

CRITERION

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| | <p>Dear Alumni and Friends —</p> <p>This issue begins with texts delivered at a Wednesday Lunch on February 18, 2015. At this Dean’s Forum, Professors Wendy Doniger, (the Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions), and Brook A. Ziporyn, (Professor of Chinese Religion, Philosophy, and Comparative Thought), discussed the groundbreaking work of Anthony C. Yu, the Carl Darling Buck Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus: <i>Journey to the West</i>.</p> <p>We continue with texts from a panel discussion event held to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil Rights march on Selma, Alabama.</p> <p>This issue also contains texts from the June 2, 2015 reception in honor of Dean Margaret M. Mitchell, the Shailer Mathews Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature, on the occasion of her return to the full-time teaching faculty.</p> <p>Our issue closes with a sermon—on the theme ‘how did I get here?’—delivered in Bond Chapel by Maggie Potthoff (MDiv’15).</p> <p>Many of our public events are made available for online viewing. You can watch the Wednesday Lunch and the Selma panel discussion by visiting http://divinity.uchicago.edu/multimedia.</p> <p>My thanks to Ken Janssen, designer, for his work on this issue.</p> <p>I hope you enjoy this issue.</p> <p>Terren Ilana Wein, <i>Editor</i></p> | |

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Dean's Forum on Anthony C. Yu's *Journey To the West*

Journey to the West by Anthony C. Yu (1938-2015), initially published in 1983 (new edition, University of Chicago Press, 2014) introduced English-speaking audiences to the classic Chinese novel in its entirety for the first time. Written in the sixteenth century, *Journey To the West* tells the story of the fourteen-year pilgrimage of the monk Xuanzang, one of China's most famous religious heroes, and his three supernatural disciples, in search of Buddhist scriptures. At a Dean's Forum Wednesday Lunch on February 18, 2015, Wendy Doniger, Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of History of Religions, and Brook A. Ziporyn, Professor of Chinese Religion, Philosophy, and Comparative Thought, discussed this work. Professor Yu, the Carl Darling Buck Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus, also spoke.

ANTHONY C. YU

I am honored to have been invited by Dean Mitchell for this forum on most likely the last major work of my career, and I am doubly grateful for my two commentators here—one who is now my oldest active colleague and one who is among the newest that I am meeting for the first time. A second happy coincidence is that Professor Wendy Doniger, as many of you know, is the first person featured on the University website's write-up this February celebrating scholarly translations by

faculty.* Finally, tomorrow happens to be new year's day for the lunar calendar, ushering in the Chinese Year of the Goat, Sheep, or Ram, the animal—whether male, female, or kid—that rhymes with one of the two fundamental forces (i.e., Yin and Yang) governing the ancient Chinese cosmos. Today's event is an auspicious one, because the animal *yang*, a homophone of *yang*, that rhythmic dynamic energizing the universe, is further symbolized by an unbroken line in the trigram system of *Yijing* or the *Classic*

* *Finding new life in world's classics*

<http://www.uchicago.edu/features/translation/>

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an act of fools diving in where gods and demons fear to swim.

of Change. Beginning in November with one unbroken line, the trigram adds another line each month until January. One commentary on this trigram says: three lines of yang reverts to prosperity.

Because I want to leave as much time as possible for my colleagues and questions from the floor, I will offer only a brief remark that easily falls into three parts.

My formal education up to my taking the doctorate here at Chicago was focused entirely on Western languages, literatures, and thought, and my knowledge of my own



Chinese tradition derived almost entirely from familial and private mentoring. The

knowledge of English was enlarged progressively by modern and ancient European languages, but their use (including translation activities) was limited only to short pieces or fragments as needed by critical writing for class or later

professional work. Deciding to translate entirely this huge late Ming novel was thus a sudden plunge into deep currents with scant knowledge or experience of swimming, an act of fools diving in where gods and demons fear to swim. The deep water analogy is warranted because there is no option for other means of support or staying afloat. Whereas a student writing on some foreign text may pick and choose what portion accommodates a person's level of comprehension and labor, a plenary translation of any text offers no such choice. That is why Professors David Tod Roy, Doniger, and I all affirm that our kind of translation likely makes the most severe demand on one's ability to read a text.

I'd hasten to add that close reading is not the only difficult demand of such translation, because another aspect of the labor requires rigorous attention to such other features as rhetoric, style, tone, and an educated calculation of comparably intended effects in two languages. I'll give one example by citing the famous episode when the mischievous Monkey hero made fun of

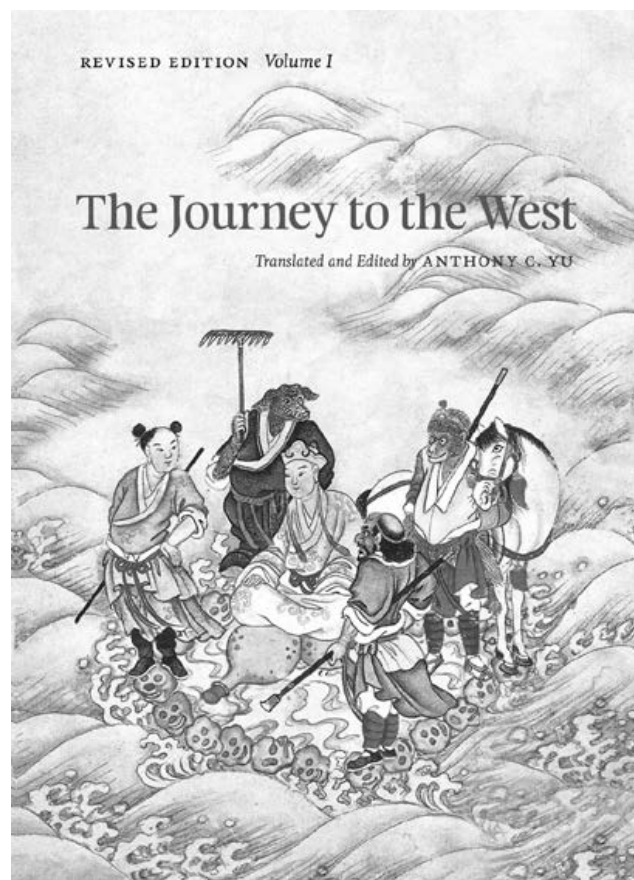
wayward Daoist priests, actually animal spirits, by making them drink his—and his companions'—urine as holy water. Arthur Waley's translation of this and other selected portions of the novel almost seventy years ago was justly praised for conveying the rollicking humor—often scatological—of the original. But his abridgment also leaves out parts that are crucial to one's understanding of the story here. If one looks at my version of the same episode now excerpted in Vol. II of the new *Norton Anthology of World Religions*, one will find that the narrative is dramatically punctuated by four sets of hilarious limericks. Monkey declaimed two of them in brazen mockery against the Daoist Trinity and their deviant disciples, and his declamations bookend two other limericks chanted by the animal spirits to plead for the gift of holy water. Granted due attention, the four slapstick poems present a hilarious mimicry of religious and ritual poetry. The clipped brevity metrical rhythm (mostly four syllables) and rhyme no less than the incongruous pairing of classic and demotic diction deliberately parody lines of the *Classic of Poetry*, one foundational text of ancient Confucianism, the prosodic patterns of which were mimed by both Daoist and Buddhist liturgical texts and performance. In this manner, the comic narrative actually satirizes all three religions.

Religion brings me to my second point: the story's one human protagonist. A devout and courageous Buddhist monk defied imperial prohibition and went from the ancient capital Chang'an to India, mostly on foot, to acquire more Buddhist scriptures. Xuanzang left China in the early seventh century as a treasonous criminal subject to immediate execution if caught, but his triumphant return seventeen years later was marked by imperial pardon, unbroken patronage, and continuous service to the court as revered cleric and renowned translator. The modern view of this classic novel began with the unquestioned assumption in the early twentieth century that it was about an actual Buddhist priest, Xuanzang of the sixth century CE.

If Xuanzang's journey and accomplishment were well known, the question that sorely baffled modern scholars was how and why the novel's presentation of his familial background, upbringing, and undertaking of his pilgrimage would stray so far from attested events and circumstances

I did not share this opinion, but I could find no alternate argument.

in both secular and ecclesiastical histories. Concerning the priest's background, the novel drew on strands of fiction that related Xuanzang's father as a Confucian scholar of the highest rank who married a prime minister's daughter, his death by pirates while on route to his first appointment, the pregnant mother being forced to be the pirate's wife after rape, Xuanzang's abandonment as a baby in a river raft until rescued by a Buddhist abbot, and eventual



reversal of fortune, rescue, and reunion of family members. One astonishing detail is the entrenched affirmation—in both the novel and some of its literary antecedents—that the monk's pilgrimage was commissioned and honored in elaborate ritual by the Tang emperor himself. The other feature is, of course, the entertaining association with his disciples of animal and half-human figures, in which art and religious history mostly point to a regional origin also wholly different from that of the historical person. To

explain this array of bewildering details, most modern scholars found answers in a rather simplistic assessment of the unknown or putative author: yes, he was a gifted writer of great wit and linguistic wizardry, second to none in his depiction of the Monkey and half-pig disciples, but he was a lousy student of history who invented "wild fiction."

When I began work on my translation, I did not share this opinion, but I could find no alternate argument. The displacement of the hero's birthplace and his youthful experiences is indeed incredible: from inland western China to the coastal area of the modern city Nanjing that spans spatial and social disparity much greater than that between Minneapolis and Philadelphia. I was haunted by this strange fable and its setting in life even as I translated and taught it. Only recently do I believe I may have a partial answer for at least the genetic matrix of the five pilgrims' journey to the West for scriptures, and this insight is very much an ironic bequest by the historical monk's after life.

Xuanzang was buried at the Tang capital twenty years after his return from India. In the ninth century, a rebellion invasion greatly devastated the city, including the wreck of his tomb. Another two centuries went by and Buddhist clergy found and identified the ruins, whereupon they boxed and escorted his skeletal remains through the vast, twisting distances of the Yangzi River to its delta region in the eastern coast and had them re-buried near Jinling, now Nanjing. In 1942, construction work by occupying Japanese troops discovered the new tomb and asked Japanese scholars for authentication of inscriptional records in the rubble. In 1955, the remains and stele pieces were flown back to Taiwan, then recognized as China proper. This sequence of events was, of course, unknown to the early twentieth-century students of the novel, and it was also not easily reported and studied, even in China today. Nonetheless, if the historical Xuanzang's re-burial is a true sequel of his life story, I can well imagine how that second site might generate for popular consumption over time a highly varied version of the scripture pilgrim's background and career, going a long way to account for the radically changed geographical setting and his mission's sponsoring agency. This alternate story of Xuanzang would endow the region's co-opted hero with the noblest birth, miraculous preservation of life (dubbed the Chinese Moses by the late CT Hsia), royal recognition from youth,

The multiplicity of allegory already richly funded the syncretistic usurpation of Zen Buddhist discourse.

imperial commission of his famous mission, and exciting accompaniment of four supernatural attendants. The historical pilgrimage of a solitary unknown cleric now has the emperor himself as bond-brother and partner. All these motifs in narration and art were in place by late Ming when the full-length novel reached its published form.

My work on the novel profited initially from the standard modern Japanese translation which already identified the specific Daoist origin of about half a dozen poems in the novel. Further research was constantly stimulated by an unusual source of knowledge: the ongoing volumes in Joseph Needham's massive *Science and Civilisation in China*. My translation and teaching during the last three decades also coincided luckily with the international community's accelerated research in Chinese Daoism, led in Europe by the erudite Kristof Schipper and his collaborators. Rick himself is an ordained Daoist priest whose mastery of his order's writings is truly encyclopedic, attested by the three-volume historical companion to the Daoist Canon he co-edited with Franciscus Verellen and published in 2004 with UC Press. It represents the first complete survey, in any language, of all two thousand-plus titles of that scriptural thesaurus.

