

A PUBLICATION OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DIVINITY SCHOOL

AUTUMN 2022

Criterion

SWIFT HALL
THE
DIVINITY SCHOOL



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DIVINITY SCHOOL

FROM THE DEAN

Much has happened over the past year-and-a-half—especially the past month—since I stepped into my role as Interim Dean of the Divinity School and transitioned to permanent Dean on December 1. Classrooms are full, the calendar is full, even offices are full as we welcome new students, new staff, and new faculty colleagues to the work of the Divinity School. The quarter had barely begun when we hosted a three-day conference celebrating the Chicago career of Jean-Luc Marion, a standing-room only Nuveen Lecture by Tahera Qutbuddin, and a panoply of other events, including our first-ever 5K run.



And many more new things as well: the faculty gathered at our first-ever faculty book party where we raised a glass to colleagues who have published a book during the last year. We reinstated the longstanding tradition of the Dean's Forum, where faculty members from across our Areas of Study engage each other in public conversation on new works. And that was just in one week.

In a broader sense, the past year-and-a-half has been significant in various ways. We have grown the undergraduate curriculum significantly. This has raised our visibility on campus and has created many opportunities for graduate and post-doc teaching (our Teaching Fellows program for new graduates continues to generate excellent new classes and new engagements). We have improved funding for the MA and MDiv degrees, which enables us to support and encourage the matriculation of the best and most promising students. We have increased PhD funding as we continue to refine the milestones, while developing and expanding resources to support both PhD education itself and movement toward life after the PhD—including placement programs, Colman Program classes and certificates, and internship opportunities.

On the faculty side, we have worked to promote and grow the faculty, with two new scholars joining us last year, and multiple faculty and post-doc searches underway this year. We have grown the faculty in other ways as well, with seven visiting professors who are sharing with us their unique knowledge and skills through classes and public lectures. We have also three new instructional professors and three lecturers who will have especially strong impact on Islamic Studies offerings.

We have developed the Marty Center in exciting ways, offering a variety of approaches to and projects around the public understanding of religion. The reviving and recreation of social ritual in Swift Hall continues as we work our way back from the pandemic shutdown, with the internationally acclaimed Bibfeldt colloquium, retreats, and festive meals. We have started experimenting with adult education programs for alumni and others on campus, online, and at the Newberry Library downtown. We were a strong and vibrant presence at the recent AAR and SBL conferences in Denver: it was as equally wonderful to see the many student, faculty, and alumni names in the program books as it was to see their faces at our Sunday night reception.

And, of course, most important of all: we are witnessing the steady return of the type of robust student activity so characteristic of the Divinity School, from the reopening and return to normalcy of the Grounds of Being coffee shop, the restarting of student clubs, workshops, affinity groups, 4-8s, the continuing of the innovative BONDS mentoring program and the initiation of a new community building activity: Monday morning DiviniTea in the Common Room.

This is but a brief sampling of developments over the past year-and-a-half. It is the type of activity I hope—I trust—we will continue to refine, build on, and grow into the future. I look forward to moving into that future with all of you, alumni and friends of the Divinity School: from strength to strength!

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "James T. Robinson".

JAMES THEODORE ROBINSON
DEAN OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL
CAROLINE E. HASKELL PROFESSOR OF THE HISTORY OF JUDAISM,
ISLAMIC STUDIES, AND THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

Criterion

AUTUMN 2022
VOLUME 57, ISSUE 2

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Criterion is published for alumni and friends of The University of Chicago Divinity School. We welcome your feedback. Please email terren@uchicago.edu.

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YOUR ALUMNI COUNCIL

The Alumni Council is a small group of alumni who advise the Dean on alumni matters, help select the Alumni of the Year every year, and provide other support to the School through their engagement and commitment. If you would like to serve on this council, or know of someone who would be a good fit for the role, please let us know!

divinity.uchicago.edu/news/your-alumni-council



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Philanthropy is a key part of supporting the stories in *Criterion*. Your gifts provide aid to students in need of fellowship support, enable scholarly work at critical hubs of research and academic exploration, and maintain the classrooms and facilities in which professors and students work together to expand knowledge of the world and its religious traditions. Your gifts matter. Help us continue to flourish as a community where important questions are pursued with tenacity and care.



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SELECT COURSES

Every year our faculty develop new courses across the range of our curriculum.

Islamic Jurisprudence, Reason, and the State

Advanced Readings in Classical Ethiopic (Ge'ez)

Coptic Bible

The Book of Ruth: Bible, Literature, Gender

Zion and Zaphon: Biblical Texts and Memory Studies

Confucian Philosophy and Spirituality

Chinese Buddhist Omnicentrism: Tiantai and Huayan

The Cult of Relics in Byzantium and Beyon

The Holocaust: History and Meaning

Colloquium: Society & the Supernatural in Late Imperial & Modern China

The Ottoman World in the Age of Suleyman the Magnificent

Women and Islam

Fundamentalism



What Are We Talking About When We Talk About Religion?

“It depends on who is doing the talking. For some of us who understand religion to be a social fact, our ideas and embodied perceptions of what is “holy,” “real,” “supernatural,” and the like all stem from systems of shared meaning and collective representation. For others, religion is more of an experiential and existential response to the condition of finitude that is fundamental to being human in our world. And for still others, even asking what the concept of “religion” is means asking a whole slew of bigger, messier questions about what modernity is and how it shapes our politics of knowledge. No doubt I am missing other voices, mysterious and mundane, on religion and the life of religion in the Divinity School.”

ANGIE HEO, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF THE ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION; ALSO IN THE COLLEGE



PROFESSOR ANGIE HEO is an anthropologist of religion, media, and economy. Her research and teaching cover a range of topics related to the critical study of global Christianities in the modern world. These topics explore

the intersection of everyday religious practices with colonial and national institutions of rule, along with political economies of development and globalization. She is the author of *The Political*

Lives of Saints: Christian-Muslim Mediation in Egypt and a collaborator in *Praying with the Senses and Religion and Borders in (Post-) Cold War Peripheries*.

Arts of Religious Leadership and Practice: Ritual and Speaking

Introduction to Environmental Ethics

Reading Your Neighbor’s Scripture: Comparative Reading and the Logic of Scripture

The Ethics of War: Foundational Texts

The Nature of the Good: Levinas’s Philosophical Ethics

Sexual Disorientation in Freud’s Vienna

Racial Capitalism

Biblical Politics: Literature, History, Political Thought

Philo of Alexandria

The Contours of Twentieth Century Thought I: Between Dialectical Theology and Analogical Imagination

Colloquium: The History of Jewish Time

Islamicate Civilization I: 600-950

Seminar: Poetry (Al-Mutanabbi)

Moral Reasoning Between Church and State: The Case of Abortion



Jonathan Tran is a Visiting Professor with us this year. Associate Professor of Theology and Ethics and George W. Baines Professor of Religion at Baylor University, Tran's research and teaching focus on the theological, ethical, and political implications of the human life in language, with specific attention on Christian theology and ordinary language philosophy. His most recent book, *Asian Americans and the Spirit of Racial Capitalism*, examines racism from the perspective of political economy. Read more about Professor Tran: divinity.uchicago.edu/jtran

CLASS:
Moral Reasoning
Between Church
and State:
The Case of Abortion

INSTRUCTOR:
Jonathan Tran,
Visiting Professor

What's the class about?
Coincidentally, the Divinity School invited me to a visiting professorship right after the Dobbs decision leaked. Anticipating then that Roe's right to abortion would be overturned just ahead of the Autumn quarter, I thought, "What better time to think about abortion?"

