



September 2007

GORABS Newsletter

Volume 29 Number 1

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Please send comments, questions, letters, and newsletter submissions to
 Ed Davis,
 GORABS Chair,
ehdavis@ehc.edu

A Mildly Cryptic Message from the GORABS chair

By my hand-count there are SEVEN colleagues at my small college doing research related to religion, which must be a record. But here's a bigger surprise: none of them are in the religion department. They are in English, sociology, political science and elsewhere. An interdisciplinary flourishing, stimulated by religion's power. Our specialty group implicitly recognizes that power, but look further into our work and we see much that stands isolated, unread by others. Are we too divided intellectually to converse across even this small subfield?

What if we built upon Thomas Tweed's idea that religions are about making homes and crossing boundaries? We might find more ways to link the landscape studies among us to the theological and social analyses. What if we also took seriously both the identity studies and the belief system constructs? We could have large conversations – paper sessions attended by scholars of multiple perspectives, conversations by email between far-flung and diverse geographers, fruitful debates. Here is my plea for dialogue within the sub-discipline: rather than fortify islands of thought, we should build new bridges. If we do that we are more likely to learn, to teach, to share. What an irony that we as scholars might by our atomism deny a key wisdom of most religions: the world is ONE.

Read the contents of this newsletter and make new connections within! –Ed Davis, Chair

**GORABS
 Online Journal**

The first ever online journal on the geography of religions and belief systems had a successful premier issue last year, but it is still a fledgling. Anyone with a serious interest in publishing on this topic ought to submit their manuscript to the GORABS journal – and soon. Our Editor Elizabeth Leppman indicates the influx of manuscripts is slow, so an opportunity knocks. This is a refereed journal, with a well-respected editorial board, so the value is significant, especially for new scholars. Another option is for a group of scholars to propose a thematic issue. Here is the link to the journal, and directions for submission of your manuscripts:
<http://gorabs.org/journal/index.htm>

VISIT GORABS ON THE INTERNET

Webpage:

<http://gorabs.org/>

Listserv:

To subscribe to the gorabs listserv simply send an email to listserv@listserv.wvu.edu with "subscribe gorabs firstname lastname" in the body of the message or send your request to Michael Ferber at mike.ferber@mail.wvu.edu



Member News

Lily Kong, National University of Singapore, is writing a new book on the geographies of religion, offering an overview of the rapid development of the field in the last twenty years. After David Sopher's (1967) *Geography of Religions* and Chris Park's (1994) *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion*, there has not been a major work that examines the development of the field and critiques its trajectory, although it is in the last decade and a half that geographical research on religion has grown very rapidly. Lily invites GORABS members to send their publications for possible inclusion. lilykong@nus.edu.sg.

Carolyn Prorok, Slippery Rock University, won the 2006 Robert Stoddard Award for Service and Research to Geography of Religion and Belief Systems. She is co-editor with Mike Ferber of a forthcoming book from Sage: *Doing Geographies of Religion*. carolyn.prorok@sru.edu

Olaf Kuhlke, University of Minnesota-Duluth, is completing a book, "Geographies of Freemasonry: Ritual, Lodge and City in Spatial Context". It will be available early 2008. It is published by The Edwin Mellen Press in Lewiston, NY. It discusses Masonic ritual and lodge design in the context of the work of Mircea Eliade, and examines the establishment of Masonic Lodges as interdenominational sacred spaces.

Ramin Zamanian, now a first year PhD student at Oklahoma State University, won the 2007 David Sopher award at the annual AAG meeting in San Francisco, with the paper "A Material/Conceptual Landscape Analysis of the Virgin of Guadalupe Pilgrimage Site in Mexico City, Mexico." The paper also won first place in the master's student category for both the Cultural Geography and the Latin Americanist Specialty Groups at the 2007 AAG meeting. Ramin received his M.A. from Louisiana State University in May. raminz@okstate.edu

David J. Rutherford, University of Mississippi, developed and taught an upper level course on the geography of religions and belief systems while teaching in the International Studies Program. He is now in the Department of Public Policy Leadership, and also Associate Director of the Gilbert M. Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education. His course is one of a series he's developing on major forces of contemporary global change for students in both Public Policy Leadership and International Studies programs. druther@olemiss.edu

Peter Hopkins, Newcastle University, co-edited *Geographies of Muslim Identities: Diaspora, Gender and Belonging* (Ashgate) with Cara Aitchison and Mei-Po Kwan (see details below). He was also elected as co-secretary-treasurer for GORABS. He is studying the experiences of young Sikh men in Scotland (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/geps/staff/profile/peter.hopkins>).

