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The Center for the Study of Religion at Princeton University was founded in 1999 to encourage greater intellectual exchange and interdisciplinary scholarly studies about religion among faculty and students in the humanities and social sciences. The Center is committed to scholarly research and teaching that examines religion comparatively and empirically in its diverse historical and contemporary manifestations. It aims to facilitate understanding of religion through a program of support for Princeton faculty to pursue teaching, research, and public event planning; awards for Princeton graduate students to complete dissertation research and undergraduate students to write senior theses and junior papers; two interdisciplinary seminars; undergraduate courses; public lectures and conferences; and opportunities for visiting scholars to affiliate with the Center.
The Center offers two weekly interdisciplinary seminars that bring together faculty, postdoctoral and affiliate fellows, graduate student fellows, and other graduate students to present and discuss research in progress. Papers are prepared and distributed in advance of each week’s meeting. Participants in these seminars develop a level of trust that allows them to share the challenges of writing and offer each other supportive yet critical feedback.

Religion and Culture Seminar

Led this Fall by Professor of Religion Jacqueline Stone and this Spring by Assistant Professor of Religion Jessica Delgado, the Religion and Culture Workshop brings together researchers working on historical, ethnographic, and normative aspects of religion. Approaches vary, but participants’ work examines the relation between religion and its wider context, whether that context is construed in literary, cultural, anthropological, philosophical, artistic, or other terms. Topics and presenters for 2013-2014 were:

- “A Modernist Madrasah in Hyde Park? Encounters between the University of Chicago and Indonesian Islamic Intellectuals” and “Cultivating a Hermeneutic for Development: Leonard Binder, Fazlur Rahman, and the University of Chicago,” Megan Brankley Abbas

- “Empire, Religion, and Revolution in Early New England, 1686-1783,” James Bell

- “Speaking the Past: Etymologies, Translation and Empire in Early Modern Spain (1492-1650)” and “Language as Archive: Etymologies and the Ancient History of the New World,” Valeria Escauriaza-Lopez Fadul

- “At Home with Angels: Ritual Texts from Jewish Babylonia and Palestine” and “Yannai and the Angels,” Mika Ahuvia

- “Political Archaeologies: Re-Writing the History of Christianization: Servando Teresa de Mier and Jose Ignacio Borunda in the Spanish American Independence” and “The Voice of the Dead: A Spiritual Revolution, Approaches to Mexico’s Turn of the Century (1891-1896),” Ana Sabau Fernandez

Religion and Public Life Seminar

Center Director and Gerhard R. Andlinger ’52 Professor of Sociology Robert Wuthnow leads this weekly interdisciplinary seminar that brings together scholars engaged in research dealing with the relationships between religion and public policy or between religion and contemporary social issues more generally. Topics and presenters for 2013-2014 were:

- “Composing Spiritual Belonging at the Political Limits of Citizenship,” Sera Chung

- “A National Study on Confirmation Practices in Five Mainline Denominations,” Katie Douglass

- “’Think about that Special Man Who’s on His Way Home to You’: The Sexual Politics of Conservative Women’s Defense of Marriage in the 1970s,” Gill Frank

- “The Cultural Infrastructure of Empire: City-Hopping and the Road to a Pan-Ottoman Islamic Society,” Helen Pfeiffer


- “Have you Spread the ‘Good News’? Evangelical Mission as an Economy of Affect,” Jan an Haack

- “The Life and Death of Stigmatized Organizations: The Case of Nonbelief Groups” and “Digital Contact, Facebook, and Levels of Tolerance Toward Muslims,” Alfredo Garcia
Secularism is one of the most fundamental tenets of French modern social, political, and cultural identity. At the basis of the 1789 Revolution, anticlericalism, along with antimonarchism, had established the conditions for a godless, democratic culture. This apparently undeniable secular identity, however, has not disappeared, and still remains with contradictions. What this course aims to explore most intently is how the struggle between religion and secularism has been a factor for modernity.

Home to the largest Jewish and Muslim communities in Europe, France has both pioneered and struggled with their integration. These tensions, we will see, play a role not only in the modernization of these religions, but also in the modernization of society and culture.

In the cultural productions of the modern period (literature, visual arts, cinema, etc.), ethical and aesthetic innovations often originated in new, ambivalent perspectives on religion. Some of the main contradictions relate to the search of new ethical grounds without God (from Don Juan's libertinage to Camus' existentialism). In the modernization of society and culture, ethical and aesthetic innovations often originated in new, ambivalent perspectives on religion. Some of the main contradictions relate to the search of new ethical grounds without God (from Don Juan's libertinage to Camus' existentialism).

In the realm of aesthetics, from the Belle Époque avant-gardes, experiments to contemporary productions, new forms of expression often accompanied equivocal postures vis-à-vis religion.

This seminar aimed to explore this fertile (albeit problematic) set of dynamics by drawing from cultural history, current events, literature, and culture — from the canonical corpus (“classic authors”) to the popular domain (films and graphic novels), which offer prime material for looking at this topic through the broadest possible spectrum.

The Princeton University Faith & Work Initiative, housed within the Center for the Study of Religion, has had another exciting year. A highlight was the University’s approval for FWI to begin another five-year term. In addition to teaching, continuing the Faith & Ethics in the Executive Suite interview series, and various on-campus and external outreach activities, FWI continues to focus on three primary research projects. Each of these is aligned with FWI’s mission “to generate scholarly research and practical resources for the issues and opportunities surrounding faith and work.”

Teaching a Freshmen Seminar for the first time, on a topic with which I am familiar and engaged, but that I had taught previously only as parts of other courses, I did not know what to expect. The seven students were extremely motivated, full of enthusiasm and eager to learn. The atmosphere was always relaxed and propitious to raising difficult issues, such as anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and radical anti-religion measures in French society (e.g. the Headscarf affair, etc.). Debates flourished around the vastly different approaches to the US and France, and news events were a regular part of the discussion (such as the place of prayer in New York’s public schools). Overall, the class was a success beyond my expectations, and I’ll be more than happy to repeat it in the future.

André Benhaim
Associate Professor of French and Italian
mitting papers on various stages, aspects, and findings from our research.

2) The Integration Box (TIB)

The second project is continued research into and development of The Integration Box (TIB), a psychometric assessment tool to measure how individuals and groups “bring” their faith to work. Notably, this is the first instrument that measures faith at work in a business context at both the individual and aggregate level, and functions for people of all religious traditions. This project builds on and expands the TIB theory I initially posited in God at Work (Oxford University Press, 2007). The TIB instrument is designed to help individuals and organizations understand the primary and secondary ways people manifest their faith at work. TIB theorizes the existence of four modalities of how people bring or live out their faith in the workplace. We call these “The Four E’s”: Ethics, Expression, Experience, and Enrichment (each of which has two suborientations).

With the assistance of research collaboration partner, Timothy Ewest of Wartburg College, and FWI research specialist, Jonathan Lea, the TIB instrument has successfully undergone rigorous field testing, following best social science practices, and is now deemed to be a psychometrically reliable scale, with face and content validity, that accurately and reliably measures the four manifestations of faith/spirituality at work. Last fall, the research team enlarged the original dataset of 1,548, by inviting hourly and salaried employees at a large publicly traded company to take the TIB instrument, bringing the total data set to 6,673. FWI is now making the TIB assessment tool available to other scholars to generate working papers to explore possible connections between various manifestations of faith at work, and other variables. This will facilitate critical reflection by scholars, as well as CEOs, HR professionals, and other practitioners in the possible development of new policies regarding faith and work for all employees, regardless of their tradition. Moreover, the team is testing a beta site of an online, publicly accessible version of the TIB assessment tool for individual use. We hope to make that available in the next academic year.

In addition to the development of the survey itself, Professor Ewest and I are now beginning to write and publish a series of scholarly articles drawing on our work with TIB (see the “Publications” section on page 36). Furthermore, “The Development of The Integration Box: An Individual and Organizational Faith at Work Assessment Scale,” will be presented at the Academy of Management annual proceedings in August 2014.

3) Faith-Friendly Companies

FWI’s third research project explores the scholarly and practical dimensions of corporate attitudes toward integrating faith at work. We have developed a typology that recognizes a spectrum from faith-avoidance to faith-friendly. We are applying particular focus to my conception of what it means to be a “faith-friendly” company (in contrast to a “faith-based” company). Professor Ewest and I have a paper under review on this subject. In addition, we also collaborated on and published an article in the edited volume, “Faith at Work (Religious Perspectives): Protestant Accents in Faith and Work,” in Handbook of Faith and Spirituality in the Workplace: Emerging Research and Practice (Springer, 2013).

Teaching

In addition to FWI’s ongoing research projects, I taught “Business Ethics and Modern Religious Thought” (REL219) through the Department of Religion. The course continues to be over-subscribed, attracting students from a wide variety of majors across the arts, humanities, and sciences, and representing a wide diversity of religious traditions and worldviews. Students are asked to consider the resources of religious thought (with particular attention to the three Abrahamic traditions), as well as the possible conflicts and other issues that may arise as a result of religious thought applied to contemporary workplace ethics situations. During the semester, CEOs from various religious traditions visit the class, and lend a practical dimension to the theoretical underpinnings of the class.

