CRITERION

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S P R I N G / S U M M E R  2 0 1 3
Dear Alumni and Friends —

The Spring 2013 issue of Criterion opens with a paper by Paul Mendes-Flohr, the Dorothy Grant Maclear Professor of Modern Jewish History and Thought. Discussing “The Promises and Limitations of Interfaith Dialogue,” Professor Mendes-Flohr points out the tensions in different conceptions of tolerance, and claims that tolerance need not be seen as a threat to religious integrity.

Next is a lecture by Stephen Chan (AM 1990, PhD 1998), who spoke at Swift Hall last year as part of a conference on “Sino-Christian Theology in Today’s China.” At the conference, scholars reflected critically on the religious, cultural, political, economic, and sociological factors that are giving rise to the growth of Christianity in China, and asked how theology, as an academic discipline, could engage, interrogate, and complicate this novel phenomenon. Professor Chan’s talk, reproduced here, addresses how issues of translation inform the enterprise of Sino-Christian theology.

The opening Wednesday Community Luncheon talk of 2012, by Dean Margaret M. Mitchell, then challenges us to consider the academic study of religion, and the place of religion within that enterprise. Reminding us of how complicated religious identity is, she cautions against theories that see a great divide between religious and non-religious scholars.

A sermon by current Theology PhD student Andrew Packman (MDiv 2012) follows. He takes the occasion of the temporary relocation of Wednesday worship to Swift Hall during renovations to Bond Chapel to remark on the relation between the spiritual and the reasonable, between prayer and study, and to consider the sort of community that engages these “supposedly competing claims.”

The issue concludes with news from our alumni. Please continue to keep us up to date on your accomplishments.

As always, my thanks to Susan Zakin, editorial assistant, and Robin Winge, designer.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Terren Ilana Wein, Editor
The Promise and Limitations of Interfaith Dialogue

To tolerate is to insult. Tolerance must only be preparatory to open the way to mutual acceptance. … True liberalism is acknowledgment and understanding.

— Wolfgang Goethe

In what might be regarded to be a commentary on Goethe’s sapient maxim, cited as the epigraph to this essay, the Jewish philosopher Franz Rosenzweig exclaimed, “the main thing is that we still must prove ourselves — the test is still before us: The overcoming of mere thoughts of tolerance, above all the overcoming of [mutual] indifference.” In the best of liberal circles, marching under the banner of tolerance, “the Christian ignored the Jew in order to tolerate him, and the Jew ignored the Christian in order to allow himself to be tolerated.” This strategy of studious indifference attainment its most pristine expression in the German poet and philosopher Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s didactic play Nathan the Wise. A parable of tolerance, this play, first performed in 1779, projects the difference between the bearers of the three monotheistic faiths to be irrelevant, of no consequence because they are — despite their religious particularities — first and foremost human beings. As Nathan, Lessing’s wise Jew, rhetorically asks, “Are Christian and Jew sooner Christian and Jew than human beings?” Indeed, as Rosenzweig observed, Nathan is abstracted from his Judaism, as is Lessing’s Muslim from Islam, and his Christian from Christianity. They meet solely as fellow human beings.

Their religious patrimony, grounded in the witness they bear to their respective faith communities, is accordingly treated as an encumbrance, or an ultimately trivial accident of birth. Hence, as Rosenzweig laconically observes, Lessing’s Jew, Christian, and Muslim “have no children.” As pure human beings, they have no progeny, certainly no Jewish, Christian or Muslim descendants.

But surely believing Jews — as Christians, Muslims, and for that matter believing Buddhists, Hindus, or Navajo Snake Dancers — would protest that their humanity is refracted through the particularity of their community of faith. Yet one must acknowledge that religious faith, especially of biblical or theistic inspiration, may engender intolerance. The claim to privileged knowledge often instills hubris, and contempt for other faiths. Indeed, historically the liberal ethic of tolerance was born of a resolve to contain the fury and wrath aroused by conflicting religious claims. If tolerance courts indifference, let it be. For surely it is preferable to the scourge of religious intolerance.

Hence, the liberal creed of tolerance poses an irrefragable challenge to men and women of faith: Can an abiding fidelity to the theological positions and values of one’s religious community allow one to acknowledge the cogni-
tive and spiritual integrity of other faith commitments? The challenge is perhaps more poignant when formulated from the perspective of religious educators: How is one to instruct youth in the religious beliefs and values of their community, while at the same time be tolerant of beliefs and values deemed to be incompatible with their own? How is one to educate youth to have firm moral and faith convictions, while encouraging them to honor opposing positions? Surely, this challenge would be banal were tolerance interpreted merely as a code of “live and let live,” or construed as a demand to dismiss differences between religions, to cite once again Nathan the Wise, as but a question of “color, dress, and shape.” The differences are not always so superficial, however. There are often some very real and far-reaching theological and axiological differences that divide various faith communities.

It is from this perspective that T. S. Eliot exclaimed, “The Christian does not wish to be tolerated.14 If one takes one’s own faith seriously, one must perforce demand that others take one’s faith seriously, even if but to protest. Thus, Franz Rosenzweig voiced his preference for the medieval disputations—which in Jewish savants were obliged to defend rabbinic teachings before an inquisitorial forum of Catholic clerics—to the tepid ethic of interfatih tolerance. Taking his own faith seriously, Rosenzweig unflinchingly insisted that the differences between Judaism and Christianity are not merely matters of folklore and contrasting cultural inflections. In a memorable essay on “the phenomenology and dialectic of tolerance,” the Catholic existentialist Gabriel Marcel posed the issue with particular acuity when he mused, “Insofar as I consider the object of my faith sacred, have I the right to act as if it were an object of scientific study? For a person of true religious faith who has internalized the liberal ethos, the challenge of interfaith reconciliation is perhaps more poignant when formulated from the perspective of religious educators: How is one to instruct youth in the religious beliefs and values of their community, while at the same time be tolerant of beliefs and values deemed to be incompatible with their own? How is one to educate youth to have firm moral and faith convictions, while encouraging them to honor opposing positions? Surely, this challenge would be banal were tolerance interpreted merely as a code of “live and let live,” or construed as a demand to dismiss differences between religions, to cite once again Nathan the Wise, as but a question of “color, dress, and shape.” The differences are not always so superficial, however. There are often some very real and far-reaching theological and axiological differences that divide various faith communities.

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The lexicological history of the term tolerance highlights the issue. Prior to the eighteenth century and the dawn of liberal politics, the word “tolerance” had, in French, a pejorative connotation, namely, a permissive or compliant attitude towards evil. As late as 1691, in his famous admonition to Protestants, Jacques F. Bousse unabashedly extolled Catholicism as the least tolerant of all religions. As a “careless indulgence,” tolerance was deemed a heresy. It is only with the emergence of the modern state as a fundamentally secular institution, concerned preeminently with public tranquility as a condition necessary for collective prosperity, that tolerance lost its pejorative sting and became a civic and moral virtue. Whether it can also be a theological virtue is of course yet another issue. Philosophically, tolerance is an elusive concept, fraught with logical paradoxes, if not downright antinomies. Are we to tolerate the intolerable? Liberal law, crafted to ensure the maximal freedom and thus diversity of opinion and practice recurrently has difficulty in drawing the lines between toleration and legal censure. The civic duty to tolerate and the moral injunction to oppose what is objectionable are often in conflict, if not seemingly irreconcilable. Tolerance has accordingly been defined as a deliberate restraint—albeit conditional—to objectionable beliefs and conduct. But, again returning to Goethe’s instructive maxim, one must regard this form of tolerance—as at best preparatory to “mutual acceptance” and reciprocal “acknowledgment and understanding.” From the perspective of the state, such tolerance is supertagatory, that is, it is above and beyond the purview of the law; it cannot be legislated. A solicitous, dialogue tolerance—through which one actively seeks to acknowledge and understand the other—must take its lead from a source other than a concern for civic harmony. As a positive virtue, dialogue tolerance derives its energy from a compelling desire to know and honor the other, and perhaps at a deeper level a conviction that the other, despite his or her difference to be understood as how one may extend tolerance beyond the pragmatic bounds of tactical indifference towards other religious and axiological traditions, and to forge a path to mutual “acknowledgment and understanding”—and to do so without compromising or vitiating one’s own commitments.

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—and perhaps even because of this difference (and this will be our point) — shares some basic humanity with oneself.