Despite the novel's explicit use of the quest for Indian Buddhist scripture theme, criticism of the novel's linguistic content increasingly recognizes its diversity that dramatizes the so-called Three-Religions-in One rhetoric and practice. The growing consensus from both Chinese and non-Chinese scholars is that the tale is arguably more Daoist than Buddhist or Confucian, thus confirming some insights by the yet unknown but named author of the 1592 preface to the earliest printed version and by most of the pre-modern commentators. That classification, however, is complicated.

Historical Daoism of almost two millennia is less a homogenous phenomenon than a tradition of variant organizations, doctrines, and practices. The novel's manifest character seems to orient itself deeply towards the Quanzhen Order, two main divisions or lineages (south and north) of which were founded in the 11th and 12th centuries. Despite some important doctrinal differences, the two divisions' most significant contribution to the history of Chinese religion is their unambiguous appropriation and adaptation of Zen Buddhism to

reformulate its teaching on mental discipline as an integral path to alchemical self-realization. Formation of the inner elixir in one's body with implications for attaining longevity becomes synonymous with perceiving the true Buddha nature in one's own life, the manifestation of Buddhahood. An immense physical distance intimating paradoxically protracted travel or instantaneous traversal provides apt metaphors for gradual or sudden enlightenment.

As I have tried to indicate throughout my Introduction in the revised edition, and the copious annotations of identifiable Daoist sources, the novel's use of language seems to reveal something much more than substituting one belief or meaning for another. What the author or final redactor has grasped instinctually is the native emptiness of the verbal sign and thus its boundless freedom for random association with sound and sense. The multiplicity of allegory already richly funded the syncretistic usurpation of Zen Buddhist discourse. In the novel, this conception of language even more ingeniously enables the writing of one epic story, beginning with the naming of the stone-born monkey of chapters one and two by etymological allegory as inventive as Greek decipherment of Homeric poetry. Sun Wukong, the simian disciple of the fictive monk, can signify zodiac periods; temporal units by the hour, day, or year; the mind and its recalcitrant double; loyal acolyte and adversarial demon; phasal energetics construed as metal; and stages in self-cultivated enlightenment—all of which significance weaving continuously a patterned tapestry of captivating narration. Such understanding of language, so strikingly modern, is rooted firmly in Daoist thought. "I don't know its name," declares the ancient Laozi, "and so I style it Way, reluctantly assigning it the name Great." Philosophically minded readers may detect in this blatant bit of nominalism a promising hint of metaphysics. The novel's author, however, might have been irresistibly inspired to write incomparable fiction. Hu Shi—eminent Chinese philosopher and literary historian, and John Dewey's pupil who delivered the first Haskell Lecture on this campus—wrote in his preface for Arthur Waley's 1943 translation that *Journey to the West* is "a novel of profound nonsense." Today, he tempts me to reply by paraphrasing Winston Churchill's famous jibe at cowardly French generals: "Some profundity! Some nonsense!"

A work such as this is living proof of the learning and talent and inspiration that is needed to produce a great translation.

What Anthony Yu's *The Journey to the West* Teaches Us About World Literature

WENDY DONIGER

Clearly this is a work of extraordinary erudition, not just within Chinese literature but throughout world literature. How many scholars in the world could write a sentence like the one citing “distant Western parallels” that incorporate poetry into prose narration, including “the early satiric fragments of Menippus, the later *Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius, a work like *Aucassin and Nicolette*, and the writings of Bunyan and Rabelais”¹? But we should value the work even more simply as a great translation, and appreciate Anthony Yu's decision to undertake this enormous life's work, to devote decades of his life to it. For in the present academic world, translations are not usually honored as “original” works of scholarships; often they do not count for tenure. A work such as this is living proof of the learning and talent and inspiration that is needed to produce a great translation. It demonstrates that, without translation, there cannot be culture and there cannot be knowledge. It brings honor to the task of translation, and hope to other translators, especially in this new edition, which has greatly simplified the transliteration in order to welcome in more readers.

The new introduction is also a major contribution to our understanding, not only of this text but of the history of Buddhism in China, the nature of Chinese satire, the aesthetics of Chinese poetry, the relationship between Chinese and Indian religious and literary traditions, and much more. Professor Yu writes of “the supramundane, the mythic, and indeed the religious themes and rhetoric that pervade the entire work,”² an entire aspect of it that previous scholarship has ignored. He also writes at some length about the meaning of the text's depiction of “a monkey and a monk” (as he titled his 2006 abridged version of the translation) who travel from China to India to bring back Buddhist texts. As I know much less about China than about India, let me focus my remarks on India, more precisely on Indian stories that are illuminated by Professor Yu's work.

Early in my training as an Indologist, I learned that there

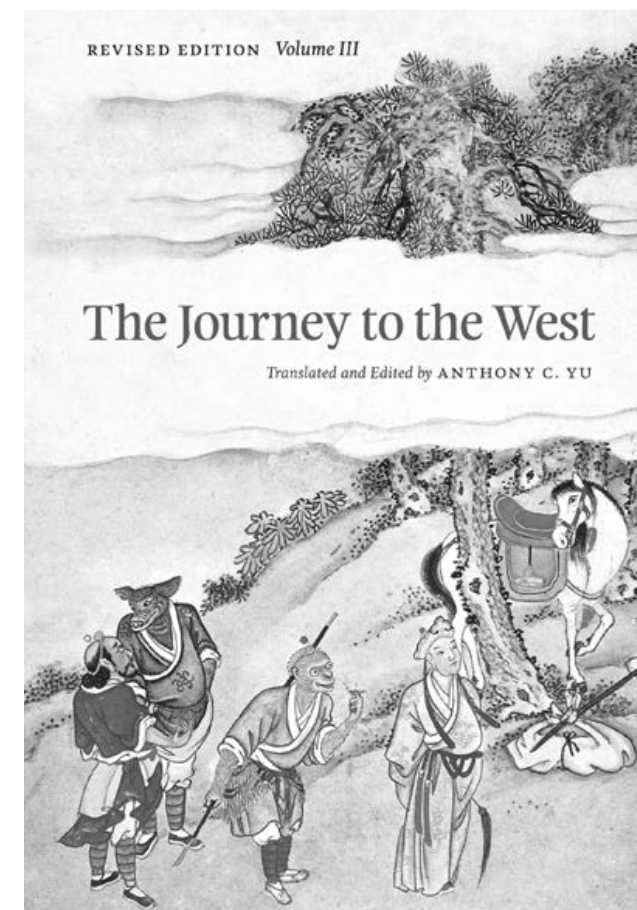
was a lamentable lack of reliable historical evidence in ancient India, a dearth of historical rather than fictional texts, relatively few texts that you could date, other than rather short copper plate or stone inscriptions, few contemporary sources that gave you straightforward data about what was actually going on. Historians of ancient India therefore tended to rely upon visitors to India, beginning with the Greeks (such as Megasthenes' 4th century BCE *Indika*). Among the very first reliable historical sources are the records left by two Chinese pilgrims who journeyed to India in the fifth century CE, and whom I learned about through Samuel Beal's (1869) text, *Travels of Fah-Hian and Sung-Yun, Buddhist pilgrims, from China to India (400 A.D. and 518 A.D.)*.³ Beal's Sung-Yun is Xuanzang, the pilgrim hero of *The Journey to the West*. It was strange for me to see the hero of factual reporting transformed, in *The Journey to the West*, back to the fiction from which his actual diaries rescued us, or so I had thought.

Other, more strictly fictional ties between China and India appear throughout *The Journey to the West*. Professor Yu argues strongly for an Indian source for many of the stories in this novel. “More scholarship. . . has steadily recognized that [the] ‘fund of shared motifs’ [with India], a rather large one, cannot be easily ignored.”⁴ There is a convergence of Chinese and Indian motifs, clustering around the monkey Hanuman (a hero of the Sanskrit epic, the *Ramayana*, c. 200 BCE to 200 CE) in a larger body of “monkey lore”: the monkey's “depicted action irrefutably constitutes one fundamental element of Indian religiosity encompassing both Hinduism and Buddhism, in which a huge variety of known animals and mythical beasts has been pressed into ritual service to the gods.”⁵ I would add that there is a great deal of humor associated with monkeys in the Indian text: the monkeys get hilariously, and destructively, drunk on ripe fruit, falling down, making obscene gestures, ruining the trees; and Hanuman himself worries obsessively, also hilariously, about all the possible disastrous outcomes of his planned action. This humor gets into the Chinese work too, and humor is notoriously hard to capture in translation, but Professor Yu succeeds brilliantly here too.

Certain narrative themes in the Chinese text immediately reminded me of important Indian parallels, particularly but not only from the *Ramayana*. The hunter who accidentally

Certain narrative themes in the Chinese text immediately reminded me of important Indian parallels, particularly but not only from the *Ramayana*.

kills a person whom he mistakes for an animal and so becomes separated from someone he loves appears in the Chinese text⁶ as well as in both the *Ramayana* and the other great Sanskrit epic, the *Mahabharata* (c. 300 BCE to 300 CE).⁷ The use of rings and bracelets to identify princesses in captivity is another important theme from the Indian *Ramayana* that plays a pivotal position in the Chinese text.⁸



Chapter 9 of *The Journey to the West*, about the birth of the hero, the pilgrim Xuanzang, seems particularly Indian. Sinologists find it problematic,⁹ and it has been “the editorial practice of some of the more recent critical Chinese editions to exclude chapter 9,” but Professor Yu writes that he is “persuaded that [this episode] is essential to the plot as a whole, even though it was not part of the hundred-chapter novel's earliest known version.”¹⁰ Moreover, “Whether the problematic chapter 9 is authentic

or not is a moot question, because all the Ming and Qing full-length editions of the novel known to us, with or without this chapter, include all of these fictional details.” And even though this popular story, “so at odds with known history,” does try the patience of “historically aware readers, . . . [it] links the human pilgrim and the Tang court . . . That linkage—most false but also most true—has profound implications for shaping the meaning of both the human pilgrim's character and his mission.”¹¹

What is this controversial story?

It begins¹² with the pilgrim's prenatal identity as the Buddha's disciple, who is exiled to the human world for inattentiveness during a lecture by Buddha. Right here at the start we are in Indian territory; this is the framing motif of the great compendium of Indian stories, *The Ocean of Streams of Story* (*Kathasaritsagara*), composed around the 12th century CE in Kashmir, the crossroads of the silk route, a place frequented by pilgrims between India and China. This part of the story may well have moved from China to India; it is more likely that both of these extant texts drew upon an earlier, now lost version of the Indian story.

The story continues with another episode in the prenatal life of Xuanzang, and his early life:

Xanzang's father, Guangrui, saved the life of a golden carp. Some time later, Guangrui was murdered by a pirate, who threw him into the river, took his pregnant wife, and pretended to be Guangrui. (But the carp found Guangrui's body, revived him, and kept him safe under water).¹³ When Guangrui's wife gave birth to a son, she was afraid that the bandit would try to kill the child;¹⁴ she floated him on a plank down the river. To be sure of recognizing him later, she placed a letter and a garment beside him, and she bit off a little toe from his left foot. The abbot of a temple fished him out and named him Xuanzang.¹⁵ After eighteen years, Xuanzang learned the story of his birth and resolved to find his mother and avenge his father. He found her,¹⁶ and “She noticed that in speech and manner he bore a remarkable resemblance to her husband.” He showed her the letter, and the garment. “One look told her that they were the real thing.” Still, she asked him to show her his feet, just to make sure; seeing that there was, indeed, a small toe missing from his left foot, she embraced him and wept.¹⁷ Eventually they were also united with Guangrui.

“ ... an exploration of the deepest conundrums of spiritual life ...”

Some of these motifs are Indian. The fish that returns a life-saving favor appears in Indian texts as early as 800 BCE;¹⁸ the son whose mother abandons him to the river and later recognizes him by his feet (though someone else mutilates him) is Karna in the *Mahabharata*. But many of these details are also part of a theme much broader even than the great ocean of Indian stories: what Freud called the family romance, the child threatened by a wicked ruler, abandoned by his mother, saved and adopted (often by, or with the help of, a fish or another animal—think of Romulus and Remus), and finally recognized when he is grown up through multiple forms of evidence, like the letter and the garment kept with the abandoned Xuanzang. This always available, never copyrighted folklore has been brought in, from India or elsewhere, to establish the magical birth of the hero, to plug a hole in the narrative—as, indeed, it was imported into the Christian gospels: the infant threatened by a tyrant, raised among animals (the manger), returning in the end to his true father in a higher world.