Faith & Ethics in the Executive Suite Interview Series

As part of the ongoing Faith & Ethics in the Executive Suite Interview Series, FWI had the privilege of hosting and interviewing six distinguished leaders this year. Representing Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Mormon traditions, each spoke about their personal perspectives on faith, ethics, and leadership in the workplace. This year our list of interviewees included: Ralph Izzo, Chairman, President and CEO, PSEG; Wendy Murphy, Managing Director, Chief Human Resources Officers Practice, RSR Partners; Bill Powers, former fixed-income portfolio manager and Managing Director, PIMCO; Jim Quigley, CEO Emeritus, Deloitte, Touche & Tohmatsu Limited; John Tyson, Chairman, Tyson Foods Inc.; Kevin Weiss ’79, CEO, SkyMall; and Jay Worenklein, Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, and former CEO, US Power Generating Company (see “Events” section on page 32).

The most recent list of guests brings the total to 20 interviews since the series began. These and all of our prior Faith & Ethics in the Executive Suite interviews are available for viewing on the FWI website.

Outreach Activities and Development

I also conduct off-campus field research, delivery of papers/presentations, and programmatic activities that support the mission of FWI. A sampling of such activities includes: guest lectures at Columbia, Yale, Concordia College, Trinity International University, and Phillips Theological Seminary, as well as Tsinghua University in Beijing and Fudan University in Shanghai; addresses at various faith and work related conferences; and advisory work on ethics and faith at work with various executives and organizations. Significant time is spent developing and maintaining relationships with existing and new donors to support the current and future financial needs of FWI.
At the last session of the term I had the pleasure to share with my colleagues the draft text of the first three chapters of my book. Without reservation I am indebted to each of the seminar members for the lively discussion and constructive and thoughtful comments that were offered. I am grateful too for the every-ready welcome and assistance during my appointment of the Center’s capable administrators, Jenny Legath and Anita Kline. The inspiring, engaging and supportive interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Religion casts a significant role in the graduate program at Princeton and in the American and international academic community. During the Fall Semester of 2013 I had the privilege and opportunity to serve as an Affiliate Fellow of the Center while undertaking research and writing on my current book project, Anglicans, Dissenters and Radical Change in Early New England, 1686–1783. My association allowed me the occasion to exploit in congenial surroundings the significant library resources of the university while writing and inevitably, based on my findings, re-writing important segments of the study.

Another component of my association was to participate in the weekly sessions of the Center's Religion and Public Life seminar. The meetings were attended by an impressive group of talented and accomplished Princeton students. The participants were all in the early or later stages of writing their dissertations on topics that ranged across a broad range of historical and literary timelines and geographical regions of study. But there was an impressive uniformity of the sessions: the papers to be discussed were circulated in advance and were cogently presented and provided valuable views of the topics. The discussions at the meetings were intensive, absorbing, critically supportive and encouraging.

At the time of the fellowship I completed two articles, which benefited from the incisive feedback of participants in the Religion in Public Life seminar and the Religion Department's Religion in America seminar. The first article explores the racial and religious politics of abortion and will be published in Gender and History. The second, which will appear in an edited volume, analyzes the gender and sexual politics of 1970s Evangelical sex advice literature. I also used my time to contribute essays on religion and sexuality to Notches, a public history blog, and to co-edit an anthology on Histories of Sexuality and Religion in the 20th Century United States. I also had the privilege of participating in a number of conferences, workshops and symposiums. Some highlights included CSReS Religion and the Digital Technologies workshop, Yale's symposium on Queer Life After DOMA and Rider University's conference on Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies, where I was the keynote speaker.

Inspired by conversations at CSR, I am beginning work on two new projects. The first explores the efforts of feminist missionaries to proselytize conservative Evangelicals and Mormons in the 1980s. The second will examine the history of the Clergy Consultation Service, an interdenominational organization that assisted women in obtaining abortions in the pre-Roe era. I am grateful for my affiliation with CSR, which has enabled me to have thoughtful and productive interdisciplinary conversations, to develop my research and to learn from a group of exciting and committed scholars.

My time at the CSR was extremely valuable at a transitional moment in my career: it afforded me the chance to put the finishing touches on work based on my doctoral research, and to begin gathering materials for my next major project. At the beginning of my fellowship term, I corrected the final proofs for my first book, Walking Where Jesus Walked: American Christians and Holy Land Pilgrimage (New York University Press, June 2014). It is the only comprehensive study of American Christian travel to Israel-Palestine in the period since 1948. In the book, my first goal is to offer an in-depth portrait of these travellers, most of whom are women who have never, or only rarely, travelled abroad before. I conducted field work with pilgrims before, during, and after the trips, paying close attention to how they integrate the journey into their lives at home. In designing the study, I sought to complement (and sometimes correct) the top-down approach to Christian tourism taken in studies of Christian Zionism and foreign policy. Second, I place these personal stories within the context of broad historical trends, analyzing how the growth of mass-market pilgrimage relates to changes in American Christian theology and culture over the last sixty years. In particular, I engage with the growth of small group spirituality, and the development of a “para-church” Christian leisure industry. The major themes in the book highlight key tensions in contemporary US Christianity between material evidence and transcendent divinity, commoditization and religious authority, domestic relationships and global experience.

Besides completing the manuscript, I also worked on two articles that derive from the same research. The first, which I presented at the Religion and Public Life seminar, concerns Messianic Judaism, an American-born movement of congregations that hold evangelical beliefs and follow Jewish practices. After encountering it during the pilgrimages, I began to study why it has drawn increasing numbers of evangelical and charismatic Christians since the 1990s. With input from members of the RPL seminar, I re-drafted an article on the subject, which has now been accepted for publication in Religion. During my tenure at CSR, a colleague and I also wrote and submitted a successful proposal for a special issue of the Journal of Contemporary Religion about Christianity and ritual efficacy. This summer, I
I count myself extraordinarily fortunate to have had the support of CSR’s Religion and Culture seminar in my fifth year at Princeton. Over the past year, the seminar has provided both an intellectual laboratory for ongoing work on my dissertation, and a productive space in which to examine its results. The thoughtful reflections of my colleagues have been immensely helpful in focusing and refining my work. Just as importantly, some of the materials we considered gave me a valuable introduction to new scholarly genres – the job talk, the book proposal – that are essential to early professionalization. I will greatly miss the warmth and camaraderie of our weekly meetings, as well as the gracious guidance of our faculty leaders, Jackie Stone and Jessica Delgado, in the upcoming year.

Rebecca Johnson
Religion and Culture Fellow

Mika Ahuvia
Religion and Culture Fellow

The fellowship at the Center for the Study of Religion was the most positive and productive learning environment I participated in over the course of my graduate career at Princeton University. The other fellows and faculty mentor provided excellent and pointed feedback on two chapters of my dissertation, but more than that, they provided the kind of encouragement and affirmation only other people working on their dissertations could give.

Mika Ahuvia
Religion and Culture Fellow

will be collaborating on the introduction to the collection, which will also include the second article I wrote while at the CSR titled, “Contingency, Failure, and the Pilgrimage Process.” In it, I consider cases where pilgrimages failed to affect expected outcomes and may even go disastrously wrong.

In spring 2014, I presented papers in venues including the Lived Religion since Vatican II conference at Notre Dame, the meeting of the Young Scholars in American Religion program, and the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians at Princeton. I attended the Race and Religion conference, which Judith Weisenfeld organized in March. It was an especially valuable experience for me since the questions it raised about race and missionary work, in particular, dovetail with my second major project – a study of international child sponsorship in U.S. Christianity. Through these enormously successful fundraising programs, people in the West pay a set amount each month for the care of “their” child abroad, with whom they also exchange photos, letters, and gifts. With the CSR as my home base, I was able to complete preliminary research in the archives at Princeton, Drew, and Columbia. What I found is that, although sponsorship programs are usually thought to have originated in the interwar or immediate postwar period, they actually have important antecedents in nineteenth-century Western missions. As it evolves, the project will examine sponsorship as lived religious practice, asking how participants have conceptualized it with regard to “seed” money, gift-giving, and fictive kinship ties. Driving the project is my interest in how the sponsor-child relationship is instantiated and how, for the sponsor, it corresponds to broader notions of a global Christianity.

The scholars and students I met at the CSR were incredibly welcoming and the quality of their work led me to reframe old questions and pose some new ones. Most importantly, being at the CSR reminded me how energizing it is to be in dialogue with an incredible community of scholars. As I return to Montreal, I am well-equipped to move forward with the research ahead.

Graduate Student Fellows

A small number of Princeton graduate students in the humanities and social sciences are selected each year as CSR Graduate Student Fellows. Their proposals are evaluated by the CSR Executive Committee for scholarly merit, clarity and persuasiveness, and the applicants overall scholarly record. Successful applicants receive support that supplements their regular fellowships and that can be used for research expenses. Graduate Student Fellows take part in one of two Center-sponsored workshops: Religion and Culture or Religion and Public Life (See pages 4-5 for descriptions). In these workshops Fellows present work in progress and respond to that of others. This year’s Graduate Student Fellows are listed below, with their research abstracts.