The issue of tolerance, of course, is considerably alleviated if one adopts a moral and cultural relativism. This was Lessing’s recommendation. In his parable of tolerance, neither the Jew nor the Christian nor the Muslim are certain whether he is God’s elect, that he possesses the pristine covenant. Bequest of such knowledge, Lessing’s Jew, Christian, and Muslim are enjoined to humility, and thus to disregard the doctrinal and historical differences that divide them. In effect, to overcome the task of dividing Lessing sought to remove the differences by urging a self-critical agnosticism and an ethic of cultural relativism. If all is relative, religious and attendant cultural differences are not worth a fight. This attitude leads to what has been aptly called a skeptical pluralism, and an “easy acceptance of a heterogeneity of values and ways of life.”15 This may also be characterized as a laissez-faire conception of tolerance. With the elimination—often by dint of a sheer decision for the sake of tolerance—of a clear ground of morality and religious conviction, one ethical system and set of beliefs are to be regarded as good as the next. As in the case of the well-meaning Lessing, this form of relativism is prompted not merely by pragmatic objectives of civic and inter-communal tranquility, but also by a genuine humanism. At the core of every culture and faith, the humanist holds, is a common humanity and even shared spiritual sensibilities. Focusing on the essential humanity of the other allows one to dismiss that which is particular as unessential. Indeed, extending tolerance to the Jew in the person of Nathan the Wise, Lessing “abstracted” him from his Judaism. He became what later Isaac Deutscher would call a “non-Jewish Jew.”16 And to a lesser degree, Lessing did this with the Christian and Muslim protagonists of his play. What is tolerated is the human being hidden beneath the façade of a particular faith community. A species of this type of tolerance is what might be called “ad hominem tolerance,” in which a pious individual—be he or she a devout Jew, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, or what have you—is portrayed as being fundamentally a decent person, for he or she is perceived to possess such engaging human qualities as sincerity, integrity, and humaneness. Intrinsic value is attributed to these trans-cultural qualities and implicitly granted priority to the distinctive beliefs and practices that define the particular Jewish, Christian or Muslim. The danger of this approach is also illustrated by Lessing. In his earlier play, “The Jews,” he presents a Jew of manifest integrity, social grace, and a humane disposition, and then has one of the protagonists parenthetically but tellingly sigh, if only all the Jews were like him.17 Unwittingly, he casts his Jews—as he does the Muslim and Christian in Nathan the Wise to be exceptional, and, in fact, praiseworthy for transcending the constraining limits of their respective faith communities. Seeing the individual Christian, Jew, or Muslim as an autonomous and thus a trans-cultural subject, Lessing, the preeminent humanist, in effect ignores or at least downplays their faith commitments.

In some contemporary interfaith circles, there is a beguiling twist to the humanistic leveling of differences...
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But the two religious events are, of course, not the same at all. Their calendrical proximity, and the fact that both occasions an exchange of gifts, and that both holidays are marked by illuminated candles does not render them spiritually and theologically homologous. Nor is Passover “essentially” identical with Easter. There are, to be sure, more nuanced and sophisticated variations of this approach to interfait understanding, represented especially among certain trends in the academic study of religion, stemming from the Religiongeschichte-Schule of the early twentieth century which holds that all faiths, including so-called pagan faiths, enjoy a relationship to the Absolute. This is not a theological but a phenomenological argument, based on heuristic presuppositions of a universally apprehended Absolute or divine reality, and some core religious personality to which particular religious beliefs and actions are ultimately peripheral.14 To be sure, these strategies promoting inter-religious tolerance generally reflect more than a mere pragmatic accommodation or suffrage of the other. They express humanistic affirmations and a moral commitment to the ideal of genuine tolerance. Without gainsaying the overlapping significance of this attitude, I wish to highlight conceptual problems inherent to such an attitude.

Humanistic and phenomenological approaches to interfait tolerance induce two distinctive forms of pluralism: A weak pluralism, which contends that all religions have some intrinsic value; and a strong pluralism, according to which each religion has not only intrinsic value, but each is of equal moral and spiritual value. In either case, the ethic of tolerance is advanced by endorsing a form of cultural and religious relativism. But if tolerance is to be more than merely a by-word for relativism, then it does not flinch from engaging the other theologically, and in order to tolerate members of other faith communities it does not suffice with focusing on the subjective reality of the other, bracketing or even dismissing as irrelevant their beliefs and actions. One may even question whether the humanistic and phenomenological approach to interfait understanding is actually capable of achieving its objective. For by focusing on the interior experience and human qualities of members of other faiths — the subjects or agents of other faiths — this approach in effect detaches the subjects from the objective content and theological claims of their beliefs and actions. According to the subjective approach — be it in the form of some humanistic essentialism or universal phenomenology of religious experience — only human beings are strictly tolerated, not their beliefs and practices. One does not tolerate the beliefs and practices of the other, but only the subjects holding these beliefs and the protagonists of these practices. Put differently, tolerance of the subjective reality of the other and the assumed humanity of the other, while perhaps confirming the humanity of the other, does not entail an understanding of the other’s beliefs and deepest religious commitments.15

The problem of tolerance as a theological virtue is probably most acute for monotheistic religions. Founded upon historical revelation, these religions hold themselves to be graced by a privileged knowledge of God and the divine will. Revelation thus constitutes a system of propositional claims, that is, truth claims that are affirmed through faith, and as such are constitutive of a specific theistic religion’s guiding principles and practices. The privileged status of revelation lends the religion upon which it is founded a preeminent position, which precludes the truth claims of competing religions. There is but one true religion, others are utterly false or, at best, impaired by incomplete knowledge of divine truths. Hence, it is argued that “a religion based on constitutive... revealed truths cannot ascribe value to a religion that contradicts these truths.”16 Monothestic religions are thus said to be inherently intolerant. Since the Enlightenment, theologians have implicitly acknowledged that the propositional character of revelation has obstructed monotheistic religions’ integration into the liberal order. In late eighteenth century Jewish circles, Moses Mendelssohn argued the Judaism in not constituted by a divine dispensation of “eternal truths” — which should in principle be available to all rational individuals — but rather a divine legislation of ritual or ceremonial laws. But twist and turn as he did, the German-Jewish philosopher could not deny that Judaism had a privileged status, for, as he argued, the ceremonial laws had the symbolic role of keeping the Jews ever alert to the eternal truths, of which ordinary mortals, that is, non-Jews often tend to lose sight. Despite his passionate endorsement of the then new, indeed, revolutionary ethic of religious tolerance, Mendelssohn could not explain away Judaism’s privileged status as a revealed religion. Liberal Christian theologians fared no better in their efforts to adjust revealed faith to the demands of tolerance. In the twentieth century, a radical new strategy crystallized with the rejection of propositional conceptions of revelation. Revelation, according to this view, is not a disclosure of divine truths, but is rather the experience of divine presence, especially as manifest in given historical events. Founded on such events, religion is thus said to be an encounter with the living God, and not principled recognition of privileged knowledge. Such encounters cannot be properly formulated in propositional statements to be affirmed or denied; the witnesses to these events are meant to inspire among believers a posture of faith allowing for similar encounters in their lives. In this sense, revelation is instructive, not constitutive. A non-propositional conception of revelation, propounded especially by Protestant liberal thinkers, is by definition less exclusive and thus in principle capable of accommodating other faith experiences. But, even if one should grant that the non-propositional conception of revelation paves the way for religious tolerance and pluralism, it is actually irrelevant to the larger question of whether religious tolerance can be regarded as a theological virtue. Moreover, it is probably a historically irrelevant position. For the fact remains that the votaries of a non-propositional view of revelation are a small minority of theologians, who address a rather circumscribed circle of readers. The vast majority of believers still — at least formally — regard their respective theistic faith communities to be based on a privileged access to divine truths.

There is yet another more basic flaw in the non-propositional view of revelation. Eager to free monothestic faith from what they regard as the bane of exclusivity, the proponents of a non-propositional view of revelation implicitly deny the faith reality of those for whom revealed truths are an intrinsic, indeed, perhaps the constitutive aspect of that reality. Should interfait understanding not be limited to post-traditional, perhaps secularized theologians representing various monothestic faiths, it must also be forged between individuals for whom propositional revelation is deeply part of their faith experience. To be historically significant, interfait understanding cannot demand a theological shift to non-propositional conceptions of revelation. The reality is that there are those, perhaps the majority of believers, who are beholden to propositional conceptions of belief. One cannot demand of Christians to forfeit their conceptions of dogma as revealed truths mediating salvation, and hope to claim that “outside the Church there is no salvation” (Saint Cyprian). Nor can one demand of Muslims

From left: Moses Mendelssohn, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, and Johann Kaspar Lavater.
to yield certain notions of Islam, such as expressed in Quran, Sura 3:18: “The only true faith in Allah is Islam.” Nor could one require of Jews to deny that the Torah, oral and written, was given at Sinai and that God thereby established a special relationship with the Children of Israel. We therefore return to our original question, slightly reformulated in the light of the preceding discussion: Are monotheistic faiths, grounded as they are in historical revelation embodying propositional truths, inherently incapable of genuine tolerance? Are monotheistic faiths constitutionally antagonistic to religious pluralism?