The Journey to the West drew on a world of stories, and made them uniquely Chinese. Anthony Yu’s translation is, in addition to everything else, a major contribution to this great wealth of mythology.

(Endnotes)

¹ *The Journey to the West*, Vol. I, pp. 31-2.

² Vol. I, pp. 51 ff.

³ Republished, in 1884, as *Si-Yu-Ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World, by Hsuen Tsiang*. 2 vols. (including *The Travels of Sung-Yun and Fa-Hien*)

⁴ Vol. I, p. 10. He cites, among other sources, Victor Mair’s 1989 essay, “Suen Wu-kung —Hanumat: The Progress of a Scholarly Debate,” A. K. Ramanujan’s 1987 essay, “Three Hundred Ramayanas,” and Philip Lutgendorf’s 2007 book, *Hanuman’s Tale*.

⁵ Vol. I, p. 10.

⁶ Vol. I, p. 15.

⁷ Wendy Doniger, “Zoomorphism in Ancient India: Humans More Bestial than the Beasts.” In *Thinking With Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism*. Ed. Lorraine Daston and Gregg Mitman. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005. pp. 17-36. Reprinted in *On Hinduism* (Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2013; 2nd edition, 2014; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 426-437.

⁸ Vol. I, p. 15, full text in chapter 70.

⁹ Vol. I, p. 56.

¹⁰ Vol. I, p. 20.

¹¹ Vol. I, p. 56.

¹² The main story is told in Vol. I, pp. 219-227.

¹³ Vol. I, p. 219.

¹⁴ Vol. I, p. 221.

¹⁵ Vol. I, p. 222.

¹⁶ Vol. I, p. 224.

¹⁷ Vol. I, p. 225.

¹⁸ *Shatapatha Brahmana* 1.8.1.1-6.

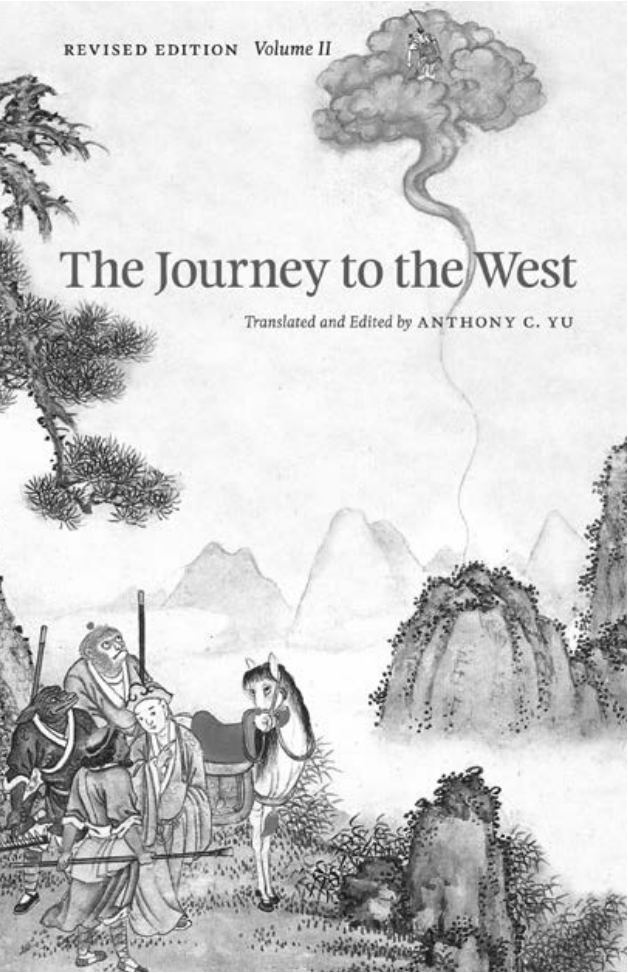
The Journey to the West

BROOK A. ZIPORYN

First, I would like to thank the Dean for inviting me to participate in this discussion today, among this very distinguished company and on such an entirely agreeable occasion. For it is indeed a great pleasure and honor to have the opportunity to celebrate the new edition of Professor Yu’s *Journey to the West* translation, a chance to explore in depth the excitements and insights of the new version, and share some thoughts on this monumental scholarly achievement, which has for the first time brought to the English-speaking world complete access to this masterpiece of Chinese literary and religious culture. The *Journey to the West* (*Xiyouji*) is one of those rare works in world literature that bears an instantly recognizable flavor which is saturated in equal measure both with playful humor and with high seriousness, addictively entertaining as a reading experience and yet nourishingly fascinating and thought-provoking as an exploration of the deepest conundrums of spiritual life, as expressed and experienced in the idiom of the religious traditions of late imperial China, in particular those of late Chinese Chan Buddhism and Quanzhen Daoism, which remain somewhat poorly understood and understudied in the Anglophone world. It is of course one of the great virtues of Prof. Yu’s edition that it has so fulsomely and effectively bucked the trend in post-May Fourth Chinese scholarship to marginalize the religious allegory of the novel, which he has shown in his Introduction to have been central to the traditional reception of the work, and which his own reconstructions in the hard detailed labor of translation have restored to the reader’s eyes in all its deep intertextual symbolic intricacy. To have made this available to an English reader, not only in the abstract demonstrations of the Introduction and supporting scholarly apparatus, but even in the surface of the prose, is an especially great and exciting achievement of the current edition especially. The new edition, besides converting the transliterations into the Hanyu pinyin system which has now become standard, thereby integrating the work into the present-day internationalization of Chinese culture, is also noteworthy for the revisions of the prose style, which have achieved a greater economy and

Witnessing Prof. Yu’s successes in this endeavor makes me acutely aware of how difficult and rare it is, and yet holds out the hope that it is really possible to accomplish.

sleekness of tone, a brisker and more compressed rhythm which strikes me as contributing greatly to the overall impact of the work, for the tighter and more streamlined flow of the English prose in the new edition comes significantly closer to transmitting the comic allegro of the novel as it reads in the original Chinese, the light-feet and lack of ponderousness with which the original text



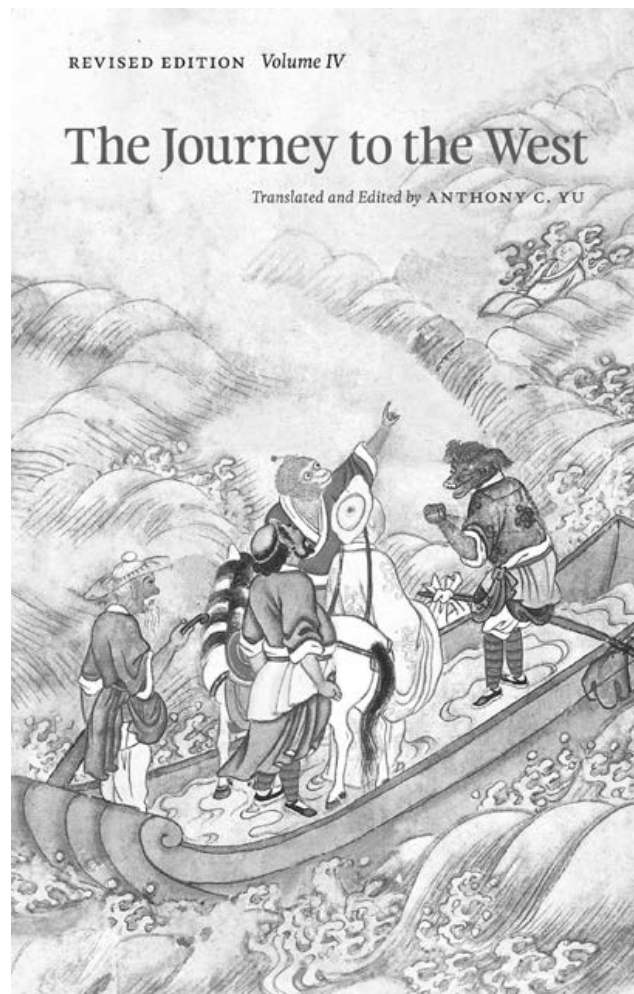
allusively treats the heaviest subjects, even in the midst of its vastness and its leisurely expansiveness through a hundred chapters. I know well from my own experience attempting to translate the Zhuangzi how difficult it is to calibrate the tonal qualities of particularly idiosyncratic Chinese writing, trying to calculate in the total sweep of

implications of the words in both the source and the target languages, trying to recreate somehow not just the meaning but the overall visceral impact of a particular left-turn of phrase or unexpected leap in the language. To do this successfully requires an almost impossible mastery of a vast network of semantic and phonetic traces and echoes and resonances in both languages, and an intuitive sense of the particular morphology of that language at the particular time and place of its production, and of this language in the current state of play in our own culture. I feel keenly the limits of my own abilities in this regard when I am forced, with great reluctance, to revisit my Zhuangzi translation—and I find that there is almost no line in that work which I have not reconsidered and wished I could tweak or invert since it was published: the translation of such a work is a constant work-in-progress, a process that doesn’t end when the manuscript goes off to the printers. To put it in words variously attributed to Leonardo Da Vinci, W. H. Auden, and the *Music for Airports* composer and Roxy Music keyboardist Brian Eno, works like these are never really finished, just given up on. So I can well understand if Prof. Yu has been ceaselessly haunted by the possibility of adjusting and reworking details of his original already surpassingly excellent translation over lo these many years. I envy him both the opportunity to put out a new edition which can reflect so many decades of intense engagement with the text, and in surveying the new translation, I can only conclude that this must be the only way to really do it right. Witnessing Prof. Yu’s successes in this endeavor makes me acutely aware of how difficult and rare it is, and yet holds out the hope that it is really possible to accomplish. It is a great good fortune for the Anglophone world to have in its hands now the fruit of this decades-long labor, which requires for its successful completion such a statistically unlikely combination of deep knowledge, innate intellectual skills, iron discipline and abundant expanses of available time, all converging in a single scholar. Such a convergence doesn’t happen often, and we are lucky to have the resulting crystallization in the gem of a book we have palpably before us today.

I would like to say some words about some of the thematic currents identified in Prof. Yu’s introductory discussion to the text. Prof. Yu’s scholarship has laid bare a key conceit of the novel in the poetic license taken with

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its protagonist and his relationship to official power. The historical Xuanzang was a brilliant independent thinker and translator in his own right, and also an intrepid religious outlaw, strictly speaking, undertaking his journey to India in a spirit of heroic defiance, braving not just great physical danger but also explicit imperial interdiction, moved not by loyalty to the state but by religious fervor



and a rare intellectual probity, an undaunted will to pursue at any cost the truth on which, in his view, his spiritual liberation depended. The Xuanzang of the novel, in sharp contrast, is on an official mission from the emperor, and is something of a comic figure, a coward and a hypocrite and a sycophant, never slow to boast of this official endorsement

in his nervous, somewhat buffoonish encounters with all who stand in his way. Prof. Yu has illustrated the necessity of this transformation in the hands of the religious poet behind the novel, the crucial role it plays in making vivid all the vicissitudes of the human spirit as conceived in the Chan and Quanzhen traditions allegorized in the expanded figure of the little band of human and animal pilgrims, whose interrelations mirror the struggles and synergies between the various aspects of the body and mind of the human religious practitioner working through his attachments, his biases, his fears, his illusions on the way to a fervently sought total transformation and integration at the end of his journey. Prof. Yu draws an interesting parallel between this shift in the private-public, obedient-transgressive relation enacted in the character of Xuanzang, and the ambiguous relation to language—and cultural mediation in general—characterizing the Chan and Quanzhen traditions, the relation between an ostensibly language-and-culture transcending realization of truth and the actual linguistic and cultural practices which either incite or express it. This is of course one of the perennial unresolved issues in these traditions, as in many religious traditions, a centerpiece of their own rhetoric and anti-rhetoric, and the engine for many of the most memorable and ingenious of the inventions and impasses of the canonical literature of these schools. But the problem is especially exacerbated, or perhaps given the room for a more expansive treatment, in the special context of the fanciful, comical allegorical novel we have before us, where the overflowing creative use of language, and the liberties it takes with proprieties, doctrines, historical characters and even deities, is in high tension with the comically anticlimactic blank pages of the wordless scriptures the pilgrims end up receiving when they reach their destination. The effusiveness of the means and the austere emptiness of the goal is itself part of the allegory folded in to this tale, by virtue of the author's ingenious self-commentary, whereby his own allegorization is part of the subject matter of his allegory. This of course echoes the ancient dynamic of the Two Truths in Mahayana Buddhism, the relation of ultimate truth to conventional truth, and indeed, particularly in the conflation of Conventional Truth and Upaya, skillful means, in much of Chinese Buddhism, also to all manner of diverse upaya—skillfull means. That is,

The convergence of these two registers of meaning in this Chan metaphor perhaps points to a deep intertwining of these themes in the Chinese religious traditions under consideration here.

what is at issue here is the vexed relationship, so central to these traditions, between the worded and the wordless, the mediated and the unmediated, the conditioned and the unconditioned, the cataphatic and the apophatic. The deft juxtaposition of these two forms of tension—that is, one, between official public policy and private transgression on the one hand, and, two, between words and wordlessness on the other—to which Prof. Yu so effectively draws our attention in his introduction, reminded me of a brilliant and amusing Chan phrase which seems to prefigure it or even to point to a deep collapsing of these two registers of tension embedded in Chinese religious culture, appearing at least as early as the Caoshan biography in the *Jingdechuandenglou* of 1004, but perhaps attested even earlier. In Chinese the phrase is: 官不容針 私通車馬.

