School of Varese Internal Professional Development Courses

2018 Diploma as a translator, *Diploma in Formazione professionale per traduzione* (Scuola Interpreti e Traduttori Pescara, Italy)—110/110 cum laude (translation diploma, language pairs: Italian-English and English-Italian)

2020 Remote teaching, technologies, and techniques, Bryant University (Professional development course)

2020 Remote Teaching course on interactive asynchronous work, Harvard University (Professional development course)

2020 Remote Teaching course on HyFlex teaching (combining elements of both online and class-based learning), Bryant University (Professional development course)

2020 Remote Teaching course on Zoom, Panopto (Professional development course)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

2022-present, Co-chair of the Contemporary Pagan Studies Unit of the American Academy of Religion AAR (American Academy of Religion) with dr. Christopher Chase

2022-2024, with Dr. Helen Cornish, founding **co-chair** of NAOH, the Anthropology of History Network, EASA (European Association of Social Anthropology)

Member of **HEAL**, Network for the Ethnography of Healing

Peer Reviewer for the journal *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*

Peer Reviewer for the journal *Political Theology*

Peer Reviewer for the journal *JAAR*

Peer Reviewer for the journal *Civiltà e Religioni*.

Peer reviewer for the *Journal for the Academic Study of Religion*

Peer reviewer for the *Journal of Lesbian Studies*

Peer reviewer for the *Journal Capacious*

Peer reviewer for *Routledge-Religion*

Peer reviewer for *Springer Nature*

Advisory board member in the Program for the Evolution of Spirituality, Harvard University

Secretary of the Women's Studies Caucus at American Association of Italian Studies (2019-2021)

Member of the task force for the Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism Initiative of the American Association of Italian Studies (2020)

Member of PSI (Pagan Studies Initiative) since 2022

Member of the American Academy of Religion (AAR)

Member of the American Anthropological Association (AAA)

Member of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA)

Member of the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS)

GRANTS AND FUNDING

2008-2012 Connaught Scholarship (Canada)

2023: Transcendence and Transformation (CSWR), research and fieldwork grants

2025: Yale Religion, Ecology and Expressive Culture Initiative, with Emily Pierini and Giovanna Capponi (approved)

OUTREACH WORK

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Interview on conspirativity for Vice (Italia)

Expert advisor for a forthcoming documentary film about TV, politics, gender, and satire in Italy by Clare Major (claremajor.com)

Written piece on *tarantismo* and spirituality for the English journal Sali&Tabacchi Journal (<https://www.facebook.com/salietabacchijournal/>)

Research reflections, CSWR

GNOSEOLOGIES (Organized within the Transcendence and Transformation initiative at the CSWR, Harvard University)

LANGUAGES

Italian native speaker

English, C2

Spanish, B2

French (written)

September 17, 2025