A journal founded in Germany of the late 1920s adumbrated a strategy for interfaith dialogue that might not only provide an answer to our question but also point to the possibility of regarding religious tolerance as a theological virtue. Appearing between 1926 and 1930, the journal, entitled Die Kreator, was edited jointly by a Jew, a Protestant, and a Catholic. The journal sought to provide a forum for representatives of monotheistic religions to engage in a respectful dialogue that did not require the yielding of traditional faith positions. The name of the journal was chosen with great care: Die Kreator — translated as “creatur,” but the German has wider connotations, embracing “all living created beings.” Under the sign of Divine Creation, men and women of theistic faith are to be cognizant of themselves as created beings and thus co-responsible for the care of the created order, which includes at its center one’s fellow human beings.

Conceived by the theologian Florens Christian Rang, this interfaith journal was initially to be called “greetings from the traditions represented. Without proclaiming it as its position as such, the journal thereby implicitly took seriously the constitutive beliefs of each religious community, thus acknowledging them as intrinsic to the faith commitment and identity of the other. There was no apology, no defensive posturing. The distinctive voices were simply resounded and heard, resonating a humble sense of a shared creaturality.

The editor of Die Kreator, Martin Buber, explained that in such a dialogue one encounters the other as a Thou — as an irreducibly unique presence. The Thou, he further pointed out, is not to be construed as some hidden essence of the Other, some quasitheological core distiled from the Other. Rather the Thou is the whole — the Gestalt, if one wills — of the Other. The Thou is beholden in the Presence of the Other, through which the Presence of the Divine is also manifest. Dialogue thus differs from a humanism that seeks to isolate and celebrate the common “human” essence of each of us. In contrast, dialogical tolerance discerns one’s humanity — or creaturality — in the particularity, as Emmanuel Levinas would put it, of the distinctive Face of each human being. Hence, within the sphere of theistic faith, dialogical tolerance finds in the concept of creaturality a theological ground analogous to the humanistic notion of our universal humanity. But creaturality is not to be construed as a mere synonym or metaphor for the humanistic notion of a common humanity. By virtue of a conscious-ness of one’s creaturality, one assumes a bond with one’s fellow human beings — or divinely graced creatures. One is thus bonded to the others not only by dint of common anthropological features but also because of a sense of shared origins, destiny and responsibility before the transcendent source of life.

Because dialogical tolerance secures the integrity of each participant in the ensuing dialogue, it need not, as is often feared by orthodox custodians of the various monistic monotheistic faith communities, threaten the certainty of one’s beliefs, or commitment to the values of one’s religious tradition. Open-mindedness and tolerance need not necessarily lead to a loosening of communal bonds, and a weakening of cognitive attachments. Indeed, dialogical tolerance may be hailed a theological virtue.

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Indeed, dialogical tolerance may be hailed a theological virtue.
Theology as Translation
A Glimpse of Sino-Christian Theology in China

It is an extraordinary occasion for us to gather together in Swift Hall to present and discuss the formidable issues of the development of Christian theology in today’s China, and it’s especially exciting to have this conversation here at my alma mater.

The following is a continuation of the Chicago–China story in the area of Christian theology. I seek to suggest that cultural-religious contact is an alliance of meaning, rather than a search for equivalent beliefs. In the immense region we call China today, the creative translation of Western scholarship is best seen in the ongoing story of Sino-Christian theology.

Theology as Translation

Haan Saussy, the University Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Chicago, is a renowned scholar of Chinese and comparative literature. His rumination on culture and literature is highly comparative and cross-cultural as exemplified in his formulation of translation as a model of inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue. He describes translation (“fanyi” in Chinese) as follows:

[T]he job of the translator is not reproductive, representing a pre-existing meaning in a new milieu, but rather expository and applicational — the task of...
...translation is neither a reproductive nor a representational task.

making something mean something to somebody. Its political counterpart would be not jurisdictions but alliances... [Alliances deserve to be prominent among the models and metaphors of cultural contact, because it is through choosing sides that emitters become participants in the civilization they have come to visit. There is an affinity between such participation and the notion that translations are acts, not discoveries.

Saussy seeks to bypass the equivalence model of communication by pointing to creative acts of cross-cultural interaction and participation, as exemplified in the efforts of a handful of Jesuit missionaries in China during the seventeenth century. In Saussy’s reformulation, translation is not understood as a “ferrying” (the original Platonic pun) of meaning between the authorial and audience poles, “not as a matter of finding equivalences between vocabularies but as one of making the meanings of one speech community mean something to another speech community.”

This assertion is made in the context of Saussy’s historical and literary reflection on the legacy of Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), whose quincentenary the Vatican celebrated in 2010. Saussy cites the pertinent example of how Ricci translated “sanctus” by the Chinese word “sheng” (which means holy and sacred) with an intended double meaning of referring to the emperor’s majesty in the context of medieval monarchy. Ricci was the master of religious and political alliance and maneuver.

When describing the development of non-Western theologies, Western theology has long employed the terminology and models of inculturation (in the case of Catholicism), indigenization (for the spread of Eastern religions in Asia), and contextualization (in reference to modern sociocultural situation). But as Saussy and other sinologists have shown, all these discourses carry a modern sociocultural situation). But as Saussy and other sinologists have shown, all these discourses carry a heavy dose of essentialism. If theology in a cross-cultural context, present and past. The language and insights of medieval Christian mystics provides correlation, or even an “analogical imagination,” to today’s ideological struggles in China: the dilemma of rationalism and empiricism, of individualism and nationalism, of Platonic idealism and Marxist (and post-Marxist) pragmatism.

The modern episode of the historic encounter between Christian intellectual traditions and Chinese intellectuals has accelerated to fortissimo in the arena of modern Christian theology. How do we assess the development of Sino-Christian theology? The usual approach is to ask for its methodology as well as its system. The late Langdon Gilkey, whose Shantung Compound remains a classic, told me in 1988 when we first met in Hong Kong, that the reason Chicago is so interested in theological methodology is partly because of the steel plants in South
David Tracy’s repeated caution against methodologism. To ask for a method without paying equal attention to its subject matter is a misplaced method itself.

As a theological movement, Sino-Christian theology certainly has to give an account of its methodology, and such accounts can be read in many methodological papers published by the Institutes of Sino-Christian Studies in Hong Kong. However the discussion of theological methodology pertinent to the development of Christian theology in today’s China must be set within the larger context of contemporary Chinese cultural discourse. Both context and method are inseparable for understanding Chinese scholars are translators of Christian classics, one can often encounter genuine methodological insights even in their non-methodological writings, such as their translation works and their readings of Western theologians as illustrated above. Examples par excellence are the Chinese translations of heavy-laden words like “being” and “existence.” Sino-Christian scholars seek not to construct an independent theological movement apart from the Anglo-American tradition, instead most of its members see themselves as exegetes and interpreters of the Western tradition. The commitment to translation in Chinese academia is deep and massive: we often have two translations of complete works of major Western thinkers, such as Plato and Augustine. There are also two translations of Kant’s *Gesammelte Schriften*. The Institute of Sino-Christian Studies has completed more than one hundred volumes of translated works by modern German and Anglo-American theologians, including our very own David Tracy, William Schweizer, Bernard McGinn, and the late Don Browning (the latter two in process).

It is refreshing to read Haun Saussy’s reflection on the multi-faceted legacy of Matteo Ricci, and his creative suggestion that translation is an alignment or allegiance of meanings. If cross-cultural theology is like translation, it engenders a situation whereby “two speech communities can coincide in their language, although not in their frames of reference.” Hence the intellectual burden of Sino-Christian scholars is not a mere retrieval of Western tradition, nor a new meaning generated by a Gadamarian fusion-of-horizons. Their theological reflection, analogous to Saussy’s comparative literature, is post-hermeneutical and post-contextualization. In light of Tracy’s formulation, it is a retrieval, suspicion, and reconstruction of Western Christian theology. Sino-Christian theology is both a critique of Western methodology, as well as of the content of Christian theology, in the cultural setting of today’s PRC.

Is Sino-Christian theology another form of cultural theology? The answer is both yes and no. However even if it is a cultural discourse, it’s not the over-differentiated and over-oppositional cultural typology of Richard Niebuhr. Is Sino-Christian theology another facet of contextual theology? The answer is both yes and no. However even if it is a contextual praxis, it’s not an over-appropriated theological program, which often, ironically, retains and reinforces an implicit essentialism. In summary, Sino-Christian theology is neither indigenization nor contextualization. In light of Tracy’s formulation, it is a translation of Christian intellectual traditions in today’s Chinese cultural milieu. It is a translation-as-alliance, and seeks to form an alliance between Christian thoughts and contemporary Chinese concerns. There is no haunting of “lost in translation” here.

