

# CRITERION

*A Publication of the University of Chicago Divinity School*



DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS—

**D**aniel L. Overmyer, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Asian Studies and the Centre for Chinese Research at the University of British Columbia, was honored as the Divinity School's Alumnus of the Year for 2001 on May 2, 2002, in Swift Lecture Hall. On that occasion, President of the Baptist Theological Union Susan B. W. Johnson praised Professor Overmyer "for his seminal contributions to scholarship on Chinese popular thought, religion, and culture; for his outstanding service as a teacher and mentor to aspiring young scholars in the field of East Asian Studies; and for his exemplary leadership as a university administrator." This Autumn 2002 issue of *Criterion* opens with Professor Overmyer's Alumnus of the Year address, "Gods, Saints, Shamans, and Processions: Comparative Religion from the Bottom Up."

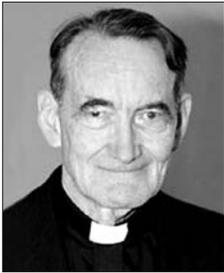
Following Professor Overmyer's address are two speeches that were delivered in association with the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life's winter conference, "A Call for Reckoning: Religion and the Death Penalty." The first, by Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., explores Catholic teaching on the death penalty and whether it has changed; the second, by Governor of Illinois George H. Ryan, reflects on how the Governor's religious faith influenced his decision to announce the nation's first moratorium on state executions.

The issue continues with the paper "A Jewish Look at Isaiah 2:2-4," delivered in an earlier version by Professor Tikva Frymer-Kensky at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, which highlights the centrality of Isaiah's famous eschatological vision in Jewish thought, literature, and liturgy.

The issue concludes with an address by Dean of the Divinity School Richard A. Rosengarten, "Beginning and Ending in the Commentarial Mode," delivered to the Disciples Divinity House graduates and their families at the DDH Convocation on June 7, 2002.

I hope you enjoy this issue,

JENNIFER QUIJANO SAX  
*Editor*



*Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., is the Laurence J. McGinley Professor of Religion and Society at Fordham University.*



*Tikva Frymer-Kensky is Professor of Hebrew Bible and the History of Judaism in the Divinity School. She received her Ph.D. from Yale University in 1977.*



*George H. Ryan is Governor of Illinois, a position to which he was elected in 1998. He has spent his career engaged in public service and legislation.*

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VOLUME 41 NUMBER 3



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# GODS, SAINTS, SHAMANS, AND PROCESSIONS:

COMPARATIVE RELIGION FROM THE BOTTOM UP

*Daniel L. Overmyer*

**I** begin with two passages describing processions in local festivals, the first in honor of a Chinese deity, the second for an Italian saint :: Temple festivals, which the people call the god's birthday, in general are celebrated once a year, usually for two or three days. . . . There are three main parts of the ritual: beginning the festival, sending up a memorial report [to the gods], and going out on patrol [a procession]. . . . In the procession the image and spirit-tablet of the god are taken on a patrol through all the streets [of the village]; this is the most

important ritual of the festival. First, the god is invited to have its image and tablet put in a "celestial sedan chair," then the procession begins, arranged in the following sequence, led by two men beating gongs to "open the way," followed by two others carrying leafed bamboo poles decorated with yellow cloth streamers. They are followed by two men carrying lanterns on the top of tall poles, with the word "god" and the name of the deity written on the lanterns, to let people know who the god is (in this case the goddess Mazu, a community patron deity who was originally a protector of fishermen and sailors). Next are two men carrying lacquered wooden placards with the words "be respectful and quiet" and "stand aside" written on them, to warn people not to obstruct the procession. Fifth are musicians beating gongs and drums, clashing cymbals and playing trumpets. Sixth is the god's sedan chair, and last another group of musicians . . . This procession is the high point of the temple festival.<sup>1</sup>

On the Italian saint:

The celebration of mass in the little chapel, sumptuously decorated and brilliantly lit, renews and augments the sanctity of the place. The sermon given by the priest

exalts the greatness of St. Besse, his glory and his power, as well as reminding his worshippers of their religious duties. But the central event of the festival is the procession. In good order, the whole community of the faithful leaves the chapel, grouped according to sex, age and religious dignity; they only return to it after having "done the round of the Mount," that is to say, having made a complete circuit of the rock, [on which stands the saint's shrine] proceeding, of course, from left to right and reciting the prayers of the rosary as they go. To add to the luster of the ceremony, the parish of Campiglia, on whose territory the shrine is situated, provides St. Besse with an accompaniment of all kinds of banners and holy images; but these are only accessories. By contrast, two other elements are essential to the procession. These are, on the one hand, the two *fouïaces*, ornaments composed of ribbons and fabric in bright colours, mounted on wooden frames, and almost entirely covering the faces of the young girls who carry them on their heads; these *fouïaces*, regarded today as the 'trophies' of St. Besse, in the past contained

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*Professor Overmyer delivered his Alumnus of the Year 2001 address on May 2, 2002, in Swift Lecture Hall.*





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far beyond what I had known before.*

consecrated bread which was distributed after the procession. On the other hand, and above all, there is the massive statue of St. Besse, dressed as a Roman soldier and holding the palm of martyrdom in his hand. Four or eight young men carry it on their shoulders carefully and seriously, as befits those entrusted with a trying but honorific and praiseworthy task.<sup>2</sup>

These two quotes introduce us to one of the structural similarities among religious traditions in different parts of the world: processions in honor of the annual celebration of the presence of a god or saint. Similar processions take place in India, Japan, Southeast Asia, Mexico, and elsewhere. I myself have observed such processions in mainland China, Taiwan, Mexico, and Italy. They are part of a widely shared complex of beliefs and rituals expressing a concern of ordinary people to have direct contact with physical symbols of divine power in their own communities. Such local religious traditions are characterized by their location in the midst of everyday life and their focus on practical aid and results. Though clergy may be involved, for the most part these traditions are led, organized, and continued by the people themselves. I have long been studying such common practices in China, where they constitute the foundation and quantitative mainstream of Chinese religions. More recently, I have become interested in comparing them with those of other cultures, to see what they share and where they differ, to learn if there are enough common factors to justify a more general comparison. If so, perhaps we can build a comparative perspective on detailed descriptions of what ordinary worshippers actually do. Such a perspective may enable us to see deep commonalities among religious traditions behind differences of theory and mythology, and hence reach toward an understanding of a kind of universal practical religion of humankind. But more of this later.

First let me say how happy and deeply honored I am to be here; I am grateful for the award and the invitation to lecture, for which I particularly want to thank my friend and colleague Anthony Yu. My thanks as well to Dean Rosengarten and to the others involved, and to my dear wife, Estella, who has shared my life and work ever since we were married while I was a graduate student here.

I studied at Chicago for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in the History of Religions from 1964 to 1970, including about a year and a half in Taiwan for dissertation research and language study from 1968 to 1969. The University, the Divinity School, and the History of Religions field were an intellectual and personal enlightenment for me; I was exposed to vistas of culture and learning far beyond what I had known before. My experience at Chicago was the most intellectually intense of my life; it was an ecstasy of learning both in classes and in preparing for and writing a variety of qualifying examinations. I remember my yearlong weekly discussion groups with fellow students to help prepare for the Ph.D. comprehensive exams. I particularly remember one of those students, my dear friend David Kinsley, with whom my wife and I stayed in close contact over the years until his untimely death two years ago. David was a fine scholar and an excellent teacher, who published several books about Hindu goddesses, religion and healing, and religious views of the natural environment. His last research project was fieldwork among Hindu and Muslim healers in Varanasi. His wife, Cary, who was with him there, is now editing his field notes to prepare a book on this research.

Another fond memory I have of Chicago is monthly meetings of the History of Religions Club, with talks by Mircea Eliade, Joseph Kitagawa, and Charles Long, and by senior graduate students, such as Frank Reynolds, Robert Ellwood, J. Bruce Long, Nancy Auer Falk, Byron Earhart, Alan Miller, and others. Our HR Club meetings were stimulating both intellectually and personally; they gave me models to emulate that have influenced me ever since. I am also grateful to another fellow student at that time, Chris Chou, who helped me prepare for Herlee Creel's courses in classical Chinese. As I recall, I also helped him with English, but my biggest debt to Chris is a paper he wrote on Chinese popular religious sects that helped start my own research on that topic. However, I owe the most to Joseph Kitagawa, Martin Marty, and Philip Kuhn. My whole career in the study of Chinese religions began with a note from Kitagawa at the end of a paper I wrote for his course on worship. The paper topic was Chinese imperial sacrifices on the night of



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the History of Religions, Chicago-style.*

the winter solstice; his note said "I hope you will continue in this study," which I have! Joseph Kitagawa always asked his students to come to his office around midterm to discuss their research paper topics; I have followed his example ever since, even with classes of forty to fifty undergraduates at the University of British Columbia. I just finished this task with my students in Taiwan two weeks ago. It is exhausting work, but well worth the effort.

In seminary, my favorite subject had been church history, but later I read Mircea Eliade and some sermons of Helmut Thielicke that referred to Scandinavian mythology, and I became interested in the History of Religions field. I had met Martin Marty earlier, so I went to his office at the *Christian Century* to ask his advice about which field to choose. He said that while church history was an interesting topic, the field was already crowded, with job prospects quite probably limited to seminaries and church colleges, so I decided on HR.

Philip Kuhn, now at Harvard, at that time was at Chicago. I am grateful to him for encouraging me to continue with a Ph.D. research topic that another Chicago China historian here had told me could not be done. I also want to thank David Roy, one of my Chinese language teachers, with whom I took a reading course in Buddhist Chinese. In sum, my experience at Chicago was intellectually formative for me in every way.

I suppose that in some respects I have not been a very active alumnus (though I did succeed in arranging for an honorary degree for Mircea Eliade while I was at Oberlin), but in my intellectual commitment I have been a faithful alumnus and disciple wherever I have gone because I have always proudly carried the flag for the History of Religions, Chicago-style. I have done my best to further the academic study of religions, particularly Chinese religions, in departments of religions and Asian and Chinese studies in the United States, Canada, Germany, mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. There has been much work to do, because for various reasons the academic study of Chinese religions has not been accepted or developed until recent decades. Of course, there were some fine scholars in earlier generations, such as J. J. M. de Groot, Tsukamoto Zenryū, Henri Maspero,

Edward Schafer, Derk Bodde, Herlee Creel, C. K. Yang, and Arthur Wolf and a few other anthropologists. Standing on their shoulders, Laurence Thompson, Holmes Welch, Norman Girardot, and I began in the 1970s to organize the Society for the Study of Chinese Religions. We also organized groups for the study of Chinese religions in the AAR and AAS, and a newsletter for the SSCR, which later became the *Journal of Chinese Religions*, now published at Indiana University. Partly as a result of these efforts, but also because of changes in cultural attitudes toward Asian religions, I am happy to report that the study of Chinese religions is now a flourishing and developing field in North America, Europe, Taiwan, and, since the 1980s, even in the People's Republic of China. In Japan there has been a small but steady stream of publications on Chinese religions throughout the twentieth century. As in other fields of Chinese studies, the Japanese have been the modern pioneers. For studies of Chinese religions in Taiwan, there is an excellent bibliography by Lin Mei-rong, who is now editing its third edition.<sup>3</sup> Concerning recent studies of Chinese popular religion on the mainland, I have written a review article that will soon be published.<sup>4</sup> For studies in Western languages, I refer those who may be interested to my two-part article in the *Journal of Asian Studies*, published in 1995, titled "Chinese Religions: The State of the Field," written together with ten other scholars. Here one should add that there are now several departments of religion studies, as well as research institutes, in Taiwan, and even a few in mainland China universities. I know of four such university departments in the PRC. In Taiwan, there is a very active Taiwan Association for the Study of Religion. Such studies in Taiwan and the People's Republic have been established only in the last several years. In addition to the increase of scholars and departments of religion studies, it is encouraging to note that many Western social historians now routinely discuss the religious dimensions of their research topics.