Religion and Culture
Megan Brankley Abbas, History, “Knowing Islam: The Untangled History of Modern Islamic Thought and Western Academia”

My dissertation examines the rise of a new international network of Islamic scholars and activists in the late colonial and post-colonial world. For centuries, Islamic scholars and activists revolved primarily around the traditional madrasa of the Arabic-speaking Middle East. Aspiring scholars from across the Islamic world would thus travel to cities such as Cairo, Mecca, and Damascus to study the Qur’an, hadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad), Islamic law, and Islamic theology at the feet of great teachers. Then, they would return to their homelands in Indonesia, India, or Istanbul and use their newfound Islamic credentials to become influential Muslim scholars or political figures. While these Middle East-centric networks remain significant in the modern Islamic world, my dissertation argues that an unexpected alternative has emerged to challenge these traditional modes of Islamic education and authority. This new network connects Muslim intellectuals to Western academia, complete with its methodologies, its non-Muslim scholars, and its institutional structures.

In order to study the rise of this “academic Islam,” my dissertation chronicles three generations of prominent Indonesian Islamic figures as they, first, pursued higher education at Western universities like McGill and the University of Chicago and then returned to Indonesia with the aim of modernizing Islam. By appropriating academic methodologies and drawing on the work of Western academics, they fundamentally altered traditional ways of knowing Islam. Moreover, I argue that they have also blurred, if not erased altogether, the line between religious and academic knowledge about Islam. Ultimately, this new international network raises important questions about how and from whom the West should study Islam and as well as to what extent Western academia is engaged in its own projects of Islamic theology and reform.

Mika Ahuvia, Religion, “Israel among the Angels: Angels and Authority in Late Antique Jewish Society”

With my dissertation project, I provide a thick description of Jewish religious practice involving the angels in antiquity. The study of the role of invisible beings in the daily life of people is a neglected area in religious studies. Ancient Jews, like Christians and polytheists around them, lived in a world pervaded by angels and other invisible beings and my work foregrounds the evidence of their reception. Secondly, my work engages with discussions of the diversity of Jewish society in Late Antiquity. If the conventional picture is that rabbits were the only leaders on the scene at this time period, my research brings other authority figures into view. Talking about angels turns out to be a conversation about authority in daily life. In my work I highlight the other authorities on the scene in Late Antique Jewish communities. By authorities I mean those people whom ordinary Jews turn to for their expertise, guidance, and as mediators to God. While we have perhaps five percent of the evidence we wish we had for the ancient world, my research shows how we can utilize neglected evidence to reconstruct a diverse and dynamic society. Thirdly, my project looks beyond Jewish communities to show how Jews are in conversation with other peoples of the Mediterranean, particularly on the topic of angels and angelic imitation. Finally, my research shows how we can include ancient Jewish and women in the writing of social history, particularly by making use of ritual texts. My dissertation examines rabbinic, liturgical, mystical, and magical sources in turn. One of my contributions is to bring these relatively understudied areas of research into conversation with far more studied rabbinic evidence, as well as to bring this diversity of Jewish material into conversation with contemporaneous developments in the religions of the Mediterranean.

Simon W. Fuchs, Near Eastern Studies, “Center and Periphery in Islam: Debating Shi’ism in Pakistan”

My dissertation is concerned with religious authority in modern Islam. In particular, I am interested in debates on religious orthodoxy and reform among Shi’ite religious scholars in late colonial India and, after the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, Pakistan. Since the main centers of Shi’ite learning are located outside the country in the cities of Najaf (Iraq) and Qom (Iran), transnational networks also figure prominently in my work.

During my time as a Graduate Fellow at the CSR, I have completed two chapters related to this project. The chapter “Importing the Revolution: Pakistani Readings of the Islamic Republic of Iran” compares three distinct...
time periods, trying to capture the immediate Pakistani reactions to the Iranian revolution in 1979 up to roughly 1982, the heyday of Shi’a activism in the mid-1980s and the situation in present-day Pakistan. I argue that the rise of the clerics during the early months and years after the Iranian revolution, Pakistani Shi’i scholars (’ulama), remained primarily occupied with domestic events. Even ardent supporters of Khomeini were not entirely sure what the latter’s authority should precisely mean for them outside of Iran. A lack of both available literature and direct contacts with Iran also led these religious scholars to make sense of the revolution in familiar South Asian terms. A second step in the reception can be discerned with the rise of the young cleric Sayyid ‘Arif Husayn al-Husaynī to the helm of Pakistan’s most influential Shi’i organization of the time. Husayni clearly and consistently drew to the hallmark themes of the Iranian revolution. Yet, contacts with Iran also led these religious scholars to make sense of the revolution in familiar South Asian terms. A dialectical relationship with the Iranian Revolution. My second chapter, which I have presented in April to the workshop, deals with Shī’i-Sunni sectarianism. In it, I argue that sectarianism (‘ulamā’i jihādi) as a viable, virulent anti-Shī’a group, the Sipah-i Sahabah (Army of the Prophet’s Companions), the Iranian Revolution constituted a particular moment of threatening closure how to envision their country. Even though they still highlight doctrinal incompatibilities between “real” and Shī’i Islam, the Shi’a are primarily framed as blocking Pakistan from being molded into its true form, namely a Sunni entity with a claim to global leadership. Shī’i denunciations are not a pressing concern only because they are unacceptable from a religious perspective. Rather, the scholars under discussion locate them within a perceived broader Islamic project of world domination and subversion of the fundamentals of Islamic politics. These debates are also informed by internal Sunni sectarian discourses which reflect attempts to discredit potential rivals like — may not so paradoxically — the Muslims in determining the future course of the state. By denouncing (and simultaneously drawing on) the example of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Sipah-i Sahabā also demonstrate a dialectical relationship with the Islamic Revolution.


This project, for a PhD dissertation, investigates the development and influence of modern seminary education within the People’s Republic of China. Seminaries first emerged in the early twentieth century as defense measures against government appropriation of Buddhist property, but other state policies later led to their extinction from 1949-1956, under Mao era Buddhist revival, however, from 1980 onwards more than forty seminaries have been established. This system of seminaries has transformed the modes and content of the knowledge and authority Buddhist institutions transmit. I argue that to understand the impact of seminaries on the future course of the state. By denouncing (and simultaneously drawing on) the example of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Sipah-i Sahabah (Army of the Prophet’s Companions), the Iranian Revolution constituted a particular moment of threatening closure.

Jan an Haack, Visiting Graduate Student, “You will be Happy and it will be Well with You”

My dissertation aims to contribute to the research on the worldwide success of evangelical proselytization by examining how the dynamics of evangelicalism: an organizational pragnatism that resembles contemporary corporate market strategies, and a voluntarism that is deeply rooted in American culture, deriving from an individual strive for happiness. Accordingly, the pivotal point of this project is the exploration of how evangelicalism is able to activate the voluntary commitment of its members, financial contributions, and how this voluntary commitment is embedded into pragmatic distribution structures. This will be conducted by examining evangelical dynamics as economies of affect (Ahmed) and by analyzing how the evangelical “promise of happiness” (Ahmed) provides both a motivator for mission and part of the specifically American “Good News” made hallowed around the world. The emotional motivation deriving from such economics of affect ostensibly marks the antithesis to the organizational form of evangelicalism. But this project argues that both rely on a logic of expansion, forming a system in which they complement each other: In the organizational form the individual commitment generated by the promise of happiness finds its frame to unfold; highly motivated, ‘happy missionaries’ are integrated into a structure that follows market principles, numerical analysis, and efficiently planned strategies, commodifying religion and thus enhancing market-compliant distribution.

As a project situated in literary and cultural studies, the project’s approach to evangelical mission is hermeneutic and theoretical, based on the examination of different modes of representation of mission and evangelicalism in the U.S.

Rebecca Johnson, History, “Praying for Deliverance: Childbirth, Medicine, and Miracle in the Late Medieval Mediterranean”

Childbirth, which links the visceral to the transcendent, has often been considered a privileged moment of access to the holy. This connection has long been over-looked by historians, not least because the scarcity of written records documenting childbirth in the past, and the Middle Ages are no exception. However, some of the best accounts of actual births in the later medieval period appear in religious sources. Numerous accounts of healings attributed to the intercession of various saints during pregnancy and childbirth are found scattered throughout saints’ lives, miracle books, and canonization proceedings. Yet despite a growing

Most people agree that interdisciplinary work is good in theory; in practice, however, it can often be difficult for scholars of different disciplines to gather productively around a common set of concepts and questions. The Center for the Study of Religion at Princeton University is a model for how such work can be done. By bringing together historians, literary scholars, anthropologists and area studies specialists around a shared interest—religion—the CSR seminar functions as a forum for scholars to share research on the intersections between diversity and commonality. It is hard, in the long marathon that is the dissertation, to find the time to read broadly; the CSR seminar suggests that we’d all write better works if we did so more often.

Helen Pfeifer
Religion and Culture Fellow

Having the opportunity to be a part of the Religion and Culture Seminar was without a doubt one of the richest experiences of my time in Princeton. During the hard process of dissertation writing it was fundamental for me to have a committed group of people who not only were careful and brilliant readers of my work, but who were going through similar experiences in their own research projects. The workshop attests to how important collaboration is for academic research, and how fundamental the exchanges with both peers and brilliant readers of my work, but who were going through similar experiences in their own research projects. The workshop attests to how important collaboration is for academic research, and how fundamental the exchanges with both peers and professors can be.