One can get a sense of how we're approaching things through the prompt with which I start the class: "Imagine first a dead

body. The body is Roe v Wade. Imagine next yourself a detective tasked with figuring out what happened. Was the death natural, and if so, what caused it? If foul play was involved, who did it and why?" The course works on the question "What happened?" and its major writing assignment asks students to answer it for themselves. Throughout we visit texts that offer various clues one might gather on the way to arriving at an answer. Those clues include

philosophical arguments about rights and virtue, theological claims about personhood and community, a cultural history of political elements mobilized (often around racism and sexism) to overturn Roe, and various legal theories about the Supreme Court's work.

On the way to answering "What happened?" I hope students think through two broad sets of issues. First, what reasons do people give for their views on abortion? Second, how do those reasons cross the threshold from the personal to the public, and in the case of Christianity, from church to state? Along the way, students face further questions that help them examine why they and others think the way they do. For instance: What are rights, and what does it mean to speak of them as natural? How does autonomy as a good square with community as a good? What role does religion play in how societies order themselves? What is the relationship between theological reasoning and moral reasoning, and how do either factor in public reasoning about imminently personal choices? And how do we even begin to approach these questions when histories of inequality and abuse make it that none of them are posed on level playing fields? These

questions are anything but easy, each proving enormously complex, and for that reason exciting to tackle in a classroom.

Who should take this class?

I'd love for everyone at the University of Chicago to take the class! Actually, we've been lucky in drawing a wide range of students, undergrads and grad students and from a broad range of schools, disciplines, and backgrounds. One thing the class has done already is expose students, often in new ways, to moral philosophy and philosophical theology. Everywhere these days critical theory is in the water. But oftentimes not in ways that swim with the kind of rigorous analysis that can help critical theory think clearly about things like race, gender, power, selfhood, community, etc. So I'm happy to see students step back from their critical and often rightly-activist sensibilities to examine baseline beliefs and attitudes regarding any number of foundational, and implicitly and explicitly theological, commitments. This is fun to watch, especially when the class has the kinds of terrific students it's drawn. Mostly I just try to get out of the way and let the texts (which include iconic philosophical arguments, traditional theology, nuanced ethnographies, popular podcasts, etc.) do the work of stirring the imagination.

What was your inspiration for the class?

Well, my other class this quarter focuses on the relationship between racism and capitalism, another obviously controversial and contested topic. So I must be a glutton for punishment!

What do you hope students take away from the class?

Of great importance to me is the communal experience of learning together, of thinking hard and openly, and of having one's world shifted by thinking with others. I also hope students come away with a better, if not settled, sense of "what happened." I hope that answering that question in an academic context will inform how they imagine themselves as citizens of a complex democracy, and in some cases, participants in religious and moral communities for whom abortion really matters for whatever reason. For example, at the end of the quarter we visit some really interesting legal theories about the role of the Supreme Court, and what it says about our democracy that we citizens invest so much authority in a single part of a single branch of government. How might we think more radically about what democracy promises and demands? Likewise, so much of the Christianity on offer in the current abortion culture war trades in problematic arguments (with the

READING LIST

- Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion"
- Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body*
- Rosalind Hursthouse, "Virtue Theory and Abortion"
- Slate's Slow Burn Podcast: *Roe v. Wade*
- Margaret Kamitsuka, *Abortion and the Christian Tradition*
- Ziad Munson, *The Making of Pro-Life Activists*
- Antonin Scalia, "Originalism: The Lesser Evil"
- Adrian Vermeule, "Beyond Originalism"
- Larry Kramer, "Popular Constitutionalism"
- Reva Siegel, "Abortion and the 'Woman Question': Forty Years of Debate"



culture war mentality inspiring dubious claims all around). But theology has more to offer than bad faith arguments. Students in the class come from all kinds of backgrounds (Christian, Jewish, Hindu, atheist, secular, etc.) and each one brings implicit commitments informing how they think about abortion. The process of

making those commitments explicit in order to examine the work they do in ordinary life matters much to this class, and I hope students walk away having grown by thinking through how they think and bringing to the fore how they experience the world. After all, the course's goals have less to do with coming up with definitive answers regarding abortion's ethical and theological status and more to do with developing the moral sensitivities for asking the question well.

"Mostly I just try to get out of the way and let the texts...do the work of stirring the imagination."

JONATHAN TRAN

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Matthew Harris has joined us at The Divinity School as Provost's Postdoctoral Fellow of Religions in the Americas. He studies African American Religious History, American Religion, Popular Culture and Religion, Black Studies, and Black Radical Tradition.

What are you enjoying about life in Chicago?

I am really enjoying living in a city that is home to important historical and contemporary social movements, possesses a rich musical culture, and where, hopefully, I use my car a lot less. But I'm also happy that I don't have to wake up quite as early on Saturdays and Sundays to watch the English Premier League.

What are you liking about being a part of the Divinity School community?

Just about everything really. I am enjoying talking with other faculty members and learning more about their research interests. I also love hearing about what kinds of exciting projects graduate students are working on. And I appreciate being a part of a community that has immensely shaped the critical study of religion and thinks with all interested parties about what that looks like going forward.

How did you come to do the work you do?

What do you like about it?

On the good advice of a mentor, I applied for some research money very early on in the conceptualization of my project. With the money received, I decided to visit the collection of Sun Ra materials held in the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center at the University of Chicago Library. The archive completely changed my trajectory. What was initially a project about the relationship between cultural forms and radicalism, became a religious history of Sun Ra, who is one of the icons of the Black Radical Tradition. It's a very fun project, one that takes me into odd corners of Black religious history, the historiography of radical traditions, and raises questions about theory and method in the study of religion.

When you're not studying religion, what do you do for fun?

I haven't been able to do it much lately, but one of the things I love most is attending concerts and discovering new music. I am slowly beginning to find my way through Chicago's music scene.

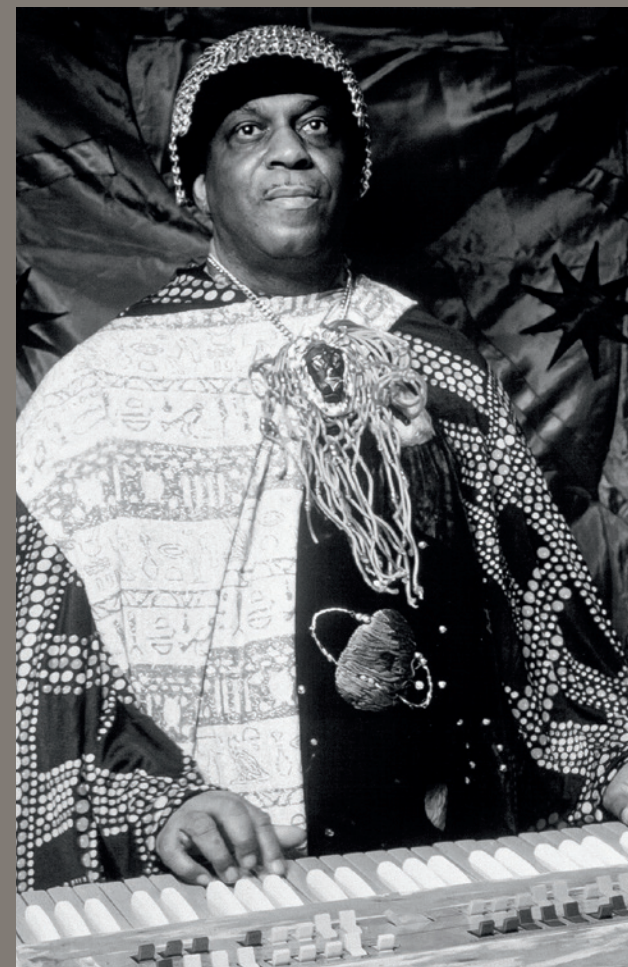


Tell us about your work on Sun Ra.

