



BASR

British Association for
the Study of Religions

Bulletin

Number 120
May 2012

CONTENTS

Guidelines for contributors.....	3
Editorial.....	5
BASR Business	6
Reports and News.....	10
Teaching matters.....	16
Tributes	17
Book reviews.....	22
Members recent publications.....	25
Occasional papers.....	26

GUIDELINES FOR *BULLETIN* CONTRIBUTORS

The Editors welcome contributions on events and issues relating to the Study of Religion. The following guidelines on length should be observed.

Conference reports (short, one-day)	500-800 words
Reports on major conferences	1,000-1,500 words
Notices of forthcoming conferences	Not more than one page
Book reviews	500-800 words
Religious Studies in location	800 words
Changes and Movements	500-1000 words
Research in progress	800-1,000 words
Turning Point	800-1,000 words
Tributes	normally 500 words

We welcome, in particular, accounts of research in progress by post-graduate students, articles describing RS at a particular location and reports of changes and movements.

The *BASR Bulletin* will carry notices of relevant conferences and calls for papers (up to one page) free of charge. Preference is given to conferences where members may offer papers; other non-participatory conferences, which are more akin to courses, may be included if space permits. The deadline for the next edition is 15th October 2011.

Flyers may be sent out with the Bulletin, for a pre-paid charge of £50 each.

ABOUT THE BASR

The British Association for the Study of Religions, formerly the British Association for the History of Religions (founded in 1954), is affiliated to the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR) and to the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) Its object is the promotion of the academic study of religions through international interdisciplinary collaboration. The BASR pursues these aims within the United Kingdom through the arrangement of conferences and symposia, the publication of a Bulletin and an Annual General Meeting. Membership of the BASR is open to scholars whose work has a bearing on the academic study of religions. Membership of the BASR confers membership of the IAHR and the EASR.

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Printed at Oxford Brookes University.

The deadline for contributions to the November 2012 edition is 15 October 2012

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the 120th edition of the BASR *Bulletin*. As we gather material for this edition of the *Bulletin* the showers are passing through, semesters and terms are coming to an end, and plans are made for journeys to external examine, fieldwork and engage in academic gatherings as conference season begins again. So we are put to mind of Chaucer's opening to the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales:

Whan that aprill with his shoures soote
The droghte of march hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
...
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages

If there is one pilgrimage to be shared by BASR members it is to our annual conference. Please note the dates for 2012 BASR Annual conference, September 5-7 when we will meet in Winchester. The theme is 'Borders, Boundaries and Transgressions: within and between religions'. If you have not already signed up to contribute you have time by contacting the local conference organiser, Paul Hedges (paul.hedges@winchester.ac.uk) and you may choose to contribute to the Teaching and Learning panel (details to be found under 'Teaching Matters'). You will also find a hard copy registration form within these pages. To avoid cutting your *Bulletin* you might prefer to use the electronic version on our website.

George Chryssides maintains his excellent record of engagement with our discipline by reporting here on the Research Integrity Concordat. This is a UK university wide initiative to promote ethics in research, a laudable objective, though as George points out, if anyone

does not support research ethics they are unlikely to say so and the RIC is unlikely to deter them. Nevertheless the importance of ethics in research is a matter that UK departments of religion and theology have considered carefully and produced in 2005 a Framework of Professional Practice to clarify ethical issues.

We are sad to report in this *Bulletin* the death of three colleagues whose input into thinking about religion, engagement in developing departments and influence on many students have been considerable – Adrian Cunningham, Peter McKenzie and John Hick. Colleagues of Adrian and Peter have written tributes for them for the *Bulletin*.

Also inside is a short report from a meeting of the Religious Education Council Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications Committee by Denise Cush as well as our regular sections: conference reports, book reviews and member's recent publications. There are three reports on the proceedings of conferences relevant to the study of religions, (with apologies from the editors that two reports were not received in time for inclusion in the last edition of the *Bulletin*).

We hope you will enjoy reading issue number 120 and encourage you to contribute to future editions.

Dominic Corrywright
Helen Waterhouse

BASR BUSINESS

From the BASR Secretary:

1) I was informed that a few members had problems with receiving the last Bulletin. May I remind you how important it is to update your mailing address (e.g., if you move home or work place)? Please send me a short email with your new address and I will update it in the spread sheet.

2) The second item concerns the latest treasurer's report. Only 61 members have updated the subscription and paid the correct rate. 93 members still have paid the old rates. And most of the rest (excluding our honorary life members, of course) have not paid at all. This causes quite a financial problem for the BASR. May I remind everyone to check with our treasurer Stephen Gregg if you do not know whether you have paid the correct amount, and, if not, how to do it? His email is: s.gregg@tsd.ac.uk. The BASR needs your support, not only by attending the conference and General Meeting in September but also by paying your subscription. Thank you.

3) Proposal for election



BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

I propose for election as Secretary of the British Association for the Study of Religions to serve from 2012-2015.

Signed Dated

I second the above nomination:

Signed Dated

I agree to be nominated

Signed Dated



BASR

British Association for
the Study of Religions

**Call for papers
Annual Conference 2012**

**Borders, Boundaries and Transgressions:
within and between religions**

University of Winchester, UK
5-7 September

Scholars of religion and religions are invited to submit paper proposals related to the topic. The question of what religion is, whether there is such a thing, and, if so, what may constitute the borders and boundaries are matters of dispute. Papers exploring these topics, broadly conceived, including discussions of transgressions, whether within or between traditions or the conceptualization of the debates, are welcome.

Confirmed speakers include:
Douglas Davies, University of Durham
Ron Geaves, Liverpool Hope University

Papers will be 20 minutes (with 10 minutes discussion).