In part because the study of Chinese religions until recently has been neglected by Chinese scholars, it is an exciting field. Everywhere there are new materials to study and there is new work to do. Centuries of neglect by Chinese



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and I have been hooked on fieldwork ever since.

scholars are much to be regretted, but at least this has given others an opportunity to make new discoveries. A very good example of this is two large fieldwork projects initiated and directed, respectively, by Professor Wang Ch'iu-kuei of the National Tsing-hua University in Taiwan and Professor John Lagerwey now of the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris. These research projects are both based on the work of Chinese local scholars recruited and trained by Professors Wang and Lagerwey to investigate the ritual and drama traditions of their own areas. These large projects have each resulted in a series of books in Chinese: Wang Ch'iu-kuei's *Studies in Chinese Ritual, Theatre and Folklore*, in eighty volumes; and John Lagerwey's *Traditional Hakka Society*, which is still ongoing, with twelve volumes published so far, and four more in press. (The Hakka are a large group of people who centuries ago migrated from north to south China, where they were given the name "guest families," *kejia* in Mandarin, *hakka* in Cantonese.) In 1998, a conference was held in Hong Kong to review the books in these series; I presented one such review, and was asked to edit the conference volume, which is just now being published. Here I take the liberty to include a few lines from the book jacket, taken from my introduction.

This book includes twenty chapters reviewing a total of sixty-four books in Chinese in the two series: "Studies in Chinese Ritual, Theatre and Folklore" and "Traditional Hakka Society," edited respectively by Wang Ch'iu-kuei and John Lagerwey.

It is intended to inform the wider world of scholarship of this new research, which provides the most detailed information ever available about Chinese local culture, drama and religion. Together with the excellent studies of this dimension of culture by scholars in Taiwan, and with a revived interest in this area by other China mainland scholars, it represents a resumption of the folklore studies movement of the 1920s and 1930s that was interrupted by the war with Japan. These new reports may also be seen as a complement to the work of anthropologists, who until recently have not been able to conduct many field studies in

China. As such, this research provides fresh information for an understanding of the culture of the majority of the Chinese people, an understanding based on their lived experiences and values.<sup>5</sup>

The most important contribution of my own research so far has been to help define and clarify a sectarian form of Chinese popular religion, building on the work of such scholars as J. J. M. de Groot, Joseph Edkins, Zenryū Tsukamoto, Sakai Tadao, Li Shiyu, C. K. Yang, Tai Hsüan-chih, Richard Chu, and others. On this topic, I have published three books and a number of articles, the most recent book being on sectarian scripture texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, published in 1999.<sup>6</sup>

In 1996, when my work on these texts was substantially completed, I was invited to teach and do research at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. There, to my good fortune, I met John Lagerwey, an American scholar based in France, who by then had long been doing fieldwork with Chinese colleagues in southeast China. We became friends, and he invited me to accompany him and two Chinese co-researchers on a trip to a village in northern Fujian province to observe a ritual and interview local people. I had done fieldwork on a popular sect in Taiwan before, but that trip to the village festival in Fujian was a revelation to me, and I have been hooked on fieldwork ever since. As a result, together with two Chinese colleagues, I am now engaged in a research project in villages in Hebei province in north China, in direct imitation of what Lagerwey has done in the south. In addition to our own observations and interviews, we have now organized local scholars in four areas of Hebei to write reports on the ritual traditions and temples of their own communities. So far, we have titles and authors for sixty-one such reports, which we are now collecting and editing, and which we plan to publish in four volumes in Chinese. We also plan to write a fifth volume in English, summarizing and analyzing these reports, and including the results of our own fieldwork. All this is new material in an area and topic in which very little work had been done previously. By imitating what Lagerwey has done in south China, we hope to produce what in effect will be a new



*My topic today represents a return to comparative work from a new perspective,  
that of local traditions of ritual and belief practiced by ordinary people.*

kind of primary source for the study of one of the world's major religious traditions: Chinese local and common religion. This will be the major focus of my work for some time to come. Eventually, I hope to write a comprehensive overview of Chinese local religion, but the topic is so immense and complicated I'm not sure I'll be able to do it.

Though my Ph.D. dissertation was based on a comparative perspective, I have sometimes reproached myself for not doing enough comparative work since then. I have been swamped by trying to make my way through all this new Chinese material, and by teaching and administrative responsibilities. My topic today represents a return to comparative work from a new perspective, that of local traditions of ritual and belief practiced by ordinary people. I began this task in a modest way a few years ago with a comparative study of Chinese gods and Christian saints, published in the Hong Kong journal *Ching Feng* in 1997.<sup>7</sup> I am now teaching a graduate seminar in Taiwan on comparative popular religion, from which I am learning much. I thought a brief report on this topic might be of more interest here than the details of north China local culture and religion, which after all are an acquired taste!

What I am trying to do is carry through what, for me at least, is a new approach to comparative religion that focuses on the practices and beliefs of ordinary people who are the majority population of every culture. Stephen Sharot has started this task in his new book, *A Comparative Study of World Religions: Virtuosos, Priests and Popular Religion*.<sup>8</sup> I find this book to be too tangled up with old discussions of the definition of "popular religion," and the relationship of what Sharot calls "elites and masses." I believe it is much better to leave behind this long and vexed discussion of the relationship of "popular and elite," and instead proceed directly to a detailed description of what people in local communities actually do. When we do this we find that, for the most part, everyone who lives in a community shares a common worldview and is expected to participate in the rituals that express it, regardless of their gender and social and economic status. This was and is true in China, and it was the case in early modern Europe, as it is in Islamic cults of saints, in India,

and in every other place I have looked so far. Of course, there may be some intellectuals who do not participate, but most do, even if they interpret what is going on in their own terms. The relationship of local traditions with those of regional or national scope is, of course, an important topic, but first we need more patient and detailed description of what ordinary people do, and of what we can understand of the intentions behind their actions.

The baseline for my comparison is commonly shared traditions of ritual and belief in Chinese local communities as they existed well into the twentieth century. For comparative study, these traditions have the advantage of having developed slowly in areas where they have been long established, in some places for many centuries. Hence these religious practices are integral parts of their communities; they are expected, normal behavior that cannot be separated from everyday life in families and villages. What we call the sacred and profane are here blended together. The other major advantage of basing comparison on such Chinese village ritual traditions is that they are fundamentally nonsectarian. All who live in a given community are expected to practice them, and their leaders are those of the community itself. They are not voluntary associations, and they do not have special forms of organization or teaching intended for one particular group, with others excluded. Their founders are simply the first ancestors who settled their families in that area.

Of course, there have long been sectarian religious traditions in China, such as Daoism and Buddhism, and over the centuries they influenced village rituals and beliefs, and have been influenced by them. However, forms of community religion were already in place when these sects appeared, forms with their own worlds of tradition and intention. When sectarian leaders, deities, or texts enter the gravitational field of village religion, their meanings are changed to fit what the people need, which is basically to *qi fu qu xie*, "pray for blessings and drive away harm." So in local religion, Daoist priests are hired to help renew life forces in annual temple festivals; Buddhist monks are invited to recite scriptures to see off and placate the dead; holy monks and bodhisattvas, such as Guanyin, can become local protective deities; and



. . . *Chinese polytheism and nondualism help one see the continuing role of similar perspectives in local traditions elsewhere* . . .

the *Diamond Sūtra* is recited to ward off demons. (One of my M.A. students has just completed an excellent thesis on the bodhisattva Guanyin [Avalokiteśvara] as a goddess who brings sons.)

From the perspective of nonsectarian Chinese local religion, the more sectarian and dualistic nature of some other traditions jumps into view, in particular that of orthodox Christian thought. At the same time, Chinese polytheism and nondualism help one see the continuing role of similar perspectives in local traditions elsewhere; they also jump into view, as we can see, for example, in local cults of saints in Christianity and Islam. As I wrote a few years ago:

It is well known that most of the gods worshipped by ordinary people in traditional Chinese society and its modern continuations are the deified spirits of former human beings believed to have power to respond to prayers and petitions. This power is manifested in healing, protection, and support, and in advice and moral teachings. These gods dwell in temples, represented by images that are the focus of petitions, offerings and divination. They are primarily responsible for the well-being of the local communities around them, though the veneration of some gods spreads to whole regions. Because they were once human these deities can understand and sympathize with the problems of their worshippers; because they are believed to participate in a realm of extra-human divine power they can use that power to help solve the difficulties and questions made known to them. Though they are worshipped throughout the year, their presence and patronage are celebrated primarily in annual “temple festivals” (*miaohui*) in which the whole local community is invited to participate.

From its early centuries the Christian tradition in the Mediterranean world and Europe has venerated similar symbols of local divine power who were also once human, saints. Saints, too, are believed to sympathize with and respond to their worshippers; they too are present in their shrines, represented by images. As with

Chinese gods, cults of saints are revitalized in annual festivals in which their images are carried around the community in lively processions.

Though these gods and saints had different origins in historically unrelated cultures, by the medieval period (about the seventh to eleventh centuries), beliefs and rituals concerning them showed many similarities.

• • •

*Similarities* [After discussing differences in historical and religious contexts]

Despite the differences noted above, by the medieval period many similarities had developed between Chinese gods and Christian saints, beginning with their parallel roles as local divine patrons and protectors, represented by images, and housed in shrines. Both were believed to be present in those shrines as well as in a divine realm, accessible because they were once human, but bearers of extra-human power. In the minds of their worshippers, what counted most was the ability of these figures to respond effectively to prayers and petitions and to work miracles of healing, fertility and exorcism. On a daily basis both were offered candles or incense, but on the anniversaries of their births or deaths they were celebrated in community festivals that involved similar processions, offerings and feasts. Vows that offerings or pilgrimages would be made if prayers were answered were also employed in both contexts. In both cases, these festivals were organized by local lay people, though Daoist or Christian priests might be invited, and expected to participate in certain of the rituals. The Chinese produced scripture texts praising the efficacy and justice of their gods; the Christians read *passio* at their festivals, accounts of the lives and trials of their saints. Saints and gods were both believed to punish sinners as well as reward the good, and on the other hand both themselves could be ritually punished or humiliated if their protection failed.<sup>9</sup>



*From such study, perhaps we can gain a fresh understanding  
of underlying patterns in the practice of religion.*

The influence of local hope for direct and immediate access to divine power is also well illustrated in medieval Islam in Syria and Egypt. Frederick M. Denny provides examples of several orthodox Muslim scholars who attacked the veneration of saints, but who were so venerated themselves after their deaths. One of them was Ibn Taimīya of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries of the Common Era, who was famous for his zealous defense of a “pure Islam” that had no need for saints. Nonetheless, as Denny writes,

The supreme irony of Ibn Taimīya’s life was what happened after his death. His funeral was attended by an estimated two hundred thousand men and fifteen thousand women at the Sufi cemetery in Damascus, and admirers adopted the custom of visiting his tomb in ever increasing numbers to venerate his memory, seek his intercession, and share in the *baraka* (spiritual power) of his now holy remains. The reluctant saint was a victim of his own virtues.<sup>10</sup>

So, the people will have their way!

There are many other structurally similar factors in different local traditions, such as their social base in families and specific communities; their lay leaders; observation of seasonal festivals; focus on special places, such as shrines, mountains, streams, rocks, and large old trees; a quest in prayers and rituals for specific practical results, such as healing, help with childbirth, good harvests, and protection from disasters, such as floods and droughts; a concern for comfort for the dead; and belief in the possibility of direct manifestations of extra-human power that can take the form of possession by gods, spirits, or the souls of the dead. All these and other such themes are worthy of comparative study. From such study, perhaps we can gain a fresh understanding of underlying patterns in the practice of religion.

I have told the students in my course on comparative popular religion that it is an experiment, based on the hypothesis that there are enough underlying patterns to make the topic worth investigating. So far, I think the hypothesis works for traditional societies in which there are relatively cohesive local communities that provide an organizational

context for ritual practices. This is certainly true for China, and for villages in places like India, Burma, and Japan. In Islam and Roman Catholic Christianity, cults of saints provide a social context, as they do in Mexico, where in some areas additional support is provided by continuations of pre-colonial traditions. The practical concerns of people in tribal religious traditions provide parallels that should also be investigated. If my hypothesis is correct, then this is indeed an important topic because what we have here is the quantitative mainstream of religious practices for millions of people in different cultures around the world.