Ana Sabau
Religion and Culture Fellow
The heterogeneity of these varied approaches to linguistic studies is a powerful reminder of Spain’s unique position in European, and imperial, history: the only European empire that had such an early and sustained contact with languages of the New World, it was also one of exceptionally few European polities forced to contend with Arabic speakers and Hebrew sources when approaching its immediate and distant past. Spanish humanists, informed by Old World precedents, realized the full potential of comparative linguistic research in order to make sense of their newly broadened world. Spanish writers in a variety of genres, like the royal chronicler Ambrosio de Morales (1513-1591) and the Biblical scholar Benito Arias Montano (1595), claimed to follow the examples of Plato, Dioscorides and Isidore of Seville when they used the etymological method to shed new light on topics as diverse as the remote history of the Iberian Peninsula, the origins of the inhabitants of the New World, the order of nature, the botanical, and historical information laid in every all the words that locals used to designate the land formations, rivers, plants, or animals in their regions. Spanish and American scholars turned to etymologies as a tool with which to excavate the histories and true meanings of these exotic names. The Spanish Crown, by sponsoring scientific expeditions, comprehensive censuses, the writing of local and universal histories, and the creation of libraries, attempted to harness linguistic knowledge at home and abroad for its own political benefit.

Perhaps because I am at the most solitary stage of my graduate student career (writing my dissertation), what stood out most to me this year was the sense of community and comradeship that was established among the participants and fellows at the Center. The weekly workshop was often the highlight of my week, a time when I was able to leave the lonely and narrowly-focused world of writing and engage with the other scholars and their fascinating and diverse projects.

My project reconstructs the momentous social, cultural, and religious consequences of the 1516-1517 Ottoman conquest of the Mamluk Empire. Overlooked because it happened under the aegis of Islam, the encounter between Arabs and Turkish-speaking Ottomans (called Rumis) was decisive not in spite of their shared religion, but because of it. As Ottoman elites found their political power unmatched by religious and cultural prestige, they intensified their engagement with a shared Arabo-Islamic intellectual tradition and remade their own language and literature in its image. In the short term, this caused great intellectual fervor and a widespread concern with religious orthodoxy. In the long run, it produced the social and cultural network on which imperial cohesion relied. Viewing incorporation through the lens of intimate social gatherings allows for a more dynamic understanding of how Ottomans experienced human difference and developed a shared culture.

My three years as a CSR fellow have been a highlight of my graduate study. The Center for the Study of Religion has been particularly instrumental in cultivating my interdisciplinary sensibility. I understand the opportunity to engage with scholars in fields ranging from Sociology, Politics, and Religious Studies to History, Near Eastern Studies, and Philosophy has been invaluable, and will shape both my work, and how I approach it, for years to come.
This year I was able to present my research very early in the school year. This was a great opportunity for me to workshop my research before the job season began. The feedback I received from Professor Wuthnow and my peers significantly strengthened the work. I believe that CSR’s greatest asset remains its interdisciplinary group of engaged scholars. I’m very proud to have participated with the RPL workshop for the last two years.

**Steven Snell**

**Religion and Public Life Fellow**

**Alfredo Garcia**, Sociology, “Tolerance in an Age of Social Media: Facebook, Acceptance of Muslims, and the Extended Contact Effect”

Could social networking sites (SNSs) be influential in increasing levels of acceptance of (1) members of a non-Western religion and (2) the institutions associated with that religion? This study tests the extended contact effect—in which the mere knowledge that an ingroup member has an outgroup friend can increase attitudes to outgroup members—with an experimental design that employs a screenshot of a Facebook page as a stimulus. Using a sample of crowd-sourced respondents from Amazon Mechanical Turk, we demonstrate that warmth towards Muslims is statistically different across treatment and control conditions: those shown a that warmth towards Muslims is statistically different regardless of gender, race, or age.

**Michael Hoffman**, Politics, “Religion and Democratic Attitudes”

Why does religion sometimes promote support for democracy and sometimes undermine it? My dissertation project argues that communal religious practice has an ambiguous effect on democratic attitudes and behaviors, and that this effect depends considerably on group interest. For religious groups who would, on balance, benefit from democracy in their country, communal prayer tends to have a pro-democratic effect. However, for groups who would lose privileges or resources from democracy, communal practice will generally have the opposite effect. I argue that the axis of political competition is a key intervening variable in this relationship: the link between communal religion and political attitudes depends on who the relevant religious groups are and what issues constitute political competition between them. Using survey data from Lebanon and Iraq, including several embedded experiments, I show that the communal aspect of religion heightens the salience of group identity and therefore pushes believers’ attitudes into closer alignment with the political interests of their sect. Furthermore, I demonstrate that the effect of communal religion on democratic attitudes and behaviors can change over time and may depend on what respondents believe democracy to mean. These findings suggest that contrary to existing literature, communal prayer’s influence on attitudes towards democracy is neither consistently pro- nor anti-democratic nor random. Rather, once group interest is considered as a conditioning variable, clear patterns emerge in the relationship between communal religious practice and attitudes towards democracy.

**Erin Johnston**, Sociology, “Keeping Practitioners Engaged: Confronting Failures and Shortcomings in the Acquisition of Spiritual Disciplines”

Perceived failures and shortcomings abound in the process of spiritual formation: spiritual experiences are few and far between, progress is difficult to perceive and evaluate, and the lofty ideals of the aspired-to spiritual identity are unachievable for the majority of practitioners. In addition, training programs in spiritual disciplines—intentional practices such as yoga and meditation which require regular and sustained commitment and are said to facilitate spiritual formation—explicitly encourage practitioners to identify and acknowledge their failures and shortcomings. I argue that failures and shortcomings are part of the internal logic of practices: a constitutive component which has been under-theorized in previous scholarly work. Given the prevalence of perceived shortcomings and the tendency for repeated failure to elicit task exit, I investigate how teachers, texts and students interpret, justify and account for repeated failures and perceived shortcomings in the course of training. Drawing on data from case studies of two organizations committed to the transmission and maintenance of spiritual disciplines—a Catholic Prayer House and an Integral Yoga Institute—I elucidate the various ways in which these communities deal with failure, both practically and discursively.


My dissertation investigates the spiritual traditions and ritual practices of a group of US mental health professionals, and examines how they translate their experiences with members of a Native North American tribe into a vision for social change and a role for the sacred in American mental health care. Drawing on extensive ethnographic research among the entangled spiritual and vocational lives of a loosely-connected network of US mental health practitioners (many of whom practice in college mental health centers), I show how their efforts help us understand forms of care, ways of worship, and—crucially—relationships between the two in contemporary American life. I argue that my interlocutors both resist and reproduce what they call the “dominant culture,” as they navigate between appropriation and bricolage—in clinics and ceremonies—and labor to create possibilities for faith and healing, for themselves and each other.

**Beth Stroud**

**Religion and Public Life Fellow**

Their stories challenge scholarly accounts of secular selfhood in the ‘West’—and, more importantly—they demand that we attend to the particularities of self-fashioning as an always-unfolding project. In the process, these women and men make a strikingly compelling case for the ethnography of religion against surveys and interviews that reproduce the same categories with which we already work to make sense of American spirituality, they push us to get closer to the complex trajectories along which traditions migrate, and to the very interaction-level spaces in which relationships between experience, authority, and truth are negotiated in word and deed. The dissertation is very much concerned with questions of epistemology and intellectual history, and with the ethics and politics of social scientific inquiry; more broadly, however, my work tells a story about middle-class Americans reaching out beyond the world in which they were enculturated; it’s also very much about how they decide to stop—where they draw the lines, that is, between what they’re willing to do and give up, and what they choose to protect.


During my participation in the Religion and Public Life Seminar, I presented work from my dissertation on Christian therapists, evangelical Christian psychologists and counselors who incorporate their religious faith into their mental health counseling. Christian therapists see themselves as helping their clients with psychological and spiritual issues, but doing so in a different way... As a result of the interdisciplinary conversations in the Religion and Public Life workshop, I have had a much broader graduate education than I might otherwise have had. My colleagues have challenged me to think about the role quantitative questions and methods might play in my own, mostly interpretive, research. In addition, they are delightfully funny, caring people. I deeply value the friendships I’ve developed through the CSR.
fert than church leaders and secular therapists. In the dissertation, I examine the spiritual backgrounds of Christian therapists, the interactions between Chris-
tian therapists, churches, and the greater secular pro-
fession, and the strategies that Christian therapists em-
ploy when engaging with their religiously-diverse clientele.

For the seminar, I presented my findings from the chap-
ter on Christian therapists’ communication strategies
with their clients. Drawing from interview data, the chap-
ter addresses how Christian therapists see them-

selves becoming authentic Christians in the context of
their therapeutic role and how Christian therapists see
themselves as facilitating the development of new selves
in their clients. The challenge for many Christian ther-
pists is to balance their needs to be authentic Christians
with their clients’ goals, preferences, and beliefs. Espe-
cially when they work with clients who are theologically
liberal or even non-religious, Christian therapists must
employ various strategies to express and articulate their
faith in a way that respects professional ethics.