Proposals in the form of a title, a short abstract (300 words max.), and a brief biographical statement, including affiliation should be sent, by Friday 1st June 2012, to:

Dr Paul Hedges, BASR Conference, Theology & Religious Studies, University of Winchester,
SO22 4NR, UK or paul.hedges@winchester.ac.uk

For details of costs, accommodation etc. see theBASR website www.basr.ac.uk

BASR – 2012 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION AND BOOKING FORM

Borders, Boundaries and Transgressions within and between religions

Keynote Address: Professor Douglas Pratt, University of Waikato, New Zealand

Presidential Address: Professor Douglas Davies, University of Durham

Wednesday 5th September to Friday 7th September 2012 at the University of Winchester

Register and pay in full by Friday 3rd August in order to confirm accommodation and catering

1. Conference with overnight accommodation: The full conference fee of £220 includes the registration and conference fee, all meals, conference reception, teas and coffees. All rooms are fully accessible. Some double rooms are available. If you have any particular requirements please contact the conference organiser as soon as possible. Please see the conference page on the BASR web site (www.basr.ac.uk) for further details as they become available.

2. Conference Day Fee only: This fee includes attendance at the conference, conference reception, buffet lunch, teas and coffees as applicable to each day. For non-residents dinner is available on Wednesday and Thursday evening at extra cost (see booking form below).

3. Deposit & Payment: Please include a deposit (non-returnable) of £60 with your booking form (£20 if booking on a day rate basis). Please provide the booking form and deposit by 1st June. The deposit will be deducted from the total conference fee. The balance should be paid by Friday 3rd August.

4. Programme Enquiries: Enquiries about the academic programme should be directed to Dr Paul Hedges, at the address below. The closing date for conference paper submission is 2nd July. We also welcome panel proposals on specific topics. Please contact the conference organiser for further information. The BASR encourages joint ventures with other subject associations.

5. Registration Details: Please give your name in the form you wish it to appear on your name **badge**.

Name(s) (in capitals please):	
Institution:	
Address for correspondence:	
Post Code:	
Telephone:	Email:

May we include your name/email/institution on a conference participants list? Yes No

6. Please tick the boxes to indicate which days you will be attending and accommodation requirements

Conference Day Rate only WITH OR WITHOUT DINNER				Conference with Overnight Accommodation EN SUITE ROOM INCL. CONFERENCE, BREAKFAST & DINNER		
	WITH DINNER	NO DINNER				
Wednesday only	£30		£50			
Thursday only	£45		£65		Wed night only	£110
Friday only	£40		---		Thurs night only	£110
Entire conference	£100		£138		Entire conference	£220

7. Are you vegetarian **vegan** **other diet** **if so please specify here**.....

8. Deposit enclosed £60 (Full Conference) or £20 (Day only)

9. Confirmation of registration will be sent by email. **10. Do you require a receipt?** Yes No

BASR Subscription

The BASR subscription rates are £30 (full rate) and £15 (unwaged/student) and payable on 1 October. You can pay your subscription by cheque made payable to BASR and sent to the treasurer Stephen Gregg, School of Theology, Religious Studies & Islamic Studies, University of Wales: Trinity Saint David, Lampeter SA48 7ED

Or you can pay by standing order through your bank using on-line banking or by completing the relevant forms at www.basr.ac.uk/membership.htm.

Please consider signing up for Gift Aid. See our website for details.

RELIGION & BELIEF IN HIGHER EDUCATION

How are students and staff negotiating religion and belief in universities today? This symposium will bring together researchers examining the role of religion and belief in higher education and showcase a range of recent research projects. We will examine evidence from large-scale surveys and local case studies, and from projects spanning a range of faith and belief groups. Topics include multi-faith spaces on campus, non-religious students, Muslim chaplaincy and student Christianity. The symposium will bring together scholars from a range of disciplines, including sociology, religious studies, social policy, architecture, Islamic studies and theology.

SPEAKERS:

Professor Paul Weller & Nicki Moore (Derby) 'Religion and Belief in Higher Education: Findings, Questions and Reflections from a Research Project for the Equality Challenge Unit'

Jacqueline Stevenson (Leeds Metropolitan) 'Struggling, Striving, Strategising, Surviving: Religious students in UK higher education'

Dr Ataullah Siddiqui (Markfield Institute) 'Bridging the Gap between the "Islamic Studies" and "Islamic Sciences": Some Challenges'

Dr Mike Higton (Cambridge) 'A Theology of Higher Education'

Dr Adam Dinham (Goldsmith's) 'An Ambiguous Role for Religion in the Universities: A Case Study in Practice'

Dr Andrew Crompton (Liverpool) 'The Architecture of the Multifaith Space: Designing for Inclusion'

Dr Rebecca Catto & Dr Janet Eccles (Lancaster) 'Forming and Expressing Non-Religious Beliefs in Higher Education'

Maulana Dr M. Mansur Ali (Cambridge Muslim College) 'Muslim Chaplaincy in UK and US Higher Education: A Comparative Study'

Dr Kristin Aune (Derby) 'Student Christianity in English Universities'

DATE: Friday 15th June 10am-4.45pm

VENUE: The Enterprise Centre, University of Derby, Bridge Street, DE1 3LA

REGISTRATION:

No charge but places are limited so please register soon. Vegetarian lunch and refreshments provided. Register by email to Frauke Uhlenbruch (f.uhlenbruch@derby.ac.uk)

REPORTS and NEWS

THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION (AASR) CONFERENCE, 1-3 JULY 2011, SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY (TWEED GOLD COAST RIVERSIDE CAMPUS)

The 2011 AASR annual conference was organized by Dr Angela Coco (Southern Cross University, Lismore Campus), with assistance from colleagues Des Tramacchi and Robert Lingard. The conference opened on Friday evening with the Charles Strong Trust Lecture (see <http://www.charlesstrongtrust.org.au/>), delivered by Dr Anne Gardner (La Trobe University). The topic was: 'The Apocalyptic Visions of Daniel 7:2-14; 12:1-3: Their Persistent Appeal and the Notion of Revelation.' Dr Gardner linked the emergence of apocalyptic literary forms in the Hebrew Bible with their contemporary manifestations in film, television and literature employing psychological and other insights into end-times mentalities.