Langdon Gilkey once suggested that China is the third encounter of Christianity, after the two grand historical periods: the encounter with Greek philosophy in the third century, and with modern science over the last two centuries. As a graduate of this institution, I am privileged and burdened to carry on this mission. As a fine product of Swift Hall, I run the full course from the medieval McGinn, through the nineteenth-century Gerrish, to the modern and postmodern Tracy. I have fought the good fight, but the race is not yet over. May 1 wish my alma mater well. May I wish that the Divinity School becomes an active participant in the flourishing of Sino-Christian theology in China.

Endnotes


2 Translations of both books were published in Chinese by the Institute of Sino-Christian Studies in Hong Kong, the first in 1995, and the second one (translated by me) in 2009. Tracy’s latest contribution to interreligious dialogue is “Western Hermeneutics and Inter-religious Dialogues” in *Interreligious Hermeneutics*, ed. Catherine Cornille (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2010).

3 Haun Saussy, Great Walls of Discourse and Other Adventures in Cultural China (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 51.

4 Ibid.


6 Huifan Yang and Daniel H. N. Yang, eds., Sino-Christian Studies in China (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006) and Pan-Chen Lai and Jason Lam, eds., Sino-Christian Theology: A Theological Qua Cultural Movement in Contemporary China (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010).

7 Saussy, Great Walls, 32.
Complicated Religious Pasts and Presents
The Place of ‘Religion’ in the Academic Study of Religion

In a recent issue of the Journal of the American Academy of Religion, we find the following statement: “…religiousness will continue to constrain the academic study of religion even as it will continue to dominate the concerns of Homo sapiens generally.” And a second: “it is delusory to think that ‘religious studies’ has ever achieved, or can achieve, a full emancipation from religious concerns.”

For these two authors, the culprit is two-fold: an institutional context within higher education for the academic study of religion that is, in their view, still too much dominated by “theology” and concern for meaning and value, on the one hand, and on the other the human brain, which is evolutionarily predisposed, on their account, to try to find external causality for things, including the ultimate delusion, the explanation for which should be the only goal of a properly scientific study of religion — the persistence of belief in what are by definition false imaginary beings.

The authors present themselves with deliberate self-irony, couched as a statement of public repentance of the optimism of their middle years about forging a properly scientific study of religion uncontaminated by religion; instead, now elder statesmen, they throw up their hands and renounce their ‘faith’ (my word) or ‘hope’ (their word) in the ability of properly scientific human beings to overcome the delusions that constitute religion, which are so thoroughly perpetuated by others in forms both individual and structural. Although two of the four respondents to the piece in this issue of JAAR try to cheer the authors up with some evidence of the traction the cognitive science of religion is having in some circles of the study of religion (while the other two, including our own Alumna of the Year in 2012, Professor Ann Taves, dispute Martin and Wiebe’s model of science, on the one hand, and vision of the university, on the other), in their afterword Martin and Wiebe pronounce themselves still among the de-converted, misplaced hope now set aside with the weary resignation of defeated Jeremnias (my image) or brilliant, but still unheeded Freuds (their title, evocative of his 1927 book, The Future of an Illusion, with more than a soupcon of Richard Dawkins, The God Delusion). In their own response to the responses we see that they have actually had two ‘de-conversions,’ as they refer to their former, former selves as ‘recovering humanists’ (p. 619). Converted from humanists to optimistic scientists, they now convert yet again from optimistic scientists to pessimistic ones.
From where do these smooth pebbles, untouched by the grit of religion, come?

Professors Martin and Wiebe yearn for a completely, utterly scientific study of religion that must, by their definition of science, be entirely uncontaminated by its object. The scientist of religion, on this model, conducts his or her work in a laboratory, in a HazMat suit, with sanitized theoretical tools, with the goal being explanation of religious thought and behavior (and also, it appears, the legitimation of the scholar of religion as a bona fide scientist along-side the biologists, physicists and others in the university). This scholar is a genuine modernist (he inveighs against the post-modernists, and a noble figure, defiant against all academic disciplines that are organized in any way other than scientific explanation (so not only religious studies, but the humanities entirely, and, with a bit more of a zètik anthropology, for instance, among the social scientists, get rebelled for getting too close to their subject matter). Religion — we have the tools, we can explain it, but we have to get religion out of the way.

There is much of interest in this essay and dialogue with the respondents, and I encourage all to read, think and talk about them. In conveying a flavor of their own self-irony I hope I have not given the impression of dismissal of their argument — I take it very seriously, and hence have fore-fronted it for our consideration today. That we can find ample evidence in religious studies scholarship of some religious tourism and religious self-valorization, if not outright apologies, seems to me correct, and needs critical assessment; it is our job to assess continually which is which. And yet there are problems with their essay, significant ones. For instance, I find a blatant self-contradiction in the essay, in that eschewing causal explanations of any type (including intentionalilty) they in turn hypostatize 'religions' as causative agents that prey on the cognitive impairments of human beings. But let’s let that go for now. In examining this model (after successive years where I have spoken in this same venue on “playing with fire” and “the workshop or the assembly line” as ways of conceptualizing the academic study of religion) I wish to focus on one thing in particular: on this depiction of our field, from where do these sciences of religion come? How do these rare few manage to rise above their own cognitive impairment and the institutional contexts that shepherd them away from the properly scientific demeanor and toward a “learned practice and/or appreciation of religion,” which they take to be identical with a simply non-critical perspective on religion? From where do these smooth pebbles, untouched by the grit of religion, come? Where, in other words, does what they call passionately the ability to “have the mind of a scientist” come from, and what would it mean for pedagogy in the academic study of religion?

I cannot find any clues in the two essays other than a “contradiction” from the mouth of one of these men, and how to embrace ‘theor’.' Frantically, the concession they offer that “[t]his is not to deny that many in the field [of religious studies] have done valuable empirical work, and are increasingly doing so” (p. 594) bears no footsteps, so we are not even given models for this model of the study of religion.

What we are left to divine is that the scientist must either have left ‘religiousness’ behind or have found some way to separate their ‘religiousness’ from their scholarship (apparently left in the locker room after donning the Haz-Mat suit) and must have renounced the quest for meaning and value, in life or in religion (which quest they regard as itself an expression of the same cognitive defect — you can see why they are ‘recovering humanitarians’). The recipe for getting to the scientific mind-set resounds with rugged frontier values: by power of will and hard work. The model presumes (and an interview with Donald Wiebe that I heard online confirms), above all, that it is possible to separate those other ‘religious scholars’ from ‘non-religious’ ones and, as well, to know securely what camp oneself resides in.

I am not at all so sure. For one thing, this model assumes that what a ‘religion’ or ‘religiousness’ is (and what is really the object of study) is ‘faith’ or ‘belief’ in invisible beings. Not complex social systems of practice and thought variously conditioned and fashioned by human beings over time, but individual brain (mis)fixing is what this ‘religion’ is that we seek to understand. This ‘belief’ in the supernatural may be a constant or semi-constant along much of what we study across the degree programs and areas of study of the Divinity School (as you know, the point is much debated, such as whether a ‘Buddhist believes’ in the supernatural in the way certain Christian theists do), but it is surely not comprehensive of all that is studied, and perhaps not even what is ever or always most important. For instance, turning to my own scholarship for an example, it is true that Paul believes in the existence of God, but that is not all that remarkable, nor nearly as interesting as how he articulates that belief in complex rhetorical arguments, how he incorporates the incongruous scandal of a crucified Son of God into his start-up software of Pharisaic apocalypticism, how he fashions rituals of initiation and incorporation into the Christ-myth, how he inventively deals with apparent and strong historical falsifications of events, and how he inventively deals with his own complicated religious past, as one (he claims) scrupulous of his ancestral traditions and yet (how can he possibly refer to his own self with the words, εὐ τῷ Ἰωβενοναῖ), “when I was in Judaism”! now divorced from them. Was this circumstances adhered of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (and that rather complicated add-on, Jesus Christ) ever not a Jew? And by what criteria can we judge his religious identity? By ritual (Paul knows about epiphanies, the operation to reverse circumcision [1 Cor 7:18], but there is no evidence that he pursued it), by theology, religious experience, social circles, economic prac-
tics, etc. And at what moment can we measure it, and does any moment stand in isolation from the whole life?

And, of course, my selection of Paul is not just random, for in many ways it is due to his influence that πίστις (faith) — which one translates conventionally in English as both ‘faith’ and ‘belief’ — becomes the emblem of and metonymy for ‘religion,’ even in its appearance as an object of study in Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thought. Should a properly scientific study of religion — which I take to be a most ungainly set of world-wide human phenomena, past and present — not be founded on analytical categories that come from sources other than the ‘side fide’ mantra of the European Protestant Reformation? I am reminded of the self-description of classicist Keith Hopkins in his book that I teach in my Colloquium on Ancient Christianity, A World Full of Gods: “my atheism was indebtedly Protestant” (p. 2). This scientific study of religion model — as Martin and Wiebe present it — appears liable to this same charge.