Literally this means, “Officially, not even a needle is allowed to pass. Privately, carriages and horse get through.” The metaphor seems to be one of a customs official, all the more apt for our surreptitiously border-crossing Xuanzang and his ambiguous fictional counterpart; the question is what is or is not permitted to go through. Official policy stipulates that nothing shall pass, but privately anything goes—not a bad description of many situations even in present-day China. The phrase is used in Chan dialogues in a typically compressed way, for maximal ambiguity: it expresses on the one hand disapproval at a hypocrisy, suggesting that someone has not really attained the high level of insight he had officially claimed, allowing huge errors to get through, but at the same time, in typical Chan fashion, showing the literary ingenuity of the tradition which is writ large in its continued ramifications in the novel we have before us, the phrase is a folksy encapsulation of the technical Buddhist philosophical doctrine of the Two Truths, cast in the metaphor of public and private, of strict official interdiction coexisting happily with under-the-counter backdoor folk practice. In this sense, the simultaneous meaning is: “Although in Ultimate Truth, nothing exists, not even a needle, not the slightest entity, not the slightest conception, not the slightest language, yet in Conventional Truth, all and everything exists, a veritable circus of horses and carts and comings and goings and forms and thoughts and characters and narratives.”

The convergence of these two registers of meaning in this Chan metaphor perhaps points to a deep intertwining

of these themes in the Chinese religious traditions under consideration here. The novel seems to be both an illustration of this point—itself a carnivalesque passing of horses and carts through the border passes, official yet unofficial, getting something but getting nothing, saying something but saying nothing—and also a comment on this intertwining of themes. Ultimate truth intertwines with Conventional Truth, Silence intertwines with narrative and poetry, official interdiction intertwines with private transgression, history intertwines with poetic license. This seems to me one of several distinctively Chinese elaborations of the implications of the Two Truths doctrine, brilliantly ramified in this masterpiece of Chinese literature, and doubly ramified in its virtuosic English translation given us here, in newly refurbished form, by Prof. Yu. Its very departure from the official silence is its service to that silence; the novel in all its exuberance speaks loudly the blank pages of the sought-after sutras of truth.

For putting this into such a viscerally powerful form on the page for the English reader, I join with the Dean and with Wendy in expressing my admiration for this work, and my gratitude, on behalf of English-speaking readers, Prof. Yu. And I hope that this will serve as an encouragement to all English-readers assembled here to make good use of the opportunity Prof. Yu's work has provided: in other words, do read the novel! ✧

Letters from Selma: Then and Now

On March 2, 2015, the Divinity School commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights march in Alabama from Selma to Montgomery. Our panel for this discussion included emeriti faculty Franklin I. Gamwell and Martin E. Marty, who were participants in the original march. Curtis J. Evans of the Divinity School and Jane Dailey of the Department of History also participated; Dwight N. Hopkins moderated.

Video of this event is available. Please visit <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/lessons-selma-then-and-now>. You may hear remarks by all speakers, including Professor Evans, who spoke extemporaneously and is therefore not included in this issue.

FRANKLIN I. GAMWELL

Fifty years ago, I was a young pastor at the West Side Christian Parish, an inner-city ministry on Chicago's near west side, involving several store-front churches along Roosevelt Road and orchestrated by a group ministry. Five of this group drove to Selma on the Friday preceding the March to Montgomery. I was driving, as it happens, as we apprehensively crossed the Alabama State border, well below the speed limit, I assure you. We were soon stopped by two Alabama State troopers—but we faced, I see in hindsight, no danger. By that time, the risks in Selma were taken and the brutality suffered, evoking national attention and offense—and President Johnson had eloquently sent his voting rights bill to Congress. The troopers did not dare be impulsive. So, they only harassed us and then sent us on our way.

Friday evening in Selma (or maybe Saturday), we

attended a mass meeting in Brown Chapel—packed to the rafters. The atmosphere was electric; one sensed being present for a singular, perhaps historic, venture. Several people spoke, but I recall especially Andrew Young and James Bevel, two gifted members of Dr. King's staff, exceptional in their capacity to articulate the issues and inspire commitment. Dick Gregory, a comedian of that era (still alive, I believe) also spoke, and I recall one line that brought down the house: "I ran into Jim Clark [sheriff of Selma County] today," Gregory said, "and told him we were going to march to Montgomery. 'Over my dead body,' he replied, and I said that would be a good route."

For our small company from the West Side Parish, our experience in Selma was felicitous. In Chicago at the time, the principal resource for organizing inner-city communities against poverty and racism was led by a man named Saul Alinsky and called the Industrial Areas Foundation. It was widely thought to be marked by its

After our return to Chicago, the West Side Christian Parish chose, not an invitation to Alinsky but, rather, something like a movement in this city.

complete social realism. On that account, politics is solely a conflict of power, where each of many contenders acts strategically for its own self-interest and achieves it in the measure its power permits. Likely this does an injustice to Alinsky, but something like it was a widespread perception. There had been talk of inviting him into the larger west side, and some in our group ministry dissented, principally



because the IAF seemed to have no social ideal of its own. The Civil Rights Movement and, specifically, our experience in Selma, presented a compelling alternative. Here was a display of nonviolent power wedded to a moral appeal for the beloved community. This was Reinhold Niebuhr at his best.

The March to Montgomery itself began on Sunday, sometime between noon and one o'clock, although we had assembled much earlier. More than 3,000 people walked out of the black community and over the Edmund Pettis Bridge (named, I subsequently learned, for a confederate general). We were all allowed to march to the first camp site, some seven miles away, where a far more limited number would spend the night and continue for the next two days, including through ominous Lowndes County. I cannot begin to imagine the logistics of caring for 3,000 people and simultaneously planning a five-day march through hostile Alabama. In any case, a truck arrived late in the evening with an apple and a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for each of us. I have never much liked peanut butter, but I'd not eaten all day, was wasted by the walk, and treasured being there—and it was, hands down, the best sandwich I've ever had. Most of us, then, were motored back to Selma.

After the first day, I joined a crew that was trucked each morning to the previous campsite, where we broke down the huge tents in which some three hundred people slept and then reset them at the next site, and I was grateful to have some continuing participation in the event. All of the campsites were properties owned by African Americans, who assumed a considerable risk in granting use of their fields. On the fourth day, we could rejoin the march for the few miles to the outskirts of Montgomery, where many hundreds spent the night on the spacious grounds of a Roman Catholic School for blacks—entertained there by a long list of celebrities. And the next day, many thousands, the number multiplied by morning arrivals, marched to the Alabama State capital for the final rally and speeches.

Now, there's a sequel to this modest narrative, which I beg your further patience to explain. After our return to Chicago, the West Side Christian Parish chose, not an invitation to Alinsky but, rather, something like a movement in this city. At much the same time, Dr. King decided to take the Southern Christian Leadership Conference north. So, in early summer 1965, Jim Bevel and a group of some ten young people fresh from Selma's campaign came to Chicago, intent on preparing the way for King's arrival and a movement here during 1966. The West Side Christian Parish in fact hired Bevel, making him Director of Parish Program, and, in effect, merged our group ministry with his workers as one staff seeking social change—even while some of us had continuing responsibilities at the several churches. In the meantime, Andrew Young and others of Dr. King's associates were active with other protest groups elsewhere in the city.

On the west side, it was a heady time. The group from Selma was flush with victory, and the optimism about equal success in Chicago, encouraged and sustained by Bevel, was staggering. I recall a staff meeting during early Autumn 1965, at which Bevel delegated to his company their several tasks: one person was to organize the suburbs, another the city colleges, a third the city high schools, another the youth gangs in Chicago—and by Spring and Summer of '66, tens of thousands would be ready and eager for a movement to end slums, through which the national conscience about urban poverty and racism would be summoned forth and responsive federal action would follow.

"In the end," Dr. King once said, "we will remember not

Democratic change is difficult without focused purpose.

the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends.” We in the group ministry were at fault for our silence. We knew that whites in the north would not protest racism here the way they rose up against Jim Crow in the South; we knew that Chicago’s black community had a divided agenda; above all; we knew that Mayor Richard J. Daley, so far from abetting the movement through violent resistance, as did Bull Conner and Jim Clark, would instead give lip service to the movement’s goals and insist that he could achieve them more effectively. But we were silenced by our admiration for these Selma activists.

In any case, the effort to organize the metropolis soon retrenched into the west side ghetto, seeking to form tenant unions there. In fact, however, little was achieved on the west side between autumn ’65 and June ’66. But marches did begin that summer—and confirmed the depth of racism in the north. Focused now solely on “open housing” in the city, demonstrations through Gage Park and Marquette Park provoked from those white neighborhoods crudity, abuse, and violence. Still, the movement was nothing like the tens of thousands predicted. Certainly, no national conscience was raised and no national action occurred. Mayor Daley, refusing to play the villain, directed police to protect the marchers, but he was thereby also displeasing to part of his own political base. So, in later August, he called a summit meeting of movement leaders and the heads of several city agencies, which reached an agreement about concrete steps toward open housing—and Dr. King’s organization then largely left town. Now, the movement here was not, in my judgment, a failure; some important gains and consequences occurred. But relative to Southern campaigns, and surely relative to expectations raised, Chicago was not a success. Indeed, Daley later called the summit agreement a list of suggestions, not commitments.

The young people from Selma with whom I worked were disillusioned. They thought Chicago a failure, and many scattered, attending to their personal lives—and I later thought again of Reinhold Niebuhr: when political commitment depends for its meaning of the assurance of success, he said, failure turns optimism to pessimism, idealism to cynicism. There is no guarantee of success in history, and pursuit of justice can be sustained only by a source of meaning transcendent to the world.

In 1963, the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, James Baldwin published a letter to his nephew: “You know, and I know,” he wrote, “that the country is celebrating one hundred years of freedom one hundred years too soon.”¹ Fifty years after Selma, the color line in our country transparently persists. In thinking about the problem, I’ve been forced to see that practical wisdom is not something my kind of academic work cultivates. For too long, I fancied that this life of ideas would somehow give me special purchase on particular political problems and the achievement of political success. But I have met some people of practical wisdom, and I’m not one of them. So, some lessons for our time I’ve taken from the Civil Rights movement are bound to be general and, perhaps, prosaic.

For one, moral appeal to the democratic promise was vindicated by the awesome courage of people long debased, even while the movement also confirmed that social advantage will not yield to justice without a contrary exercise of power.