The other keynote lectures were the Penny Magee Memorial Lecture, 'On Indigenous Futures,' which was delivered by Dr Deane Fergie (University of Adelaide) who gave a field anthropological analysis of female agency and leadership in Australian Aboriginal communities, and the Presidential Address by Professor Douglas Pratt (University of Waikato, New Zealand), 'Stressing Religious Studies: Some Reflections on What We Do, and How We are Doing,' a timely reflection on the beleaguered position of both Religious Studies as a discipline, and the academic staff who practice that discipline, both delivered on Saturday 2 July. The AGM of the AASR was held on Saturday prior to the confer-

ence dinner, and the BASR was represented through the presence of Professor Jim Cox (University of Edinburgh), who joined the AASR when on a Teaching Exchange at the University of Sydney 2009. Several important decisions were made at this meeting, most significantly to change the name of the Association's journal, *Australian Religion Studies Review* (published by Equinox) to the *Journal for the Academic Study of Religion*, and the decision to re-affiliate with the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) after disaffiliating at the 1999 conference held at the University of Sydney. Doug Pratt was re-elected as President, and Professor Roland Boer (University of Newcastle) was elected Vice-President.

The conference dinner was held at the nearby Ivory Hotel and was well-attended. Paper sessions were lively and varied with strong representation by postgraduate students. Particularly distinguished or topical contributions included; 'A Sky Empty of Angels: Contemporary Afterlife Beliefs in Australia' (Dr Andrew Singleton, Monash University), 'Critics, churchmen and cheerleaders: the shifting voice of religious leadership in Kenyan politics' (Steve Bevis, PhD candidate, University of Sydney), 'Archaeology, Agency and the Numinous' (Dr Julian Droogan, Macquarie University), and 'A Pilgrimage in Pixels: An Exploration of Religious Worship and Ritual in Second Life' (Dr Helen Farley and Adrian Stagg, University of

Southern Queensland). The AASR annual conference for 2012 will be held at the University of Western Sydney (with Associate Professor Adam Possamai as convenor), and the date will be the weekend before Monday 1 October (which in Australia is the Labor Day holiday) to coincide with the

Australian vice-Chancellor's Committee Common Week (the mid-semester break from teaching).

Carole M. Cusack
University of Sydney

CESNUR (CENTRE FOR STUDIES ON NEW RELIGIONS) ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2011, ALETHEIA UNIVERSITY, DANSHUI (TAIPEI) TAIWAN, 21-23 JUNE

The 2011 CESNUR conference was held at Aletheia University, Taiwan, and was organized by Dr Clyde R. Forsberg. The theme was 'New Religions in a Globalized East: Taiwan, Southeast Asia, the World'. There were no plenary lectures, although the address by Massimo Introvigne (President of CESNUR) at the conference dinner at the Hotel RegaLees, Danshui, on Wednesday 22 June, 'Confessions of a Reluctant Diplomat: My Mandate as OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe)'s Representative on Combating Religious Intolerance and Discrimination' performed something of that function. As CESNUR is an organization that welcomes founders and members of new religions, there were 'insider' papers from members of the Family (Daniel Tarpey), the Unification Church (Eungtae Jo), Christian Science (Shirley Paulson), and the little-known Neo-Human Institute in Korea (Gang-Hyen Han).

Academic presentations included: Eileen Barker (LSE), 'Learning about New Religions in the West by Learning about New Religions in the East'; Liselotte Frisk (Dalarna University), 'Globalization and Religious Encounters: Older Religious Traditions Meet Newer Traditions in Dalarna,

Sweden'; Julia Day Howell (University of Western Sydney), 'Closing the Gates: The Reassertion of Delimited Pluralism in Indonesia since 2005'; and Alex Norman (University of Sydney), 'Narratives of Exploration and Discovery: New Religious Movements and the Spiritual Marketplace of Rishikesh.'

The BASR was represented at CESNUR by Eileen Barker (LSE), George Chryssides (University of Birmingham), Bettina Schmidt (University of Wales, Trinity Saint David), and Marzia Coltri (University of Birmingham). The International Society for the Study of New Religions (ISSNR) held its first two-yearly meeting since it began in 2009 at Aletheia University during CESNUR. This was a successful gathering that acknowledged the quality of the first issue of the *International Journal for the Study of New Religion* (Volume 1, issues 1 and 2, 2010) and developed plans for the future. The ISSNR sponsored sessions at CESNUR and will do so at the EASR in Budapest in September 2011.

After the conference ended approximately half of the delegates participated in a tour of temples and religious organizations in Taiwan, organized by Clyde Forsberg and

his colleague, Coco Liu of the International Office at Aletheia University. The tour visited: the Tzu Chi Foundation, founded by Master Cheng Yen, a charismatic Buddhist nun; the Presbyterian Northern Synod Seminary in Tainan; the Grand Matzu Temple (traditional Taoist) in Tainan; the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Monastery, near Kaohsiung on the south-west coast of Taiwan, which features one of the Taiwanese

Giant Buddhas but also the startling Pure Land Cave, a Disneyesque realization of Ultimate Bliss.

Carole M. Cusack
University of Sydney

THE NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION (NZASR) CONFERENCE, 7-9 DECEMBER 2011, UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO (HOSTED AT THE MERCURE QUEENSTOWN RESORT)

The 2011 NZASR conference was organised by Will Sweetman with Erica Baffelli from the University of Otago. The NZASR keynote speaker was James L. Cox (University of Edinburgh). His address, 'Religion as the Transmission of Authoritative Traditions: That without which Religion Is Not Religion', explored the ever-problematic act of defining 'religion'. Cox employed diverse examples from indigenous Zimbabwean and new age American ritual in order to display the ubiquitous "transmission of authoritative traditions" as the *sine qua non* of religion.