I do not think it is either fully accurate or useful to categorize students or scholars of religion as simply ‘believers’ versus ‘non-believers’ or ‘religious’ versus ‘non-religious.’ Human identity itself, and religion (however we define it), are both too complicated to allow of only two co-
termiously mapped options — in or out (as that famous scholar of religion Heidi Klum puts it on Project Runaway — “are you in, or are you out?”). All of us who study religion and have made it our work to talk about religion critically, rigorously and honestly in — and beyond — Swift Hall have complicated pasts and presents in religion. Because religion is knitted into human social reality on this planet, that is simple for reasons that I claim a religious identification, past or present (changing or puta-
tively constant), occupies a very particular place within that tradition, past and present, local and global. Even for those who say they were raised in a ‘non-religious home,’ or ‘non-observant’ home, that self-description is set against an opposing term (others have ‘religious homes,’ others ‘observe’ religion, through ritual, through practices, etc.).

Many (though certainly not all) a-theists embrace the term ‘anti-theist’ for a reason, embracing the reality that they are defined by religion and over and against it. They, too, have a history in religion. There is an assumption of what those ‘others’ are doing in those homes, sometimes one born of actual observation, and sometimes of speculation from small pieces of evidence combined with inherited cultural stereotypes. This is of course all the same true of those who claim to have had some upbringing or some experience in or affiliation (past or present) with a religion, a religious community, and set of religious ideas or practices. Everyone was born somewhere and to certain parents, with extended families running back through time and to different places. Socialization and self-identification in western society and globally involves not only the category of religion (which is listed on passports and birth certificates in various places on the globe) in itself, but names, birth and baby-welcoming rituals, foods we eat and don’t eat, books we read or don’t read, laws we should or do not attend, laws we follow or do not follow, medical practices we accept or reject, neighbors who are like us or are not like us, people we associate with or shun, the way we bury our dead. Many of those markers serve as barriers for society as well as constructive building blocks of the self. In any case, they are pervasive — even if regarded as to be avoided (for any number of reasons) and to have been completely transcended. I have never met a person in these halls in thirty-one years who has not had a ‘complicated
We scholars of religion should rightly bristle at such a blunt instrument, a rhetoric of reasonability that masks religious differences for political ends.

religious past and present.”

This is true for all citizens of the University (these complicated religious pasts and presents), but what is required in the academic study of religion practiced here—self-consciously at the intersection of historical studies, religion and the human sciences and that constructive study of religion that makes its special but not exclusive possession to the Christian religious right and Mormons and Jews and others. We scholars of religion should rightly bristle at such a blunt instrument, a rhetoric of reasonability that masks religious differences for political ends.

But I would say, to Martin and Wiebe, that we should do the same for using that as some template for dividing students of religion. The issue isn’t about being a “faith-based” scholar of religion or not, but, what are you bringing into this conversation and how it affecting the questions you ask, the sources you are drawn to, the ways in which you interpret them (for ill and for good) and where you are going from here? And what will you do when others challenge you about the assumptions you make? We are all accountable for those questions, but we are also not bound indefinitely to some construct of “religiousness” or “non-religiousness” that we have either embraced or escaped that makes us predictable. Critical study above all does not presume its own conclusions, and neither—I would argue—does autobiography (in, our, with and against religion). All are complex, textured, quirky and often different than we first thought. And that is both the reason we study, and the precondition for it.

On another day we shall talk perhaps about whether a purely scientific study of religion is possible, let alone desirable, whether a university we would want to participate in should make it a matter of principle to avoid all questions of meaning and value, and what the relationship is between explanation and understanding in intellectual inquiry. But this is more than enough for one Wednesday lunch talk. Welcome to the new academic year, Divinity School.

Endnotes


2. Posted February 2, 2012, see http://www.religiousstudiesproject.com/2012/02/06/podcast-donald-wiebe-on-theology-and-religious-studies/. One sample statement: “I think it is possible to be religiously committed and be a good scientific student of religion; you have to keep the two separate … when I went to Lancaster U to study with Ninian Smart, I was a devout committed evangelical Christian; as I studied I began to see my own faith position and tradition as problematic …” (transcription mine from audiotape).

A N D R E W  P A C K M A N

Between Angels and Reasons

During Fall quarter 2012, renovations to Bond Chapel created an opportunity to reflect on the Divinity School’s long-standing tradition of Wednesday Worship. During this time, Wednesday services were held in Swift Hall’s third-floor Lecture Hall and the following sermon, delivered on October 17, 2012, contemplated what it means to engage in religious worship as a scholar of religion.

What are we doing when we pray in a lecture hall? Historically, of course, we’ve held Wednesday Worship in Bond Chapel. The Beatitudes are written along the walls. The ceiling is high and vaulted. The stained-glass windows cast lavender hues across the gathered community. Worship and prayer fit in Bond Chapel like a glove.

But a worship service in the Third Floor Lecture Hall takes a little squeezing. The glove doesn’t fit quite so naturally.

Consider where we are. Wednesday Worship is now tucked into this little strip of space, squeezed between two neo-gothic university quadrangles. Yet in the middle of this “secular” academic setting at the University of Chicago, we squeeze ourselves into a little sacred space.

In some way, this room itself bears the marks of this squeezing. We are, in fact, gathered under the irenic gaze of the angels suspended in the heavens. And yet we sit just a few steps away from the rigorous, analytical, rational gaze of some professors and students who take it as their mission to stand in dialectical opposition to these angels.

Perhaps it was blunt necessity that led us to move this service from the chapel to the Third Floor Lecture Hall. But since we’re here, we might as well take note of the theological implications.

Professor Rosengarten, back when he was Dean Rosengarten, liked to say that Swift Hall was a place that held no orthodoxy except the rule of argument. I like that phrase. I take it to mean that there are no sacred cows here; everything is subject to questioning, everything is on the table. We are free to take any belief and make any claim we like, so long as we give reasons.

But is that the kind of place you can worship? Can you pray in a place where the doctrines are so diverse, where the lines are so blurred? Could some bold soul dare to preach in a community that takes different texts as sacred, different liturgical elements as proper?

Can we be spiritual in a place that’s so reasonable?

When we come to Wednesday Worship in the Third Floor Lecture Hall, we enter into a kind of breach. We are free to take any belief and make any claim we like, so long as we give reasons.

Perhaps it was blunt necessity that led us to move this service from the chapel to the Third Floor Lecture Hall. But since we’re here, we might as well take note of the theological implications.
stretched between supposedly competing claims on our identity—sacred and secular, spiritual and rational, person of faith and scholar of religion. It may feel like we have to squeeze ourselves into a space that doesn’t feel quite right. This is that awkward space between the angels and reasons.

In our reading today, Paul sheds some helpful light on what we’re doing when we worship. And as it turns out, these lines weren’t so clear for him either.

In Chapter 12 of his Letter to the Romans, Paul calls these lines weren’t so clear for him either.

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formation through the renewing of our minds, can only

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ginal, fundamental part of our humanity to wither and die.

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or work out our faith with fear and trembling in various

faith; as soon as we either bask in the gaze of the angels

choose to be either citizens of the University or people of

As soon as we begin to live our lives, these living sacri-

reasonable runs all the way down. It runs all the way down. In Paul’s text, and I believe it runs all the way down in us too. As soon as we give up the space in between, we’ve missed what Paul means, and we’ve missed something fundamental about what it means to be human.

As soon as we begin to live our lives, these living sacri-

fices to God, as either spiritual or reasonable; as soon as we

choose to be either citizens of the University or people of

faith; as soon as we either bask in the gaze of the angels

or work out our faith with fear and trembling in various

publics like the classroom or the Night Ministry; as soon

as we evacuate this holy, liminal, reasonable space that we

inhabit here, as soon as we choose one side of this slash/ mark in Paul’s letter to the Romans, we have left an inte-

gral, fundamental part of our humanity to wither and die.

The transformation that Paul calls us to, a total trans-

formation through the renewing of our minds, can only

happen when we keep squeezing our bodies into these

uncomfortable breaches.

And, Paul tells us, there is something about this uncom-

fortable squeezing that helps us resist conformity to the world.

Last winter, I was riding the subway in New York and I noticed a poster that said, “Imagine the world, different.” It had an aerial shot of the entire island of Manhattan. If you know New York City, you know that the city is almost entirely concrete and stone. But squeezed into the middle of this island full of city is a little strip of green from 59th Street to 110th – Central Park.