Drawing on the archive of the avant-garde musician Sun Ra, my work brings into focus the intellectual and institutional outlines of Black Chicago's metaphysical religious culture. My research details how Sun Ra's celebrated "music of the space age" emerged from and extended Black Chicago's esoteric and occult popular cultures, mobilizing its sources and infrastructures into a distinct, otherworldly aesthetic idiom. While gospel would emerge as the vernacular sound of Black sacred music in the wake of the Great Migration (and thus in the popular and historical imagination), I attend to the religious dimensions of Sun Ra's brand of grassroots utopianism beyond the walls of churches—in nightclubs, basements, and public spaces—to offer a different sense of twentieth century Black religious space and sound. And, ultimately, given this history and Sun Ra's simultaneous iconic place in the Black Radical Tradition, I argue for a rethinking of the relationship between Black religion, religious studies, and the refusal to take one's place.

"What was initially a project about the relationship between cultural forms and radicalism, became a religious history of Sun Ra, who is one of the icons of the Black Radical Tradition."

MATTHEW HARRIS



When Herman Poole "Sonny" Blount settled on Chicago's South Side in 1946, he did so rather inconspicuously.

Though studious and intelligent, Blount had dropped out of college. He had also spent some time in an Alabama prison for registering as a conscientious objector during World War II. Quiet, intellectual and somewhat eccentric, there was little to suggest that over the next two decades, Blount would become Sun Ra, one of jazz music's most innovative and respected band leaders.

The Alton Abraham Papers of Sun Ra are located in the Special Collections Research Center (lib.uchicago.edu/scrc/). The collection, which contains material from throughout Sun Ra's career, was generously donated by and acquired from School of the Art Institute of Chicago professor, jazz writer, and Sun Ra scholar John Corbett and writer, cultural critic, and faculty member at the School of the Art Institute Terri Kapsalis in 2007 and forms part of the University of Chicago's Jazz Archive.

This online exhibit, Sun Ra and the Chicago Years, 1946-1961, explores Sun Ra's time in Chicago and includes a variety of audio clips: library.uchicago.edu

Divinity School Convocation Speech

Karin Krause

KARIN KRAUSE IS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF BYZANTINE ART AND RELIGIOUS CULTURE. A specialist in the Christian visual cultures of Byzantium and the premodern Mediterranean region, she is also affiliated with the Department of Art History, Center for Hellenic Studies, and Medieval Studies Program.

Thank you for your introduction, Dean Robinson, and for inviting me to speak on this momentous occasion. It's a great honor for me.

Welcome families, partners, friends, and mentors. You can be very proud! But most of

all, welcome graduates of the class of 2022. Congratulations to each and every one of you on your accomplishment!

Here we are—gathering in person to honor and celebrate all your hard work. Perhaps it was only recently that you were able to explore our community in the flesh and hang out with new friends at Grounds of Being or elsewhere on our beautiful campus. There's indeed a lot to honor and celebrate this particular spring. In the past months and years, you each had unique challenges to face. We've all had our moments of despair and seen even more despair around us. But we have also seen a lot of strength and bravery. I hope that's how you think of yourselves, graduates—as being strong and brave. Managing to graduate in these unprecedented times should make you feel especially proud!

Life sets us up for many conclusions and new beginnings. As for you, this particular year was also an important one for me. Like you, I find myself standing at a threshold. The invitation to deliver this



speech has triggered thoughts I may not otherwise have had. I'd like to share some of them with you in hopes that you may find them helpful as you embark on your next adventure.

This weekend, you should celebrate your success. Do so noisily and exuberantly! After celebrating, though, I hope you will take some time to pause, to take in what you have accomplished, and to reflect upon what lies behind and in front of you.

Graduates, there's a lot that I would like to share with you, but I'll talk about just three things: passion, curiosity, and gratitude.

My first true passion was art history. Like religion, art is among humanity's oldest and most prevalent forms of expression. Indeed, religion and art have frequently intersected in the long history of mankind and across faith traditions. What you and I have in common

is that we did not choose our fields because they have the reputation of securing great material riches for ourselves and our families. We chose our fields and specializations because we see a *different* kind of value in them for ourselves and for others, too.

You joined the Divinity School and made it all the way to graduation because you are also passionate about what you do. You chose an institution that is one of the country's most demanding, but also one of the most inspiring, places for the academic study of religion.



Whatever your personal background and interests are, whichever of our programs you were enrolled in, you have preoccupied yourself with some of this world's most pressing questions.

You have developed an analytical skillset and the critical judgment that enable you to approach these questions with competence. These are essential tools that you bring to your profession and community.

For some of you, your faith and passion—or compassion—have led you to become active for good causes, for the benefit of others. You have been moving outside your comfort zone and engaging in social work to help people who live on the margins of society cope with their most pressing problems. You have become a transformative force in their lives. And this deserves our respect.

Graduates, *your* voices and *your* contributions will be needed in the field, and indeed in this world. I wonder what your next steps will be, as you continue shaping your lives and building your professional careers.

We know that some of you have already found your dream job. Congratulations to you! May you have a good start and thrive. Those of you who are still on the lookout, don't ever lose sight of what you are passionate about. Unless you absolutely need to, don't necessarily accept the first job offer that lands in your inbox.

I have always taken much delight in my scholarship. While I was completing my PhD in Munich many years ago, I sensed that a position at a university would be just the right thing for me.

However, what we were constantly being told was that the professional future of academics in the humanities was most precarious, that we were wasting our talents on futile things. Some sages even predicted that the academic job market was going to collapse anyway in the imminent future. Does that sound familiar to you?



It would be naïve to tell you that finding your niche in academia is going to be a breeze for all of you who are seeking such a niche. But I just don't think that

succumbing to pessimism is an option when you are really passionate about your work. In my own case, it took a long time to arrive where I am now, and there were many setbacks and nagging doubts. As the word "passion" implies, there is an element of suffering involved.

However, never forget that you have acquired essential skills that are invaluable in the academic world and beyond. Keeping up with the accelerated speed of the quarter system, you have learned how to be productive under pressure. You have demonstrated perseverance, regardless of the dire circumstances of the past months and years. Have you found creative solutions to connect with others during all the lockdowns? Were you somehow able to get hold of the books you needed to complete your projects when libraries closed their doors to us all of a sudden?

Did you remain focused on your work, while many of us were finding it difficult to even just keep track of what day of the week it was? Don't underestimate the resilience and problem-solving skills you have developed during the pandemic. Never lose the sense of optimism that you can achieve a lot in your life in whatever profession you settle into. And never lose the confidence that you with your particular skills and talents will have a positive impact on the lives of those around you.

We will each continue to pursue our unique path. Whatever your professional trajectory will look like in the near or more distant future, I hope that you will maintain the passion that has led you to join the intellectual community of the University of Chicago.

If there's one thing that cannot be disentangled from passion, it's curiosity. A German book author, Walter Moers, wrote that (I quote), "Curiosity is the most powerful incentive in the world ... because it is capable of overcoming the two most powerful disincentives in the world: common sense and fear."¹

From early on in our lives, we are taught to be always reasonable and behave sensibly.

But isn't it all too often an exaggerated sense of reason that holds us back from exploring new territory? And doesn't it happen all too easily that we let our anxieties prevent us from being at our best and maturing as individuals?

I hope that you are curious, fearless, and bold. Be adventurous! If you have never really been out of the country, consider traveling far. Go, live on the other side of the planet, at least for a while. Build bridges, and connect with people of different cultures.

May your curiosity keep you passionate and fearless for the rest of your lives!

We cannot achieve personal freedom and success in life without the good intentions and support of others. This brings me to my last point—gratitude.