The second is the significance of focus. It was, said Dr. King, absent from the ineffective effort in Albany, Georgia but decidedly present in the Montgomery bus boycott, in Birmingham, and in Selma. Democratic change is difficult without focused purpose. As recent events have underscored, corruption in our criminal justice system is one urgent context. But equally important, with Selma on our minds, are faults in our system of voting—especially through state laws, the more so since *Shelby v. Holder*, designed to suppress minority participation at the very time when minorities are sensing their political power. “Give *all* the governed the right to vote,” said Abraham Lincoln, “and that, and that only, is self-government.”

The third lesson is this: when the change sought requires national action, a national constituency is needed. The movement’s signal campaigns were virtually designed to evoke a national response. If Chicago included a mistake, it was the premise that urban poverty and racism could be exposed with federal consequence in the way effective against Jim Crow. A movement to fix criminal justice procedures or ensure the franchise for all will need clarity about how national support for that change can be evoked—although here, alas, I must wait on people of practical wisdom.

Unlike the March on Washington in August 1963, the first Selma march was not intended as spectacle.

And a final legacy: the justice pursued belongs to a beloved community and thus, among other things, to an integrated democracy in which diversity is cherished. This was the inclusive *telos* the movement’s specific purposes should advance. Against voices calling for a more separatist political commitment, Dr. King, his staff, and John Lewis never compromised that ideal. Also, justice and its beloved community are, Dr. King professed, authorized by and only by the divine purpose—a conviction reason commends, I think, and thus well worth abiding assessment by “we the people.” ✚

(Endnotes)

¹ James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990, 1991; original copyright: 1992, 1993), 10.

JANE DAILEY

The first question that leaps to my mind with regard to this panel is: why Selma? Of all the civil rights markers, why would a Divinity School have a conversation on Selma? There are a number of reasons, of course, not the least being that this week marks the 50th anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery March. The march is also an event that created energy and space at the national policymaking level, and thus had a demonstrative effect on American history in the form of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Thirdly, I expect that there are people here today—perhaps even on this panel—who participated in the march: who gathered their things, hurled them in a suitcase, and caught the first bus to Alabama.

Unlike the March on Washington in August 1963, the first Selma march was not intended as spectacle. Alabama troopers transformed a local event into a national one by attacking the demonstrators on the Edmund Pettis Bridge (NBC played its part by breaking into the film ‘Judgment at Nuremberg’ with live footage). Martin Luther King and SCLC transformed the march into something else again when they regrouped following the violence.

SCLC was determined to march again. But this time it would be more than a march: it would be a procession, and, like all proper processions, it would be led by holy men. Shrewdly building on the reaction of religious leaders

outside the South, Martin Luther King issued a national call to clergymen to join him in Alabama.

This call represented a significant rhetorical shift. Prior to Bloody Sunday, SCLC presented the Selma voting rights campaign in terms of citizenship and equal justice. A nine-by-sixteen inch advertisement published in the *New York Times* on February 5, titled “A Letter from MARTIN LUTHER KING from a Selma, Alabama Jail” called for help from “all decent Americans” to support equal rights and “to advance dignity in the United States.”



What had been a secular campaign for civil rights in February was transformed in March into a holy crusade to redeem the blood spilt in Selma. On the evening of Sunday March 7, King sent telegrams to clergy around the country. Insisting that “no American is without responsibility” for what happened at Selma, King continued, “The people of Selma will struggle on for the soul of the nation, but it is fitting that all Americans help to bear the burden. I call therefore, on clergy of all faiths

Which raises the question again: why does a Divinity School commemorate the Selma March?

. . . to join me in Selma for a ministers march to Montgomery on Tuesday morning, March ninth.”

The response was overwhelming: by March 9 more than 450 white clergymen, rabbis, and religious women (including a contingent of nuns) had gathered in Selma, with more on the way. Contemporaries remarked on the sense of pilgrimage shared by those who traveled to Selma that March. Arriving from New York, NAACP lawyer and longtime King adviser Stanley Levison was “struck by the unfamiliarity of the participants. They were not long-committed white liberals and Negroes. They were new forces from all faiths and classes.” Believers who did not themselves journey to Selma could still participate vicariously in the march: denominational leaders in New York and Washington urged that the coming weekend’s sermons be on Selma. And that Sunday (March 14), upwards of 15,000 people gathered across the street from the White House in Lafayette Park to take part in an ecumenical protest sponsored by the National Council of Churches.

There are many ways to read this march, but one way to read it is as a contest over Christian orthodoxy—as a collision of religious communities presenting themselves as defenders of two conflicting theological views. As its very name implies, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference was always aware that men of the cloth lent the movement moral and social power. King and other preacher-politicians encouraged the conflation of black protest and Christian righteousness throughout the civil rights era; King used it to particularly good effect, as when he chose to be arrested in Birmingham on Good Friday.

But religious leaders were equally important for their theological imprimatur. Calling the Selma march a “pilgrimage,” as the black press and leading rights workers did (including King, in his end-of-the-march speech at the Alabama capitol), invested it with religious, and not just political, significance. So did SCLC’s decision to call those who would be allowed to walk the entire fifty-mile distance “the chosen few.” The ranks of marching priests, ministers, and rabbis represented a concrete witness to the rightness of integration, a walking testimony to an ecumenical belief in racial equality rooted in a common Judeo-Christian heritage. This, at least, is how *Ebony* saw it. Rev. King, the magazine declared, had “accomplished the virtually impossible: he had converted leaders of the

so-called white church” to civil rights. Here we may see the participation of the “pure-faced nuns” and “the clerics with high collars” in the march and SCLC’s long-standing campaign to portray desegregation and black equality as right Christian doctrine as part of a single strategy: to assault at its root the most powerful language supporting segregation, that of white supremacist Christians who justified their segregationist position on their own reading of Holy Scripture.

From a distance, I cannot say how many people in this room mark their own participation in the Selma to Montgomery March. But I guess that most people here today did not themselves participate. Which raises the question again: why does a Divinity School commemorate the Selma March?

One answer, of course, is that this is the University of Chicago Divinity School and not, say, Bob Jones University! But the other, more important, argument reflects what can only be seen as the victory of the theology of the beloved community. For many Americans, including, perhaps especially, non-Christians, “true” Christianity has become synonymous with the vision of King and other Christian integrationists. *New Yorker* writer Louis Menand reflected this when he argued a few years ago that “It was King’s genius to see that in the matter of racial equality the teachings of the Christian Bible are on all fours with the promise of the Constitution and its amendments. With one brilliant stroke, he transformed what had been a legal struggle into a spiritual one, and lost nothing in the bargain.”

For the historian (as opposed to the believer), orthodoxy is the product not of revelation but of conflict, in which the victory of one interpretation over another is historically produced rather than divinely ordained. This conflict tends to be passed over by historians of the civil rights era, who, like Menand, consider the color-blind, universalist theology of the “beloved community” as normative Christianity. There was nothing preordained about this, however, and the Selma to Montgomery March remains an important milestone in what was perhaps the most lasting triumph of the civil rights movement: its successful appropriation of Christian dogma.

So: what “lesson” can be drawn from this history of Selma? One may be the continued importance of having

Picture six Divinity professors crammed into a car, driving (upon advice) less than thirty-five miles per hour, gabbing and—admit it—trembling a bit.

God on your side. Recently I was asked by the American Civil Liberties Union to be an expert witness in an anti-discrimination suit from Washington State, in which a florist refused to sell flowers to a gay couple for their wedding. Her reason: providing flowers for a same-sex wedding compromised “her relationship with Jesus.” Her lawyers, representing the Alliance Defending Freedom, wanted a religious exemption to Washington State’s antidiscrimination law. The ACLU wanted to prevent the ADF from sanctifying discrimination against same-sex marriage. My role in this drama was to compare her argument with similar ones made against interracial marriage in the 1950s and 1960s; to show that they were perfectly legitimate arguments from a religious point of view, but that they were inconsistent with laws dedicated to non-discrimination in the public sphere. The analogy wasn’t perfect, but it was good enough: we won. ✧

MARTIN E. MARTY

The assignment was specific: focus on what we at the Divinity School learned from the Selma march of fifty years ago, and what that experience might mean at the School today. Observances of that “Jubilee,” recalling and celebrating a major event in the struggle for civil rights in America, occurred at the small Alabama city of Selma and at most points around the nation where publics are sensitive to issues of rights and an ever more full experience of freedom.

So widespread and thorough was the fiftieth anniversary event and discussion of the well-timed film *Selma* that there is no need here for me to rehearse all the details. To the point: “Bloody Sunday,” the attack by Selma and Alabama police on non-violent protestors inspired impulses to respond. Martin Luther King and other leaders in the rights-movement on the Monday following called allies and sympathizers around the nation, religious leaders especially among them, to come to Selma to “try again,” after their planned Selma-to-Montgomery march had been forcibly aborted. Hundreds if not thousands responded, including Divinity School faculty.

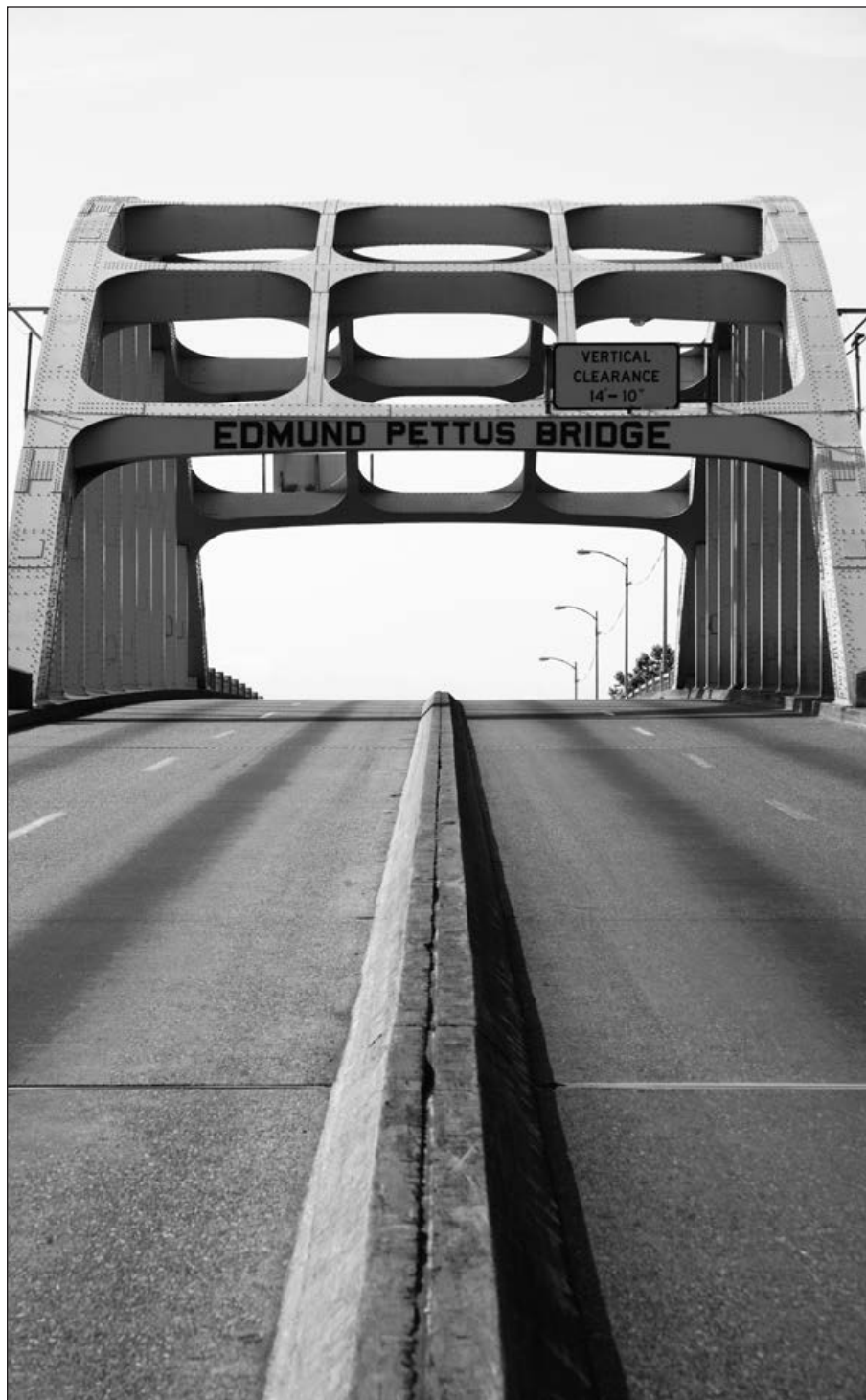
I learned that scholars, not all of them typed as “activists,” could rise from their desks and take some risks

in demonstrating, putting into action, showing that there are times when they can fulfill elements of their vocation apart from libraries and classrooms. My own small assignment from King-dom was to attract fifteen marchers from the Divinity School and the downtown *Christian Century* staff. Others, many of them with closer ties to the movement than I, were given similar assignments. If we would get commitment from some one hundred potential passengers, Delta would charter a jet to Atlanta. No one backed off: all those I called showed up, with credit card in hand, and off we went to Atlanta. Since the accent was to be on church-and-synagogue engagement, we were to wear identifying garb, so we were to see plenty of black-garbed priests, ministers, rabbis, and nuns. My wife thrust a white London Fog raincoat over me and an occasionally whitened-up clerical collar, and off I went. A two-page photo spread in *Life* magazine shows hundreds of pray-ers in black and, tiny in their midst, I glow in white. Beyond that, I had no visible role or mark, and happily joined the large company of marchers, who were to be called “foot-soldiers” at the fiftieth anniversary event.