A difficulty for me in all this is in trying to see if the hypothesis works in modern North America, where, except for the Native American, religious traditions are entirely sectarian in form, even new ones not directly associated with Christianity. As voluntary associations, sects in principle are not limited to particular communities. Do local congregations, civic associations, and civil religion provide a social context for the kinds of locally centered practical concerns that characterize popular religion elsewhere? For ordinary believers, are Pentecostal spirit possession and healing congregational analogues to spirit-medium traditions elsewhere? Are prayers for specific purposes, such as healing, safe trips, and success in business, parallel to similar prayers in other traditions? Can pictures of Jesus or Christian bumper stickers be understood as protective charms? We know that the Bible can be used for divination, but can it also have functions similar to those of deity images? The context has changed, but are some of the old patterns of practice still here, or is it just that I have been studying Chinese religions too long? Of the materials I have read on this topic so far, by scholars such as Peter Williams, Charles Lippy, Robert Ellwood, and Harry Partin, the most helpful is Colleen McDonnell’s *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America*.<sup>11</sup> My concern is that if there are indeed widespread patterns of practical religion, these patterns should be demonstrated in North America as well, but how to do this is not yet clear to me. Comments and suggestions are welcome! □

*Continued on page 34*

# A CALL FOR RECKONING:

## RELIGION AND THE DEATH PENALTY

**O**n January 25, 2002, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life sponsored a major conference at the Divinity School entitled “A Call for Reckoning: Religion and the Death Penalty.” Over five hundred people from around the country filled Swift Lecture Hall (and several overflow rooms) to hear scholars of various faiths and religious backgrounds from the fields of politics, religion, and law examine a broad range of views on the death penalty. Distinguished theologian Avery Cardinal Dulles, the Laurence J. McGinley Professor of

Religion and Society at Fordham University, agreed for *Criterion* to publish the remarks he delivered that day. Raised to the cardinalate in 2001, Cardinal Dulles is the author of over 650 articles and twenty-one books on theological topics.

Also printed in the pages to follow is an address on the death penalty delivered by Illinois Governor George H. Ryan, who was invited to speak at the conference but was unable to visit Swift Hall until June 3. Governor Ryan gained international prominence in 2000 when he instituted the nation’s first moratorium on state executions. “Until I can be sure with moral certainty that no innocent man or woman is facing a lethal injection,” he announced then (and reaffirmed in the address printed here), “no one will meet that fate.” Shortly thereafter Ryan formed the Governor’s Commission on Capital Punishment, which in April 2002 recommended more than eighty changes to the state’s capital punishment system.

Complete transcripts of the conference—as well as many articles and other resources for reflection on religion and the death penalty—are available online at [www.pewforum.org/deathpenalty](http://www.pewforum.org/deathpenalty). A volume of papers from the conference speakers and other contributors, edited by Pew Forum staff Erik Owens, John Carlson, and Eric Elstain, will be published in mid-2003 by Eerdmans under the title *A Call for Reckoning: Religion and the Death Penalty*.

### CATHOLIC TEACHING ON THE DEATH PENALTY: HAS IT CHANGED?

*Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.*

**U**ntil at least the middle of the twentieth century, it was generally agreed in the Catholic Church that the state had the right, and sometimes the duty, to impose the death penalty for certain heinous offenses. This teaching seemed to have an adequate foundation in Scripture and was the common doctrine of the fathers and doctors of the Church, including the two great doctors of the West, Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Pope Innocent III, early in the thirteenth century, made acceptance of this doctrine a condition of reconciliation with the Church for certain heretics, who denied the doctrine. They were required to subscribe to the following proposition: “The secular power can, without mortal sin, exercise judgment of blood, provided that it punishes with justice, not out of hatred, with prudence, not precipitation.” After the Second World War, Pius XII clearly supported the death penalty in addresses to jurists and doctors. The same position was affirmed by the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* (the Roman Catechism) and many other catechisms, manuals





*A small but increasing number of Catholic theologians has opposed  
the death penalty, especially since World War II . . .*

of theology, reference works, and the like. The legitimacy of capital punishment was clearly in possession.

The death penalty was judged to fulfill the purposes of punishment, which were often enumerated as the following four:

1. *Retribution.* When justice has been grossly violated, the restoration of due order may require that the offender be deprived of the good of life itself. The primary biblical texts referred to were Genesis 9:5–6 and Romans 13:1–4, both of which emphasize this retributive aspect.
2. *Defense of society against the criminal.* The death of the criminal is the surest guarantee that he will not be able to perform further crimes.
3. *Deterrence.* Where administered in a timely fashion and on a regular basis, the death penalty appears to deter others from committing serious crimes.
4. *Rehabilitation.* Although execution does not of course reintegrate offenders into society, it prevents hardened criminals from spiritually harming themselves by further sin. The prospect of imminent execution is a powerful inducement to repentance and reconciliation with God, as many accounts of ministry to convicts on death row attest.

A small but increasing number of Catholic theologians has opposed the death penalty, especially since World War II, perhaps because of the notorious abuses of criminal justice in the death camps of Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia. Nevertheless, the first edition of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, published in 1992, reiterated the classical position. It states:

... the traditional teaching of the Church has acknowledged the right and duty of legitimate public authority to punish malefactors by means of penalties commensurate with the gravity of the crime, not excluding, in cases of extreme gravity, the death penalty. (2266)

The next article added a cautionary note:

If bloodless means are sufficient to defend human lives against an aggressor and to protect public order

and the safety of persons, public authority should limit itself to such means, because they better correspond to the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person. (2267)

Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Evangelium vitae* (1995) expressed a slightly different point of view. After stating that public authority must impose adequate penalties for the purposes of defending public order, ensuring people's safety, and offering the offender an opportunity to be rehabilitated, the Pope added:

It is clear that, for these purposes to be achieved, the nature and extent of the punishment must be carefully evaluated and decided upon, and ought not to go to the extreme of executing the offender except in cases of absolute necessity; in other words, when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society. Today, however, as a result of steady improvements in the organization of the penal system, such cases are very rare, if not practically non-existent. (56)

As a result of this statement, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* was revised. Paragraph 2266 was amended in the 1997 edition by omitting the phrase "not excluding . . . the death penalty." The next paragraph was altered to read as follows:

Assuming that the guilty party's identity and responsibility have been fully determined, the traditional teaching of the Church does not exclude recourse to the death penalty, if this is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against the unjust aggressor.

If, however, non-lethal means are sufficient to defend and protect people's safety from the aggressor, authority will limit itself to such means, as these are more in keeping with the concrete conditions of the common good and more in conformity with the dignity of the human person.

Today, in fact, as a consequence of the possibilities which the state has for effectively preventing crime, by rendering one who has committed an offense incapable



*Prima facie, then, it would seem that the Catholic teaching on the death penalty has changed from approval in the past to disapproval in the present.*

of doing harm—without definitively taking away from him the possibility of redeeming himself—the cases in which the execution of the offender is an absolute necessity “are very rare, if not practically non-existent.” (CCC 2267, quoting *EV* 56)

On a visit to St. Louis in January 1999, the Pope went even beyond his previous statements by characterizing the death penalty as “both cruel and unnecessary.”

In accordance with the Pope’s declarations and the new wording of the *Catechism*, the American bishops have published a number of statements advocating a moratorium on, if not the total abolition of, the death penalty. In November 2001, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a lengthy “Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities,” containing three paragraphs against the death penalty, in which a number of quotations was made from *Evangelium vitae* and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.<sup>1</sup> Besides making doctrinal pronouncements, the Pope and the United States bishops have regularly pleaded for clemency in the case of criminals being executed, including the notorious case of Timothy McVeigh in the spring of 2001.<sup>2</sup>

*Prima facie*, then, it would seem that the Catholic teaching on the death penalty has changed from approval in the past to disapproval in the present. What was previously seen as licit or even mandatory is now seen as forbidden.

The reversal of a doctrine as well established as the legitimacy of capital punishment would raise serious problems regarding the credibility of the magisterium. Consistency with Scripture and long-standing Catholic tradition is important for the grounding of many current teachings of the Catholic Church, for example, those regarding abortion, contraception, the permanence of marriage, and the ineligibility of women for priestly ordination. If the tradition on capital punishment had been reversed, serious questions would be raised regarding the other doctrines.

It might be contended that the tradition on capital punishment, unlike some of the other subjects just mentioned, is not infallible and is therefore reversible. Granting but not conceding this point, one might ask what would be needed to reverse it. I believe that competent authority would have

to declare that the previous teaching was in error and to show by arguments from reason or revelation why the new doctrine is superior. However, Pope John Paul II and the bishops have not said a word against the tradition. In fact, they have appealed to it in proposing their doctrine on capital punishment. From this, I conclude that their teaching ought to be understood, if possible, in continuity with the tradition, rather than as a reversal.

If, in fact, the previous teaching had been discarded, doubt would be cast on the current teaching as well. It, too, would have to be seen as reversible, and in that case as having no firm hold on people’s assent. The new doctrine, based on a recent insight, would be in competition with a magisterial teaching that has endured for two millennia—or even more, if one wishes to count the biblical testimonies. Would not some Catholics be justified in adhering to the earlier teaching on the ground that it has more solid warrant than the new? The faithful would be confronted with the dilemma of having to dissent either from past or from present magisterial teaching.

It may not be necessary, however, to choose between the classical doctrine and the contemporary teaching. In the canon law commentaries, there seem to be at least three interpretations of the current teaching in relation to the tradition. The first school, which may be called abolitionist, maintains that the Church has reversed its earlier teaching, since it now forbids public authorities from ever inflicting the death penalty as a punishment. Commentators of a second school hold that the Pope and the revised *Catechism* are developing and refining Catholic teaching. They admit the power of the state to execute dangerous criminals, but only in cases in which the physical protection of society requires it. A third school of interpretation contends that the encyclical and the *Catechism*, while leaving the traditional doctrine unchanged, express the prudential judgment that it would be better not to practice capital punishment in countries like the United States today.

The first school of interpretation is exemplified by E. Christian Brugger, a professor at Loyola University of New Orleans.<sup>3</sup> He declares that the *Catechism* is laying the theoretical ground for a change (not “development” precisely



*One will not find in the teachings of the Pope or the Catechism the idea that it is never legitimate to kill another human being intentionally.*

understood) in the Church's teaching.<sup>4</sup> Although the Church previously taught that the state could and even should intentionally inflict death as a punishment, this teaching is now seen to be invalid. The death penalty is acceptable only under the rubric of self-defense. Brugger maintains, in fact, that in defending itself society may not intend to kill the malefactor, but only to render the malefactor incapable of causing harm. According to this theory, the death of the aggressor would only be an unintended consequence of self-defensive action. It would not be intended as a punishment.

I personally believe that this is an extreme and erroneous interpretation of the encyclical and the *Catechism*. Neither rules out all intentional killing. The Pope, in *Evangelium vitae*, lays down the principle: "The direct and voluntary killing of an innocent human being is always gravely immoral" (57). If he had wanted to teach the doctrine proposed by Professor Brugger, he would have omitted the word "innocent" in that sentence. It is also important to distinguish between the object and the motive of an act. One will not find in the teachings of the Pope or the *Catechism* the idea that it is never legitimate to kill another human being intentionally. Whenever capital punishment is warranted, however rarely this may be the case, the intention of the executioner is certainly to kill the criminal, who has lost the right to life.

The second school of doctrinal revisionism proposes a more moderate thesis. It contends that whereas several ends of capital punishment were previously acknowledged, only one end (the physical protection of society against the criminal) is now admissible.<sup>5</sup> The other ends (retribution, deterrence, and rehabilitation) do not warrant the death penalty by themselves. This is indeed a plausible reading of the two documents I have cited, but, if correct, it would involve a partial reversal. Besides, it may not take sufficient account of the retributory aim of punishment. In *Evangelium vitae*, the Pope approvingly quotes the *Catechism* as saying "The primary purpose of the punishment which society inflicts is to redress the disorder caused by the offense" (EV 56, quoting CCC 2266). On this basis, the Pope asserts: "Public authority must redress the violation of personal and social rights by imposing on the offender adequate punishment for

the crime" (EV 56). Punishment, he then says, is not adequate unless it defends public order and ensures people's safety, while at the same time offering the offender the opportunity to change for the better.

Since the documents we are examining say that punishment, to be adequate, must defend the public order, it is necessary to inquire what they mean by public order. The *Catechism* answers the question to some extent when it states, in another context, that public order ought not to be conceived in a positivist or naturalist manner as mere physical protection but as including legal principles in conformity with objective justice (CCC 2109). A careful interpreter of *Evangelium vitae*, Professor Steven A. Long, draws the conclusion that when the Pope speaks of the protection of society as legitimizing capital punishment, he has in mind much more than the mere physical safety against the criminal's behavior, but includes what Long calls "the somber efficacy of transcendent moral sanctions in social life."<sup>6</sup> To interpret the Pope as meaning only *physical* defense against bodily harm, according to Long, is a "reductionist reading." Thus the second school of interpretation, as well as the first, may be contested.