Dear graduates, did those around you, your partner or children, have to do without you when you needed to be alone working in your study space to finish that term paper before the deadline? Have there been people who helped you cope with the stress, your doubts in your own abilities, your failures—not to mention tuition fees? You have reached an important milestone, but not all on your own.

Looking back on your life thus far, who are the people you could rely on, who made a difference, who offered you something important, perhaps even something you feel you didn't fully deserve?

When I was little, and nobody else was available, my grandmother Auguste Konietzka stepped in to take care of me. I was lucky because she was a loving and humorous woman. And she owned a collection of the most fascinating hats! She had a beautiful voice and sang lots of songs for me, some of them in a dialect I hardly understood. My grandmother's migration wasn't voluntary. For the rest of her life, she missed the farm in East Prussia where she had spent a happy childhood surrounded by many siblings, animals, and splendid lakes. Because she decided to be there for me, she sacrificed her long-awaited liberty after decades of hardship that others had introduced into her life. My grandmother ensured my well-being. When I was 27, she died, and I realized I had never said "thank you."

When I was a teenager, I received a fellowship to spend a high school year in the United States with an American family. That year has had a lasting impact on my life, way more than any other year. I owe that to the Marks family with whom I lived in Phoenix, Arizona. Mary and Frank had raised five kids, and they were not rich. The program relied entirely on volunteers and did not provide even the most minimal compensation for hosts. It came naturally to the Marks family to invite into their home a stranger—that 17-year-old girl from Germany. They had never met me before they picked me up from the airport at 3 o'clock in the morning. Theirs was a particularly express kind of altruism that I've often seen in this country. In recent times, I have experienced similar generosity from my students and colleagues in the Divinity School—for which, thank you!

Graduates, it feels *great* to say thank you!

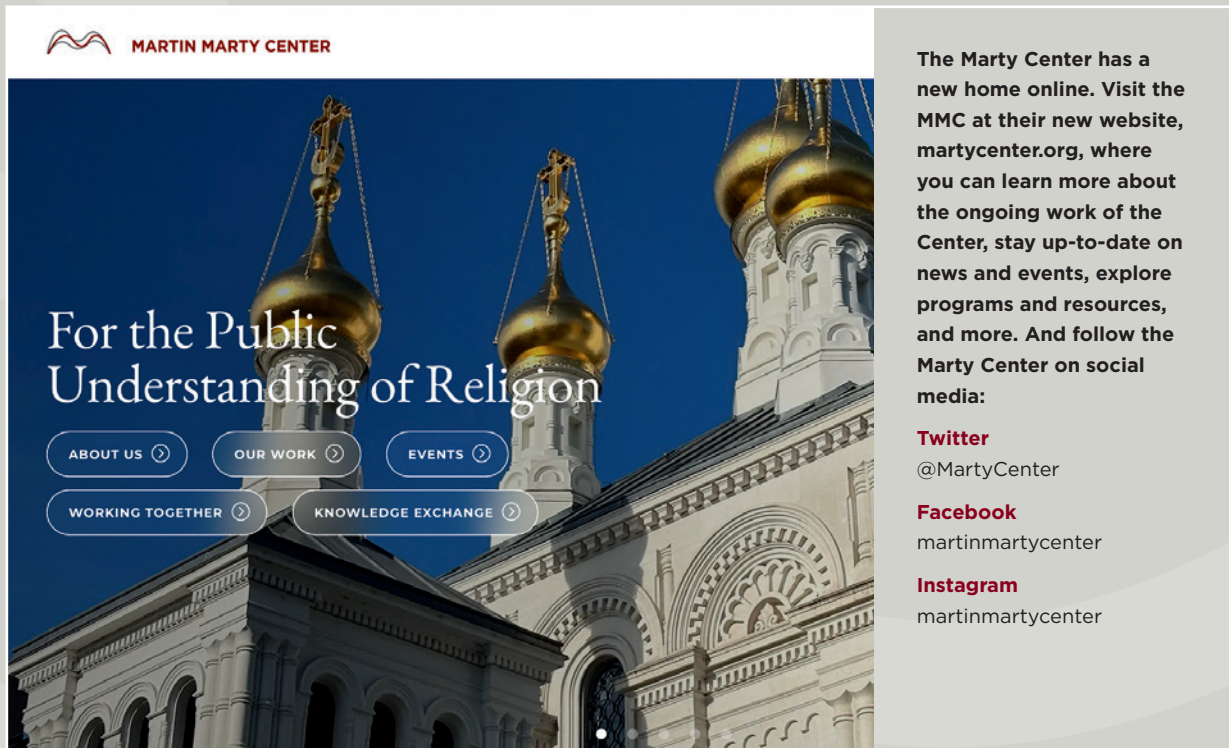
I also want to thank all of you for choosing the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, and for sharing with us some of the most formative years of your life. Thank you for all you have offered to make the School the intellectually vibrant and collegial place that it is. And, again, congratulations, graduates, on everything you have achieved here.

Whatever you do for the rest of your lives: Be passionate, be curious, and be grateful.

¹ Walter Moers, *The City of Dreaming Books* (trans. John Brownjohn). New York: The Overlook Press, 2021, p. 313.

Scenes from Convocation





The Marty Center has a new home online. Visit the MMC at their new website, martycenter.org, where you can learn more about the ongoing work of the Center, stay up-to-date on news and events, explore programs and resources, and more. And follow the Marty Center on social media:

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For the Public Understanding of Religion

ABOUT US | OUR WORK | EVENTS | WORKING TOGETHER | KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



MARTY CENTER EVENTS

The Marty Center hosts and sponsors a variety of events each year focused on the roles religion plays in the world. These include a new series created in partnership with the Seminary Co-Op Bookstore featuring intimate conversations with authors of recent books on religion or religious studies. To learn more, visit martycenter.org/events

Join us next on January 24, 2023, when **Mona Oraby**, author of *A Universe of Terms: Religion in Visual Metaphor* will be in conversation with **Sarah Hammerschlag**.

Join us on February 21, when **Eman Abdelhadi** and **M.E. O'Brien**, authors of *Everything for Everyone: An Oral History of the New York Commune, 2052 - 2072*, will be in conversation with Professor Alireza Doostdar.

And on March 30, **Samira Ahmed**, author of *Amira and Hamza: The Quest for the Ring of Power*, will be in conversation with **Zeenat Rahman**, Institute of Politics, University of Chicago

Please note: these author events are held at the Sem Co-op.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

When I arrived to my new office at the Divinity School just over a year ago, sitting on my chair were three manila folders marked "Marty Center documents."

In them I found typewritten documents on thin paper, the kind that feels delicate and fragile in your hands. They were the original memos in which Marty and others outlined plans for The Institute of the Advanced Study of Religion.

Marty noted in the cover page for one set of documents, dated October 16, 1979, that what followed "pretends to be a kind of constitution for the Institute. Nothing in it is sacred. Tear it apart, send suggestions...I am not prescribing, only drawing a line of scrimmage." In those pages Marty articulated his vision for the enterprise that would come to bear his name—the operations, the location, the activities (like lectures and conferences), the Junior Fellows seminar program, and the Senior Fellows residency for visiting faculty on sabbatical.

After some discussion about how to communicate some details of the Institute to "those outside the Kingdom" of the Divinity School, a formal proposal was presented in February of 1980. "The Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion encourages scholarly research in religion which is at once rigorous, interdisciplinary, and responsive to a public that extends beyond the academy. While fostering scholarly research it also seeks to provide opportunities for parish clergy, other religious leaders, and lay men and women to utilize Institute resources and programs. The Institute is an expression of the Divinity School of The University of Chicago."