Picture six Divinity professors crammed into a car, driving (upon advice) less than thirty-five miles per hour, gabbing and—admit it—trembling a bit. The TV images of Bloody Sunday were on everyone’s mind. Early Monday we were ushered into the soon-to-be-crowded Brown’s Chapel, by now a virtual landmark of the religious scene in Selma. Word quickly spread that a federal judge had issued an injunction against marching, and Dr. King acquiesced and, through his lieutenants, told us there would be no march that day. That news was greeted gruffly among our cohorts: we had interrupted class schedules or various religious duties, bought tickets, and come to Selma—for nothing?

The mood changed when the hero-of-the-day (and ever since) John Lewis, now congressman and tireless leader, led a kind of chapel service or sort of rally, and certainly educational forum. We were to keep cool, not march, not provoke violence, and trust King and company to work on the politics of setting a march days later. There were signals and hints that some good might come of it all. Robert Spike, then a newcomer to the Divinity faculty, but a veteran leader from the National Council of Churches counseled us: we were to march onto the Edmund Pettis

We returned safely to our teaching and editing roles and mental images to last a lifetime.
What did we learn, to carry back?



bridge, the thwarting place from Sunday, not to confront the now-familiar line of blue-clad police and, when signaled to do so, kneel for prayer, which King led. After a while we were bidden to go back and, if we could, return on a later day when marching would be (federally) legal and more safe. The day went down in the books as “Turnaround Tuesday.”

We dispersed and found our way back to our transportation, to head back to Atlanta for our flights. (Hours later, one of the ministers who had responded to the King call was James Reeb, a Unitarian minister from Boston, who was murdered outside a restaurant by thuggish locals.) We returned safely to our teaching and editing roles and mental images to last a lifetime. What did we learn, to carry back?

We learned that for pastors and professors, politics and prophecy must interact, but the interactions will often be clumsy, frustrating, and demanding-of-patience. King could be prophetic, as his *Letter from Birmingham Jail* and many sermons indicate. (Prophecy: Dietrich Bonhoeffer called it ‘hope projected backward.’) He took risks and asked others to do so, but he also knew that being prophetic did not mean stepping out of all other roles to pursue immediate ends. King was facing a federal judge whose signals inspired hope that was to be projected backward, and so he engaged in dialogue and arguments, with an end in view. This was to make progress for civil rights, but to persist in following commitments to—at this

We went back to live with the mix of the prophetic and the political,
as professors and editors of those days got to live it.

point rather consistently religious commitments to non-violence.

An aside: the film *Selma* portrays President Lyndon Johnson as politician, not prophet, which means as someone who, protecting himself and his vision and approach, almost sabotaged the march-movement. Many insiders, including Bill Moyers—once a right-hand man to Johnson—give a more positive reading to the President, whose plate was full with proposals and programs, and, rightly or wrongly, he had to balance protest-march activities with uphill legislative efforts. We Divinity School people had no inside or insight about that. We marched when Dr. King thought it wise and delayed when he was emphatic about delay. We went back to live with the mix of the prophetic and the political, as professors and editors of those days got to live it.

We learned that theology and religious inquiry did color our commitments those March days. Sometimes these showed up in almost amusing incidents. We were busy learning why Jews (Abraham Joshua Heschel most notably) and assorted Protestant and Catholic theologians and preachers interpreted events as they did. Conversations in the buses and other vehicles during the longer march to Montgomery inspired many discussions of motivations, from pacifist to radical, from explicit believers to agnostics, conversations which—like all the civil rights moves—enhanced awareness of pluralism. Arlie Schardt, who covered the day for *Time* magazine, had rented the car into which five of us were crammed. As he drove, he listened, and at the end said, “Listening to you theologians, I wonder how you ever got out of your chairs and put one foot in front of the other in the march.” Why?

To paraphrase, he said something like: “I heard two Baptists, who had no hierarchy to worry about and no inhibiting dialectical theology to detain them.” I think Schardt called them “apocalyptic.” As I recall, they were Jay Wilcoxon and the late Al Pitcher, who was truly an activist, close to King and his team, as we were not. “Those two had no trouble at all, and were ready to go.” Then he commented on Dean Jerald Brauer, who had worked hard to commit the Divinity School to ventures like this, and me. He was amused that I had compromised my marching-assignment by wearing a strapped-on little Olivetti typewriter, to record the day—I didn’t type one letter—

and said, “Marty and Brauer, both Lutherans, were all hung up on whether they were violating Romans 13 from the Bible, by ‘resisting authority.’ He discerned that our loophole was the fact that we thought we were protesting Alabama law, about which we cared not, but were violating a federal injunction [soon to be lifted].

Finally, Schardt noted—I paraphrase again—that after hearing the opinions of now recently deceased Professor Robert Grant—he wondered how this expressively “high church” and his own kind of “conservative” professor could have stirred himself. “He doesn’t even know that King George is dead.”

We learned much more to carry back to Swift Hall and our communities. We had an experience of the lay people of Selma, almost all of them African-American, being unsung and beaten-up pioneers in the advance guard those years. We learned to follow trusted on-the-scene leaders of our own communions. Among mine was then-Birmingham pastor Joseph Ellwanger, a consistent and courageous leader and a friend through decades. Which means, we more timid sorts learned to lean on veterans emboldened by the struggle. We came to know Episcopal bishops and religious scholars from many traditions. I think and hope we carried back to Swift Hall new respect for religious leaders who, in the early 1960s, were studying and speaking and leading on the basis of long-obscured resources.

The Selma march, the kind of leadership that Al Pitcher and other Divinity School “activists,” as they came to be known, and the kind of companionship students provided as they took part in civil right struggles in Chicago, inspired us to be more aware than before of the *public* role of religious, theological, and ministerial leadership to which the Divinity School has long been committed.

My friend and companion at Selma, Will Herzfeld, the first African-American bishop among Lutherans in America, playfully derided me for having strapped on the little typewriter. “You knew you wouldn’t use it; it was just a badge of office.” The Olivetti no doubt found its way to the junk yard—who remembers instruments called “typewriters” any more?—but other writing instruments and assignments and opportunities in respect to ethics and civil rights causes came to have their day, and, prophetically, as in “with hope projected backward,” we expect them to continue to find their place in our scholars’ world. ✧

Honoring Dean Margaret M. Mitchell

On June 2, 2015, the Divinity School held a reception to honor Dean Margaret M. Mitchell, Shailer Mathews Professor New Testament and Early Christian Literature, on her tenure as Dean. Among those who offered tributes were faculty colleagues David Tracy, Paul Mendes-Flohr, Wendy Doniger, and Richard B. Miller.

DAVID TRACY

When five years ago Professor Mitchell agreed to become Dean of the Divinity School, I thanked her for taking such a task but could not resist stating then that I hoped her new position—a complex, often an all-consuming position—would not keep her from her important scholarship which, like so many others, I deeply admired as in fact ground-breaking.

As the years wore on and the tasks of the deanship exponentially grew, I noticed with increasing admiration that, overwhelming as the Deanship duties sometimes were, Margaret kept her scholarship both alive and productive. She did so in several ways: in her legendary teaching, through her papers at conferences here and abroad and above all through her publication of articles on the rhetorical analyses of both the New Testament, especially Paul, and several texts of the first four centuries of the common era. As in her earlier much-praised work on John Chrysostom, Professor Mitchell's works advanced a form of rhetorical analysis to become one of the major works of scholarship on the New Testament and early Christianity in our period.

Although I am not a scholar in biblical studies, as a Christian theologian I have always been a committed

reader of the vast field of New Testament scholarship and, even more so, a committed reader of the splendid exponentially increasing international scholarship on the first four centuries of Christian theology. Hence I have remained Professor Mitchell's avid reader since she first started writing many years ago.

Moreover, as a student of the history of hermeneutics I can usually recognize the signs of a major scholar in hermeneutics when I read one. Margaret Mitchell is clearly such a scholar. In fact what intrigues me most about Professor Mitchell's recent scholarship is her bold claim that the first Christian hermeneutics occurred in First Corinthians. As someone who has worked for over forty years in Christian hermeneutics I was originally somewhat dazzled by this bold claim. It took me a while, indeed several readings of Professor Mitchell's book, to become convinced that her claim, a hermeneutical claim—historical, rhetorical and, at times, theological—is a persuasive and very important one.

It is clear that Margaret Mitchell, for all her scholarly originality also remains a committed student of her two major mentors, the rhetorical methods of Professor Hans-Dieter Betz and the more empirical-historical studies of the late Professor Robert Grant. At the same time, Dean Mitchell has developed her own distinctive scholarly voice by means of her unrelenting philological care and her

... free again to concentrate all her remarkable energies and scholarly expertise on her ground-breaking, original and demanding scholarship.

rigorous scholarly standards in rhetorical and historical critical analyses. Those high standards of scholarship have characterized not only Professor Mitchell's scholarship. They have also characterized Dean Mitchell's untiring work as Dean, upholding these same high standards, for example, in her many searches for new colleagues in every field of this pluralistic community of scholars.



Here at the Divinity School, even retired professors like myself, are honored to salute and thank wholeheartedly our very scholarly, our very cosmopolitan Dean, Margaret Mitchell, for her splendid services to us all for these five years. At the same time, as a great admirer of her ground-breaking scholarship noted above, I cannot but also be thankful that Professor Margaret Mitchell will now be entirely free again to concentrate all her remarkable energies and scholarly expertise on her ground-breaking, original and demanding scholarship.

In one of Margaret's several ancient languages, allow me to close with some ancient Latin words of praise used for centuries to salute an especially distinguished colleague: *Ad multos annos, gloriosque annos, vivas, vivas, vivas, Margareta.*

PAUL MENDES-FLOHR

To do great things is difficult; but to command great things is more difficult. —Friedrich Nietzsche

I recently had the occasion to contribute an essay to a volume on leadership. As I wrote the essay, I had Margy—our beloved and esteemed Dean (and a dear friend)—in mind. In framing the essay, I made reference to a disquisition of 1921 on the subject by the German philosopher Max Scheler, in which he makes a typological distinction between a *Führer* and a *Vorbild*. The former, a *Führer* serves as the head of an organization and duly exercises administrative and executive authority. It is the *Führer's* task to ensure that the ship at his or her command



sets sail on an even keel, and to chart its voyage through thick and thin. In assuming this demanding responsibility, the *Führer* must give maximal attention to detail. Indeed, he or she must adhere to the adage that "God dwells in

... scholarship as a spiritual and intellectual, indeed as an ethical calling.

details.“ To be sure, those who are impatient with details claim in their exasperation that it is rather the devil who dwells in the details. But the captain of the ship knows that Providence has commissioned her to attend to minutiae, lest the vessel at her helm goes astray, stuck on the shoals of directional uncertainty.