This image showed Manhattan transformed. The map displayed an island almost entirely green, filled from top to bottom with trees, lakes, and public parks. But squeezed in the middle of the island of green was a little strip of city, from 59th Street to 110th Street.

What if our weeks were transformed like that? Instead of constraining our prayer and our worship to one thirty-

minute block, what if the posture of prayer that we culti-

vate in this breach between angels and reasons were to be

come the posture we assume the rest of the week?

What would it look like if we treated our studies, not as

assignments to get through, but as spiritual disciplines,

shaping us and preparing us, indeed, transforming us by

the renewing of our minds, to be ministers and scholars that this world desperately needs?

What would it look like if this posture of vulnerability

before God and before each other, this communal expression of our need for transformation we cultivate here, guided our conversations about Race, Schleiermacher, and Job?

What would it look like if the attention to the holy, the

numinous, the mystical that we hone in this time of prayer

inflected the way we read, study, and attend to the

texts that have the power to transform us?

And what would it look like if we heard the words of Paul, and as we seek to be transformed by the renewing of

our minds, we present not just the reasonable and not just

the spiritual, but our whole person as an offering, holy and acceptable to God?

I like Bond Chapel, and I like religious space. And when

the new organ comes to rest in the choir loft, and when

our services return to their more fitting home, I’ll be there.

But for now, I’m glad we’re here. ↑
Larry Bouchard, AM 1975, PhD 1984, Associate Professor at the University of Virginia, has published Theater and Integrity: Emptying Selves in Drama, Ethics, and Religion (Northwestern University Press). The book follows questions about the nature of integrity across theatrical, philosophical, and theological studies of moral, personal, bodily, and kenotic patterns of integrity.

T. L. Brink, PhD 1978, is YouTube’s “headlessprofessor” where he has uploaded nearly three hundred videos covering topics in psychology, economics, logic, statistics, and Mexican politics as well as religious studies. He has videos on theology, the ontological argument, teleological argument, cosmological argument, Calvin, and religious roles. The videos are particularly useful in his online lower-division courses.

Michael Brown, MDiv 1994, PhD 1998, left his position at Emory, where he was Associate Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins, for the position of Associate Dean of the College and Director of the Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies at Wabash College.

Marcia Bunge, AM 1979, PhD 1986, has been named the Bernhardson Distinguished Endowed Chair in Lutheran Studies at Gustavus Adolphus College.

Lisa Sowle Cahill, AM 1973, PhD 1976, received an honorary degree from the College of the Holy Cross during the College’s Commencement ceremonies on May 25, 2012. Cahill is the J. Donald Monan Professor of Theology at Boston College where she has taught since 1976. She is a past president of the Catholic Theological Society of America (1992–93), and the Society of Christian Ethics (1997–98), and is also a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Her recent books include Bioethics and the Common Good (Marquette University Press, 2004) and Theological Bioethics: Participation, Justice, and Change (Georgetown University Press, 2005).

John Carlson, AM 1999, PhD 2005, and Jonathan Ebel, AM 1999, PhD 2004, have published From Jeremiad to Jihad: Religion, Violence, and America, which assembles an interdisciplinary team of scholars to explore the critical, historical, and normative connections between religion and violence within the American context. In its scope and perspectival diversity, the book offers a nuanced, multi-disciplinary treatment of the intersections of religion and violence in American history. Carlson is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict at Arizona State University. Ebel is Associate Professor of American Religion at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Dennis Castillo, MA 1982, PhD 1996, is Academic Dean and Professor of Church History at Christ the King Seminary. He has published The Santa Marija Convoy: Faith and Endurance in War-Time Malta, 1940–42 (Lexington Books). Using published histories as well as interviews and oral histories, the book explores the experiences of the Maltese during World War II and how their faith sustained them through this dark period of their history.

Anthony Cerulli, PhD 2007, has won a European Institutes for Advanced Studies (EURIAS) Fellowship, with affiliation at the Institut d’études avancées-Paris, for 2012–2013. He has also been awarded an NEH Fellowship for 2012–2013. He is an Assistant Professor at Hofstra and William Smith Colleges and the Managing Editor of India Review. Cerulli has recently published Somatic Lessons: Narrating Patience and Illness in Indian Medical Literature (November 2012) with SUNY Press. The book looks at narrative in the history of ayurvedic medical literature and the perspectives on illness and patiendhood that emerge.

Rebecca Chopp, PhD 1983, became President of Swarthmore College in August 2012.

Jessica DeCou, PhD 2012, will be Visiting Lecturer in Systematic Theology at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary beginning August 2012.


Spencer Dew, AM 2001, PhD 2009, joined Centenary College of Louisiana as Assistant Professor of Religious Studies in the fall of 2012, where he will hold the Marie Allen Bronyes Inaugural Year Research Chair. He is completing a manuscript on religious understandings of writing in the work of Jack Kerouac, Norman Mailer, and James Baldwin, and he is at work on a study of the Moorish Science Temple of America, funded in part by a research fellowship from the Black Metropolis Research Consortium. He is the author of a collection of short stories, Songs of Inwergy (Vagabond Press, 2008), Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres (Another New Calligraphy, 2010), and the critical study, Learning for Revolution: The Work of Kathy Acker (San Diego State University Press, 2011). His first novel, Here is How it Happens, is forthcoming from Ampersand Books. A regular reviewer for Rain Taxi Review of Books, and a Staff Book Reviewer for decom* magazine, his fiction and essays have appeared in scores of publications, including art reviews in Newcity Chicago and Chicago Artists’ News, and essays in Religion Dispatches and Sightings.
H. Byron Earhart, PhD 1965, has just published the fifth edition of *Religion in Japan: Unity and Diversity* (Cengage Learning, 2013). This standard text explores religion in Japan as a complex tapestry of different religious strands, reflecting both the unity and diversity of Japanese culture, a theme Earhart pioneered in the first edition (1969) of this classic book. Tracing the development of religious traditions from the prehistoric era through modern times, Earhart explores the vital influence of Shinto, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, and folk religion. This new edition updates the description and interpretation of the entire history of religion in Japan in light of the latest developments in the field.

Jon Ebel, AM 1999, PhD 2004, was awarded tenure at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and is now Associate Professor of American Religion. He was also awarded the Helen Corley Petit prize for best tenure dossier in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He has also recently coauthored *From Jerusal to Jihad* with John Carlson. See page 20 for more information about this book.

Jo Preuninger Forrest, MDiv 2010, is now the Associate Minister for Congregational Care at Kenilworth Union Church in Kenilworth, Illinois. She was ordained to the Presbyterian ministry on December 2, 2012.

Dale Goldsmith, MA 1964, PhD 1973, recently published *Speaking of Dying: Recovering the Church’s Voice in the Face of Death* (Brazos Press, 2012), with coauthors Fred Craddock and Joy V. Goldsmith. The book critiques the failure of Christians to communicate healthily about dying and reminds the church of scriptural, Christological, and pastoral resources to strengthen its ministry to the dying.


Kelly Hayes, AM 1998, PhD 2004, joined the Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro as a visiting professor for fall 2012, in conjunction with a Fulbright grant for U.S. scholars. As part of her Fulbright project, she is researching, the Valley of the Dawn, a new Brazilian religion founded in 1968. She is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Joel Harter, PhD 2008, published his first book, *Coleridge’s Philosophy of Faith: Symbol, Allegory, and Hermeneutics*. The book reconstructs Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s intellectual project as a philosophy of faith that anticipates modern philosophical hermeneutics, challenges reductive notions of reason and personhood, and illustrates the progressive potential of the biblical tradition. Harter is currently the Lily Pastoral Resident at Hyde Park Union Church and an adjunct instructor of philosophy at Catholic Theological Union.

Ellen Davina Haskell, PhD 2005, has recently published with SUNY Press *Suckling at My Mother’s Breasts: The Image of a Nursing God in Jewish Mysticism* (November 2012). The book provides a discussion of the kabbalistic image of a nursing god, its historical context, and its theological implications. Haskell is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and is the recipient of an American Association of University Women American Postdoctoral Research Leave Fellowship for the academic year 2012–2013.

C. David Hein, AM 1977, Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Hood College, has published, with coauthor Andrew Chandler, *Archbishop Fisher, 1945–1961: Church, State, and World* (Ashgate, 2012). The book explores Fisher’s influence on major contemporary issues and events, including divorce-law reform, capital punishment, and the most dangerous years of the Cold War abroad. It establishes the continuing significance not only of the office of Archbishop in the Church but also of the Church at large in the tumultuous world of the later twentieth century. A final section of original source material brings vividly to life the range and character of Fisher’s public and private role.

Susan E. Henking, AM 1979, PhD 1988, has been named President of Shimer College in Chicago, effective July 1, 2012. Previously Professor of Religious Studies at Hobart and William Smith Colleges where she taught for twenty-four years, Henking will be the fourteenth President of Shimer College and the first woman to be appointed to that office since its founding.