In the dissertation chapter, I argue that Christian ther-
apists evangelize their faith and respect their clients’
differences by taking on the role of “translators” or “ad-
tapters” of faith. In this role, therapists communi-
cate the fundamentals of Christianity to their clients in
an appealing and understandable format. Translating
and adapting means that the fundamental messages of
Christianity are preserved, but it is also expected that
the original meaning may fail to be interpreted in its
full richness and complexity to the audience. Accord-
ing to Christian therapists, the fundamental messag-
eses of Christianity are communicated using principles
and frameworks, which are general themes, concepts,
and ideas that are drawn from Christianity. The pri-
mary principles that therapists incorporate in therapy
revolve around relationships, emotions, meaning, and
sin. Christian therapists believe that, in contrast to re-
ligious practices like prayer and Bible-reading which may
not appeal to all Christian therapists, principles and
frameworks transcend boundaries and speak broadly
and meaningfully to the human experience. By seeing
themselves as translators and adapters of faith, Chris-
tian therapists communicate what they believe to be
the essential truths of Christianity in a way that also
makes room for clients’ perspectives and interpreta-
tions.

Allison Schnable, Sociology, “Voluntary Entrepre-
neurs: The Growth of American Grassroots Develop-
ment Organizations”

My dissertation examines the implications of the dra-
matic growth in international relief and development
NGOs being founded by Americans. Roughly 10,000
new American NGOs have been registered in the last
two decades. Most of these are what I call grassroots
aid organizations: IRS records; an original database
of NGO websites, analyzed with traditional
content analysis and with topic modeling; and inter-
views and fieldwork with five case study organizations
based in East Africa. I find that grassroots NGOs are
typically led by individuals who hold a college degree
but have no training or professional experience in the
field of development. Because they are financed almost
entirely by small, private donations and because they
are not professionalized by the circulation of expert
staff, grassroots NGOs can durably operate according
to a development narrative at odds with the elites of
the field. Their aid projects that reject concerns of institu-
tionalization in favor of providing goods and services
or of developing individuals themselves as religious, ed-
ucated, or capitalist subjects.

Steven Snell, Politics, “Devout Citizens: The Social In-
fluence of Religion on Political Behavior”

This year I spent most of my time writing my disser-
tation on how religious congregations shape the polit-
cal behavior of congregants. I have been engaged pri-
marily in a chapter that evaluates the extent to which
local, congregation-level norms about politics shape
voter choice. Using original data gathered
through a nationally representative survey and through
an exit poll of Mercer County, NJ voters I show that
controlling for standard predictors of voter choice, re-
ligious voters favor the candidate that they perceive
to be closely aligned with their faith, and to have
more socially conservative views. This relationship between individual-level and congre-
gation-level preference is heightened by social embed-
dedness within a congregation and especially by social
surveillance within a congregation. I also demonstrate
experimentally that congregants who are simply primed
to think about their congregation are much more likely
to report vote choices that conform to their perception
of the congregation’s preference. This is especially true
in right-leaning churches.

Irene Elizabeth Stroud, Religion, “A Loftier Race:
American Liberal Protestants and Eugenics, 1877-1930”

As a Religion and Public Life Graduate Student Fellow
during the 2013-2014 academic year, I deepened my
investigation into the connections between turn-of-
the-century liberal Protestants’ embrace of scientific
progress and social change, and their unfortunate en-
thusiasm for increasing the reproduction of the “fit”
while regulating the reproduction of the “unfit.” With
the Center’s support, I was able to complete the propos-
al for my dissertation.

I continue to be excited that my work may fill an im-
portant gap in the burgeoning literature on eugenics
and American society by paying attention to the role
of liberal Protestants. Eugenics fused two of their central
preoccupations in a single social program: first, inte-
grating new scientific ideas into their faith, and second,
ameliorating the social problems of an industrializing
society. Moreover, eugenics fed into liberal Protes-
tants’ postmillennial hopes for human perfection, as
they imagined progressive improvement in both the
biological and the social body. My work examines how
eugenics shaped four significant areas of liberal Protes-
tant religious practice in the twentieth century: the re-
striction of charity, the education of children and young
people about sex and reproduction, the regulation of
marriage, and the celebration of the healthy infant body.
In addition, among white liberal Protestants in partic-
ular, eugenics played into conscious and unconscious
ideas about racial hierarchy and American identity, en-
hancing the idealization of white Anglo-Saxon identi-
ty and helping to codify the social power of those
who claimed that identity.

I originally planned to travel for research during this
fellowsip year, but health and weather intervened.
Instead, I discovered rich archival collections close to
home, some in Philadelphia and some in Princeton’s
own libraries. This robust collection of sources will sup-
port an exciting and engrossing process of dissertation
research and writing.

Ruwa Alhayek ‘14, Near Eastern Studies, “Degendering
the Movement: An Intersectional Reading of Islamist
Women in Jordan”

The assumption that male Islamists need to incorpo-
rate or accommodate women and the assumption that
Islamist women are accepting subordination is prolif-
ic in literature about Islamist women and in popular
discourse. In this thesis I argue that both seem to stem
from the same source: a subtle acceptance of the idea
that patriarchy and the subordination of woman is in-
herent to Islam, or, at the very least, inherent to Islamic
movements. The main contributions of this thesis are
three: 1) To provide an intersectional reading of Women’s activism in Jordan, based on
fieldwork over two summers and interviews conducted over two weeks
during the winter, which contextualizes them both in
terms of larger Jordanian society and relative to other
Islamist movements; 2) to challenge ideas about subor-
dination built into the secular and liberal feminist tradi-

Ruwa Alhayek ‘14, Undergraduate Fellow

Center for the Study of Religion

Catherine Cornbleet, Managing Editor

Undergraduate Research Fellows

The Center annually assists undergraduates by funding
their junior and senior independent research. The Cen-
ter also works to include Princeton undergraduates in
its many areas of ongoing research. The following stu-
dents were named Undergraduate Research Fellows for
2013-2014. In addition to receiving research funding
these students met together to share their research
and attended Center-sponsored lectures and workshops.

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terms of larger Jordanian society and relative to other
Islamist movements; 2) to challenge ideas about subor-
dination built into the secular and liberal feminist tradi-
tion by positioning Islamist women as feminists not despite their Islamism, but because of it; and 3)To argue for the degendering of the Islamic movement and understand- ing Islamist women as full participants and members of Islam in contemporary tradition.” I consider the factors that obscure women’s political activism, and those that may encourage women’s political activism. I contextualize Islamist women’s activism in light of both internal changes within the Islamic movement and external changes in political freedoms—and that the changes in the thought (fikr) of (leaders, scholars, and members of) the movement must be tracked through its female participants as well. Namely these changes lead to shifts in perspectives on issues like the interac- tion between women and men (ikhliât), ideal models of motherhood, domesticity and the Muslim family.

Mieryam Amsli ’14, History, "Nazifascist, Anti-Semitic, or Anti-Zionist? The Debates Surrounding Tacuara in Argentina"

The Movimiento Nacionalista Tacuara (MNT, Tacuara Nationalist Movement) was a right-wing nationalist group formed by eight students in 1958. Made up mostly of young men in their late teens, Tacuara gained pop- ularity for its fight against Jews in the early 1960s. Follow- ing Eichmann's arrest in Buenos Aires in 1961 and death sentence in 1962, a wave of anti-Semitism swept Argentina. This included smearing of Swastikas in Jew- ish schools, synagogues, communal buildings, and Jew- ish residential areas. The most salient of these instances included the shooting of a fifteen-year-old student in a high school ceremony in August of 1960 and the kid- napping, beating, and tattooing of swastikas of Graciela Sirota, a Jewish university student, in June of 1962. The international press, national and international Jewish presses, and Argentine national press reported widely on these incidents, condemning the neo-Nazi attacks and labeling the group with names such as “Argenti- nais youthful pro-Nazi movement,” “anti-Semitic,” and “a Nazi-Fascist band.” Tacuara rejected these epithets, claiming it was anti-Zionist.

Anti-Semitism had a long history in Argentina, which was brought forward by the Tacuara debate. Different strains of anti-Semitism had evolved in Argentina, of- ten not associated with Nazism and that did not neces- sarily support neo-Nazi activities. Given this complicat- ed background, the debates sparked by Tacuara provide a broader understanding of what was going on in the 1960s in Argentina as militant nationalist movements took to the streets and urban guerrillas formed in reac- tion to the shaky politics of the decade. Using primary documents published by Tacuara, we are able to trace the origins and history of anti-Semitism and national- ism in Argentina. This thesis works to understand the currents of approach brought to surface by the violent incidences instigated by Tacuara, how they were under- stood by different parties and lines of thought, and the implications of the different understandings on political activity and international responses to the anti-Semitic wave in Argentina.

Miriam Araya ’14, Sociology, "Remember Where You Came From: A Study of Eritrean Transnational Organizations"

This study looks at the effects Eritrean transnational or- ganizations have on the incorporation of Eritreans into U.S. society. Numerous works exist on immigrants and how they are incorporated into a receiving nation. Old assimilation theories argued that immigrants would shed their ethnic ties in effort to assimilate into the mainstream culture. In more recent times, the focus has shifted from the old assimilation theories to mod- els that take into consideration the experiences of the new, diverse waves of immigrants that came after the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. Models such as segmented assimilation and transnationalism have been created to describe the experiences of these con- temporary immigrants in their adopted countries. This project focuses on Eritrean transnational organizations and their effects on Eritreans in the U.S. Ultimately, the findings show that the Eritrean transnational organiza- tions display defense functions that help ease the settle- ment of Eritreans into U.S. society.