In the last year, we have taken Marty at his word; we continue to build something that is rigorous, interdisciplinary, and responsive—and much of it modeled

on the first 40 years of the Center's success. The junior and senior fellows programs continue. We hosted a conference honoring the career of Jean-Luc Marion with another on religion and reproductive politics slated for April 2023. We support faculty events and research projects like Gaming Islam, spearheaded by Alireza Doostdar, and Sufism and Artificial Intelligence, by Yousef Casewit.

We have also held fast to the idea that the Center is not itself sacred and we are free to innovate around this line of scrimmage. In that spirit, we now collaborate with the Seminary Co-op Bookstore to host a monthly book series that is rich and diverse. We have piloted a Black Church Leadership program and collaborated with the Chicago Commons project to build more opportunities for clergy engagement. We have begun a multimedia series entitled, "Why This Text Matters," which features faculty of the Divinity School offering insight into significant texts in the study of religion. You can find out about all these new initiatives and more about what we are up to on our new website martycenter.org.

We are thrilled with this new chapter of the Marty Center's work and look forward to hearing from you as we undertake it. Just as Marty noted in 1979, "send suggestions..."

BRIE LOSKOTA
DIRECTOR OF THE MARTIN MARTY CENTER
FOR THE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGION



The Martin Marty Center is partnering with Sacred Writes (sacred-writes.org) to help train graduate students to translate their academic and research interests for public/popular objects.

Sacred Writes provides support, resources, and networks for scholars of religion committed to translating the significance of their research to a broader audience. The 22 participants of the inaugural Martin Marty Center workshop held in September 2022 each produced an op-ed, explainer, or other popular piece of writing for publication.

The Hidden Interfaith Networks' Key to the Migrant Justice Movement

BY CHARLOTTE LONG

ἐπείνασα γὰρ καὶ ἔδωκάτε μοι
φαγεῖν, ἐδίψησα καὶ ἐποτίσατέ με,
ξένος ἦμην καὶ συνηγάγετέ με,

*For I was in need of food, and you gave it to me;
I was in need of drink, and you gave it to me;
I was wandering, and you took me in;
Matthew 25:35*

Every week the smiling faces pop up on Zoom. Everyone is greeted by name. There's joking as we all log in. Someone says, "Sorry that I don't have my video on but I'm in the car and I didn't want to miss it!" A woman with short silver hair gets serious, saying, "Alright everybody, we have a lot on the agenda and not a lot of time, so let's get going."

Quickly, everyone reintroduces themselves: a woman from a church on the South Side of Chicago with extra room in their parsonage, a synagogue in the nearby suburbs involved in immigration reform, a resettlement nonprofit stretched thin with asylum-seeker cases, a married couple with a spare bedroom. The purpose? To house newly arrived migrants without delay.

This summer I was hired by the collective organizations in this meeting to lead a research project. The group informally call themselves the Sanctuary Working Group (SWG), and they are an interfaith network made up of both organizations and individuals, aging leftists and social workers, immigration lawyers and nuns. They are a seemingly tireless bunch of movers and shakers, all of them committed to immigration justice because of their personal religious values, although the meaning of those values may vary between belief systems.

Some have been doing it since the last Sanctuary movement in the 1980s, and some of them are immigrants themselves. As a Master of Divinity student at the University of Chicago, and as a life-long Chicagoan with experience working with young immigrant women, I was asked to conduct sensitive fieldwork on what long-term migrant shelters (1 month+) exist in the United States.

Spoiler alert: There are not enough to meet the current need.

"Religious minded networks are currently working together to fill in the gaps of our nation's skeleton immigration policy."

CHARLOTTE LONG

Across the country, I encountered other similar networks of individuals, shelters, and houses of worship trying to connect migrants to housing and basic resources. It is not unlike what churches and volunteers recently did at Martha's Vineyard for 50 asylum seekers. Networks like SWG do it every week and utilize a more bricolage membership.

An average weekly agenda at any one of them might look like this: a member of the meeting brings an asylum seeker's case to the group. They speak of a woman from Venezuela with two children who has been bused to Chicago where

she knows no one. She is currently staying at the Salvation Army shelter, but would X church have room for her in their rectory? Yes, the family from Guatemala staying there is actually ready to move out. Someone volunteers to reach out to a resettlement organization to find a case manager. Also, the gentleman from Haiti has been moved to an affordable apartment but needs rental assistance for the first month. Can we help him out?

The group votes on it; they only have so much cash in their communal funding. But the vote is unanimous. This is what the funds are for. Then an update on the family staying at A & B's home. They are doing great; they love to cook. Kids will start going to school this week. Can the group wrangle some winter boots for them? At network meetings geared more for shelter staff, the conversation consists of how many people arrived that week or any legal questions that can be addressed for the good of the group. And of course, the evergreen question: anyone got a room?

I was not asked to do this research arbitrarily. There is a historic surge of migrants at the southern border, mostly due to chronic poverty, drought, or violence in countries the world over. Interfaith networks like the SWG have felt that uptick in their work this past year. Grassroots groups lately have a list of 10-15 persons seeking immediate shelter.

The recent political moves from the governors of Texas, Arizona, and Florida to relocate asylum seekers from the southern border to blue states reminds us again that immigration needs trauma-informed policy reform centered on human dignity. And what the described weekly agenda tells us is this: religiously minded networks are currently working together to fill in the gaps of our nation's skeleton immigration policy. They do it for reasons of personal conviction and faith, and they often do it for little to no money.

Religious institutions have long been involved in the safe asylum movement. Many religious leaders make public statements about human dignity, both through their theology and their actions—although the two do not always align. Many leaders have recently spoken out against inhumane treatment of families fleeing violence or poverty. And yet some religious communities remain silent. Often, I found it was these smaller interfaith networks that forthrightly told me their faith was the motivating factor in their work, even as multiple faiths were represented and even as they try to fly under the political radar.

The soulless performance art from the aforementioned governors is reportedly to assist migrants in getting to sanctuary cities where there are more resources. They are correct that metropolitan sanctuary cities sometimes have more infrastructure for immigrants, although border communities have a specialized experience due in part to their geography. But virtually no infrastructure in any state—from the border community of Brownsville, Texas, to the 15-bedroom communal shelter home in Chicago where I worked—has the capacity to respond to the current surge.

Here is an example of why interfaith networks have been so crucial. As a byproduct of their communication, shelter staff in these networks were among the first to see there is a growing need for long-term shelters in immigrant infrastructure.

They hear firsthand how newly arrived migrant families do not have the usual relatives to stay with in the United States. Their first asylum trial may be more than two years after they are "processed," and there is no place to live in the meantime. But they come anyway. This is a new-ish trend.

Even now in September 2022, I scan the headlines for an echo of shelter staffs' intel and can find almost nothing. All I see is the word "crisis."

It is true that those on the religious right have always had the loudest voice promoting fear and misinformation that migrants negatively affect the economy and crime. Voices on the religious left are less likely to be in the spotlight.

"At this very moment, religious organizations are doing some of the most grassroots, radical, hard work there is to welcome the afflicted." CHARLOTTE LONG

They have less headline-catching things to say, often repeating Matthew 25:35 from the New Testament, which calls us to welcome the "stranger" (often translated as "foreigner" in the ancient Greek).

After my work this summer interviewing religious migrant organizations around the country, I have a hunch that one reason for their tentative voices is simply because they are too busy.

They are trying to co-create with migrants some semblance of a path through the migratory muck, and it takes all their energy. They don't have time for a quippy comeback when Trump's pastor cites a "biblical responsibility to protect our borders." They often don't want to speak to the press because they do not want their names in the papers.