Laura Hollinger, MDiv 2004, has become the Campus Engagement Manager with Interfaith Youth Core, a Chicago-based nonprofit with the mission of building interfaith cooperation. She moved to this position after seven years as Associate Dean of Rockefeller Chapel and coordinator of Bond Chapel worship for the Divinity School.

Werner Jeanrond, PhD 1984, is the new Master of St Benet’s Hall in Oxford. This is a smaller College owned by a Benedictine Trust and run by Ampleforth Abbey. Jeanrond will be the first layman to run a Hall in any of the religiously owned colleges of Oxford. The College teaches humanities and social science subjects, and Jeanrond is charged with developing its postgraduate activities. Previously Professor of Divinity at the University of Glasgow, in 2008 he became the first lay person to hold the Chair of Divinity, the senior chair of University of Glasgow. Prior to that he was a professor of systematic theology at Sweden’s University of Lund, the first Catholic in Sweden to hold such a post.

Michael Karunas, MDiv 1998, has been named the new senior minister of Central Christian Church in Decatur, Illinois. He concluded service as the senior minister of First Christian Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on January 31, 2012.


Alex Kindred, MDiv 2009, has become Pastor of First Christian Church in Muscatine, Iowa.
Ellie Krasne, AM 2012, is an Associate at Grovenor Capital Management, L.P. in Chicago, Illinois.

Fr. Paul V. Kollman, PhD 2001, Associate Professor of Theology at Notre Dame University, has been appointed the executive director of Notre Dame’s Center for Social Concerns (CSC). Kollman has worked with the Center since 2004, including his recent tenure as its acting director. In addition to his commitment to the CSC, Kollman serves as a fellow of three Notre Dame institutes: the Kellogg Institute for International Studies, the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and the Nanovic Institute for European Studies.

Jeff Lehn, MDiv 2010, is the new pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Rachel Diane Graef Leslie, AMRS 2012, is working as a Foreign Service Officer for the U.S. State Department.

James W. Lewis, PhD 1987, who served as Dean of Students at the Divinity School from 1980–1991, retired as Executive Director of the Louisville Institute at LPTS (Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary) in the summer of 2012. Lewis was the Institute’s first Executive Director and served for twenty years, developing a national center for the support of research and leadership education on North American religion. During that time, the work of the Institute supported through grants at least 144 dissertations, 182 books, and 315 books.

April Lewton, MDiv 2007, became the Vice President of Development and Marketing for the National Benevolent Association (NBA), a general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in June, 2012. Founded in the 1880s, the NBA “creates communities of compassion and care” through the provision of health and social services. Prior to joining the NBA, Lewton worked with Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS), a United Church of Christ related institution of theological and ministerial learning, to build a comprehensive annual giving program.

Kinndlee Shea Lund, MDiv 2008, has been called to serve as Associate Pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Brenham, Texas.

Elizabeth Marquardt, MDiv 1999, and Amy Zietlow, MDiv 1999, have received a three-year grant from the Lilly Endowment to investigate aging, death, and dying in an era of high family fragmentation. They plan to write a trade book. Each currently blogs at Huffington Post.

Adrienne Martin, MDiv 2012, is now Children’s Ministry Coordinator at St. John’s Lutheran Church in Des Moines, Iowa.

Mark Mattes, PhD 1995, Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Grand View University, is the co-translator of Klaus Schwarzwälder’s Cross and Resurrection: God’s Wonder and Mystery (Fortress, 2012) and Oswald Bayer’s A Contemporary in Dissent: Johann Georg Hamann as a Radical Enlightener (Eerdmans, 2012).

Dan McKanan, PhD 1998, has published Prophetic Encounters: Religion and the American Radical Tradition, with Beacon Press. In it, McKanan challenges simple distinctions between “religious” and “secular” activism, showing that religious beliefs and practices have been integral to every American movement promoting liberty, equality, and solidarity. He is Ralph Waldo Emerson Unitarian Universalist Association Senior Lecturer at Harvard Divinity School.

Richard B. Miller, PhD. 1985, is Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Indiana University and Director of the Poynter Center for the Study of Ethics and American Institutions. He was named Provost Professor and awarded the 2011 Tracy Sonneborn Prize. His book Terror, Religion, and Liberal Thought (Columbia, 2010) was selected as a 2011 Choice Outstanding Academic Title.

Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, MA 1980, PhD 1986, the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of Pastoral Theology at Vanderbilt University, has completed two publications with support of a Sabbatical Grant for Researchers from the Louisville Institute. The titles are Christian Theology in Practice: Discovering a Discipline (Eerdmans, 2012) and The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology (Wiley/Blackwell, 2012). She also recently completed her tenure as president of The International Academy of Practical Theology, where she served from 2009–2011.

Anne Mocko, PhD 2012, has joined Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota as Assistant Professor of Asian Religions.

Tristan Orozco, MDiv 2010, has become Associate Minister of Wakonda Christian Church in Des Moines, Iowa.

Dan Overmyer, AM 1966, PhD 1971, has published two books and been honored by a Festschrift in the past several years. These are: Local Religion in North China in the Twentieth Century: The Structure and Organization of Community Rituals and Beliefs (Brill, 2009); (coedited with Larry DeVries and Don Baker) Asian Religions in British Columbia (UBC Press, 2010); and Festschrift, The People and the Dao: New Studies in Chinese Religions in Honour of Daniel L. Overmyer, Monumenta Serica Monograph Series LX, Sankt Augustin, Institut Monumenta Serica, 2009. He has retired from teaching and research, and is now a happy grandfather of five and President of Nature Vancouver (The Vancouver Natural History Society).

Andrew Packman, MDiv 2012, was ordained a minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on August 19, 2012 at First Christian Church, in Centralia, Illinois. Michael Karunas (MDiv 1998), Senior Minister of Central Christian Church, Decatur, Illinois, preached. Packman is currently a PhD student in the Divinity School.

Aristotle Papankolakou, PhD 1998, was promoted to full professor in the Department of Theology at Fordham University. He is also the Co-founding Director of the Orthodox Christian Studies Center at Fordham. He recently published The Mystical as Political: Democracy and Non-Radical Orthodoxy (University of Notre Dame Press, 2012). In February 2012, he received the Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in the Humanities. He was also recently awarded a Sabbatical Grant for Researchers from...
the Louisville Institute for his current project: *The Ascetics of War: The Undoing and Ridding of Virtue*.

**Anne E. Patrick, AM 1976, PhD 1982**, retired from Carleton College as William H. Laird Professor of Religion and the Liberal Arts, emerita, in 2009 and moved back to Silver Spring, Maryland. She has recently published *Women, Conscience, and the Creative Process* (Paulist, 2011), and is now at work on another volume on Catholic feminist ethics.

**Anthony R. Picarello, Jr., AM 1992**, general counsel for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), has been named associate general secretary for policy and advocacy of the USCCB. He has served as general counsel for the USCCB since 2007 and will retain that title. In his new role, Picarello will function as director of policy and advocacy for the full range of issues in which the USCCB engages.

**Santiago Piñon, Jr., PhD 2012**, is Assistant Professor of Religion at Texas Christian University.

**Jeff B. Pool, PhD 1994**, recently received an appointment to The Eli Lilly Chair of Religion and Culture at Berea College in Kentucky. He also recently began a term of service as the chair of the Religion Department. From 2003 to 2012, he served at Berea College in a combined teaching and administrative position as Professor of Religion and Director of the office of religious life. For a portion of his most recent sabbatical leave, during the spring of 2011, he taught a graduate seminar as Guest Professor and Research Scholar at Univerzita Karlova (Charles University), in Prague, The Czech Republic. His recent books include two volumes of a three-volume study on divine suffering in Christian thought: *God’s Wounds: Hermeneutic of the Christian Symbol of Divine Suffering, vol. 1, Divine Vulnerability and Creation*, and *God’s Wounds: Hermeneutic of the Christian Symbol of Divine Suffering, vol. 2, Evil and Divine Suffering* (both part of the Princeton Theological Monographs Series and published by Pickwick Publications).

**Jackie Posek, MDiv 2007**, has become Assistant Director of Campus Ministry at DePaul University in Chicago.

**Helena Sofia Lenneke Post, AMBS 2012**, is a researcher at VU Medical Center in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

**Katherine Raley, MDiv 2012**, was ordained June 23 at First Christian Church, Columbia, South Carolina. She has been called to serve as Associate Minister of First Christian Church in Colorado Spings, Colorado, where Chuck Blaisdell (AM 1977) is the Senior Minister.