“The Books of Angelópolis” attempts to reconstruct the book culture in Puebla de los Ángeles in 1640, just pri- or to the arrival of the new Bishop Juan de Palafoux y Mendoza. Palafoux is remembered by historians because he helped build the great Biblioteca Palafloxana, one of the few colonial libraries still intact to the modern day. I wanted to know about the book culture before his ar- rival, and what that could tell us about the historical context of Palafoux’s controversial time as bishop. In the introduction, I establish the conflict between the regu- lar and secular clergy. In the first chapter, I deconstruct the book trade to Puebla in the seventeenth century. In the second and third chapter I study the libraries of regu- lar orders, called conventual libraries, and those of the Jesuit colleges. I studied three separate indexes from the eighteenth century, one from the Discalced Franciscan Convent de Santa Bárbara, one from the Jesuit Colegio de Espiritu Santo, and one from the Jesuit Colegio de San Ildefonso. The contents of the libraries show the ex- tent of the ties between the elite citizens of Puebla and the regular orders, which helps us understand Palafoux’s reaction to the wealth and power of the regular orders upon his arrival. The contents also show that the Palafoux Library, though an incredible piece of history, was just one of many tremendous libraries in Puebla in the sev- enteenth century, a sure sign of the intellectual culture of the city.


For my senior thesis, I studied the Rastafari movement and Bob Marley’s musical impact on the faithful. My pa- per first explores the history of Jamaica for contextual information for the study of Rastafari. Then, the paper has a brief overview of the founders and influences of Rastafari. The section concludes with Rastafarian ideol- ogy and practices. constitutes the faith by The next sec- tion details Bob Marley’s life and has song analyses of several popular songs such as “Exodus” and “Jamming.” The penultimate section has several interviews of Rasta and non-Rasta Jamaicans that were interviewed during a research trip to Kingston. This section is integral to the study as interviewees share their sentiments toward Bob Marley, his music, and his depiction of Rastafari. This section ends with a detailed analysis of the inter- views. The paper concludes with an analysis of how Bob Marley’s reggae music impacted the Rasta ideology and its continuing legacy.

Katherine Hawkins ’15, Music, “The Escape”

“The Escape” is a song cycle comprised of seven pieces for solo soprano, piano, violin, and cello set to poems from the “lyric cycle” Spirits in Bondage by C.S. Lewis. Spirits was Lewis’ first published work, and is a compila- tion of forty poems that span a time of great upheaval and change in both the poet’s life and in the world at large. Some poems were written while Lewis was un- der the tutelage of “The Great Knock” in preparation for his Oxford entrance exams, some during his short stay at Oxford for exams and admission, and some of the last during his time as a soldier in the French trenches of World War I and later during his hospitalization and convalescence. Most importantly, the poems track Lew- is’ first foray out of the atheism that marked his early youth to a Paganism of beauty, later to flower into con- version to Anglican Christianity.

Spirits is divided into three sections, titled “The Prison House,” “Hesitation,” and “The Escape,” respectively. I had at first intended to set the poems in their entirety, but instead chose a collection of seven from the last sec- tion. My title is therefore taken from the title of this last section, and alludes to what I believe is Lewis’s mental “escape” from the very real oppression and death of the natural world due to the faerie fantasy hearkening back to the “old gods” of Paganism. Even as a Christian, Lewis saw Classical and Scandinavian Paganism in particular as important shadows of that Christian faith. In his first poems then, we see a young Lewis grappling with ques- tions of God and gods, of beauty and earth, of wisdom...
and foolishness, and of life and death. I have set seven poems from “The Escape” section to music, in part because I feel that these seven represent a range of emotional states and searching questions that give a sense of the entire section.

Lauren Hoffman ’15, Religion, “Glass Houses: Drawing from the Past to Build the Future in Munich’s Herz Jesu Church and Ohel Jakob Synagogue”

This Junior Paper examines the Herz Jesu Parish Church (2000) and Ohel Jakob Synagogue (2006) in Munich, Germany. Built so close together in space and time, their intense similarity in aesthetic and architectural design is more than the effect of shared contemporary philosophy. Through a close analysis of these buildings and their historical contexts in the city of Munich and at the turn of the millennium, and through interviews with members of the Jewish and Catholic, I use a criticism of the buildings’ architecture and historical inspirations as a lens through which one may examine their respective faith communities. These public houses of worship are extremely revealing of the goals and self-perception of their religious communities. Herz Jesu church expresses the desire of its commissioners to maintain Catholicism’s relevance in the new millennium, while covertly rooting itself in the past. I argue that the Jewish community of Munich, in attempting to stand out with their contemporary construction project, actually built a synagogue which mimics Herz Jesu Church and blends in with the rising landscape of contemporary architecture in the city. In doing so, Ohel Jakob Synagogue expresses the insecurity of the Jewish community surrounding their newly prominent and implicitly permanent place in the city of Munich.

Allegra Mango ’14, Anthropology, “The Religious Experience of Individuals Diagnosed with Terminal Illness”

The focus of my thesis revolves around the religious experience of individuals who are diagnosed with terminal illness. I concentrated my study on people that categorized themselves as Christian, or described themselves as Christian at some point in their life. My fieldwork period during this stressful time at the end of life. One of the biggest distinctions noted throughout this thesis are the differences in the definitions of, and experiences of, spirituality versus religion. Offering great background on both religion in America and the religion of Christiani-unity as a whole, this thesis explores all of the Christian beliefs of suffering, death, and afterlife. Finally, based upon the fieldwork I conducted in Hospice centers, Palliative Care Centers, and Comfort Care Homes, this thesis provides ethnographic evidence of specific examples of various terminal patients’ experiences with religion. This thesis contrasts the experiences of patients experiencing positive, relieving, and comforting aspects of religion with the fear-instilling, and negative feelings brought on by religion. Finally, this thesis analyzes the dynamic relationship between religious beliefs and the spirituality, or personal values, of individuals during end of life experiences.

Joel Newberger ’14, Comparative Literature, “Combinations/(New Mixtures): Charles Olson and the Problem of Dream-Poetry”

The basic argument of this essay is that, around 1956, at a moment when he found himself incapable of continuing the composition of his epic sequence, The Maximus Poems, the poet Charles Olson confronted the problem of writing a “dream-poem.” Because of his understanding of oneric epistemology, the “dream-poem” presented an irreconcilable difficulty to his theory of verse. His confrontation and solution of this problem deflected the development of not only his poetics but also of the Maximus series. The manuscript notebooks towards “The Librarian” reveal his efforts to construct the poem in accordance with his solution, the principles of which he derived from the psychological writings of the Swiss psychoanalyst C.G. Jung. How can a poem “reanimate” a dream or sequence of dreams? This is the question Olson addresses in the notebooks. Essentially, his answer is that the poem must contain multiple dream-transcriptions, phonologically distinguished from one another, the terms of each transcription being typologically or mythologically inflected so as to resonate with the terms of the others. It seems to me that “The Librarian” enacts this solution. I attempt to reconstruct the process of thoughts by which Olson arrived at it.

In particular, I analyze the conception (in the notebooks) and the presentation (in the poem) of the Jungian archetype of the child, in its Greek mythological figure of Kore. Olson’s “dream-poem,” I find, primarily involves psychological investigations and ritual, or serial, poetic acts that reveal the processes of the unconscious. In particular, the factor of Jung’s term, a “culture hero,” is a figure associated with the growth of crops and the “bloom” of light. This illuminating power is inextricable from her continual disappearance into the underworld. As the rotation of the season in the myth correspond to the ascent and descent of Kore, so does the serial structure of “The Librarian” conceal and reveal the daughter and her “light.” Being the archetype of alternating psychic potency and psychic regression, Kore is the proper aim not only of the agricultural mysteries of Eleusis, but also of “dream-poetry”, in the composition of which the “meaning” of an unconscious process first is “un-fold[ed]” from a series of dream-transcriptions, then is hidden or suppressed as a latent element in the poem itself—in the “recreation” of the “dream-form”—and then is “reanimated” by the internal “rites” of poetic concatenation. Both writing and reading, in this view, as the recovery of what “isn’t even there” anymore, are mysterious rituals, in which, as Jane Harrison puts it, “certain sacra are exhibited” and then become the “hidden secret” or “mystery” of the unconscious again.