Let us turn, therefore, to the third school of interpretation, with which I associate myself. It holds that the Pope and the revised *Catechism*, without rejecting the traditional doctrine, render a prudential judgment that, under present circumstances in countries like the United States, cases in which the death penalty is justified are extremely rare, if not non-existent. But it can be legitimate if required to defend society either physically or morally against the dangers that would arise if capital punishment were not used. Although the classical teaching of the Church was correct, the application of the death penalty is held to be undesirable in a society like our own, even though it might be advisable in other times and places. As reasons for the present policy against capital punishment one might list the following:

1. The inequitable application of the death sentence by courts and juries that are prejudiced against blacks and other minorities.



*The death penalty should be imposed only in cases where the restoration of social order and the moral health of the society strictly require it.*

2. The inability of poor and uneducated clients in many cases to obtain adequate legal counsel.
3. The likelihood of miscarriages of justice, which is enhanced by the two considerations just stated. The large number of sentences reversed on appeal, in some cases with the help of DNA evidence, makes it seem likely that some judicial errors have slipped through and that some innocent persons have in fact been unjustly executed.
4. The difficulty of judging the subjective guilt of the defendant. At best this is extremely difficult, and the difficulty is increased where the defendant has a very low intelligence level or suffers from psychological disabilities.
5. The tendency of executions to feed an unhealthy appetite for revenge. From a Christian point of view, the administration of justice should never be motivated by anger or vindictiveness.<sup>7</sup>
6. The failure of modern democratic society to perceive the judgment of the state as legitimately embodying a transcendent order of justice. The action of the state is commonly viewed in merely secular terms as an implementation of the will of the people.
7. The urgency of manifesting respect for the value and dignity of human life at a time when assaults on innocent human life through abortion, euthanasia, and violent crime are widely prevalent.

It is not necessary for all seven of the objections I have listed to apply in each particular case. Even in cases when there can be no doubt about the perpetrator of the crime, it would seem that the death sentence may fuel rather than extinguish violence in our society.

The seven objections I have stated, while they do not invalidate the classical doctrine of capital punishment, pose severe limits on its implementation. They favor limiting the application to extremely rare cases, where the safety of persons and the moral order of society would be jeopardized unless the criminal were deprived of life.

This third interpretation, unlike the previous two, does not entail a rejection of previously settled Catholic doctrine.

Catholics who wish to be faithful to both the past and the present teaching of the magisterium will be inclined to adopt a “hermeneutics of continuity” that reads current magisterial teaching in the light of Scripture and tradition. In terms of such a hermeneutics I propose my interpretation as the best available.

#### AFTERWORD

For those interested in the practical applications of my analysis, I can make three suggestions:

1. The death penalty should not be abolished. It should remain in law, and its implementation should be a real possibility.
2. The death penalty should be imposed only in cases where the restoration of social order and the moral health of the society strictly require it. Such cases will be extremely rare in an advanced and stable society like our own.
3. The judgment of these concrete cases is a prudential one to be made in the actual situation. Those who make the judgment should not be priests but competent secular agents, including judges and juries. By reason of their vocation, priests cannot suitably call for a judgment of blood. □

#### AN ADDRESS ON THE DEATH PENALTY

*Governor George H. Ryan*

**I**t is a pleasure to be here. I was invited back in January to partake in an earlier conference, “A Call for Reckoning: Religion and the Death Penalty,” with fellow Governor Frank Keating of Oklahoma and Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, among others. I was unable to attend then because I was in Cuba. You will be happy to know I had an opportunity to discuss with Fidel Castro the moratorium that we have on executions in Illinois. Castro’s Cuba is among the nations still executing criminals and it is on the watch list of every human rights organization. However, Castro told me Cuba has a “de facto moratorium” that has



*In most of the thirty-seven states that have the death penalty, the governor makes the final decision about whether to grant a stay of execution.*

been in effect for a couple of years. He indicated that he had some concerns about the death penalty, but that he believed the people of Cuba still supported it for heinous crimes. Sound familiar? That conversation was just one of many surreal moments I experienced in Cuba during my two humanitarian missions there. It is significant that even Cuba's longtime dictator is reconsidering the death penalty.

In the invitation I received from the Pew Forum, you wrote that you were interested in hearing about how my religious and personal views bear upon the positions I have taken on the death penalty. The invitation referenced an interview I did with the *Chicago Sun-Times*, in which the religion editor asked about how my religious faith influenced my decisions.

I was raised a Methodist in a small town south of here called Kankakee, Illinois. My family was not the kind that wore religion on its sleeves. It was difficult to go to church because most drug stores, like my father's, opened early on Sundays. But we went when we could. In the *Sun-Times* interview, I said that I have prayed over the issue of the death penalty. In the end, all of us who believe, who have faith, are taught certain precepts from the time we are young. We are taught what is right and what is wrong, whether we are Jewish, Christian, or Muslim. We are also taught about eternal life and celebration hereafter.

One of the most fundamental of those religious beliefs is to protect the innocent. As God told Moses in the book of Exodus, it is up to us to show justice and mercy: "Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits. Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty."

We weren't doing a very good job of protecting the innocent in Illinois until two years ago when I declared what is, in effect, a moratorium on executions. Up until then, I had resisted calls to issue such an order. I had always supported the death penalty, thinking that only the guilty were punished and sent to death row for committing the most unspeakable crimes.

Being from Kankakee, Illinois, we always prided ourselves on trying to keep our small town feel. Kankakee was not

immune to crime, but there was always a sense of community outrage when crime occurred. We always wanted to see the bad guys behind bars, to catch them, convict them, and throw away the key. That was the sentiment I heard growing up in Kankakee, working in my father's pharmacy.

You've heard me recall how I voted in the General Assembly to put the death penalty back on the books in Illinois. I believed the ultimate punishment played a role in our society for crimes so horrendous that death was the only penalty that fit the crime. In 1976, after the United States Supreme Court ruled that the death penalty was constitutional, I voted as a member of the Illinois House of Representatives to put the death penalty back on the books. During the floor debate on the capital punishment bill, an opponent of the death penalty asked those of us supporting the bill, "How many of you would like to throw the switch?"

That was a sobering thought. I would never want to be the executioner, to "throw the switch." I would never want to be responsible for that. But as a legislator, I was far removed from making that kind of life or death decision. By reinstating the death penalty, my colleagues and I in the General Assembly were tough on crime. It was up to prosecutors, judges, and juries to determine who was guilty of a capital offense. I never questioned the system.

Looking back, it is clear that I only dealt with the issue in the abstract. In those days, my opinion was just that: my opinion. I had no say on how the capital punishment system would be administered and applied. I'm a pharmacist, not a judge or a lawyer. I had no idea that more than twenty-five years later I would have the good fortune to be elected governor. And then I would, in effect, be the one to throw the switch. In most of the thirty-seven states that have the death penalty, the governor makes the final decision about whether to grant a stay of execution. That is an awesome responsibility, the most difficult one faced by a governor. Should the convicted live, or should he or she die? Imagine having that decision on your shoulders. I must admit, I didn't realize the enormity of it until I was faced with it. It has been a long, sometimes strange trip for me on the death penalty. I went from being the lawmaker from Kankakee



*My commission's report seems to confirm my worst fears about our capital punishment system, revealing that it is fraught with error at every painful step of the process.*

who voted to reinstate the death penalty to the governor who declared the country's first moratorium on it.

We reinstated the death penalty in 1977 in Illinois, and since that time we have executed twelve death row inmates. But on thirteen occasions, innocent men were convicted of capital crimes by judges and juries based on evidence they thought was beyond reasonable doubt. On thirteen occasions, innocent men were condemned to die. And on thirteen occasions, innocent men were exonerated after rotting for years on death row. For that to happen even once is unjust. For that to happen thirteen times is shameful and beyond belief.

The first nine exonerations took place over several years, starting in 1987. In my first eleven months in office, four men were freed from death row after being cleared by the courts. Among them was Anthony Porter, a man with an IQ of less than sixty, who spent over fifteen years on death row for a crime he did not commit. Sixteen years on death row, all the time knowing he was innocent, while the state was trying to kill him and the real killer was free. His experience must have been like hell on earth.

If it were not for the students at Northwestern University—journalism students!—who found the real killer, Mr. Porter would be dead, killed by the state. He had ordered his last meal, and had been fitted for his burial suit.

When the thirteenth inmate was exonerated, I did the only thing I could do, the only thing any governor could do: I halted executions. That was the easy part. The hard part was to find out what had gone so terribly wrong, to try to answer how our system of justice became so fraught with error, especially when it came to imposing the ultimate, irreversible penalty.

I appointed some of the smartest, most dedicated citizens I could find to form a commission to study what had gone so terribly awry. It was co-chaired by former Federal Judge Frank McGarr, former Senator Paul Simon, and former U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois Thomas Sullivan. They led a panel that included former prosecutors, defense lawyers, and non-lawyers, and even Harvard graduate and famed author Scott Turow, best known for writing

*One L*, his account of his first year at Harvard Law School, which hundreds of thousands of law students have read for solace. The backgrounds of my commission members were different, but they held one thing in common: a passion for and commitment to justice. I thank them for their service.

They put together a tremendous document. The report itself is 207 pages long, and there are hundreds more pages containing technical analysis, including a study on race and sentencing. I have said before that the more I learn about the justice system, the more troubled I become. As I read this report, I am impressed that these dedicated and brilliant citizens developed eighty-five recommendations to improve the caliber of justice in our state system.

Everything in the report that requires legislation has now been introduced to the Illinois General Assembly. My bill proposes barring the execution of the mentally retarded, mandating that natural life is given as a sentencing option to juries, reducing death penalty eligibility factors from twenty to five, and barring the death penalty when a conviction is based solely on a jailhouse "snitch." It is imperative that we move forward on all of the commission's recommendations to fix our broken justice system. I hope the General Assembly will take the summer to hold hearings and meetings with all of the key parties—the prosecutors, defense attorneys, victims, and the wrongfully convicted.

But I am also deeply concerned. My commission's report seems to confirm my worst fears about our capital punishment system, revealing that it is fraught with error at every painful step of the process. The report reviews, at some level, every capital case that we have ever had in Illinois, looking closely at the thirteen inmates who were freed from death row and exonerated for lack of solid evidence.

A perfect example is the case of a remarkable man, Gary Gauger. Gary was from McHenry County. He was convicted and sentenced to die for brutally killing his parents. There was no physical evidence against him and prosecutors presented no motive. The primary evidence against Mr. Gauger involved statements he allegedly made to police. My commission reported that those statements were *never* put in writing, and Mr. Gauger denied he ever made them. But prosecutors



*Can you imagine serving even one day on death row for a crime you did not commit?*

won the conviction anyway and sent him to death row. Case closed, until a few years later when federal authorities investigating a Wisconsin motorcycle gang—a totally unrelated case—caught gang members on tape confessing to the brutal crime. Gary Gauger sat on death row for nearly three years. Not only was he grieving the brutal murder of his parents, but he had to grieve for himself as well, for being accused of taking his parents' lives. His freedom and his dignity stripped from him, he was caught in a nightmare that is too painful to imagine. He never gave up hope, though. He was innocent.

My commission says several cases involved prosecutors relying on the testimony of a witness, like a jailhouse informant or an accomplice, with something to gain. Verneal Jimerson and Dennis Williams were two of the so-called Ford Heights Four, from a south suburb in Cook County. The primary testimony against them came from a seventeen-year-old girl, with an IQ of less than sixty, who police said was an accomplice in the murder of a couple. Seventeen years later, Jimerson, Williams, and two others serving lesser sentences were released after new DNA tests revealed that none of them was linked to the crime. Later that year, two other men confessed to the crime and were put in prison. Seventeen years! Can you imagine serving even one day on death row for a crime you did not commit?

We had one inmate, Steven Smith, who was convicted and sentenced to die based solely on the testimony of one, drug-addicted witness. The case of Anthony Porter that I mentioned earlier also highlights the unreliability of some eyewitness testimonies. Two eyewitnesses said they saw Porter kill a couple in a South Side Chicago park. Sixteen years later, journalism students working with a private investigator found those witnesses, who recanted their testimony. Then the students tracked down the real killer.