In contrast to the *Führer*, Scheler's *Vorbild* is a leader who assumes no administrative responsibility. Rather the *Vorbild* is a moral and spiritual leader, who embodies in an exemplary fashion the values and ethos of a given community. The *Vorbild* thus serves as an ethical and axiological compass by which the members of his or her constituency seek spiritual orientation.

In delineating Scheler's typologies of leadership, I challenged his casting them as high-polar, even diametrical opposites—again with Margy in mind. Certainly with respect to an academic institution, such as the Divinity School, leadership requires both the steady hand of a *Führer*, who is ever attentive to detail and navigational mechanics, and a *Vorbild* who not only embodies the highest values of the institution but also vigilantly alerts her shipmates not to lose sight of those values as they attend under her leadership to administrative and organizational minutiae. Those values are encapsulated by the indefinable but commanding asymptotic ideal of excellence, the *sine qua non* of *Wissenschaft als Beruf*, scholarship as a spiritual and intellectual, indeed as an ethical calling.

As one of your shipmates, Margy, I salute you as our Captian, as our consummate *Führer* and *Vorbild*.

If I may, I should like to add a postscript: In inviting me to pay tribute to Margy's deanship, Wendy beseeched me not to yield to my incorrigible predilection for lachrymose schmaltz. But I do hope that Margy appreciates that behind each word of this all too brief *laudatio* palpitates unbridled affection and admiration.

WENDY DONIGER

For Margy

Clearly we are all talking about the same person, shining light from different angles but coming up again and again with the fierce loyalty, the vision, the sharp intelligence, the mind like a steel trap, but also the compassion, the humor, the passion, the humanity. Margy's deanship brought us diversity not just in theory but in practice, in the appointment of women as well as an object lesson in the female exercise of power, battling all the obstacles that that implies. She also extended the religious globe of Swift Hall's faculty to the farthest reaches of geography and history, as well as into other disciplines that intersect with the more central issues of the study of religion. Her deanship deepened our concern for teaching, in the Craft of Teaching program, in the more extensive practice sessions for job talks, in a closer relationship with the Graham School, and a host of other small but telling interventions in the training of our students. Moving about in my other worlds in this university, in the Humanities for South Asian Languages and Civilizations (SALC) and the social sciences for the Committee on Social Thought, it was always good to hear people speak of their deep respect for, even awe of, Margy, and affection, too, from students right up through presidents and provosts and deans. And I always encountered that same respect and warmth in academic communities far abroad.

For me, the most astonishing thing about Margy's deanship was the way that she got to know each one of us and genuinely cared about each one. She understands what we—students and faculty alike—are doing with our own work because she gets it from the inside, as a scholar who

It means wearing two hats at once.

has herself produced ground-breaking work dealing with ancient languages and fragile manuscripts and archeology, and has dealt with competing theories and complex political issues. She has given me stunningly insightful help with much of what I've written over the years, reading it with a fine-tuned editorial eye and a real knack for creative interventions. And the way she speaks about the books and articles that my colleagues and students are working on has made me realize that I am not special in this regard, that Margy just reads everything, reads what we write, what all the people whom we might appoint here write, reads all of all of our publications, reads far beyond her own field. And she finds brilliant ways to make it all useful to us and to her in the tasks she undertakes for our sake, to think in new and useful ways about the work we do together.

There are too many of my former, and present, deans standing in this room for me to be so tactless as to say that she is the best dean I've ever served under, but for me she has certainly been a very very very good dean. No matter who ends up in that office in the future, I will miss Dean Mitchell, though I am so grateful knowing that I will continue to rejoice in Margy's company as a cherished colleague and beloved friend.

And it is now my honor to present her with a gift from the faculty.

That is the end of the formal part of the party. Now you are free to go on eating and drinking and rejoicing in one another's company.

RICHARD B. MILLER

Thanks and a bittersweet tribute to Margy Mitchell, whom I've had the privilege of working under for only one year. But in that brief time span, a number of virtues were made plain to me. I'd like to share a few observations, thinking generally and also in light of some of our own interactions, to honor your achievements.

The first thing to note about the Dean—any dean—is that she is a double agent. You once said this to me yourself. On the one hand, you represent us—principally the faculty—to upper-level administrators and the broader public. You present our concerns to them. On

the other, you *represent* central administration to the faculty, conveying messages and initiatives to us in ways that do justice to the work of the U of C's academic leaders. These are the double tasks of being a representative. The best book for all budding administrators is Hannah Pitkin's *The Concept of Representation*, because Pitkin nicely captures the requirements of being a “double-agent” for those who must re-present and thus mediate ideas to different constituencies and groups. “Representation” Pitkin writes, “means the making present of something which is nevertheless not literally present.” It means “making the represented present,” and that is no small task. It means wearing one two hats at once. There is a “real and unreal” dimension to being a dean, as I suspect you know all too well. But I've only identified two groups in this dance of representation—the faculty and what is called here the 5th floor. You've also represented the Div School to prospective students, to donors, to alumni, to job candidates, to our students, and to the wider academic community in ways that reflect the traditions and values of the institution and its highest ideals. You're actually far more than a double-agent, you're a model ambassador, and anyone stepping into your shoes has big ones to fill.

You are also a scholar-dean: This is becoming an increasingly rare phenomenon, something like the “student-athlete.” But you are both a first-class scholar and an academic dean, juggling both tasks with aplomb. I remember well showing you a book prospectus recently, and in very short order you developed a set of very precise, careful, and nuanced suggestions that captured the broad spirit of the project and, with that in mind, made well-targeted suggestions as to how I should improve my pitch. I've shopped this prospectus around to several others in the guild, and received nothing from them on the order of what you brought to the table. I'm very grateful to you for that.

But it's not just that you carry out both duties of being a scholar and a dean, you integrate them in your administrative work. It's clear that, for you, being a dean is not a mindless task, but one to which you address yourself as a reflective and thoughtful person. You are an *intellectual dean*, one who tackles a problem as one that is amendable to reason, not incorrigible to reason simply because it may be a feature of institutional life and bureaucracy.

... institution not only as one that is shaped by thought and reason,
but also as one that is embodied—fragile, needy, and vulnerable.

This fact of being in intellectual dean was made evident to me in my own recruitment/discussion: an argument. When you called to recruit me, you began by giving me reasons to come to the U of C. You grasped that this is not an obvious or self-evident matter, and that a *case had to be made for* changing institutions and joining this intellectual community. You focused on the educational values of the institution, and how they aligned with my own. Your argument was one of congruence and compatibility, not

one that appealed to the usual incentives. You were right.

But you are not only an intellectual dean, you also are one committed to strengthening the health and body of the institution. You understand the institution not only as one that is shaped by thought and reason, but also as one that is embodied—fragile, needy, and vulnerable. What brings me to this insight is your hard work with alumni and donors, especially your success with the Development Office in securing two enormous gifts, one of \$900K from John and Jane



We'll miss you on the first floor, but we look forward to the fruits of your
next scholarly project and all of those that you develop as our colleague and friend.

Coleman to launch the Craft of Teaching Program, and the recent gift of \$1.5M from Julie Noolan to honor the life of her late husband, Daniel T. Carroll, with a scholarship in his name.

These gifts, as you know, take deep commitment and an ability to secure the confidence of donors, confidence that rests on their trust in you and the institution to represent and carry out their wishes. These gifts strengthen our collective body by broadening our base of support, expanding our resources, and developing opportunities to

train the best of the next generation.

You have been an exemplary double-agent, scholar-dean, intellectual dean, and a dean who knows the body, heart, and soul of this institution. I want to say thank you for all that you've brought to the office during the past five years. We'll miss you on the first floor, but we look forward to the fruits of your next scholarly project and all of those that you develop as our colleague and friend. As you step into this new chapter of research and teaching, please make sure that we all continue, as you say, to "play with fire." ✦



A reading from James Luther Adams' sermon 'In The Fullness of Time', delivered at Bond Chapel in 1939:

We need not only to discover our identity by reference to constant features in the objective world and by the creative work of memory giving patterns of meaning to our relationships. We need also to strike root in a definite plot of soil. We need somehow to find our place in a continuing and promising tradition with its sacred books, its communion of saints, and its discipline. This is just what academic life for most students seems to prevent. We get ourselves into a spectator attitude. We get into the habit of classifying religious movements and ideas according to historical, philosophical, theological, or psychological terminology. We can perhaps name the many seeds, the potential rootings that are blown our way by the winds of doctrine, but we do not actually strike root into the soul ourselves. This is the reason the university is not wholly adequate for nourishment. We need the church's community of memory and hope. In the church, we accept the truth: By their fruits shall ye know them; but we also accept the truth: By their roots shall ye know them. Where there are no roots, there will be no fruit.

MAGGIE POTTHOFF

How Did I Get Here?

My grandparents had this big tree stump in their backyard that despite its having seen better days—that is, when it was a tree—remained a central feature of their landscaping. They'd built a flowerbed around it, filled with white and red impatiens and edged rather precisely with a wooden border my engineer-grandpa had cut in his woodshop. Some years, they'd even place a pot of geraniums on the stump itself. That wouldn't stop me from stomping through the impatiens, straddling the pot atop the stump, and belting out whatever Broadway tune I'd learned most recently. I loved that stump stage, and not only because my being up there made my grandma laugh pretty hard. I especially loved that it used to be something else.

"Used to be" is a familiar phrase in small towns like Muscatine, Iowa, where that tree stump is. It's a signifier used to help people navigate: "oh, yeah, you'll need to stop by the Smiths' on your way home for supper—they just live around the corner from where the Dairy Treat used to be." Or, "did you hear they're building a new church? Right on the land where the Bosch's farm used to be." It's not so helpful to anyone who's new in town, but it cuts right to the chase for people who favor narrating the past in terms of relationships or who are just kind of terrible at cardinal directions, which is a common problem to have in Muscatine, since there the Mississippi River turns and so flows west-to-east for a bit before it heads south again.

Even though two months is the longest period of time for which I've lived there, I consider that river town my hometown. It is the town where I broke my arm, learned to drive, spent summer afternoons on my grandmother's back porch, and Christmas Eves lying awake. It is the town

where my parents were born and my grandparents are buried. As the backdrop to those decidedly life-changing events in the lives of those closest to me as well as to so many more mundane memories of my childhood, Muscatine became not only *familiar* to me as a young person but also *formational* to the person I am today.

In the spring of my freshman year of high school at Lyons Township in LaGrange, Illinois, I learned my family would be spending the summer in Muscatine. As a teenager ripped from her highly anticipated summer social engagements, I was dismayed at the decision. But my grandfather was dying and we knew it. This would be his last summer, and we would be around for it.

Our days there were filled with lots of time to just be around. My eight-year-old brother and I had water balloon fights, and read a lot in lawn chairs, and played cards with our grandparents. No matter the days' course, they always ended the same way: with dinner eaten all together—my mom, dad, brother and I, with my grandma and grandpa around their dining table, enjoying summer tomatoes and each other's company. Each meal was as slow and deliberate as our summer morning decision-making when the day stretched long before us. At this pace, I began to understand a new relationship to time and space. One of the few times in my life where the day after next was not planned, that summer and those meals created a space for simply being present: not only to the moment, but most especially to each other.

Experiencing rootedness like this has animated my subsequent decisions, and is the answer to how I got here, both to the Divinity School and more existentially—as in, how *I* am the person you know, and not some other self I

So I came to the Divinity School to engage with faith questions from inside a tradition,
so that I could speak with a community and not just *to* one or *for* one.

could have grown into. I'll connect the dots after I tell you one more story.

Just as the stump stage used to be a tree, and the church used to be a farm, and the car lot used to be a Dairy Treat, I used to be a Catholic. The shift away from attending CCD on Monday nights at the 10,000 member Catholic parish in the western suburbs to going to Unitarian Universalist Youth Group with ten other kids on an average day understandably presented a lot for me to process as a twelve-year-old. In particular, the religious education curriculum for my age group focused not on UU tradition as I'd expected based on my experience in Catholic Catechism, but on "Neighboring Faiths"; we traveled together to a mosque, a Quaker meeting house, a synagogue, and even another Catholic church to learn about these faith communities. I engaged immediately; experiencing the ways other people worshipped and hearing their stories. My journey through faith had taken a very literal turn.