Susannah Sharpless ’15, Religion, “Now and Again an Individual: Pound, Whitman, and the Role of Quaker Identity in the Conceptualization of their Poetics”

The funding I obtained from the Center for the Study of Religion to go to the Bienecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and look at Ezra Pound’s papers in order to research Quakerism’s effect on him (and Whitman) meant that my junior paper was never far from my mind over the course of the 2013-2014 academic year, which proved to be a very good thing. I worked at it diligently, and by the time my spring break trip to the Bienecke rolled around, I knew exactly what I was looking for. The two days I spent going through Pound’s files, gingerly turning over page after page, delighting in the CSR Fellowship played a decisive role in the research and composition of my thesis. It first provided crucial funds that I used to order photoreproductions of Charles Olson’s papers, which allowed me to examine them even when I was away from the archive. Second, it encouraged me to closely consider the religious dimension of my subject. Beginning mid-way through the year, and mid-way through my project, it instigated a reexamination of the work I had done. This reexamination, which discovered religious concerns everywhere latent in that work, resulted in the Mysteries attaining a central position in the final work. My entry is richer and my argument is more thorough because of this focus.
in bits of marginalia (such as a sketch of eyelash lens- 
es Pound once asked for and his childhood drawings) and 
frantically taking notes on his fascinating thoughts 
about American religion were enriching and enjoyable. 
They also proved crucial in reinforcing my paper’s cen-
tral claim, that Pound—though he rejected almost all 
religions—maintained an attraction to his family’s an-
cestral Quakerism for the entirety of his life, especially 
his early career, for how it enabled one to explore what 
it meant to be an individual.

Harriet Kristin Wilson ’14, Comparative Literature, 
“Yorùbá Headspace: Reading Power in the Cosmology 
of the Odù Ifí”

This senior thesis undertakes readings of sections of 
a Yorùbá text, the Odù Ifí, and makes an argument on the 
Yorùbá cosmological conception of power dynamics. I 
subsequently apply this reading of power in explicating 
gender politics in Tsitsi Dangarembga’s novel Nervous 
Conditions. The first major analytical sections focus on 
Yorùbá orature, especially the peculiar subgenre of div-
ingation in the Odù Ifí. It pays special attention to 

The sections Odù Oṣá Mějì, Odù Èjì Ogbé and Odù Oṣe 
Otúrù as well as to proverbs, folktales, and aphorisms, 
suggesting that power within the universe is elaborat-
ed on dialogic principles of equilibrium dynamics, es-
tericism, indeterminacy and realness. In so doing, this 
work probes the nature of Yorùbá world forming – its 
ideology and its methods of construction – especially as 
it pertains to how language reveals thought and pow-
er. The second major analytical section focuses on Tsit-
si Dangarembga’s Nervous Conditions, one of the most 
assigned and studied African novels, which scholars 
often discuss as emblematic of the “oppression of Afri-
can women”. In contrast, I offer an analysis of its female 
characters from the philosophical perspective revealed 
in Yorùbá cosmology, which accounts for the discon-
certing inverse correlation between increased socio-po-

tical capital and decreased psychosocial agency in the 
lives of the women in Dangarembga’s text. I suggest 
that the cosmological physics of equilibrium dynam-
ics within an intermutual framework makes isolated 
transformations in individual situations untenable. By 
asserting the Yorùbá cosmological principles by which 
all agent-entities are inextricably bound to a shared uni-
verse, this analysis provides a new paradigm for think-
ing about questions pertaining to identity construction, 
social relations and power dynamics.

Allegro Lovejoy Wiprud ’14, Woodrow Wilson School, 
“Nationalist Exclusion and Religious Violence in Ban-
gladesh, 2001-2014”

This thesis is a study of communal violence in Bangla-
desh in the period 2001-2014. Bangladesh is 88% Mus-
lim today and religious minorities have been a steadily 
shrinking portion of its population for nearly a centu-
ry. The decline in the number of religious minorities in 
Bangladesh – Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, non-Sunni 
Muslim, and indigenous – can be attributed to the mi-

gration waves of Partition in 1947 and 1971 as well as 
religious violence and discrimination.

Although Bangladesh had been relatively quiet for com-
munal violence after independence, the period 2001-
2014 has held significantly more communal violence. 
Although previous episodes of communal violence had 
followed typical patterns, instigated by local political 
capitalization on communal tensions or by commu-
nal violence in India, since 2001 communal violence has 
also been sparked by seemingly unrelated political 
events in Bangladesh, 

In this thesis, I seek to answer the question of what 
casted religious violence in 2001; why it was so wide-
spread and long-lasting; and why violence has contin-
ued to the present day, despite advocacy from domestic 
and international human rights NGOs. I find that reli-
gious violence can be attributed to the union of Bangla-
desh nationalism with Islamic identity. Elections, court 
rulings, and legislation that affects Islamic national 
identity or powerful Islamic organizations produces a 
backlash in violence against religious minorities. In this 
communal violence in Bangladesh in the study period 
is different from the pattern established for communal 
violence in India in Brass, Wilkinson, and Varshney: al-
though violence is led by local riot systems, it occurs in 
response to national-level events.

National-level political trends thus have major signifi-
cance for religious freedom and security in Bangladesh. 
International interventions in Bangladeshi politics to 
date have not been effective in producing amity or ac-
countability, nor has civil society advocacy for commu-
nal harmony.

Executive Committee

The Center is administered by an interdepartmental fac-
ulty committee appointed to rotating terms by the Dean 
of the Faculty. The committee sets policy for the Center 
and serves as the review and selection committee for all 
applications to the Center, including those for its con-
ferences and lecture series, graduate student fellows, and 
undergraduate seminars.

João Biehl (Ph.D., University of California, Berke-
ley; Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union) is Susan Dod 
Brown Professor of Anthropology and Woodrow Wil-
son School Faculty Associate. Biehl is the author of 
the award-winning books Vita: Life in a Zone of Social 
Abandonment and of Will to Live: AIDS Therapies and 
the Politics of Survival. He also co-edited the book Sub-
jectivity: Ethnographic Investigations. Biehl was a Na-
tional Institute of Mental Health Postdoctoral Fellow at 
Harvard University and, in 2008, was awarded a Gug-
genheim Fellowship. As recipient of a Global Health 
and Infectious Disease grant of Princeton’s Grand Chal-
lenge Initiative, he is leading a new project on the af-
termath of large-scale drug rollouts in resource-poor 
settings. Biehl received Princeton’s Presidential Distin-
guished Teaching Award in 2005 and is co-director of 
the Program in Global Heath and Health Policy.

Ellen Chances (Ph.D., Princeton University) is Professor of 
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interests range from studies on individual authors such as 
Andrei Bitov, Dostoevsky, Chekhov, and Kharns, to broad 
interdisciplinary explorations of the psychology of culture, 
and the interplay between literature and the other arts. 
Her focus is on the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first-cen-
tury Russian novel; Soviet and post-Soviet Russian literature 
and culture; the study of literature in its historical context; 
literature and ideas; literature and art; literature and values; 
and literature and film. In addition to writing fiction, mem-
oirs, essays and poetry, she is the author most recently of 
Andrej Bîtor: The Ecology of Inspiration.
Mitchell Duneier (Ph.D., University of Chicago) is Maurice P. During Professor of Sociology and author of Slim’s Table, Sidewalk, The Forgotten Ghetto (forthcoming), and Introduction to Sociology (with Giddens et al., Ninth Edition, 2012). His ethnographic film, Sidewalk (with Barry Alexander Brown, 2010) begins where the book ended and updates his stories of the vendors on Sixth Avenue in Greenwich Village. A graduate of the University of Chicago, he works in the traditions of urban ethnography that began there in the 1920s. Recent graduate seminars include “Ethnography and Public Policy,” “The Chicago School,” and “Ethnographic Methods.” Undergraduate courses include “Introduc- tion to Sociology,” “The Ghetto,” and “Sociology from E-Street: Bruce Springsteen’s America.”

Amaney Jamal (Ph.D., University of Michigan) is Professor of Politics and director of the Mamdouha S. Bobst Center. Her current research focuses on democ- ratization and the politics of civic engagement in the Arab World and includes the study of Muslim and Arab Americans and the pathways that structure their patterns of civic engagement in the U.S. Jamal’s books include Barriers to Democracy, and as co-author, Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects (with Morton Schlatter, 2012). Her new research examines healing liturgies contained among the medieval Chinese Buddhist manuscripts discovered in Dunhuang (northwest China). He is interested in how visual materials and the study of manuscripts can be combined with the standard sources for the study of Chinese Buddhism. His undergraduate courses cover Chinese religion and the history of Buddhism. He cur- rently serves as Director of Princeton’s Program in East Asian Studies.

Stephan F. Teiser (Ph.D., Princeton University) is D. T. Suzuki Professor in Buddhist Studies in the Depart- ment of Religion. He specializes in Chinese Buddhism and his latest book is Readings of the Platform Sutra (co-edited with Morten Schlatter, 2012). His new re- search examines healing liturgies contained among the medieval Chinese Buddhist manuscripts discovered in Dunhuang (northwest China). He is interested in how visual materials and the study of manuscripts can be combined with the standard sources for the study of Chinese Buddhism. His undergraduate courses cover Chinese religion and the history of Buddhism. He cur- rently serves as Director of Princeton’s Program in East Asian Studies.

Judith Weisenfeld (Ph.D., Princeton University) is the Agate Brown and George L. Collof Professor of Re- ligion and Associate Faculty in the Department of American Studies. Her field is American religious his- tory, with particular emphasis on 20th-century African American religious history. Her research focuses on the domestic consequences of international immigration, the incorporation of immi- grants, the political representation of ethnic minorities, and the determinants of ethnic conflict.

Faculty Associates
Faculty Associates are members of the University fac- ulty who have expressed particular interest in the ac- tivities of the Center and who help advise Center staff about relevant activities and interests in their respective departments. Complete descriptions of the publications and research and teaching interests of Faculty Associ- ates are featured on the Center’s website for students in- terested in knowing more about faculty resources in the study of religion.