The NZASR met with the Australasian Association of Buddhist Studies (AABS). The AABS keynote speaker was Karen Lang (University of Virginia). Her address, titled 'The Buddha's Middle Way: In Defense of Nice Clothes, Good Food, and Beautiful Monasteries' was attended by the NZASR delegates. Lang presented on the lived reality of Buddhism in which adherents have negotiated the midpoint between luxury and denial.

The NZASR conference was organised into thematic sessions commencing with 'Orientalism', in which Judith Snodgrass (University of Western Sydney) examined the broad representation of Buddhism in the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions with consideration of what Western Buddhism would one day become. Nikki Aaron and Will Sweetman (University of Otago – read by Aaron) discussed the changing presentation of Devadasi as a reflection of attitudes towards Hinduism and Hindu women. The session closed with Sweetman's problematisation of texts dealing with Orientalism, which may over-emphasise the impact of colonialism.

The 'Minorities' session gave attention to under-represented groups including Muslim migrants in New Zealand and their localised theology and community structures, as examined by Stephanie Dobson (University of Otago). Yasmeeen S. Hanoosh (Portland State University) illuminated the way in which Chaldean and As-

syrian identities are articulated in the western diaspora; and Begona Echeverria (Graduate School of Education, University of California Riverside) drew attention to the hidden gender politics in Basque translations of Catholic texts.

‘Japanese Religions and Media’ was opened with Rebecca Suter (University of Sydney) who brought to light the fascinating way in Japanese comics have explored the image of the European Christian as ‘Other’. Erica Baffelli (University of Otago) discussed the employment of *anime* as a persuasive vehicle for the transmission of new religious movements. Danilo Gaimbra (University of Otago) then examined the nature of social networking spaces in Japan with a focus on online religious discourse.

The ‘Reception Histories’ session opened with a discussion of the doppelganger Christ in modern western literature by Christopher Hartney (University of Sydney). Eric Repphum (University of Otago) explained the surprising popularity of Christian songwriter David Eugene Edwards with non- or anti-Christian audiences. Zoe Alderton (University of Sydney) presented on the schism between intended message and audience reception in the art of Colin McCahon. The session was closed with Benjamin Overcash (Macquarie University) and his exploration of anti-Semitic rhetoric based on the *Book of John* throughout history, challenging the validity

of this recurrent reading.

In the ‘Origins’ session, Gregory W. Dawes (University of Otago) explored the logical incompatibility between Christian beliefs and evolution by natural selection. Christopher J. van der Krogt (Massey University) explored developments in the idea of a greater and lesser *jihad*, considering the motivations of theorists exploring these terms.

Finally, in the ‘Teaching Religions in Multicultural Settings’ session, Patrick Uchenna Nwosu (University of Ilorin) examined the impact of ethnocentric attitudes on the teaching of religion in Nigeria. Helen Bradstock (University of Otago) presented on the politics surrounding the absence of the study of religion in New Zealand’s secular primary school curriculum. David Griffiths (AUT University) concluded with a consideration of the law and religious devotional practices in schools, focusing on Italy and New Zealand.

The conference dinner was hosted at the remote Walter Peak High Country Farm, accessed via a cruise on the TSS Earnslaw. The NZASR annual general meeting closed the conference with numerous ideas for future gatherings including increased connections with other Australasian and international organisations.

Zoe Alderton
University of Sydney

Research Integrity Concordat

Research is vital to the UK's reputation, it draws on public funds, and it is used to make important decisions affecting societal welfare and economic development. This is the rationale for the draft Research Integrity Concordat (RIC), commissioned by UniversitiesUK, who have invited comments from interest groups.

The Concordat is intended to span all subject areas, not merely the study of religion, and it commends five principal commitments to researchers: (1) 'the highest stands of rigour and integrity'; (2) conformity to the law and to professional frameworks; (3) an appropriate research environment to underpin best practice; (4) due processes to deal with misconduct; and (5) continual regular review to strengthen integrity. The document encourages all researchers to play an active role in these matters, as well as employers and those who provide funding.

The RIC goes on to commit researchers to respect and care in dealing with human subjects, avoidance of fabrication or falsification of research data, mechanisms for ensuring the integrity of research, and procedures for dealing with misconduct. Who could disagree? Most of the document is extremely bland, and says nothing that researchers in religion are not already doing. The draft makes copious use of cliché-ridden jargon: words like 'robust', 'transparent', 'strengthen', 'culture of integrity', 'good governance' and 'best practice' are used liberally throughout the document. The only specific recommendations I could find were the need for codes of practice, 'mechanisms' for maintaining stan-

dards (ethics committees are not explicitly mentioned, but no doubt fall into this category), procedures for dealing with misconduct, a (non-specific) 'duty of care' to whistle-blowers, and the recommendation that governing bodies should receive an annual statement from those who employ researchers about what has been done to implement and 'strengthen' the concordat.

The fact that the Concordat is meant to span every research institution and academic discipline no doubt lies behind the document's extreme generality. The authors acknowledge that a 'flexible framework' is needed to accommodate diversity. However, one might well wonder what the purpose is in producing a document that is so vacuous that no-one could possibly disagree. Does anyone **not** support research integrity, and, if so, are they willing to say so? If researchers are minded to plagiarise or to fabricate data, will the RIC deter them from doing so?

The RIC does little to resolve some of the dilemmas that can occur in academic research. The word 'transparency' is used several times, but is taken as a 'given', without addressing the justification of covert research, whether full disclosure of a researcher's aims might bias survey responses, or how one reconciles disclosure of research findings with maintenance of confidentiality. Those who fund research are enjoined to 'adhere to the highest standards of professionalism and integrity' to ensure 'standards of best practice' and to have 'robust processes' to deal with misconduct. However, no mention is made of the possibility that a sponsor might have

expectations of specific research findings and withdraw monies when results are inimical to the sponsor's agenda. This last issue acquires increased importance in view of the fact that UniversityUK's strategic aims for 2010-2013 include support for universities taking advantage of new funding opportunities.