At least one case involved a false confession. Ronald Jones confessed to police to a rape and murder. He later said that his confession was coerced and, years later, DNA tests cleared him.

There are ten more death row cases still on appeal, known as the Burge Ten, named after the police detective commander who handled their investigations, all of which

involve allegations of police abuse and excessive force. We still don't know how those cases will conclude, but they raise serious questions.

The commission co-chair Thomas Sullivan very eloquently discussed the report's findings. He said, "In medical terms, our report calls for triage, an attempt to stanch the extraordinary rate of errors, reversals, and mistaken convictions in capital cases." He was right. If you look at the reversal rate in capital cases in Illinois, it exceeds 50 percent. In fact, the chance of executing the wrong person in Illinois is like the flip of a coin. That is not justice.

When we released the report, Thomas Sullivan noted that in the Ford Heights Four case, the police were given the names of the four actual killers and rapists within a few days after the event, but failed to follow up. Meanwhile, the four defendants served over seventy years in jail. Sullivan said, and I agree wholeheartedly, "A system that is so fragile that a journalism student has to do the police work is obviously badly flawed." Where in the Illinois criminal code does it say that journalism students are part of the system to ensure that only the guilty are convicted and executed?

In perhaps the most scathing indictment of our system, Sullivan noted the following:

The police, who conducted the investigations in these cases, remain on the force. The prosecutors, who overstepped the bounds of fairness, and the defense lawyers, who gave incompetent defense, remain in practice. The judges, who permitted or caused the errors, remain on the bench.

When I was a pharmacist, I know I couldn't have stayed in business if I only got it right 50 percent of the time. There is virtually no other profession where that level of mistake would be tolerated. Yet that is the situation that we have with the police, prosecutors, defense lawyers, and the courts in capital cases in Illinois. And these capital cases are just a small percentage of all of the criminal cases handled by the courts. What is happening in the rest of the system? If we have this level of error in cases where the ultimate penalty is at stake, what is happening with lesser crimes?



*No one is spared from accountability because we are all accountable.*

I am concerned about lesser crimes, too, for the sake of the innocent. Tom Sullivan said the message from the commission and of this report is clear: "Repair or repeal, fix the capital punishment system or abolish it. There is no other principled course."

By the way, as I mentioned earlier, Thomas Sullivan is the former United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. He was a tough prosecutor, now in private practice. Some of the critics not happy with this report have criticized the commission for being stacked with death penalty opponents. I would point out that nine of the fourteen members are current or former prosecutors. When I appointed them, those opposed to capital punishment accused me of stacking the commission with death penalty *supporters!* This commission is made up of some of the most conscientious, dedicated people ever to enter public service. I am proud of the work they have done.

Before the report was officially released, it was being criticized. I cannot understand that. Why would you prefer the status quo? My commission concluded that our twenty factors were too many, and that they ought to be reduced to five. Some critics pointed out that it is an election year and therefore a bad time to suggest reducing the number of eligibility factors for the death penalty. I am well aware that it is an election year, but matters of life and death, and justice and fairness, are more important than getting elected. Political leaders have an obligation to study this report before they jump to conclusions.

Current and former prosecutors have found fault with the report. Some have predicted that Illinois would become the new murder-for-hire capital of the world because participating in a murder-for-hire plot would no longer make one eligible for the death penalty. That is ridiculous. This factor was eliminated in large part because these sentences rarely, if ever, withstand appeal. Other prosecutors and police officers have said the recommendations are a slap in the face to police. I don't understand that either.

Throughout, I have always pointed out that there is enough blame to go around for everyone. The commission highlights the need for better-trained defense attorneys and

judges; it even suggests the state has not pulled its weight and provided enough money for things like DNA labs and a database, things that will help protect the innocent and convict only the guilty. No one is spared from accountability because we are all accountable. Our system is riddled with errors and omissions from top to bottom.

That is why I believe it is so vitally important that hearings be held this summer. We must have an honest debate about our system and whether or not it can be repaired. I don't know of any crime victim, police officer, prosecutor, or politician who wants to see an innocent person executed. It is easy to be in favor of the death penalty in the abstract, but until you sit where I sit, you don't know just how difficult that decision can be.

Is revenge reason enough for capital punishment? Can it blind the eyes of those pursuing justice? In the wake of September 11, many say the American people support the death penalty now more than ever. This country is now at war, and the terrorists who attacked it, who used passenger jets as missiles, killing thousands of innocent men, women, and children, were deranged. They were on a suicide mission and the crime they committed was already a capital offense. The death penalty was no deterrent. If Osama bin Laden or his evil co-conspirators are caught, there is not a question they would face the death penalty, and perhaps that is the appropriate penalty.

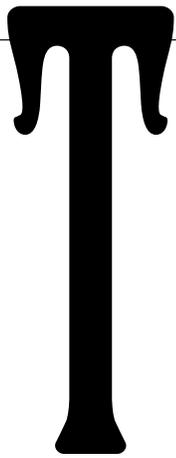
But my concern is the system in Illinois, fraught with error in convicting and condemning the innocent along with the guilty. When I made my decision to declare a moratorium, I never consulted the opinion polls. Only since my decision have I noticed them. A recent Gallup poll was interesting:

- Only 53 percent of those polled believe the death penalty is applied fairly, while 40 percent say it is applied unfairly.
- Among non-whites, 54 percent believe the death penalty is applied unfairly.
- When given the sentencing alternative of life without the possibility of parole, 52 percent of Americans support the death penalty and 43 percent favor life imprisonment.

*Continued on page 33*

# A JEWISH LOOK AT ISAIAH 2:2–4

*Tikva Frymer-Kensky*



*here are many ways in which the Bible has reverberated throughout Christian and Jewish religious traditions. As is well known, the Jewish tradition privileges the Torah, the Pentateuch, which is traditionally chanted aloud in synagogue in its entirety during the year, and which serves as the foundational document for Jewish legal thought. Selections from the prophets are also chanted liturgically through the series of Haftarah, right after the Torah reading. A haftarah is a predetermined selection from the “first prophets” (the historical books*

from Joshua to Kings) or the “latter prophets” (the classic literary prophets). The relationship of the haftarah to the Torah portion is not always known, but it is generally complementary in some not always transparent way. The rest of the prophetic writings are not part of the lectionary, but this does not mean that they are not important in Judaism. The passage that I study today, the famous eschatological vision of Isaiah (Is 2:2–4) is not a haftarah, and as a result the passage is never read in its entirety in synagogue liturgy. This may be because its major themes are very different from the ideas presented in the Torah. Nevertheless, the ideas of this passage are not marginal to Judaism: they resonate with other biblical passages and have an enormous impact on both Jewish thought and liturgy.

It will be at the end of days:  
The mountain of the house of YHWH will be  
established at the head of the mountains.  
It will be higher than the hills  
And all the peoples will stream to it.  
Many peoples will say, “Let us go up to the mountain  
of YHWH, to the house of the God of Jacob;  
Let him instruct us from his ways and we will walk  
in his paths.”

For divine torah [divine instruction] comes out of  
Zion, the word of YHWH from Jerusalem.  
He will judge between nations, and chastise many  
peoples.  
They will turn their swords into plowshares and their  
spears into pruning forks.  
Nation will not lift up sword against nation and they  
will no longer know war. (Is 2:2–4)

As a Jew, I have been surrounded by these words all my life. When I was a child in summer camp, Friday evenings began with a procession in which we all sang “nation will not lift up sword against nation,” for we were told that the Sabbath provided a taste of the eschatological Sabbath of eternal peace. Throughout the Jewish world, every Sabbath morning, and all other times when the Torah scroll is read aloud, Jewish congregations sing, “for the Torah comes from Zion, the word of YHWH from Jerusalem,” as the Torah scrolls are taken from the ark to be shown and read. A historian might consider this a strange time to sing this prophecy of Isaiah

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*Professor Frymer-Kensky delivered an earlier version of this paper at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, held in Denver, Colorado.*





. . . it makes wonderful liturgical sense for memories of Sinai and of Zion to bracket the public reading of the Torah.

(and its parallel in Micah 4:2). As far as we can judge by another eighth-century prophet, Amos, none of the prophets from the eighth century BCE had a tradition that the Torah was given at Sinai. Amos's declaration that God knew Israel more intimately than the other nations is accompanied by his statement that God provided Israel with prophets and Nazirites; he says nothing about the Torah at Sinai. To these eighth-century prophets, God is in Jerusalem and God's instruction (*torah*) comes from there. At the same time, the scroll of the Torah contains a grand narrative that says nothing about Zion or about the Torah coming from there. In the Torah, the exodus from Egypt leads to the revelation at Sinai, where God gave Israel its law and ritual life. The synagogue's Torah service celebrates the same master story, for when the congregation finishes the ceremonial chanting of the scroll, the scroll is held aloft and the congregations sing, "this is the Torah that Moses placed before Israel, by the mouth of the Lord through the hand of Moses."

These two passages, "the Torah will come forth from Zion" and "the Torah that Moses placed before Israel," represent two different senses of Torah, two separate concepts of divine revelation. The liturgy does not choose between them. The actual liturgical scroll, of course, comes neither from Zion nor from Sinai, but from the hand of a scribe. It stands as an icon of God's relationship to Israel. "The Torah that Moses placed" remembers the moment that the eternal symbiotic relationship between God, Israel, and the Torah began; "The Torah will come forth from Zion" points to the end point of this eternal process. The bringing of Sinai and Zion together encompasses the whole history of Israel's receptivity to the once, always, and future divine instruction. Given this semiotics of Torah, it makes wonderful liturgical sense for memories of Sinai and of Zion to bracket the public reading of the Torah.

The themes of this passage in Isaiah provide Judaism with a vector headed for a specific time and place, Zion in the end-time. They characterize this final setting as governed by the universal reign of God and by universal peace, and as witnessing the end of war and the exaltation of Zion.

The sovereignty of God is the basis for this vision of peaceful arbitration, but there is no kingship language here. Isaiah does not use the terminology that he himself uses for a perfect human king (11), nor does he use the poetic language of God's kingship known from Psalms. The psalms of the kingship of God (92–97) are about the time when "God reigns." Our passage represents the day *after* the "Day of the Lord," the time after the eschatological battle in which God establishes God's universal kingship. It is a picture of the after-days (*aharit hayyamim*) and its tone is very much like that of Genesis 1, which deals with the beginning (*rešit*). Like Isaiah 2:2–4, Genesis 1 also begins *after* whatever divine combat ("chaoskampf") Israel understood to have preceded God's kingship—a victory and kingship that the Bible celebrates in various hymnal psalms and poetic references. But Genesis 1 begins after the primordial battle, on the first days (*rešit*) of our history. At that time, God's word was uncontested in the cosmos, and God inaugurated the earthly world by creating heaven and earth. In the after (*aharit*) days of Isaiah 2:2–4, with God's kingship established on earth and uncontested, God's sovereignty knows no contest and need not defend itself by might. This power transcends the very language of kingship which is so imbued with notions of power and force.

Instead of kingship language, Isaiah and Micah draw on the terminology of Deuteronomy 17:8–12, which sets up a supreme authority that circumvents the monarchy. Deuteronomy provides for the local authorities to bring their difficult issues to the central city, to the priests and "the judge of that day." The tribunal's word (*dabar*) is to be absolute; the parties must act according to its instruction and perform according to the *torah* ("instruction") it gives on pain of death. Normally kings are sovereign in conflict resolutions, but not in Deuteronomy, where the world of the tribunal is supreme. Isaiah and Micah apply the terms of this Deuteronomic passage to the international scene. Just as in Deuteronomy the local courts brought their cases to the tribunal in Jerusalem for resolution of their conflicts, in the after-days nations will come up to Jerusalem for the *dabar* and the *torah*. There will be no tribunal and no sparring



*. . . Christian participant after participant rose to say that they had never been aware . . . that Judaism had such an attachment to a sacred place.*

kings; God alone will be sovereign. And since God will be the arbiter between nations, to use Clausewitz's famous phrase, there will be no need for war to fill this function.

The ideas of divine sovereignty, judgment, and peace are not limited to this vision. Many psalms proclaim the universal kingship of God (e.g., 47:8) and depict God judging the world, or petition God to do so (67, 82, 96); they also portray the universal worship of God (67, 68, 86) and the universal peace that will come (46, 76). The prophetic literature also predicts the universal judgment of God (Jer 3:17), the universal worship of God (Is 56, 66; Jer 16:19; Zep 3; Zec 8, 14), and the universal peace that will come (Is 11, 33). And, above all, numerous passages, particularly in Psalms and Isaiah, depict the exaltation of Zion. Zion is Jerusalem, but it is also a term of love, never used in the passages that castigate Jerusalem. The numerous passages of affection for the beloved Zion depict it as God's city (Ps 48), which God chose (Pss 78, 132; Is 4), which God created (Pss 78, 102), and in which God lives (Is 8, Jl 4:17).