It is not uncommon for migrants to show up on their doorstep having mysteriously been given the organization's address on a piece of paper, and even to have consequently carried it for months through jungles and deserts. These days, shelter organizations are consistently full, but they also can't bear to turn away even one individual. They are in this because of their values, after all.

Yet shelter staff continued to invite me into their conversations. The invisible networks began to show themselves. I attended informal Zoom meetings for shelters in the Midwest, the Southwest, a cluster around San Antonio and California. I sat in on national webinars to hear about re-housing in DC after the latest "busing" drop-off.

Once, I somehow ended up in a wonderfully thoughtful working group with Episcopal leadership on how the church should respond to immigration policy, where I heard discussed in small groups everything from practical political suggestions to immigration theology.

It was not unusual for me to meet individual people who, when there is no room at the proverbial inn, welcome people just out of detention to stay with them for months at a time. This is even how one of the older shelters told me they were founded.

Often when I speak to liberal-leaning folks about my work, there is a knowing nod of agreement. Immigration reform is a necessity, we all know. When I say I work with religious groups—mostly Judeo-Christian groups, and lately a lot of Catholic sisters—there is some hesitancy. Some assume religious work is usually conservative, that its purpose is evangelizing above all else, and that the "dangers" involved with religious affiliations are not worth it.

I am here to tell you that while some on the Christian right continue to be swayed by xenophobia, at this very moment religious organizations are doing some of the most grassroots, radical, hard work there is to welcome the afflicted. They do it with grace and grit, they work across political and religious differences, and they have been doing it for decades.

My hope is that we acknowledge their work, fund their efforts without fear, and help nuance the narrative about religion's place in our nation.

Charlotte Long is a Master of Divinity student and a participant in the Martin Marty Center and Sacred Writes collaborative workshop. She has worked with migrant shelters, led a research project to map out migrant shelters in the US and taught on the theology of global service in the Episcopal Church. Her piece "The Hidden Interfaith Networks' Key to the Migrant Justice Movement" came out of the Sacred Writes workshop and was published on Religion News Service.





WHAT IS RELIGIOUS APPROPRIATION AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

BY LIZ BUCAR | SEPTEMBER 9, 2022

ACCUSATIONS OF CULTURAL APPROPRIATION ARE INCREASINGLY COMMON. BUT AS A RELIGIOUS ETHICIST, I AM NOT SURE THAT IS A GOOD THING.

DON'T GET ME WRONG: I AM ALL FOR IDENTIFYING ETHICALLY PROBLEMATIC FORMS OF CULTURAL THEFT. AND YET, I AM CONCERNED THAT THE USE OF THE TERM "CULTURAL APPROPRIATION" IS IMPRECISE.

At times, these accusations presuppose ultra-reactionary ideas about racial and cultural purity or assume strict borders exist between cultures when that is rarely the case. And as a scholar of religion, I can't help noticing that cases of appropriation of religion often fly under the radar. In fact, the same people who are quick to call out cases of cultural borrowing as exploiting marginalized communities refuse to recognize that religious communities can also be exploited when others adopt their practices in the name of politics, education, or well-being. In my recent book, *Stealing My Religion*, I address a wide range of questions about religious appropriation. But in this post, I'd like to focus specifically on one question: is religious appropriation unharmed, or just harmful in a different way?

Let's start by drawing a distinction between religious borrowing and religious appropriation. Religious borrowing occurs whenever individuals adopt religious practices without committing to religious doctrines, ethical values, systems of authority, or institutions. This can be morally neutral. If a non-Buddhist practices meditation through an app on their phone, this likely wouldn't bother most Buddhists, though many would insist that this is only the tip of the iceberg of what meditation means in a Buddhist context. Religious communities might even welcome borrowings, particularly if they see them as a step towards conversion. Religious appropriation, in contrast, is a particular type of borrowing that causes a harm or offense because it exacerbates some form of injustice. Intention is not what distinguishes between the two. Instead, whether borrowing becomes appropriation depends on existing forms of structural injustice, to use a term by the late University of Chicago political theorist Iris Marion Young. Determining which type of borrowing we are dealing with involves figuring out what forms of inequity, marginalization, imperialism, and even violence the borrowing might reinforce, even if unbeknownst to the one doing the borrowing.

Is it a coincidence that many of the practices commodified are from eastern religions, or is orientalism or even Christian hegemony at play? Could white supremacy be a reason so many white folks feel entitled to adopt religious practices associated with communities of color? What hierarchies does the insistence that a spiritual practice is "more correct" when not embedded in a community of belief depend on? These are the sorts of questions we should be asking to determine if and how a specific form of borrowing has resulted in some harm. But instead, many assume there are no victims of religious appropriation, or at least no victims that have a legitimate claim.

In part this is because so many religions have histories of exploiting others, which makes it hard to see them as victims of the harm of appropriation. One example is the 2018 Met Gala, during which celebrities dressed up in Catholic inspired couture to walk the red carpet for a fundraising event for the Metropolitan Museum of Art. When some Catholics complained on social media that this was akin to using their religion as a costume, they were drowned out by high-profile cultural critics and fashion reporters who argued borrowing Catholic aesthetics couldn't be appropriation because the Roman Catholic Church has been an imperial force in the world for much of its history.

But a Catholic institutional history of forced conversion, land seizures, and even violence against Indigenous people doesn't mean that lay Catholics can't be discriminated against. Religious practitioners are not immune from exploitation just because their religion has been associated with unjust institutions or leaders.

Certainly, some groups, such as religious minorities, are more likely to experience harm when their practices are borrowed. And in my book, when trying to determine if a harm has been caused, I focus on concerns raised by individuals already marginalized within a religious community—such as female and Black practitioners. This allows me to respect the diversity within religious communities while also investigating claims of harm made by the most vulnerable.

The process of identifying and then sitting with the discomfort of this fact is a hallmark of ethical learning. LIZ BUCAR



The severity of the harm caused by religious appropriation also varies, and I have adopted the concept of profound offense from American philosopher Joel Feinberg to describe the most egregious cases. In his work on criminal law, Feinberg distinguishes "harm" from "offense." He defines harm as a setback to someone's interests, while an offense does more insofar as it affects one's state of mind, making one feel disgusted, outraged, or appalled. Feinberg further distinguishes a minor offense from a profound offense. A minor offense is an affront to one's senses or one's lower sensibilities. It is a nuisance. A profound offense, in contrast, is more egregious. It is, in Feinberg's words, "shattering." Actions that are profoundly offensive do more than put one in an unpleasant state of mind. They are an affront to one's core values and sense of self. Feinberg names voyeurism, desecration of venerated symbols, and mistreatment of a corpse as profoundly offensive.

Let's think about the potential for causing a profound offense when borrowing the religious practices of others. Religious practices do a lot of things for religious practitioners. They can be part of rituals. They can build group intimacy. They can orient the mundane world to the divine. But they can also be the very foundation of how an individual sees themselves, the world, and the very meaning of life. Put simply, practices are not just beliefs operationalized, they are the very mechanism that can create belief. So rather than harmless, religious appropriations that belittle or corrupt a practice can shatter someone's core sense of values and self. That would not only be harmful, but also profoundly offensive.

And here's the challenge: most of us borrow religion of others. I know I have. I am part of the 29 percent of American who identify as religiously unaffiliated. And yet I practice yoga. I lead a study abroad program where students engage in pilgrimage. I have worn religious clothing during fieldwork. Some of my borrowings have been appropriative. Reflecting on them now, I think some might have even been profoundly offensive.

There are no quick fixes to the ethical dilemmas of religious appropriation, but an important first step is to acknowledge our borrowings of religion interact with systems of injustice to create harms we don't intend. The process of identifying and then sitting with the discomfort of this fact is a hallmark of ethical learning. It can inspire us to consider how we might change our behavior to mitigate the harms we cause to others.