Leora F. Batnitzky (Ph.D., Harvard University) is Profes- sor of Religion. Her teaching and research interests include philosophy of religion, modern Jewish thought, hermeneutics, and contemporary legal and political theory.

John Borneman (Ph.D., Harvard University) is Profes- sor of Anthropology. His research focuses on two sets of relationships: on the relation of the state and law to inti- macy and practices of care; and on the relation of polit-
Patricia Fernández-Kelly (Ph.D., Rutgers University) is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Research Associate in the Office of Population Research. Her field is international development with an emphasis on immigration, race, ethnicity, and gender.

Eddie S. Glaude Jr. (Ph.D., Princeton University) is William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African American Studies. His research interests include American pragmatism, specifically the work of John Dewey, and African American religious history and its place in American public life.

Anthony Grafton (Ph.D., University of Chicago) is Henry Putnam University Professor of History and Chair of the Council of the Humanities. Grafton’s interests lie in the cultural history of Renaissance Europe; the history of books and readers, the history of scholarship and education in the West from Antiquity to the 19th century; and the history of science from Antiquity to the Renaissance.

Eric Gregory (Ph.D., Yale University) is Professor of Religion. His interests include religious and philosophical ethics, theology, bioethics, political theory, and the role of religion in public life.

Jan Gross (Ph.D., Yale University) is Norman B. Tomlinson ’16 and ’48 Professor of War and Society. He studies modern Europe, focusing on comparative politics, totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, Soviet and East European politics, and the Holocaust.

Olga P. Hasty (Ph.D., Yale University) is Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures. She devotes herself primarily to poets of the nineteenth century and the modernist period (e.g. Pushkin, Pavlova, Pasternak, and Tsvetaeva).

Michael Jennings (Ph.D., University of Virginia) is Class of 1900 Professor of Modern Languages and Chair of the Department of German. His research and teaching focus on 20th century European literature, photography, and cultural theory.

Mirjam Künkler (Ph.D., Columbia University) is Research Assistant Professor of Near Eastern Studies. Her research concerns religion-state relations and Islamic thought in 20th century Iran and Indonesia.

Susan Naquin (Ph.D., Yale University) is Professor of History and East Asian Studies, specializing in the early modern history of China (sixteenth through nineteenth centuries).

Elaine Pagels (Ph.D., Harvard University) is the Harrington Spear Paine Foundation Professor of Religion. She has published widely on Gnosticism and early Christianity and continues to pursue research interests in late antiquity.

Sara S. Poor (Ph.D., Duke University) is Associate Professor of German. Her primary research interests are in the areas of Gender Studies and medieval German literature.

Sarah Rivett (Ph.D., University of Chicago) is Assistant Professor of English. She specializes in early American and transatlantic literature and culture.

Lawrence Rosen (Ph.D., University of Chicago) is William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Anthropology. His main interests are in the relation between cultural concepts and their implementation in social and legal relationships.

Carolyn Rouse (Ph.D., University of Southern California) is Professor of Anthropology and Affiliate at the Center for African American Studies. She is a filmmaker and a cultural anthropologist whose research focuses on why people accept systems of inequality.

Esther H. Schor (Ph.D., Yale University) is a poet and professor of English and founding Chair of the Committee on American Jewish Studies. Her teaching interests include British Romanticism and Literature, Scripture, and Religion.

Nigel Smith (D.Phil., Oxford University) is William and Annie S. Paton Foundation Professor of Ancient and Modern Literature. His interests include poetry; poetic theory; the social role of literature; literature, politics and religion; literature and visual art; heresy and heterodoxy; radical literature; early prose fiction; women's writing; journalism; censorship; the early modern public sphere; travel; and the history of linguistic ideas.

Jeffrey Stout (Ph.D., Princeton University) is Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in Religion. His interests include theories of religion, religious and philosophical ethics, philosophy of religion, social criticism, political thought, modern theology, and film.

Jack Tannous (Ph.D., Princeton University) is Assistant Professor of History. He is interested in the cultural history of the eastern Mediterranean, and especially in the Syriac-speaking Christian communities in the Late Antique and early medieval period.
EVENTS

Throughout the year, the Center sponsored many public lectures, discussions and symposia. These well-attended events attracted the interest of students, faculty, and the wider Princeton community. Video or audio recordings of most events are available online from the Center’s website, and a podcast subscription will become available this fall. In addition to financial support from Princeton University, the Center’s public events are funded through a variety of sources. The Doll Family Lectureship on Religion and Money, inaugurated in 2007, was established through a gift from Henry C. Doll ’58 and his family. The Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs is the co-sponsor of the Crossroads of Religion and Politics Lecture Series. This year, CSR co-sponsored two events with the Center of Theological Inquiry, as part of CTI’s Inquiry on Religious Experience and Moral Identity, made possible by a major grant from the John Templeton Foundation.

Buddhist Studies Workshop


”Debating the Jains in Medieval India: Where Myth and Logic Meet,” Phyllis Grazoff, Yale University, February 27, 2014.


“New Sources for the Study of Japanese Religion,” Workshop organized by KIKUCHI Hiroshi, University of Tokyo, and Jacqueline Stone, Religion Department, March 14-16, 2013.


Crossroads of Religion and Politics Discussion Series


Center of Theological Inquiry Co-Sponsored Events

“There’s Nothing Special about Religion,” Paul Bloom, Yale University, September 26, 2014.


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Co-Sponsored Events


“There and Back Again,” The Twenty-first Annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference in Medieval Studies, April 25, 2014.

Featured Workshop
Religion and Digital Technologies Workshop for Young Scholars, February 7, 2014.

The presence and participation of graduate students was an especially exciting part of the Race and Religion in American History conference. Graduate students in the Religion in the Americas subfield served as session chairs, and graduate students from a number of other departments, Princeton Theological Seminary, Rutgers, Columbia, and NYU attended and, in the informal periods of the conference, began what I hope will be ongoing conversations about the study of race and religion in America. Also among the 35 attendees were faculty from a number of Princeton departments, PTS, Rowan University, and the University of Pennsylvania. And, finally, I was pleased to see a number of Princeton undergraduates in attendance.

In sum, the papers were excellent, the discussions rich, and everyone commented on the combination of rigor and collegiality that the participants brought to the conference. The support of the Center for the Study of Religion was critical to the event’s success in terms of promotion to a broad constituency and financial support that allowed me to include graduate students from beyond our subfield in ways that created connections I hope will endure beyond the conference.

Judith Weisenfeld, Agate Brown and George L. Collord Professor of Religion
Following is a partial list of books and articles published during the past year or forthcoming by current and recent graduate students, visiting fellows, and scholars affiliated with or supported by the Center:

**Books**


**Journal Articles and Book Chapters**


Vernon C. Mitchell, Jr. completed his doctorate in American History at Cornell University in May 2014. His work primarily addresses the intersection of race, politics, and religion in America in the early decades of the twentieth century. His current project examines religious and political thought of African Americans during the famed Jazz Age. Through examining African-American religious thought during the earliest years of the Harlem Renaissance, Mitchell is uncovering the role that African-American Protestantism played in the development of this cultural and intellectual awakening. His dissertation, “Jazz Age Jesus: The Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, Sr., and the Ministry of Black Empowerment, 1865-1937,” uses the Rev. Powell, Sr., of a lens to illustrate the many ways, both tangible and intangible, in which practiced and believed faith came into communion and constellation with one of the most famous secular movements in American history.

Graduate Student Fellows
Religion and Culture Seminar (led by Elaine Pagels)

Clifton Granby, Religion, “Fruits of Love: Self and Social Criticism in Ralph Waldo Emerson, James Baldwin, and Howard Thurman”

Alexander Kocar, Religion, “On Earth as it is in Heaven: The Social and Ethical Dimensions of Higher and Lower Levels of Salvation”

Meg Leja, History, “Dissecting the Inner Life: Body and Soul, Medicine and Metaphor in the Carolingian Era”

Molly Lester, History, “Actualizing Christian Orthodoxy in Visigothic Iberia, 540-700”


Christian Sahner, History, “Christian Martyrdom in the Early Islamic Period”

Elise Wang, Comparative Literature, “The Measure of Punishment: Proportion and Pain in Late Medieval English Literature”

Wei Wu, Religion, “Indigenization of Tibetan Buddhism in Twentieth-Century China”

Religion and Public Life Seminar (led by Robert Wuthnow)

Douglas Gildow, Religion, “Contemporary Chinese Buddhist Seminaries”

Michael Hoffman, Politics, “Religion, Group Interest, and Democracy”


Awards

Irene Elizabeth Stroud, Religion, “A Loftier Race: Liberal Protestantism and Eugenics”


Events
Planning for 2014-2015 is underway. Further details will be posted on the Center’s website (www.princeton.edu/ccr) as they become available.


“Plotinus’ Theory of Soul,” Workshop organized by Hendrik Lorenz, Philosophy, Fall 2014.


Discussion on Seeing the Light: The Social Logic of Personal Discovery, by Thomas DeGloma, Hunter College, City University of New York, with Responses by Erin Johnston and George Laufenberg, Princeton University, March 25, 2015.


Sponsored Course