Isaiah 2:2–4, too, is about Zion, one of the many such passages in the Book of Isaiah. When I first started teaching in interfaith contexts, I was invited to be the Jewish dialogue partner in a weekend retreat for clergy. The theme was the Book of Isaiah, and the retreat organizers sent me the texts that they had chosen: The first lecture was to be on the branch and Immanuel prophecies, the second on the Servant Songs, and the third the section in Isaiah 61 on which Jesus preached his first sermon. I remember writing back that the choice of these texts sounded more like the format for a medieval disputation than for a true interfaith dialogue, and I asked to add a fourth lecture on Zion in Isaiah, which they did. In the Sunday morning audience reaction section, Christian participant after participant rose to say that they had never been aware that Zion was a major theme in Isaiah or that Judaism had such an attachment to a sacred place. Their traditional reading of the Book of Isaiah never noticed that it is centered around Isaiah's love of Zion, which he believes will become an entirely holy city (4), one in which no one will ever be ill or guilty (33). The first section of Isaiah (chapters 2–12, sometimes called "the

biography") begins (after chapter 1, which is a prologue) with the passage we are discussing, and ends with an invocation to the mystical personification of the city:

Rejoice, O dweller-in-Zion, for great in your midst is the holy one of Israel. (12:6)

Similarly, the whole book of First Isaiah ends with a prophecy about the perfect future of Jerusalem:

Look upon Zion, the city of our festivals; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful abode,  
A tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken. . . .  
It will be like a place of broad rivers and streams. . . .  
No one living in Zion will say, "I am ill"; and the sins of those who dwell there will be forgiven. (33:20–4)

The Book of Second Isaiah also begins and ends with Zion:

Comfort, comfort O my people, Speak to Jerusalem's heart . . . (40:1–2)

and it calls upon Jerusalem to act:

O Zion the herald, Lift up your voice . . .  
Say unto the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"  
(40:9–10)

Second Isaiah calls upon Zion to awake and to rejoice at her redemption (52). He declares that the Lord is returning to Zion and depicts her as the wife of God whom God is now restoring. When hard times beset the returnees, Isaiah vows:

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet,  
Till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch. (62:1)

Second Isaiah ends with an echo of the passage with which First Isaiah began, a vision of the end-time. All the nations will come to Jerusalem. They will bring the exiled Israelites as their offerings to God, and they will stay to become priests of the Lord as all nations come to worship God (66: 20–23).



*Peace continues to be one of the major themes of Judaism.*

The final section of the Book of Isaiah, like the final chapter of the first section, calls for rejoicing:

Rejoice with Jerusalem, be joyful in her, all who love her.  
Rejoice with her with a great rejoicing, all who have mourned for her. (66:10)

It affirms that Jerusalem will be a place of peace:

For look! I stretch out upon her peace like a river,  
The glory of nations like a flowing stream. (66:12)

The universal kingship of God and the era of peace, the two grand themes of Isaiah 2:2–4, continue to dominate in Israel's thought and liturgy. The two most famous prayers from the first two centuries of our era, the *Kaddish* and the *Aleinu leshabeah*, both concentrate on the universal kingship of God. The *Kaddish* was originally recited in study halls as the fitting conclusion to periods of study, and from there moved both to mourners' houses (which were also occasions for study) and to conclude the communal worship services. The *Aleinu* first appears in the Hekhalot literature, recited by Akiba in thanksgiving for his visionary ascent to heaven, and entered communal liturgy as part of the celebration of God's sovereignty on Rosh Hashannah, and thereafter as part of the concluding portions of communal liturgy. This Isaianic wish for universal sovereignty is the subject of the famous early medieval poem *Vey'e'tayu kol le'ovdekha*:

All the nations will come to serve you and bless your glorious name,  
They will tell of your justice in the far lands,  
Peoples that have not known you will come seek you and praise you to the edges of the earth. . . .  
They will come together to worship you,  
And those who have not known you will learn understanding  
And recite your great deeds and exalt and uplift you.  
The mountains will sing, the islands exult and receive the yoke of your kingship, and the people will exalt you in public.

Those far away will hear and come and give you the crown of kingship.

A widely used High Holiday prayer book, *The Silverman High Holiday Prayer Book*, which was compiled fifty or so years ago, introduces this poem as "remarkable for its universalistic outlook . . . particularly noteworthy since the Middle Ages were marked largely by intolerance, prejudice and violence." Today, many of us have become aware that the universalism of the Isaiah passage and of this poem is a form of triumphalism, but in the minds of their authors, and of the Jews who recite this prayer even today, the poem extends the gift of worship of God to all nations.

Peace continues to be one of the major themes of Judaism. A famous talmudic dictum, by Rabbi Simeon ben Gamaliel, says, "By three things the world is preserved, by truth, by judgment, and by peace" (Avot 1:18), and the Talmud





*Jerusalem, in particular, has been at the heart of Jewish prayer  
since the days of weeping by the waters of Babylon.*

explains that they are all one, since “if judgment is executed, truth is vindicated, and peace prevails” (TJ, Ta’anit 4:2, 68a). A rabbinic midrash notes that all the major prayers of Judaism—the *Amidah*, the *Kaddish*, the Priestly Blessing, and the Grace after Meals—conclude with a prayer for peace (Lev. R. 9:9). That concluding prayer often takes the form “May the one who establishes peace in the heavens, bring peace to us and all of Israel,” but, in addition, there are other prayers for peace in the daily and Sabbath prayer books. There is even a small talmudic tractate, *Pereq hashalom*, devoted to sayings about the greatness of peace.

Yet even as the ideas of universal sovereignty and universal peace resonate throughout the prayer book, the centrality of Zion occupies pride of place in Jewish thought, literature, and liturgy. The liturgical calendar is oriented toward the land of Israel, praying for rain in autumn and winter and for dew in summer. Jerusalem, in particular, has been at the heart



of Jewish prayer since the days of weeping by the waters of Babylon. The third blessing of every Grace after Meals prays for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. The *Amidah* itself, the silent prayer at the heart of Jewish liturgy, contains the petition “And to Jerusalem thy city return in mercy . . . rebuild it soon in our days . . . Blessed are you, O Lord, who builds Jerusalem” (blessing 14). Another petition prays, “May you restore your divine presence to Jerusalem” (blessing 17). Psalm 137 vows not to forget Jerusalem, and reminders of its loss were literally built into every house, as part of its plaster or woodwork was left undone as a visible reminder of the destruction. A whole lament genre was devoted to weeping over the city. One of the oldest from this genre is Amittai ben Shephatiah’s ninth-century petition, still printed in many High Holiday prayer books. It begins:

I remember, O God, and am deeply distressed,  
When I see every city built on its site,  
While the city of God is cast down to the netherworld—  
Yet nevertheless we are for Yah and our eyes are  
to Yah.

Yet another genre of poems, often written for weddings, looks forward to the restoration of Jerusalem. The wedding blessings themselves build on Jeremiah’s vision of the restoration of the joy of bridegroom and bride to Jerusalem. The universalism of the kingship of God and of all nations entering God’s service never displaces the love for the city. This love expresses the deep-held sense that even though God is everywhere and is sovereign everywhere, nevertheless Jerusalem is marked by God and continues to manifest the holiness of the divine presence. This love does not supplant universalism, for Micah and Isaiah already focus on their hope that this presence of God, so palpable in Jerusalem, be acknowledged universally and that this acknowledgment acquire the power to end war and bring peace.

Isaiah and Micah may be quoting a passage that was already old by the eighth century, but this passage and its ideas reverberate throughout the almost three thousand years since they were written as essential pillars of the Jewish faith. □

# BEGINNING AND ENDING IN THE COMMENTARIAL MODE

Richard A. Rosengarten

**H**enry Fielding's great opus *Tom Jones* has two beginnings: the first an initial chapter its author titles "The Bill of Fare" to the feast, a "menu" designed to describe to the reader just what sort of novel she now has in her hands, and the second in the following chapter, in which the action commences. Fielding maintains this double narrative line throughout the novel: each of its eighteen books begins with a chapter of authorial commentary, sometimes retrospective and sometimes prospective, on the action. Readers come to know the

narrator at least as well as any of the characters, and it must be said that over the course of the book he proves congenitally unable to restrict his commentary to the eighteen opening chapters: his garrulous nature simply cannot resist inserting itself into the narrative of the action at various points. (You may now understand better why I myself prize, and empathize so deeply with, Fielding.) Two aspects of the double narrative seem relevant to this occasion. First, the duality is unitary rather than divisive: such is Fielding's art that the point of the novel becomes neither the commentary nor the plot proper, but precisely the intersection of the two. Second, the reader gradually comes to wonder whether the point is the commentary, or the action.

Just as readers of *Tom Jones* get two story lines for the price of one, so those of you who convoke this evening and graduate tomorrow have had two beginnings, and now two leave-takings, to frame your programs of study at Chicago. Disciples House has perhaps provided its own essential running commentary on your program of study at the Divinity School, and I wager that for most of you the experiences of DDH and Swift together form a complementary narrative, yet remain utterly distinct experiences. And just as readers of Fielding's novel who bring to it anything like the sympathy it surely deserves will regard his decision to establish com-

plementary narrative lines as the right decision, so those of you who have enrolled at the Divinity School as residents of Disciples House must have come to regard it as decidedly the right way to have pursued your graduate education. In what follows, I want to sketch out briefly what I take to be the rationale for that perspective. It is, of course, not the only such rationale to be found in Swift Hall, but it is a powerful one of great utility, and it is essential to our common work. Everyone who studies religion needs some such "centering benchmark" for his or her work, and our richness as an institution relies on its existence and its clarity.

Central to the "centering benchmark" of DDH, I submit, is nothing less than a fundamental truth about the study of religion—namely, that one essential component of such study is the benchmark of a specific tradition, instantiated as richly as possible, that limns a vivid sense of both the sheer fecundity of religious practice and thought, and the complex ways that religion is a force for good and for ill in the world. To study religion without the reference point of such a thick description—irrespective of one's own commitments or dispositions—

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*Dean Rosengarten delivered the following remarks to the Disciples Divinity House graduates and their families at the DDH Convocation on June 7, 2002.*



ultimately impoverishes the work of scholarship. History teaches that orthopraxy precedes orthodoxy in the formation of a religion; conduct and code precede creed. The study of religion implies some link between what we might call the poetic and the pragmatic. The Divinity School seeks to acknowledge to the fullest possible extent both the poetry and the practice of religion. And it is essential, then, that we have checkpoints, institutional and otherwise, that underscore and insist upon the lived realities of religious practice—in the service, among other things, of truly superior research on religion.

In Swift Hall, this commitment is generally underscored by the Divinity School's historic and ongoing commitment to the Christian tradition. We reserve a central place in the hiring of faculty and in the curriculum of the School for the scriptural, historical, and theological heritages that comprise that particular witness. We train a select group of students for ministerial service in it. While these practices certainly reflect the institution's unique association with the Baptists, I would submit that they also reflect a cognizance—reaching back to William Rainey Harper, albeit expressed differently, and for a different world, a century ago—that when the subject is religion, a great research university will achieve the highest standards if, and only if, its work devotes a larger proportion of its resources to the fullest possible appreciation of one specific tradition. And it can do so in a way that marries engagement with disinterest. That is the challenge and the promise of work at the Divinity School.

Permit the brief but essential detour of a demurrer at this point. If I appear in this description of our Pascalian wager to sound the unhappy note of Christian triumphalism, let me be clear: I do not mean to suggest that history is destiny. It is possible for such an institution to exist under the aegis of another tradition that provides such a centering benchmark for its work. The point is that it is essential to have one, and that Christianity is ours.