Liz Bucar is Professor of Religion, Dean's Leadership Fellow, and Director of Sacred Writes at Northeastern University. An expert in comparative religious ethics, Bucar is a sought-after lecturer on topics ranging from gender reassignment surgery to the global politics of modest clothing. She is the author of four books and two edited collections, including the award-winning trade book, Pious Fashion: How Muslim Women Dress (Harvard, 2017) and Stealing My Religion: Not Just Any Cultural Appropriation (Harvard, summer 2022). Bucar's public scholarship includes bylines in The Atlantic, The Los Angeles Times, and Teen Vogue, as well as several radio and podcast interviews. She has a PhD in religious ethics from the University of Chicago Divinity School.

2022 NUVEEN LECTURE

The Divinity School is pleased to announce that [Tahera Qutbuddin](#), Professor of Arabic Literature, delivered the 2022 Nuveen Lecture: “Early Islamic Oration: Rhetoric, Religion, and Ritual.”

THE LECTURE WAS HELD THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022 IN SWIFT LECTURE HALL.



In her lecture, Qutbuddin considered Arabic-Islamic oration across different social domains in its foundational early period and situated religious speech within them, showing that boundaries between religion and other spheres of life were fluid in the early period. Drawing on ten years of research for her recently published book, *Arabic Oration: Art and Function* (Brill, Handbook of Oriental Studies series, 2019), she discussed the major features of classical Arabic oration, with a focus on religion, ritual, and the rhetoric of orality.

Professor Qutbuddin is a scholar of classical Arabic literature and Islamic studies, focusing on intersections of the literary, the religious, and the political in classical Arabic poetry and prose.

John S. Nuveen was one of Chicago's most influential business leaders and an active civil and cultural leader with ties to many

educational institutions. At the University of Chicago, he served as chairman of the University's Alumni Association and as a trustee of the Baptist Theological Union, which established the Nuveen lecture in 1972 and manages an endowment that supports the University of Chicago Divinity School. Each year, a prominent member of the University's faculty is invited by the Divinity School to deliver the lecture. Past lecturers have included Wu Hung, Janet Rowley, Jonathan Lear, and Leon Kass.

You can watch a recording of Prof. Qutbuddin's lecture, which was delivered to a completely full house, on our YouTube channel: bit.ly/DivinityVideo

Across the mosques, homes, battlefields, and open town spaces of the Middle East in the 7th and 8th centuries AD, religion, politics, and aesthetics coalesced in the richly artistic public performance of spontaneous Arabic oration (khutba). Exquisite in rhetorical craftsmanship, interactive speeches and sermons by Muhammad, 'Ali, and other political and military early Muslim leaders were also the major vehicle of policymaking and persuasion, and the primary conduit for dissemination of ethical, religious, and legal teachings. The Friday sermon that is an intrinsic part of Muslim ritual across the globe today has a long history rooted in the first Friday sermon delivered by the Prophet Muhammad in Medina, and more broadly in these multifunctional orations of the early Islamic world.



JAIN STUDIES AT THE DIVINITY SCHOOL

IN MAY, THE DIVINITY SCHOOL CELEBRATED A GIFT FROM A CONSORTIUM OF DONORS ORGANIZED THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF THE JAIN SOCIETY OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO.

With a leadership gift from Dr. Parag Doshi and Dulari Doshi, the gift establishes a \$150,000 fund for the support of Jain Studies at the Divinity School. To inaugurate the program, the Divinity School welcomed members of the Jain Society, including many of the fund's donors, to join us for a Namokar mantra ceremony and dinner. Accompanying the festivities was a lecture from Assistant Professor Sarah Pierce Taylor, “Jainism's Jeweled Garlands: From India to Illinois.” In addition to hearing from Professor Taylor, the School was fortunate to hear remarks from the

Jain Society, including from its President, Tejas Shah, and from Dr. Doshi.

In the coming year, we plan to welcome Lynna Dhanani, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at UC Davis, to join us as the keynote presenter at a joint conference between the Divinity School and the Neubauer Collegium, organized by Professor Taylor and Professor Andrew Ollett of South Asian Languages and Cultures.



THE DEAN'S FORUM



The Dean's Forum is a long-standing Divinity School tradition. This important event (on hiatus during the COVID years) puts Divinity School faculty members from across disciplines into conversation with each other to discuss their colleagues' new works.

This past Autumn we were pleased to bring back the Dean's Forum with a spirited conversation (held over a community lunch in the Common Room to a full house of students, faculty, and staff) between Professors **Richard Miller** and **Christian Wedemeyer** (Associate Professor of the History of Religions) on the topic—why study religion?

The title of Prof. Miller's recent book gives away the focus: In *Why Study Religion?* Miller, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Professor of Religion, Ethics,

and Politics asks if the study of religion can be justified. He observes that scholarship in religious studies, especially work in "theory and method," is preoccupied with matters of research procedure and thus inarticulate about the goals that can motivate scholarship in the field.

In the coming months we have Dean's Fora planned for January, March, and May. To see details, visit divinity.uchicago.edu/research-faculty/deans-forum.



UPCOMING DEAN'S FORA

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11

Carolina Lopez-Ruiz (Professor of the History of Religions, Comparative Mythology, and the Ancient Mediterranean World) with **Jeffrey Stackert** (Professor of Hebrew Bible) responding: *Phoenicians and the Making of the Mediterranean*

FRIDAY, MARCH 31

Jeffrey Stackert with **Erin Galgay Walsh** (Assistant Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature) responding: *Deuteronomy and the Pentateuch*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

Sarah Fredericks (Associate Professor of Environmental Ethics) with **Yousef Casewit** (Associate Professor of Qur'anic Studies) responding: *Environmental Guilt and Shame: Signals of Individual and Collective Responsibility and the Need for Ritual Responses*.



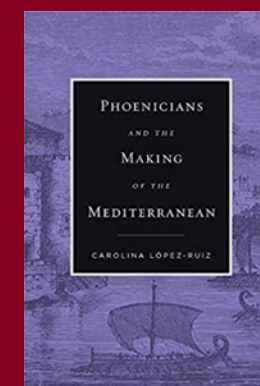
Carolina López-Ruiz, Professor of the History of Religions, Comparative Mythology, and the Ancient Mediterranean World in the Divinity School and the Department of Classics, has been awarded this year's Frank Moore Cross book award, given by the American Schools of Overseas Research (ASOR) for her recent book *Phoenicians and the Making of the Mediterranean*.

Presented annually to the author or editor of the most substantial volume related to the history or religion of the ancient Near and Eastern Mediterranean, the award honors original research published during the last two years, with primary consideration given to historical,

epigraphic, textual, and comparative literary studies; or to works that advance and evaluate new methodological approaches to the literary record.

The American Society of Overseas Research is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to initiate, encourage, and support research

into, and public understanding of, the history and cultures of the Near East and wider Mediterranean world, from the earliest times.





FRANKLIN LEWIS (1961-2022)

Franklin D. Lewis, Associate Professor of Persian Language and Literature in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (NELC) and an associated member of the Divinity School faculty, passed away on September 19, 2022.

Professor Lewis received his PhD from the University of Chicago; his dissertation, "Reading, Writing, and Recitation: Sana'i and the Origins of the Persian Ghazal," remains widely cited. He served as the chair of NELC from 2015-18 and 2019-22.

He taught on Persian language and literature, medieval Islamic thought, translation history, Baha'i Studies, Islamic mysticism, and other topics; his research interests included many more. His publications included several important translations, and his landmark book, *Rumi: Past and Present, East and West. The Life and Teachings of Jalāl al-Din Rumi* (2008), reassessed all previous research on the life of Persian's foremost Sufi poet.