Many issues in research ethics will continue to remain controversial, of course, and perhaps one should be grateful that the draft is not unduly prescriptive on ethical dilemmas, or requires mountains of increased bureaucracy. However, one might wonder what the point is in producing a document that has no doubt required fairly substantial expense to produce, circulate and evaluate. Are there serious malpractices that are rife among researchers, and, if so, will the RIC go any way towards eliminating them?

In 2005 the Association of University Departments of Theology and Religious Stud-

ies (AUDTRS) published its Framework of Professional Practice. Its authors agreed that we should not produce a highly prescriptive document that imposed answers on highly controversial topics. Nonetheless, the document highlights specific areas in which ethical dilemmas occur, and the factors to be taken into consideration, and is substantive without being over-prescriptive. TRS has therefore already made its contribution to academic integrity.

The TRS Framework of Professional Practice can be viewed by following the 'Ethics' link on the BASR web site. The RIC draft can be accessed at www.universitiesuk.ac.uk by following the link to 'Publications', then 'Work in Progress'. The deadline for comments is 11 May 2012, which unfortunately will have passed by the time this edition of the *BASR Bulletin* appears.

George D. Chryssides
University of Birmingham

Teaching and Learning Panel Invitation for Contributors

for BASR ANNUAL CONFERENCE Annual Conference at the University of Winchester 5-7th September 2012 Borders, Boundaries and Transgressions: within and between religions:

We welcome proposals for:

- Academic Research Papers on pedagogic practice in the study of Religions
- Discussion papers - short presentations (15 minutes) with discussion
- Poster presentations

There is a bursary from the HEA specifically to support Teaching and Learning projects in Religion and Theology. We will be able to offer up to £40 per speaker towards travel expenses, or the cost of poster production.

Panel members would need to register as normal for the conference
Please email proposals to: dcorrywright@brookes.ac.uk and S.Gregg@tsd.ac.uk

TEACHING MATTERS

Report on Religious Education Council Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications Committee

7th February, 2012

REC Offices, 76, Shoe Lane, London

We discussed a recent letter to REC from Nick Gibb, Education Minister. It mainly reiterates the position that RE remains statutory at all Key Stages in all state-maintained schools, but is organised locally (by Local Authorities and/or schools). Thus RE will not be in the official Curriculum Review – now due Sept 2013 for implementation Sept 2014. There was some encouragement to the REC to engage in a parallel review of RE, produce a framework, and to suggest ways of improving ‘quality of teaching’ in RE.

If all schools are eventually academies, which don’t have to follow the National Curriculum, let alone Agreed Syllabus RE – then who exactly is it for? The answer seems to be that it – the NC- will serve as a ‘benchmark’.

The REC has commissioned a ‘scoping’ project on the possibility of a parallel RE Review – this to report shortly and it seems that the idea is supported. Important to know what is happening in the other, NC, subjects and to use the same language and patterns. We need press release and

PR for this RE Review – Stephen Lloyd MP is chairing an all-party parliamentary group on RE.

Assessment remains an important issue for RE. It looks as if Attainment Targets and the 8 level scale will disappear from the NC.

On qualifications, GCSE short course RE will continue in near future but not count for league tables of results. It is expected that the year on year increase in entries seen over the last decade will go into reverse. It was noted that there is a lack of continuity between KS3 RE which pupils like, and KS4 exam syllabuses which they like less.

DC talked about pressures on TRS in universities and decline in RE in ITT in universities.

We discussed the importance of having Confucianism in RE.

Denise Cush
Bath Spa University

TRIBUTES

Adrian and Angela Cunningham

A Personal Tribute and Memoir

I am glad to be able to write about Adrian Cunningham who died on the 5th March 2012 just a few weeks after his wife Angela. I had known both these redoubtable figures for many years, as I was a member of the very first cohort of students to pass through the newly established Department of Religious Studies that opened in 1967. Those were heady days of innovation and exploration, and the original troika of Ninian Smart, Adrian Cunningham and Robert Morgan did not disappoint. Each day brought new stimulus and the crash of pre-existent personal and intellectual citadels: it was dangerously exciting. However, I was to be at Lancaster three times, as undergraduate, Reckitt Research Fellow and then a Chair holder, and I thus came to know Adrian and Angela better during each sojourn by the Lune.

As a benign presence - and Oxford educated Scot - Ninian Smart had a clear agenda for Religious Studies that he had developed in response to the then stranglehold of Establishment over the traditional theology and divinity departments that existed both north and south of the Border. For me, as one with extremely limited experience of Catholicism and fresh from an Evangelical Christian conversion experience, Adrian was at first an almost complete enigma: I thought of him as an 'atheist, Marxist - Sartrean existentialist - and a Catholic (!)'. In my first year at Lan-

caster I was Prayer Secretary of the Christian Union, a position I had to relinquish around Easter 1968 because the combination of personal identity strain and the pressing necessity of trying to understand how the troika had arrived at the positions they were arguing for was overwhelming. The situation induced in me a truly obsessive commitment to reading and academic effort that characterised my life for subsequent decades.

It was, however, becoming aware that Adrian was married to Angela that helped reassure me that Adrian's commitments to thinkers that my Calvinistic Evangelicalism encouraged me to regard as purveyors of the failure and fall of Western thought, meant that what he represented could not be all bad. I was myself newly married, and in the relationship chaos of Lancaster at the end of the Sixties my late wife Audrey was - and remained - the primary point of stability in my life until her death in June 2010. At the beginning life at Lancaster was very intense. It was possible for those like Adrian and Bob Morgan who were fresh from the Cambridge system of supervision to make detailed critical observations upon one's work. I became conscious not only of Adrian's minute handwriting, but of the even more minute and exacting scrutiny that informed his comments upon any script. One was taken seriously and rightly this was often daunting.