I said just a moment ago that in Swift Hall this commitment is *generally* underscored, and the adverb is crucial: our commitment to Christianity necessarily embraces neither specific denominational lines nor apologetic traditions, but its broader contours. Some have been, are, and will be uneasy that this commitment is indeed general: that impulse gives rise to institutions with specific denominational affiliations. Academy and church need one another; each has its virtue, which it must cultivate, and its corresponding lack, to which it must always be alert. Denominationally affiliated institutions richly instantiate a particular branch of their tradition, and must guard constantly against reifying the part into the whole. Non-denominational institutions richly instantiate the broader tradition, and must guard constantly against so reifying the whole that it forgets that sustaining it as a lived reality requires just such branching out.

The Divinity School's general underscoring of this fact is buttressed—in an indispensable way—by the specific fact of institutions that affiliate with it in the name of specific communities of belief and practice. Exemplary among these is Disciples House, and the happy news—what we celebrate this evening—is that those of you who convoke twice in these next twenty-four hours have in fact not had to choose: you have benefited from both the educational breadth of a non-denominational institution, and an exemplary instance of the specific focus of a denominational setting. So what we honor tonight is what I would term the commentarial dimension of your tenure at the Divinity School in the full, Fieldingesque sense that dignifies commentary as an essential activity to the plot, understood in this case as your program of study. We celebrate this evening the rich, commentarial dimension that your membership in the Disciples House community has played in your educational odyssey through Swift Hall.

When the reader arrives at the last of the eighteen introductory chapters of *Tom Jones*, on page 913 in the Wesleyan edition of the works of Henry Fielding, (perhaps not the least appropriate metaphor for how you feel as you conclude your program of study) the narrator offers “A Farewel [sic] to the Reader.” It opens as follows:

We are now, Reader, arrived at the last stage of our long Journey. As we have therefore travelled together through so many Pages, let us behave to one another like Fellow-Travellers in a Stage-Coach, who have passed several Days in the Company of each other; and who, notwithstanding any Bickerings or little Animosities which may have occurred on the road, generally make all up at last, and mount, for the last Time, into their Vehicle with Chearfulness and Good-Humour; since, after this one Stage, it may possibly happen to us, as it commonly happens to them, never to meet more.

Allow several days to comprise several years and you have, I submit, a lovely and very wise sense of ending, and one that not incidentally requires a second narrative line to sustain its central metaphor. So permit me, on behalf of the Divinity School, to take the liberty of your privilege and salute you as we mount together today and tomorrow for our last rides in the “Stage-Coach” that is Disciples House and the University of Chicago Divinity School. Let us do so with the cheer and good humor that a journey well-traveled and nearing completion richly warrants. And let us summon up the commentary as we proceed! Finally, let us depart from the resolve of Fielding's narrator only in this: that we shall bid adieu firm in the resolve to avoid the common fate of fellow-travelers, so that we meet early and often in the years ahead! Kudos from Swift Hall. □

# ALUMNI NEWS

PHYLLIS AIRHART, M.A. 1981, Ph.D. 1985, Associate Professor of the History of Christianity at Emmanuel College of the University of Toronto, was awarded the Davidson Trust Award for excellence in teaching and scholarship in theological education by the United Church of Canada. She also coedited, with Marilyn Legge and Gary Redcliffe, *Doing Ethics in a Pluralistic World: Essays in Honour of Roger C. Hutchinson* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2002).

GREGORY D. ALLES, M.A. 1978, Ph.D. 1986, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Western Maryland College in Westminster, was appointed Visiting Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Munich University for the winter of 2003.

JAMES LEE ASH, JR., M.A. 1974, Ph.D. 1976, was inaugurated as the sixth President of Sierra Nevada College in Lake Tahoe, California, on August 28, 2002. Mr. Ash is former President of Whittier College and recently served as Planning Consultant to the Board of Directors of World One, a corporation founded in 1999 to bring modern technology, agriculture, housing, and medical services to developing nations. Martin E. Marty delivered the keynote address at the presidential inaugural dinner on August 27.

ROGER W. AXFORD, M.A. 1949, Emeritus Professor of Adult Education at the Center for Higher Adult Education at Arizona State University in Tempe, President of the Recareering Institute, member of the Coalition for Justice and Peace, and columnist for *Arizona Senior World*, recently authored, with a forward by Edward Asner, *A Peace of My Mind: The Unrepentant Peacenick* (Tempe, Arizona: Enlightenment Press, 2001).

W. BOYD BARRICK, M.A. 1973, Ph.D. 1977, former Dean and current sometime Instructor at Montana State University at Billings, recently published *The King and the Cemeteries: Toward a New Understanding of Josiah's Reform* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002). The book presents new examinations of the

reports of Josiah's reform in 2 Kgs 23:4–20 and 24 and 2 Chr 34:3–7 and related biblical passages (especially 1 Kgs 12:33–13:32), concentrating on the compositional history of this material and its usefulness as a source for reconstructing the likely history of Josiah's reign. Mr. Barrick is coeditor of *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honour of G. W. Ahlström* (JSOT Sup, 1984), a contributor to *TWAT* and *ABD*, and author of numerous papers on literary and historical topics, including, most recently, "Loving Too Well: The Negative Portrayal of Solomon and the Composition of the Kings History" *Estudios Biblicos* 59 (2001): 419–449.

THOMAS BERG, M.A. 1992, joined the founding faculty of the School of Law at the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis, Minnesota, teaching constitutional law, religious liberty, and intellectual property. Mr. Berg has also published *Religion and the Constitution* (Aspen Law and Business, 2002), a law casebook with (among others) Michael McConnell, formerly Professor in the Law School at the University of Chicago.

ANNE M. BLACKBURN, M.A. 1990, Ph.D. 1996, Assistant Professor in the Department of Religious Studies in the University of South Carolina at Columbia, was appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Asian Studies at Cornell University, beginning in the autumn of 2002. In June 2001, she published *Buddhist Learning and Textual Practice in Eighteenth-Century Lankan Monastic Culture* (Princeton University Press).

W. SHEPHERD BLISS III, M.Th. 1969, D.Min. 1981, Professor in the Culture and Ecology Department of New College in California, has published a book in the aftermath of September 11 entitled *Shattered Illusions: Analyzing the War on Terrorism* (Bristol, England: Amal Press, 2002), and the poem, "Caves, People, and War" in *An Eye for an Eye Makes the Whole World Blind: Poets on 9/11* (Oakland, California: Regent Press, 2002).

JAMES M. BRANDT, Ph.D. 1991, Associate Professor of Historical Theology at Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Missouri, has published *All Things New: Reform of Church and Society in Schleiermacher's Christian Ethics* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2001), with a forward by B. A. Gerrish. In this book, Mr. Brandt examines Schleiermacher's Christian ethics in relation to historical context and Schleiermacher's life and work as a pastor, professor, and advocate for social change.

JAMES S. DALTON, M.A. 1970, Ph.D. 1973, Professor of Religious Studies at Siena College in Loudonville, New York, was elected Chair of the Religious Studies Department in 2002, for a term of three years.

ROBERT D. DENHAM, M.A. 1964, Ph.D. 1972 (English), John P. Fishwick Professor of English at Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia, was awarded a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities to conduct research during his 2002–2003 sabbatical. Mr. Denham intends to spend his sabbatical expanding his preliminary investigation of Northrop Frye's religious ideas, paying special attention to the Western and Eastern esoteric traditions in Frye's notebooks. He will spend some time at Victoria University in Toronto, Canada, which houses Frye's library, and he plans to write a book-length study based on his research there. This is the second NEH award Mr. Denham has received for sabbatical work on Frye. He has recently edited the sixth and seventh volumes in the series *The Collected Works of Northrop Frye: The Diaries of Northrop Frye, 1942–1955* (University of Toronto Press, 2001), and *Northrop Frye on Literature and Society, 1936–89* (forthcoming in 2002).

GABRIEL FACKRE, B.D. 1948, Ph.D. 1962, Abbott Professor Emeritus of Christian Theology at Andover Newton Theological Seminary, was honored with a recently published Festschrift edited by his daughter, Skye Gibson (B.A. 1982), titled *Story Lines: Chapters in Thought, Word, and Deed* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), a collection of essays by leading religious thinkers, professors, and pastors, including Avery Cardinal Dulles, George Lindbeck, Jurgen Moltmann, and Martin E. Marty.

MATTHEW GOFF, Ph.D. 2002, began a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Religious Studies in the Department of Literature and Philosophy at Georgia Southern University in the autumn of 2002.

J. ALBERT HARRILL, M.A. 1989, Ph.D. 1993, has accepted a position as Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Indiana University in Bloomington.

JOHN C. HOLT, Ph.D. 1977, was appointed Kenan Professor of the Humanities at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine.

REV. DAVID J. JAMIESON, B.D. 1955, recently completed seven years as chaplain to the clergy of the Episcopal Diocese of California, following his retirement in 1994 as Conference Minister of the United Church of Christ in northern California.

DIANE JONTE-PACE, M.A. 1975, Ph.D. 1984, Professor of Religious Studies and Associate Vice Provost of Santa Clara University in California, has published *Speaking the Unspeakable: Religion, Misogyny, and the Uncanny Mother in Freud's Cultural Texts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

MICHAEL KINNAMON, M.A. 1976, Ph.D. 1980, just completed his second year at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, as Allen and Dottie Miller Professor of Mission and Peace. Last decade, he served as Dean of Lexington Theological Seminary. From 1999 to 2002, Mr. Kinnamon served as General Secretary of the consultation on Church Union, overseeing the navigation of Churches Uniting in Christ (January 2002). His new book, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement and How It Has Been Impoverished by Its Friends*, is due to be published in early 2003 from Chalice Press.

MARTIN E. MARTY, Ph.D. 1956, Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of Chicago Divinity School, was appointed Emory University's second Robert W. Woodruff Visiting Professor of Interdisciplinary Religious Studies at the University's Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Religion (CISR) for the 2003–2004 academic year. He will codirect with CISR Director John Witte, Jr., the Center's next major research project on the topic of children. Mr. Marty will lead a faculty seminar in the autumn of 2003 and make several presentations on campus, including a major presentation with former President of the United States Jimmy Carter in October 2003.

ROBERT N. MCCAULEY, M.A. 1975, Ph.D. 1979 (Philosophy), Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Emory College Center for Teaching and Curriculum at Emory University, and E. THOMAS LAWSON (M.A. 1961, Ph.D. 1963), Professor of Comparative Religion at Western Michigan University, have recently published *Bringing Ritual to Mind: Psychological Foundations of Cultural Forms* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2002). McCauley and Lawson explore the cognitive and psychological foundations of religious ritual systems.

JAMES G. MOSELEY, M.A. 1971, Ph.D. 1973, became the fifteenth President of Franklin College in Indiana on July 1, 2002. Since 1991, Mr. Moseley had served as Vice President and Dean of the College at Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky.

ANNE E. PATRICK, M.A. 1976, Ph.D. 1982, was named the William H. Laird Professor of Religion and the Liberal Arts at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, where she currently chairs the Department of Religion. She recently completed service as a founding Vice President of the International Network of Societies for Catholic Theology.

BARBARA POWELL, M.A. 1987, has published a volume of poetry, *Strange Pilgrim* (Colma, California: Second Page Books, 2002).

PAUL C. PRIBBENOW, M.A. 1979, Ph.D. 1993, was inaugurated the sixteenth President of Rockford College on October 4, 2002, in Rockford, Illinois. As part of the inaugural celebrations, the college also celebrated the opening of the Jane Addams Center for Civic Engagement, which seeks to advance the mission and ideals of Rockford College through the study and practice of citizenship, service, and life-long learning. Addams, the founder of Chicago's Hull-House and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931, graduated from Rockford College in 1882.

KEVIN SCHILBRACK, M.A. 1989, Ph.D. 1995, was recently promoted to Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia, with tenure. He recently edited *Thinking through Myths: Philosophical Perspectives* (Routledge, 2002). *Thinking through Rituals* is forthcoming in 2003. Mr. Schilbrack was also awarded a sabbatical, which he will spend as a senior fellow at Harvard University's Center for the Study of World Religions in 2002–2003.