Lewis served as the president of the American Institute of Iranian Studies for fourteen years (2002-12, 2016-20) and founded and managed the list serve Adabiyat, which has provided an international forum for scholars of Middle Eastern literatures for more than two decades. During his time at UChicago he taught and mentored a generation of scholars.

Please read a tribute to Prof. Lewis, written by Paul Losensky (PhD NELC'93) at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies website: cmes.uchicago.edu/news/memory-professor-franklin-lewis-1961-2022

Faculty News

LAURIE ZOLOTH TO RECEIVE THE 2023 ENGELHARDT AWARD

Laurie Zoloth, the Margaret E. Burton Professor of Religion and Ethics, has been selected to receive the 2023 Engelhardt Award "for a provocative voice in bioethics which considers foundations." The award is given annually by The Ohio State University Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities in partnership with the Foundation for Bioethics. The 2023 award will be given during the Conference on Medicine and Religion hosted at The Ohio State University March 12-14, 2023. Professor Zoloth will give a plenary presentation at the conference, and the award will be presented during this plenary session. The conference theme is "At the Limits of Medicine: Caring for Body and Soul." More information on the conference can be found on the Conference on Medicine and Religion website.



2022-2023 TEACHING FELLOWS

Our Teaching Fellows program, which offers recent graduates the opportunity to continue to develop their research and teaching at the School for up to two years, continues to grow. Fellows work under the mentorship of a faculty colleague, and within a pedagogical community of practice. This year's new fellows join their colleagues in developing and offering a range of new courses aimed at the UChicago College population.

2022-2023 TEACHING FELLOWS

Joseph Haydt	Mark Lambert	Christine Trotter
Maureen Kelly	Yiftach Ofek	Richard Zaleski
Andrew Kunze	John Sianghio	Raúl E. Zegarra-Medina
	Doren Snoek	



"Teaching in the college is amazing, especially in the Core. Students bring their interests, facts and methods from their major studies, and their unique backgrounds to the class. They're not specialists steeped in the debates and jargon of religious studies, so they often find applications and connections

in the material we explore that are novel to me, and that provide some unique spice to texts and questions that are often thought of as standard fare in our field." **JOHN SIANGHIO**



"Teaching undergraduates at the University of Chicago has truly been a delight. My students are highly motivated and curious young people who raise important questions and readily make connections between what we do in the classroom and the world outside of academia.

The Teaching Fellows program has enabled me to create my own courses while also working with faculty across disciplines in Core sequences." **CHRISTINE TROTTER**

NEW FACES IN SWIFT HALL

The Divinity School is pleased to welcome several new staff members to Swift Hall.



JAIME JONES
Executive Assistant to the Dean



LAUREN POND
Digital Media Manager for the Martin Marty Center



PHILIP GUZMAN
Student Affairs Manager in the Dean of Students Office



STUDENT LIFE

Run Swiftly

Sunshine peeked through green-turned-yellow-turned-red leaves that held onto the canopy of branches over Swift Hall's courtyard. Eager feet crunched the fallen colors, and excited voices of students and staff, faculty and families, floated in the fall air. Everyone gathered in anticipation. And while the familiar chill of a Chicago October had finally settled itself in to Hyde Park, the cherished surprise final day of warmth made its appearance for the Divinity School's inaugural Run Swiftly 5K. The Run Swiftly 5K is the Divinity School's first ever run/walk event. Held on Sunday, October 23, 2022, the time of year promised cold temperatures and over-booked community members. However, seventy-five degrees and a sun-warmed breeze drew participants out of their offices, homes, and study nooks to share in exercise and endorphins.

Pranati Parikh and **Emma Sternberg**, second-year MA students, and **Joe Lemna**, a second-year MDiv student, organized Run Swiftly. Pranati, Emma, and Joe are BONDS (Building Opportunities and Networks for Divinity Students) peer-mentors, and presented the idea of a Divinity School 5k as a way for new students to get connected with the Divinity School community. With good fun and a participant t-shirt as bait, Pranati, Emma, and Joe hoped for fifteen-or-so participants.

"We wanted to hold a 5K for the Divinity School community because we knew how many avid runners we have, and



we thought sharing in exercise could be a great opportunity to bring folks together," said Pranati. "Also, an event like the 5K puts everyone on the same playing field. There is a kind of intimacy and transparency which creates a horizontal community that is so necessary in the Divinity School."

Over fifty runners, walkers, and supporters showed up that Sunday afternoon. Everyone

from first-year master's students and seventh-year PhD candidates to Dean Robinson and kids and pets of faculty, staff, and students joined together to kick off the race.

"After departing from the start line just outside the courtyard of Swift Hall, we ran out and down the midway, around Washington Park, and back through campus to end at the Divinity School," explains Joe. "Upon crossing the finish line, we were greeted with music, snacks, and congratulations. Everyone was smiling."

"The school year moves faster and faster as the quarter progresses, which



breeds an intensity, and, of course, stress," said Emma. "So having a space for the Divinity School community to slow down, enjoy the ever-fleeting sensations of fall, and to be together, felt like an essential thing to do."

As the sidewalks of Hyde Park shift from leaf- to snow-covered, outdoor communal gatherings slow, but Pranati, Emma,

and Joe promise that although this was the first Run Swiftly, it is certainly not the last.

"We never could have imagined such a wonderful turnout," said Pranati, "and the energy everyone brought to the event really made the moment absolutely special."

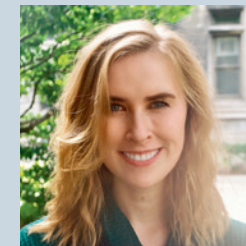
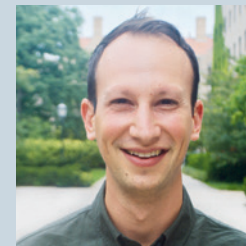
News & Notes

The Divinity School recognizes student achievements through a variety of prizes. Some of our prizes are awarded annually; others on a cyclical or ad hoc basis. To read more about student achievement and prizes, visit divinity.uchicago.edu/prizes.



2022 JOHN GRAY RHIND AWARD

Established by University Trustee James Rhind in honor of his father who was a Presbyterian pastor and teacher, the John Gray Rhind Award is presented each year to a graduating Master of Divinity student or students whose excellent in academic and professional training gives notable promise to a significant service of others. Pictured above are our 2022 recipients, [Brian Louis](#) and [Sister Hoa Nguyen](#) (with [Cynthia Lindner](#), our Director of Ministry Studies). To read more, visit divinity.uchicago.edu/news/2022-john-gray-rhind-awardees.



The Divinity School Prize for Excellence in Teaching is awarded annually to a PhD student or students who demonstrate excellence in teaching and learning.

The 2022 winners were [Mendel Kranz](#), a PhD candidate in the Philosophy of Religions, and [Marielle Harrison](#), a PhD candidate in History of Religions. Both students received an Alma Wilson Teaching Fellowship in the previous year; Ms. Harrison taught a course called “The Prophet Q” and Mr. Kranz, “Antisemitism and Islamophobia, Historically and Today.”



2022 IBRAHIM RASHED QUR'ANIC STUDIES PRIZE

Awarded to [Ahmed Arafat](#), this prize is awarded in recognition of the best-written paper in Qur'anic Studies. This Fund has been established with a gift in memory of Ibrahim Rashed, journalist and student of the Qur'an, to recognize, encourage, and foster outstanding contributions to the field of Qur'anic Studies by promising young scholars at the University of Chicago.

To read more about Dr. Arafat and his work, which focuses on the literary structure of the Qur'an, please visit divinity.uchicago.edu/spotlight/ahmed-arafat.



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