I used to make very extensive notes in all lectures, despite the fact that in their different ways the original troika made each lecture a virtually unrepeatable thought-event. Indeed, under the present-day regime of quasi-industrialised UK HE, all three would be lucky to be sent off to the equivalent of a Maoist re-education camp in order to have their teaching methods normalised into banal uniformity. It was, however, on returning over a year later to the notes I had made of Adrian's lectures that I began to discern the rhyme and reason within his vision. Behind Adrian's gnomic observations there was an intense, powerful and original mind manoeuvring within a very wide intellectual landscape. Adrian's exposition of the 'early Marx' of the **1844 Paris Manuscripts** and the theory of alienation was then fresh news, his knowledge of the work of Erich Kellner and the Internationale PaulusGesellschaft engaged in Christian-Marxist dialogue, and his juxtaposition of all this with his knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching from **Rerum Novarum** onwards, the history and fate of the Catholic Modernists and the Worker Priest movement sank deep and became enduring factors in my own standpoint. As, however, a workaholic Protestant and implicit Freudian, the significance of Adrian's life-long engagement with C. G. Jung and psychoanalysis escaped me at that time.

It was the almost involuntary absorption of key elements of Adrian's intellectual vision that, strangely enough, equipped me to become a plausible candidate for an M.B. Reckitt Research Fellowship advertised for the period 1989-91. This led to a second period of direct contact with Adrian as HOD, and with Angela as Secretary of Christendom Trust. I had left Lancaster on graduating in 1970, and in those halcyon

days of the latter-day wandering scholar I had been able to move through Part III of the Cambridge Tripos, and then on to a PhD in Edinburgh supervised by T.F. Torrance before studying at the Stift in Tübingen. As a fellow Scot, Torrance was to Ninian a 'wild man', a figure who represented much of what he thought was wrong about the hegemony of Establishment, albeit that of the Church of Scotland.

Such deviation notwithstanding, like a Prodigal Son I was warmly welcomed back in Lancaster in 1989, and had the privilege of re-joining what was at that time to my mind the most exciting department in the subject area of Religious Studies and Theology in the United Kingdom - presided over by Adrian. This was a very good period with brilliant colleagues across the whole university, and my wife Audrey and I enjoyed the hospitality of Angela and Adrian - and absolutely delicious roast Sunday lunches. We also came to know the formidable Angela much better and to realise that her own very demanding work in the charity sector, with CRUSE and then internationally with Christian Aid was growing apace.

Unfortunately, indeed with what I would now think of as touched with tragic irony, what also became apparent in the early nineties was the onset of the top-down managerial revolution in universities that has now engulfed British society. Heads of Department were sent on management training courses and this led to the emergence of a new series of tensions and cultural contradictions between creativity and massified 'Quality' uniformity (now decisively resolved in favour of managerialist hegemony).

As one willing to bear the responsibility of HOD (and it was always a struggle to find volunteers), Adrian had of necessity to ride this tiger, and I witnessed something of the impact this had upon him as a body of highly ambitious colleagues were to be atomised by managerial fiat and set against each other. In classic Marxian terms the gradual commodification of human cultural reproduction was to take place. As a historically extremely well-grounded figure, Adrian was witness to and as HOD inevitably drawn as an agent not so much into the exposure and deconstruction of the alienation expounded in the *Paris Manuscripts* and the commodification outlined in volume 1 of *Das Kapital*, as into a reluctant but necessary synergy with societal processes that have led to the full realisation of both these dark scenarios. This is an irony in which I was also to share once I moved on from Lancaster to St Andrews in 1991 where managerial normalisation was being driven forward with exceptional and amoral ruthlessness, without even the marginal protests and reflection manifested in the email newsletters *Inkytext* (or now *Subtext*) at Lancaster. However, this second stay as a research fellow was very happy and fruitful with an array of exceptional colleagues and the delivery of intellectual stimulus on virtually on an hourly basis.

Audrey and I had moved to St Andrews in 1991 full of optimism. Having been throughout my secondary school non-career in a state of inner emigration required for personal psychic survival, our first and second residences in Lancaster and times of direct association with Adrian and Angela had been for me stages in gradual recovery as I sought to become a chairable person. Fatefully, having been a Reckitt Fellow at Lancaster in an excep-

tionally active multi-disciplinary environment (and having been invited to undertake some work in the Lancaster University Management School) I understood far more about the theory and practice of managerialism than most of my colleagues in the Humanities. I too thought I could both ride the tiger of the managerial revolution and simultaneously offer a critique informed by ideas that in key respects went right back to Adrian's initially cryptic lectures. This endeavour was a mistake and indeed an illusion: I completely underestimated the power of fear used as the means of control in human resources management (HRM) dominated environments. In St Andrews I was destroyed, some might say I destroyed myself, by voicing in public informed critical opinions about governance. This led to our return to Lancaster from St Andrews in 1995 and into a very different scenario.

When Audrey, our son Anthony and I returned to Lancaster in 1995, Adrian was no longer HOD, and he was obviously not well. The workload was constantly ramped up, and whilst the liberal ethos of Ninian Smart might have been adequate in an era of relative financial prodigality, in my judgement this vestigial moral framework was not sufficient to sustain a sound community of learning once the gloves were off and the herd of cats suddenly evolved into a more ferocious species increasingly ruled by unfettered evolutionary impulses driven by management. The latter policy not only appeared to require the survival of those deemed fittest, but also regarded it as appropriate to facilitate the elimination of those regarded as in any respect less than hyperactive according to the array of conflicting performance protocols enforced in industrialised HE. This was a very difficult

time and the loss of remaining innocence took place; in my judgement the notion of 'academic ethics' has ceased to have meaning or leverage in British HE as a whole.