GEORGE W. SHIELDS, Ph.D. 1981, the 2000–2001 University Distinguished Professor; Professor of Philosophy; and Chair of the Division of Literature, Languages, and Philosophy at Kentucky State University, has authored an intellectual biography of G. E. M. Anscombe, to appear in the forthcoming volume *British Philosophers, 1800–2000*, edited by Phil Dematteis, Peter Fosl, and Leemon McHenry for the Dictionary of Literary Biography Series (Columbia, South Carolina: Brucoli Clark Layman, 2003). His article "Omniscience and Radical Particularity: A Reply to Simoni" will appear in *Religious Studies* 38 (2002). He is also Invited Editor for the Special Focus Issue on Philosophy of Technology in *Process Studies* 31, no. 1 (Summer 2002), which includes his essays "Introduction: Of Process and

*Techné*" and "Process Thought and Recent Philosophy of Technology." During March 2002, Mr. Shields presented two papers at the Philosophy of Religion sessions of the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion Southeast in Atlanta, Georgia: "The Constructive Post-modern Philosophy of Frederick Ferré," with Ferré as respondent at the Invited Symposium on the Philosophy of Frederick Ferré, and "'Out with a Whimper': Cold Death Physics and Theistic Models."

JEROME A. STONE, Ph.D. 1973, Emeritus Professor in the Department of Philosophy at William Rainey Harper College in Palatine, Illinois, joined the adjunct staff at Meadville Lombard Theological School, part of the Hyde Park Cluster of Theological Schools. He also recently published "Is Nature Enough? A Minimalist View" (Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, July 2002).

JOHN S. STRONG, Ph.D. 1977, Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, has been appointed Vice President of the American Society for the Study of Religion for 2002–2003. This position leads directly to the presidency of the group for 2003–2004.

HERBERT F. VETTER, B.D. 1952, Minister at Large Emeritus at the First Parish in Cambridge, Massachusetts, recently edited *Catholic Power vs. American Freedom: Father George La Piana and John M. Swomley* (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2002), which studies the conflict between Roman Catholicism and American democracy as discussed in four lectures by Roman Catholic Priest and Harvard Professor of Church History Gregory La Piana. Appended to La Piana's work is an extended afterword by social-ethics activist John M. Swomley, Professor Emeritus of Christian Social Ethics at St. Paul School of Theology.

JOANNE P. WAGHORNE, M.A. 1970, Ph.D. 1976, formerly Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, was appointed Associate Professor of Religion at Syracuse University in New York.

STEPHEN H. WEBB, Ph.D. 1989, recently promoted to full Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Wabash College, has published *Good Eating* (2001) and *Taking Religion to School* (2000), both with Brazos Press. He has also published several recent articles, including "The Supreme Court and the Pedagogy of Religious Studies," *JAAR* (March 2002): 135–157; "Introducing Black Harry Hoosier: The History Behind Indiana's Namesake," *Indiana Magazine of History* (March 2002): 14–17; and "Defending All-Male Education:

A New Cultural Moment for a Renewed Debate,” *Fordham Urban Law Journal* (December 2001): 601–610.

DAVID C. YU, Ph.D. 1959, Professor Emeritus of Religion at Maryville College, translated into English the first volume of Qing Xitai, et al., *History of Chinese Daoism* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2000). Mr. Yu also participated in the International Conference on Daoist Studies and Chinese Traditional Culture at Sichuan University in Chengdu in October 2000. In June 2002, Mr. Yu delivered a paper, “Comparison between Whitehead and Wang Xuanlan (626–697, T’ang dynasty Daoist priest),” at the International Conference on Whitehead and China in the New Millennium at Beijing Normal University.

#### LOSSES

REV. BARBARA MCGINNIS-GILLISPIE passed away on June 27, 2002, at the age of sixty. She graduated from Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia, with a B.S. in 1976, and was a member of Alpha Lambda Delta. She went on to earn her M.S. at Russell-Sage College of Troy, New York, in 1981, and her M.Div. from Colgate Rochester Divinity School in 1987. She was ordained to ministry by the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A., in 1989, and worked in numerous church capacities. The Reverend McGinnis-Gillispie was a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago Divinity School, working in the area of Practical Theology. She is survived by her mother, two sisters, a brother, two sons and their wives, a daughter, and five grandchildren.

DONALD G. NISWANDER, B.D. 1957, passed away on September 8, 2000.

GEORGE W. PICKERING, B.D. 1963, M.A. 1966, Ph.D. 1975, Visiting Lecturer in the Divinity School from 1967 to 1970, passed away on May 11, 2002, while asleep at his home in Detroit, Michigan. After serving as Director of Research for the Church Federation of Greater Chicago from 1966 to 1968, and Director of The Commons: A Social Ethics Institute from 1968 to 1970, Pickering joined the faculty of the University of Detroit (now Detroit-Mercy) where he taught for thirty-two years. He retired this spring to devote full attention to his writing at his Cape Cod home.

He was coauthor of *Confronting the Color Line: The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago* (1986), which received the 1986 Myers Award from the Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Human Rights in the United States. The book was also one of *Choice* magazine’s “Outstanding Academic Books” for 1987, and it was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in History in 1988. His death leaves uncompleted a decade of work on an intellectual

biography of James Luther Adams; plans for volumes on Jefferson’s religious and political thought, and on American religious social thought more generally; and revisions of the unpublished *Solitude and Democracy: How to Think about the Politics of Your Soul*.

His professional activities included cofounding the Social Ethics Seminar, chairing the Ethics Section of the American Academy of Religion, chairing the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Detroit-Mercy, and serving on the Board of the National Institute for Engineering Ethics. The audience of the nationally syndicated *Ask the Professor* will remember him for his quips and jokes during his twenty years on that weekly radio program.

He is survived by his wife, Betty; a daughter, Jennifer Metsch; a son, Timothy; and two grandchildren. A memorial scholarship fund has been established at the University of Detroit-Mercy.

DURRETT WAGNER passed away in Evanston, Illinois, on November 21, 2001, at the age of seventy-two. Mr. Wagner was born in El Paso, Texas. He received his B.A. from Baylor University in 1950, and his M.A. from Yale Divinity School, going on to do graduate work in social ethics at the University of Chicago with the Federated Faculty of the Divinity School in 1959. After a teaching and administrative career at Kendall College, he and Morton Weisman bought Swallow Press, a publishing house started by Alan Swallow in Denver, Colorado, focusing on poetry, books about the West, and belles lettres. With Frank Williams and Monika Franzen, Mr. Wagner bought Historical Picture Service, a picture archive of over three million images. Until his death, he was consulting editor of *Catalyst: Voices of Chicago School Reform*. He is survived by his wife of fifty years, Betty Jane; three children, Gordon, Velma, and Kendra; a daughter-in-law, Sirley; and a granddaughter, Anna.

- 82 percent of respondents oppose the death penalty for the mentally retarded.
- 73 percent oppose the death penalty for those who are mentally ill.
- 69 percent of Americans oppose capital punishment for juvenile offenders.

While that same poll still showed strong support for capital punishment, 72 percent, it is clear the American people are as concerned with fairness now as they have ever been.

At the beginning of my term, after Anthony Porter was freed, I sat in judgment for an inmate convicted of the brutal murder of a young woman. He was also involved in torturing and killing other women. After the Porter case, I was agonized: I personally reviewed the case files of the convicted murderer, Andrew Korkoraleis. I had veteran lawyers review them as well. I talked to victims and investigators. I left no stone unturned. In the end I was convinced Korkoraleis committed a monstrous, unspeakable crime, and he was executed.

Then the *Chicago Tribune* did a chilling report on the fact that the whole system was flawed. Their findings were echoed in my commission's report. Over half of the nearly three hundred capital cases in Illinois had been reversed for a new trial or resentencing. Thirty-three of the death row inmates were represented at trial by an attorney who had later been disbarred, or at some point suspended, from practicing law. Of the more than 160 death row inmates, thirty-five were African-American defendants who had been convicted or condemned to die by all-white juries. More than two-thirds of the inmates on death row are African-American. Forty-six inmates were convicted on the basis of testimony from jailhouse informants.

After Porter and Korkoraleis, I was already starting to question what I believed about capital punishment. The *Tribune* report left me reeling. And then two more inmates were exonerated. I had to act. After seeing again and again how close we came to the ultimate nightmare, I did the only thing I could do. Thirteen times we almost strapped innocent men to a gurney, wheeled them to the state's death chamber, and injected fatal doses of poison into their veins. I knew I had to act.

I said two years ago, and I say now, until I can be sure that everyone sentenced to death in Illinois is truly guilty, until I can be sure with moral certainty that no innocent man or woman is facing a lethal injection, no one will meet that fate.

A lot of people have called my stand courageous. Those are nice words, but they are nonsense. It was just the right thing to do. I also must decide what to do with the nearly

160 death row inmates who were convicted under our current, broken system.

There is no question that there are guilty criminals on death row in Illinois. But at our current rate of thirteen exonerations for every twenty-five death row inmates, and a 50 percent reversal rate by the courts, the odds are as good as the flip of a coin that there are also innocent men languishing behind bars.

My commission concluded that its recommendations would significantly improve the fairness and accuracy of the Illinois death penalty system. But it also concluded, and I quote, "No system, given human nature and frailties, could ever be devised or constructed that would work perfectly and guarantee absolutely that no . . . innocent person is ever again sentenced to death." That's a powerful statement. It is one that I will ponder.

How has my faith influenced how I have faced this difficult issue? How do I deal with fundamental questions of justice and fairness and morality? I just try to follow my heart and my conscience. I have tried to remember what I've learned from my faith and my family. And, perhaps like you, I might reflect upon what God told the Israelites in Isaiah, "Keep justice and do righteousness." That, I pray, is what we will do. Thank you, and good night. □

#### ENDNOTES FOR Catholic Teaching on the Death Penalty

1. UCCB Meeting, "Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities: Campaign in Support of Life," *Origins* 31 (6 December 2001): 433.
2. See the very moderate statement of Archbishop Daniel Buechlein of Indianapolis, published in *Origins* 30 (26 April 2001): 727-728. Statements by Cardinal Bernard Law, Bishop Joseph Fiorenza, Bishop Bernard Schmitt, and Bishop Thomas Daily may be found in *Origins* 31, issues of 17 May and 21 June.
3. Brugger is not alone in this position. John F. Kavanaugh, in *Who Count as Persons: Human Identity and the Ethics of Killing* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2001), expounds a "radical personalism" which rules out the direct intentional killing of any human being" (p. 119).
4. E. Christian Brugger, Letter to the Editor, *First Things*, August/September 2001, pp. 7-8.
5. Such is the contention of Charles E. Rice in a letter to the editor. *First Things*, August/September 2001, pp. 8-9. A similar position is taken by Kevin M. Doyle, *ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
6. Steven A. Long, "Evangelium vitae, St. Thomas Aquinas, and the Death Penalty," *The Thomist* 63 (October 1999): 519.
7. In the conference reader, *A Call for Reckoning*, Thomas R. Rourke speaks of the danger of fostering "the evil passion to take delight in vengeance" (p. 22). His words will repay study and reflection.

ENDNOTES

1. Zhang Quanqing, "Yuedong Wuhuaxian Huacheng zhen miaohui daguan" (An overview of temple festivals in Huacheng town, Wuhua county in eastern Guangdong province), in Fang Xuejia, ed., *Meizhou diqu de miaohui yu zongzu* (The lineages and temple festivals of the Meizhou area), (Paris and Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, 1996), 6–8. (Based on the situation in this village in the mid-twentieth century.)
2. Robert Hertz, "St. Besse: A Study of an Alpine Cult," in Stephen Wilson, ed., *Saints and Their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 61. (Hertz did the fieldwork for this report in 1912.)
3. Lin Mei-rong, *A Bibliography of Taiwanese Folk Religion*, enlarged edition (Taipei, Taiwan: Academia Sinica, Institute of Ethnology, 1997), in Chinese.
4. Daniel L. Overmyer, "From 'Feudal Superstition' to 'Popular Beliefs': New Directions in Mainland Chinese Studies of Chinese Popular Religion," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 12 (2001): 105–128.
5. Daniel L. Overmyer, ed., *Ethnography in China Today: A Critical Assessment of Methods and Results* (Taipei, Taiwan: Yuan-liou Publishing Co., Ltd., 2002).
6. Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 49 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999).
7. Daniel L. Overmyer, "Convergence: Chinese Gods and Christian Saints," *Ching Feng: A Journal of Christianity and Chinese Religion and Culture* 40:3–4 (September–December 1997): 215–232.
8. New York: New York University Press, 2001.
9. Overmyer, "Convergence," 215–216, 227–228.
10. Frederick M. Denny, "God's Friends: The Sanctity of Persons in Islam" in Richard D. Kieckhefer and George D. Bond, eds., *Sainthood: Its Manifestations in World Religions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 77.
11. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

Professor Overmyer welcomes suggestions about his article at [dano@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:dano@interchange.ubc.ca).



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