As an undergraduate, I chose to double-major early on in Religious Studies and English. Both, I argued, offered methodologies to better understand people and to situate their stories into a particular and appropriate context. At that moment in my education, my rationale was articulated from a scholarly distance: I wanted to understand *other* people, why and how *they* were religious. I befriended a 95-year-old minister who could recite Chaucer from memory as accurately as his stories of chaplaincy in WWII. I studied abroad in India to tease out what an explicitly 'secular' nation-state means for faith communities' worship lives. When pushed to explain my degree, I'd make clear that I was studying world religions so the questioner—whoever it was—would not confuse me for one of my objects of study: a religious person.

Somewhere along the line, though, as is likely obvious from the space which I inhabit now, I began to include myself in my work. I'm not sure when the moment came exactly, but I realized that for all my confusion about the distance I'd travelled from my grandparents' Catholic faith, I in fact still had a stake in how religion was talked about in our world not only as a scholar but as a religious person as well. So I came to the Divinity School to engage with faith questions from inside a tradition, so that I could speak with a community and not just *to* one or *for* one. Taking that position felt more honest for me, as I feel most like myself when I'm working alongside people rather than from a distance. With James Luther Adams's (a twentieth-century Unitarian theologian and graduate of this place) words echoing in Bond Chapel, **here I am** striking root in a definite plot of soil. Just as my parents had when they committed a summer of our lives to dwelling in an familiar-yet-uncomfortable place, a place of sadness and grief for my grandfather's decline, **to get here**, I had to let go and accept that what "used to be" shapes what *is*, now. A tree stump holds geraniums and a singing child on a summer day. And a journey through other people's faiths becomes a call to claim my own. ✧

Delivered at Open Space in Bond Chapel on November 18, 2014.



Alumni News



Phyllis D. Airhart (MA'81, PhD'85) was a finalist for the 2015 Canada Prize in the Humanities for her book, *A Church with the Soul of a Nation: Making and Remaking the United Church of Canada* (McGill-Queen's University Press). The Canada Prizes are awarded annually by the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences to recognize books that make an exceptional contribution to scholarship, are engagingly written, and enrich the social, cultural and intellectual life of Canada.

Matthew Becker (MA'90, PhD'01) is associate professor of theology at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana. His book *Fundamental Theology: A Protestant Perspective*, was published last month by Bloomsbury/T&T Clark. The book's Afterword is by **Martin Marty**.

Michael Joseph Brown (PhD'98) has assumed the position of VP of Academic Affairs and Dean of the seminary at Payne Theological Seminary, the oldest African American theological institution in North America.

Anthony Cerulli (PhD'07, History of Religions), Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Asian Studies, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, was named a 2015 Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation (JSGMF). This year 175 scholars, artists, and scientists were named fellows (out of a group of over 3,100 applicants). Prof. Cerulli received the sole fellowship in South Asian Studies for his project, "Sanskrit Medical Classics in Crisis: Language Politics and the Reinvention of a Medical Tradition in India."

Robert D. Denham (MA'64, PhD'72 in English) has recently published his thirty-eighth book, an edition of *Northrop Frye's Uncollected Prose* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015). His thirty-ninth book is in press—*Northrop Frye and Others: Twelve Writers Who Help to Shape His Thought* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, forthcoming 2015). Denham is John P. Fishwick Professor of English Emeritus, Roanoke College. He remembers Swift Hall in the early 1960s as an intellectually invigorating place.

Robert Ellwood (MA'65, PhD'67) is Professor Emeritus at the School of Religion, University of Southern California. He has published a series of books on myth with Continuum publishing: *Myth: Key Concepts in Religion* (2008); *Tales of Darkness: The Mythology of Evil* (2009); and *Tales of Lights and Shadows: The Mythology of the Afterlife* (2010). A new edition of *Introducing Japanese Religion* will appear in 2016.

Courtney Fitzsimmons (MA'03, PhD'10) has accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Religion at Whitman College.

Daniel Gold (PhD'82) is Professor of South Asian Religions, Department of Asian Studies, Cornell University. He recently published *Provincial Hinduism: Religion and Community in Gwalior City* (New York: Oxford 2015).

Dale Goldsmith, (MA'64, PhD'73) has two new books to announce. *Growing in Wisdom: Called to the Adventure of College* was published in 2014 by Wipf & Stock; the same publisher is putting out *Look – I Am With You: Devotions for the College Year in 2015*.

C. David Hein (MA'77) has published a new essay on the ethical principles of the American Founding: "Leadership and Unnatural Virtues: George Washington and the Patience of Power" as the afterword to a new edition of *Patience: How We Wait Upon the World*, by David Bailly Harned, (Reprint ed., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015).

Richard Hutch (MA'71, PhD'74, Religion and Psychological Studies) recently retired from a long academic career in Studies in Religion, School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, University of Queensland, Australia. His public lecture, "Marching to the courthouse for freedom" on his experiences as a volunteer in the American Civil Rights Movement in the SCOPE Project ("Summer Community Organization and Political Education"), which was sponsored by Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1965, will be delivered on May 29th at the University of Queensland, Australia.

Dr. Hutch recently delivered the keynote address on a symposium on the Civil Rights Movement at Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania, where he was an undergraduate, 1963-67. His presentation in the town where Union troops turned back Confederate troops in 1863, which represented the beginning of the end of the Civil War, marked not only the 50th anniversary of the SCOPE Project, but also the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War (on April 9, 1865 at 3:15 pm). Video of the address is available on YouTube.

Kevin Jung (PhD'04) is Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at Wake Forest University. He has recently published *Christian Ethics and Commonsense Morality* in the *Routledge Studies in the Philosophy of Religion*.

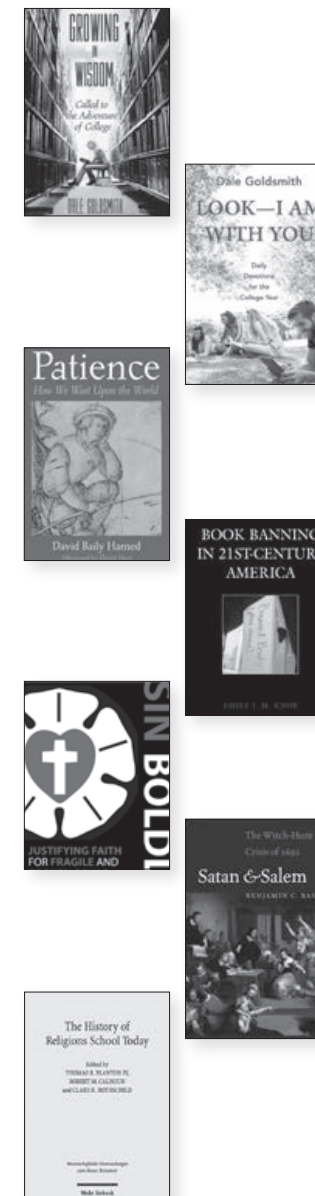
Meira Kensky (MA'01, PhD'09) has recently been tenured and promoted and awarded an endowed chair. She is now the Joseph E. McCabe Associate Professor of Religion at Coe College.

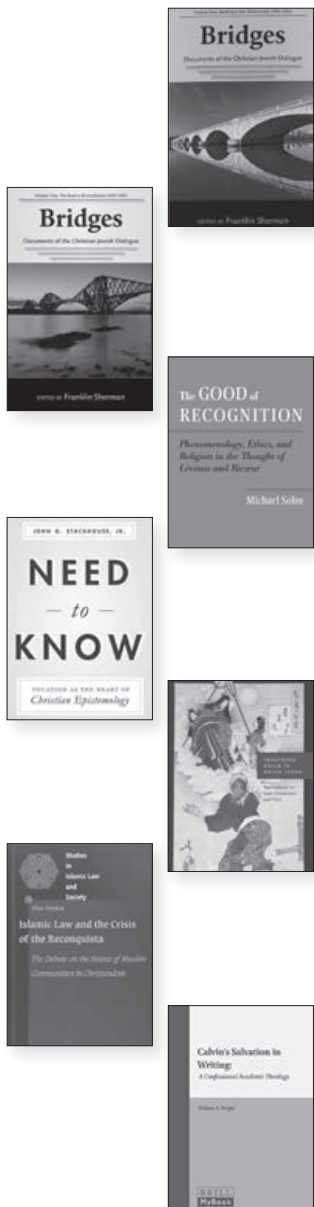
Emily J. M. Knox (MA'00) is an assistant professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She recently published *Book Banning in 21st Century America* (Rowman & Littlefield).

Ted Peters (PhD'73) is Emeritus Research Professor of Systematic Theology and Ethics at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and the GTU. He has two new books for 2015, both with Fortress Press: *Sin Boldly! Justifying Faith for Fragile and Broken Souls* and *God – The World's Future, 3rd edition*.

Benjamin C. Ray (MA'67, PhD'71) is Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Virginia. He recently published *Satan and Salem: The Witch-Hunt Crisis of 1692* (UVA Press).

Clare K. Rothschild (PhD'03, New Testament/Biblical Studies), **Robert Mathew Calhoun** (PhD'01, NTECL) and Thomas R. Blanton IV, editors, have published *The History of Religions School Today: Essays on the New Testament and Related Ancient Mediterranean Texts*. This volume offers a glimpse at one current thriving expression of the





distinguished history of religions school approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature. The University of Chicago has long been a hub of this type of investigation and over the last century, many of these Chicago studies have produced groundbreaking results. The book is dedicated to Professor Hans Dieter Betz, Shailer Mathews Professor Emeritus of New Testament in the Divinity School, the Department of New Testament and Early Christian Literature, and the Committee on the Ancient Mediterranean World. Divinity contributors include **Mark Reasoner** (PhD’90 NTECL), **Meira Z. Kensky** (PhD’09), **Jeffrey Asher** (PhD’99 NTECL), **Laurie Brink** (PhD’09), **David G. Monaco** (PhD’11), **Paul B. Duff** (PhD’88), **Matt Jackson-McCabe** (PhD’98 NTECL), and **Jeffrey A. Trumbower** (PhD’89).

Franklin Sherman (PhD’61), former Professor of Christian Ethics and Dean of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, has recently published an edited volume, *Bridges: Documents of the Christian-Jewish Dialogue. Vol. 2, Building a New Relationship (1986-2013)* (New York and Mahway, NJ: Paulist Press). This completes his long-term project of assembling the most significant documents on this subject from Christian, Jewish, and interfaith sources around the world. The first part of the collection was published by Paulist in 2011, with the title *Bridges: Documents of the Christian-Jewish Dialogue. Vol. 1, The Road to Reconciliation (1945-1985)*. Both volumes include introductions by a leading Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish scholar in the field as well as a Preface and interpretive comments by Dr. Sherman.

Michael Sohn (PhD’12) is currently Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Comparative Religion at Cleveland State University. He recently published *The Good of Recognition: Phenomenology, Ethics, and Religion in the Thought of Levinas and Ricoeur* (Baylor University Press, 2014).

John G. Stackhouse, Jr. (PhD’87) recently published his eighth book, *Need to Know: Vocation as the Heart of Christian Epistemology* (Oxford, 2014). This summer, he will leave Regent College, Vancouver, after 17 years in the Sangwoo Youtong Chee Chair of Theology and Culture, to take the Samuel J. Mikolaski Chair of Religious Studies at Crandall University in Moncton, New Brunswick.

Jonathan Stockdale (MA’93, PhD’04), associate professor of Japanese religion at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, has published a new book, *Imagining Exile in Heian Japan: Banishment in Law, Literature, and Cult* (University of Hawaii Press).

Alan Verskin (MA’04) is assistant professor in the Department of History at the University of Rhode Island. He just published *Islamic Law and the Crisis of the Reconquista: The Debate on the Status of Muslim Communities in Christendom* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

Bill Wright (PhD’06, Theology) has recently published *Calvin’s Salvation in Writing: A Confessional Academic Theology* (Brill).



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