In late 1991 I made the most difficult decision of my adult life. Having seen what happened to Adrian - and then to me in St Andrews - and faced with what would be the demand at Lancaster to impose upon reluctant colleagues protocols, many of which I did not myself believe in, I decided to take early retirement. In July 2002 just as my contract ended Audrey was suddenly smitten with acute rheumatoid arthritis and our lives perforce changed dramatically, and we had to learn to live symbiotically. We finally moved back to Scotland in 2005.

As intimated in this brief memoir, I owe Adrian and Angela a great deal and I hope that this memoir will give a little insight into how Adrian Cunningham had an important role in Religious Studies at Lancaster. The third period in Lancaster was very hard, and I subsequently did my utmost to repair a friendship that was undoubtedly damaged. It was at this stage in my life that I belatedly caught up with areas of Adrian's thought that had previously rather passed me by. It was as I sought ways in which to recover from personal annihilation and

seek a new identity that Adrian's preoccupations with the writings of Jung, his editing of the C. G. Jung/Victor White correspondence (now happily published), and the realities of psychoanalysis, myth and ritual became fully – even if belatedly- salient.

I was glad with many others to have to have attended Angela's funeral earlier this year, and to have had the opportunity to see Adrian, and exchange a few words with him during what turned out to be our last meeting. As Adrian's health had declined so he steadfastly supported Angela as her career took off and she travelled widely on behalf of Christian Aid. I sense that for Angela and Adrian, and for Audrey and me our marriages were sacramental in the fullest sense. Angela once told me that she and Adrian were members of the young Catholic set upon whom David Lodge based his early novel *How Far Can You Go?* Angela and Adrian went the full distance together. They had had the support of their daughters Sasha and Kestia in their greatest hour of need – and their lives were fully and appropriately celebrated at Requiem Masses in St Mary's Cathedral in Lancaster.

Richard H. Roberts
University of Stirling

Dr Peter McKenzie – A Personal Memory

Peter took over the role of joint supervisor for my Master of Education thesis with John Baker of the Education Department at Leicester University when Dr Harold Turner left in the beginning of the nineteen seventies. Peter was a meticulous and rigorous scholar and demanded the same from his students. He was also a diligent researcher. He completely forgot our first appointment. He was absorbed in the University Library on his current research and forgot I was coming! He was an excellent supervisor. He always demanded the very highest standards but gave you every encouragement and support.

Dr Harold Turner had commenced as the sole lecturer in the History and Phenomenology of Religion at the University of Leicester. Under Peter it grew to a team of four. The student numbers also grew both undergraduate and post-graduate.

I was a part-time student and greatly valued the once a term Saturday morning post-graduate seminars. Lively, stimulating occasions ably guided by Peter. He asked me to present a paper. At the end of the morning, he said, 'John, you should get this published'. It was and Peter's encouragement led to further published research papers during subsequent years. Peter was generous with his own time and hospitality. On many occasions he invited me lunch with the family so that he could have a tutorial with me in the afternoon. The whole family were bi-lingual. It was fascinating to sit at the table listening as the conversation switched effortlessly from English to German and back again.

Peter, above all, used phenomenology as his method of research in the field of religion. His last paper to a BASR Conference was entitled, *Otto, Wach and Heiler: Towards a systematic Phenomenology of Religion* (Diskus, 2 No.1. pp. 29 – 41. 1994). He knew Otto personally and his book *The Christians* SPCK 1988 reveals his debt to Heiler. His last book *Hail Orisha* Brill. 1997 also shows his lasting interest in West African religion.

I had quickly realised that the phenomenological method was of key importance in my own field of Religious Education. This led to research for my doctorate at the University of Leicester, first with Dr Steve Reno as my tutor and subsequently with Peter. Once again, it was Peter's insistence on rigour and his unfailing support and encouragement that brought success.

When I retired Peter suggested that I should take my earlier research on to the present day. Again, he was unstinting in encouragement and advice. I undertook a limited research into present day adult religious experience under the auspices of the then Centre for Theology and Society at the University of Essex. I sent Peter a copy of the completed report. Once again, Peter had helpful suggestions for improvement including a key paper in German, which I had not read. His last words were, 'John you must get this published.' Thank you Peter, you will be sadly missed and always remembered.

John Marvell

BOOK REVIEWS

What the Buddha Thought

by Richard Gombrich

Series: Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies monographs

London/Oakville, CT: Equinox, 2009

Any work by Richard Gombrich must be a welcome addition to the literature of Buddhist studies. This book, intended to be an introduction to the historical Buddha's thought, examines the Buddha's teachings not only in the light of the texts preserved in the Pali Canon, but also by relating them to early brahminical texts and the doctrines of Jainism. In the process, Gombrich provides a lively and engaging portrait of the Buddha as both the founder of a religion, and the originator of a complex, yet coherent philosophy.

In situating the Buddha's teaching in the historical and cultural context of early Brahmanism, Gombrich has provided a masterly study of how much of the Buddha's teaching may be understood by reference to the accepted wisdom of his day. For example, in singling out the Buddha's transformation of the word *karma* from its established meaning of 'action' to signifying 'intention', he highlights the way the Buddha turned the terminology of the Brahmans to his own teaching purposes, in the process introducing an ethical element, and the concept of personal responsibility. The centrality which Gombrich assigns to the concept of karma in the Buddha's philosophy—along with its corollary, rebirth, it occupies three full chapters of the book—is a challenge to those contemporary Western Buddhists such as Stephen Batchelor who claim that it is perfectly possible to be a Buddhist without accepting either.