**Rebecca Raphael, PhD 1997**, has been appointed NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor in the Humanities at Texas State University–San Marcos where she is Associate Professor of Philosophy. During her three-year appointment, Raphael will implement a project that focuses on the intersection of religious studies and the humanities, with activities to include conferences, panels, honors classes and faculty seminars.
Eric Ziołkowski, MA 1981, PhD 1987, Charles A. Dana Professor of Religious Studies at Lafayette College, has just published The Literary Kierkegaard (Northwestern University Press). The book examines both the pseudonymous and the signed published writings of Kierkegaard, as well as his private journals, papers, and letters, in relation to works by five literary giants from different times and places, showing how Kierkegaard signals the essentially literary as opposed to strictly theological or philosophical nature of his writings. Ziołkowski is also one of the main editors of The Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception, a prospective thirty-volume work published by De Gruyter in Berlin, whose third volume appeared this past fall, and whose fourth volume is scheduled to appear in winter 2012.

Blake Wentworth, AM 1998, PhD 2011, is Assistant Professor in the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies at the University of California at Berkeley.

Garry Sparks, MDv 2004, PhD 2011, has accepted a tenure-track appointment as Assistant Professor of Humanities in Global Christian Studies at the University of Louisville in Louisville, Kentucky. His research and teaching interests focus on an ethnographic and ethnohistorical understanding of theological production in the Americas, specifically among indigenous peoples.

Ryan Stecher, AM 2012, will be a Management Analyst in the Office of the Chairman for Export-Import Bank of the United States.

Barkley Thompson, AM 1998, has accepted the call to be the ninth dean and twentieth rector of Christ Church Cathedral in Houston in the Diocese of Texas. Thompson has served as rector of St. John’s Episcopal Church in Roanoke, Virginia, since 2007. He will assume his new role in February of next year.

Daniel Patrick Thompson, AM 1987, PhD 1998, has been named Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Dayton. Thompson was formerly chair and associate professor of Theology at St. Mary’s University in San Antonio.

Emilie Townes, AM 1979, DMin 1982, has been named the new Dean of Vanderbilt Divinity School, starting in July 2013. An ordained American Baptist clergyperson, Townes is currently the Andrew W. Mellon professor of African-American religion and theology at Yale Divinity School. Her research focuses on Christian ethics, womanist ethics, critical social theory, and cultural theory and studies.

The Rev. Dr. John R. Van Eenwyk, PhD 1981, Clinical Director of The International Trauma Treatment Program, in Olympia, Washington, has recently published Clinical Chaos: The Strange Attractions of Childhood Trauma (Inter City Books, 2013). The book combines chaos theory and Jungian psychology to explore the psychodynamics of unconscious adaptation. Case studies illustrate how to identify and to integrate those childhood adaptations that spontaneously deploy in situations that resemble the original trauma.

Bill Wassmer, AM 1982, DMin 1985, is now Senior Pastor at Port Orange United Church of Christ, in Port Orange, Florida.

The Rev. Dr. Donald L. Berry, BD 1950, retired Colgate University professor and Episcopal priest, died on January 15, 2013 in Hamilton, New York. He was 87 years old. Dr. Berry was born in Goshen, Indiana in 1925 and educated in the Goshen City Schools. He enlisted in the US Army in 1943, and after a period of military service, attended and was graduated from Goshen College (BA), the University of Chicago Divinity School (BD), and Yale University (STM and PhD). He was ordained in 1950 in the Congregational Church, and he served churches in Marion, Indiana and Norwalk, Connecticut.

He joined the Colgate University faculty in 1957 as a Chaplain and member of the Department of Philosophy and Religion. In 1988 he was named the Harry Emerson Fosdick Professor of Philosophy and Religion, and was the 1992 recipient of the Sidney and Florence Felton French Award for Inspirational Teaching. He retired in 1994.

He was the author of many reviews and more than forty articles in scholarly and professional journals, and six books, including How to Listen to a Sermon.

He was received into the Episcopal Church and confirmed in 1965, ordained to the diaconate [1971], and to the priesthood [1972] in the Diocese of Central New York.

He is survived by Wanda Warren Berry, his wife of fifty-five years; their two daughters, Martha Louise Berry and Ruth Elizabeth Berry; two grandsons, Samuel Thomas Evans and Benjamin Michael Evans; and three nephews and their families.

Ray Greenfield, MDv 2003, passed away on April 1, 2012 at the age of 57. Ray was the pastor at the Illinois Street Christian Church in Lewiston, and at the Ijapa Christian Church. He was a chaplain at Graham Hospital in Canton. He was also the former pastor at the First Christian Church in Rushville. He pursued his college education as a second career student, earning his bachelor’s degree in social work from MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Illinois in 2000. He entered the Divinity School as a Disciples House Scholar in 2000 and commuted every week from Jacksonville. He is survived by his wife Helen, his three children, and four grandchildren.

Reverend Dr. Barbara Jurgensen, AM 1975, DMin 1982, died on July 1, 2012 at the age of eighty-three, surrounded by the love of her family and friends. She died in her sleep.

Myron L. Ebersole, AM 1961, DB 1963, passed away on December 8, 2011 at Lancaster General Hospital in Pennsylvania. He is survived by his wife, two children, and four grandchildren. Reverend Ebersole received his Clinical Pastoral Education at Topeka State Hospital, Topeka, Kansas, and at Indiana Medical Center, Indianapolis and served as a hospital chaplain for many years. He was Chaplain and Supervisor of Clinical Pastoral Education at Indiana University Medical Center in Indianapolis, Lancaster General Hospital in Lancaster, Pennsylvania 1967–78; and the Penn State University Medical Center, Hershey Pennsylvania, 1978–96. He also served as a Supervisor at the Christian Medical College and Hospital in Vellore, India, in 1996 and was a member of the American Board of the Vellore Hospital from 1998 to 2006. Reverend Ebersole was active in professional organizations, serving as President of the College of Chaplains in 1979. He received the Distinguished Service Award from the College of Chaplains in 1986. He was a member of the Board of Representatives and served on the Certification Committee of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education. He also was founder of the Pennaflyna Society of Chaplains, which he served as President for a term.
from complications from a stroke and heart failure. A writer, pastor, and seminary professor, she is survived by her three children, her sister, three grandchildren, and two nieces.

Jack V. Reeve, DB 1945, died on February 25, 2012 in Indianapolis. A native of Des Moines, Iowa, and a graduate of Drake University, he was a member of the 1942 entering class of Disciples Divinity House Scholars. In 1945, he graduated from the University of Chicago and that summer married June Varner. In 1958 he was called to the national staff of the Disciples of Christ as stewardship secretary. He continued to emphasize stewardship when he was called to regional ministry in the Christian Church in Illinois and Wisconsin in 1968 and, beginning in 1978, as Professor of the Practice of Ministry at Lexington Theological Seminary. In 1968 he was elected to the Board of Trustees of the Disciples Divinity House. As its president from 1990 to 1992 and as a longtime member of its development committee, Jack Reeve both encouraged and exemplified generous giving, and in 2005, he was elected an Honorary Trustee for Life. Jack also participated actively in Habitat for Humanity, working on more than forty houses in the Lexington area.

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Alumni News Information

**Walter J. Harrelson, 1919–2012**

Walter J. Harrelson, who served as Dean of the University of Chicago Divinity School from 1955–1960, died on September 5, 2012 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He was ninety-two years old and had been in hospice care.

Harrelson was born in Winnabow, North Carolina, on Nov. 28, 1919. He attended Mars Hill College before serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Harrelson received his undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina before earning a doctorate in Theology from Union Theological Seminary in 1953. An ordained American Baptist minister, he taught at Vanderbilt from 1960 until retiring in 1990, and was dean of Vanderbilt’s Divinity School from 1967 until 1975. In 1990 Harrelson became Distinguished Professor of Hebrew Bible, emeritus, and a scholarship was established at Vanderbilt in his name. In the mid-1990s, Harrelson was asked by Wake Forest University to guide the development of its proposed divinity school. He became a professor of religion at Wake Forest until his (second) retirement.

Harrelson’s broad range of areas of expertise included Jewish-Christian relations, Biblical interpretation, the study of Biblical law and prophets, and the churches’ response to social issues.

Harrelson was predeceased by his wife, Idella Aydlett Harrelson. He is survived by a daughter, Marianne Harrelson McIver, and two sons, David Aydlett Harrelson and Robert Joseph Harrelson. There are also six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

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Criterion relies on your participation in keeping the Divinity School up to date on alumni professional accomplishments. Please email us at terren@uchicago.edu, or complete and mail us the “Alumni News Information” form on the back page. Alumni news and updates can also now be submitted online by visiting http://divinity.uchicago.edu/alumni/news.shtml.

For information on alumni giving and volunteering opportunities, please contact Mary Jean Kraybill, Director of Development, at 773-702-8248 or mjkraybill@uchicago.edu.