Nevertheless, in emphasizing the Buddha's response to his brahminic interlocutors in order to distil the 'fundamentals' of what he sees as a complex and profound philosophical structure, Gombrich perhaps risks essentializing Buddhism into a fixed set of tenets. While it is undeniable that the Buddha's teachings as recorded in the Pali suttas, contain a number of core values—as well as karma and rebirth, the four *brahma-viharas* (especially kindness and compassion), impermanence, nirvana, and dependent origination are discussed at some length—there is a danger that subsequent developments of Buddhist doctrine, after the death of the historical Buddha himself, may be denigrated if not dismissed entirely as misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the original teachings by commentators who failed to grasp their originality, perhaps by lack of knowledge of their context. If the Pali Canon is the touchstone of the core teachings of Buddhism, what shall we make of later developments such as the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism, from whose voluminous literature, as Gombrich acknowledges (98), the Pali Canon is almost completely absent?

Gombrich mentions several times Karl Popper's theory of the growth of knowledge by means of a continuing dialectic between conjecture and refutation (e.g. 94-95, 177-78). His admiration for Popper's method indicates as well the generosity of his scholarship: he has stated his own conjectures and is ready to stand by them, but he is also open to the refutation of his theories if this can be adequately demonstrated.

Although the Preface indicates that book is meant to be accessible to the general reader (viii), this is definitely a *scholarly* book. It will be of considerable benefit and interest to students of religions in general and of Buddhism in particular, but may be somewhat dense (although not prohibitively so) for a non-academic audience. If I have one complaint, it is that the references for the Pali suttas are frequently simply to a particular volume and page of the Pali Text Society edition of the relevant work (see for example a reference to ‘there is a famous text ...’ on p. 72, to which the citation is simply ‘MN I, 265-6’: p. 214, n. 23). For those using different translations, it would be helpful to have the name of the sutta provided.

In sum, however, this is a stimulating book and presents an excellent, closely-reasoned argument. It is a valuable addition to the canon of Buddhist studies, not only for the information it contains and the challenges it poses, but also as an example of how to study the historical material of the field.

Margaret Gouin

The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture
Dan Hicks and Mary C. Beaudry (eds.)
Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2010

In recent years the study of ‘things’ in material culture has given rise to new polemics and discourses within academic disciplines such as anthropology and the study of religions, among others. The problematic nature of religious materiality specifically (bread, wine, bodies, images, etc.) has caused scholars to have to rethink the positions and models upon which studies have been carried out, both in terms of doctrine and in the field. In the study of re-

ligions, approaches have generally involved the distinct separations that define binary opposites such as subject and object, sacred and profane, immanence and transcendence, spirit and matter, non-humans from humans, or idea from material. Yet ‘things’ (especially religious ‘things’) are not always interacted with as if they are the material against which we define ourselves as humans – evidence for which can be observed in practices such as statue devotion, relic veneration, and more. The burgeoning, interdisciplinary field of religious materiality is, however, growing – and fast. Questions are being raised which engage age old polemics about the nature of religious ‘matter’ and whether or not ideas of representation are enough to contain it. *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies* (2010) can be beneficial in the study of religions because it ‘celebrates a diversity of approaches to “material culture studies”’ (2) many of which either challenge or go beyond commonly accepted components of that which constitutes subjects and objects.

Following the Introduction there are 27 chapters arranged in five parts. Part I, ‘Disciplinary Perspectives’, Part II ‘Material Practices’, which explores: ‘agency, consumption, fieldwork/collecting, gift exchange, art (as a form of action), and deposition’ (7), and Part III, ‘Objects and Humans’, which question the binary distinctions found when what it means to be human is defined in contrast to what it means to be an object. Part IV addresses theoretical issues surrounding ‘Landscape and the Built Environment’, and Part V, ‘Studying Particular Things’ is, according to the editors, the ‘One thing shared by many of the contributors to this volume’. They have a commitment to understanding the

value of 'particular items or bodies of material culture: something that is all too often lost in theoretical debates about material culture or materiality' (15).

Let me first draw attention to Dan Hicks' chapter 'The Material-Cultural Turn' (25). This chapter not only offers a comprehensive survey of the historical and recent underpinnings of material culture studies, but engages wider issues relating to how 'things' are and have been theorized. Starting from the 'Museum Period', Hicks 'excavates' material culture studies by taking the reader through an historical journey through its many phases of development to its contemporary manifestation. Hicks says 'This chapter explores how the ideas of "material culture" and 'material culture studies' are themselves artifacts of particular disciplinary conceptions of 'the social' (27).

Among the many chapters which can be potentially informative to the study of material religion are Howard Morphy's 'Art as Action, Art as Evidence'. Morphy, focusing on art as action, discusses the methodological implications of studying the changeability and necessity of art in religious and other contexts, saying 'it connects the cognitive and affective dimensions of human experience and facilitates complex ways of acting in the world' (288-89). Jones and Boivin's chapter 'The Malice of Inanimate Objects: Material Agency' suggests that a recognition of materiality and material agency not only leads to but requires a further rethink about society. They explore material agency through the discourses of animism and fetishism (among others), and the social implications that arise when material agency is taken seriously as a proponent in that it 'allows us to focus

upon the way in which people and things are mutually related' (2010: 350-351). Chris Fowler addresses the factors involved in the identities of objects in his chapter 'Personhood and Materiality'. Cultural materials, bodies, gender, objects, and persons are used as examples for the ways in which the social sciences are expanding to include 'new approaches to the relationships between material culture and identity' (374). Zoë Crossland's explores 'Materiality and Embodiment', using 'early modern apotropaic devices such "witch bottles"' to explore an archaeology of the human body as a container. This evidence is used as a way in which to better understand how the materiality of the body is (and has been historically) viewed archaeologically. Further, Peter Pels' 'Magical Things: On Fetishes, Commodities, and Computers' addresses the nature of religious statues, modernity's influence on how 'magic' is perceived. He discusses the effects of a 'Protestant intellectual heritage' and how many objects behave as subjects (633).

Although the theories found in *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies* do not focus on religious materiality per se, many of them can offer different and innovative ways in which to reform and improve the debate concerning religious objects. *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies* is therefore an excellent source for considering the ways in which things can be 're-thought' and explored as further acknowledging the potentialities in the expanding the field of material religion.

Amy Whitehead

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