Laurence Simon, Brandeis University, is designing curricula for his M.A. program to further incorporate a study of the influence of religion and spiritual values upon development and social change in low and middle income countries. "Modernization theory ignores the role of religion and culture," he says.

Rana Singh, Banaras Hindu University, India, published this year "Gaia and Ecological Awakening: Message of Hinduism for Deeper Understanding." *Oriental Anthropologist*, 7 (2); also "Ethnogeography of the Sun goddess festival, 'Chhatha', in Bhojpur Region, India: From Locality to Universality." *Man in India* (Serials Publications, New Delhi), v.87; "Culture and Civilisation for Human Development: Perspectives in India on the Gandhian Path," in Maiti, Prasenjit (ed.) *Development Studies* (v.1) Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi [ISBN: 81-269-0765-7]; and "The Contestation of Heritage: The enduring importance of Religion," Ch. 7 in Graham, and Howard,(eds) *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage & Identity* (Aldershot). See elsewhere in these pages his CFP for a 2008 conference in Kunming, China.

Elizabeth J. Leppman (Lexington, KY) continues to serve as Editor for the online Journal of Geography of Religions and Belief Systems, but also presented papers on the churches of Lake Wobegon (Garrison Keillor's imaginary town in Minnesota) at two international conferences. The first, "Emerging Geographies of Belief," in September 2006, was at University of Exeter. Contributors included geographers, journalists, anthropologists, education specialists, and others. Lily Kong was the keynote speaker. The second, "Faith and Space," was organized at the Getty Institute by Denis Cosgrove of UCLA, in May 2007, had presentations from various disciplines.

Mike Ferber, West Virginia University, is co-editor with Carolyn Prorok of a forthcoming book from Sage: *Doing Geographies of Religion*, and also reviewed Thomas Tweed's new book, *Crossing and Dwelling*, in an online project called the American Religious Experience, at <http://are.as.wvu.edu/index.html>

Job Announcement

Assistant Professor to begin Fall 2008 at University of North Texas, Denton, TX.

Applications are invited for a tenure track position (Assistant Professor) within the Department of Philosophy and Religion Studies, to begin fall of 2008. AOS: in either A) Religion and Nature / Religion and Ecology or B) Applied Philosophy. Our interests in religion include scholars in Buddhism, Islam, or Christianity. Our interests in applied philosophy include bioethics, biotechnology and policy, and nanotechnology and ethics. AOC: Open, but departmental needs include analytic philosophy and/or logic.

As the leading program in environmental philosophy in the United States, the department seeks a dynamic individual who is interested in exploring how their area of expertise intersects with contemporary environmental, cultural, and societal issues. The department is particularly interested in interdisciplinary, field-based philosophic research on issues of local, regional, national, and international scope. Experience and/or interest in working with other humanists, scientists, engineers, and policy analysts is especially valued. Normal teaching load is 2-2.

Qualifications include a Ph.D. by May 1, 2008. The department offers a BA, MA, and PhD in philosophy, and an interdisciplinary minor in religion studies. Located in the Dallas-Ft Worth Metroplex, the university has over 34,000 students.

Review of applications will begin in October, and will continue until position is filled. Please send a letter of application, your C.V., and three letters of references to: Philosophy Search Committee, Department of Philosophy and Religion Studies, University of North Texas, P.O. Box 310920, Denton, TX 76201-0920 or electronically to philosophy@unt.edu.

Information about the department can be found at www.phil.unt.edu, and inquiries are welcome at 940-565-2134 or philosophy@unt.edu. UNT is an AA/ADA/EOE committed to diversity.

Featured Scholar: Carolyn Prorok

Winner of the 2006 Robert Stoddard Award for contributions to the Geography of Religions and Belief Systems

Carolyn is Professor of Geography in the Department of Geography, Geology and the Environment at Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania, specializing in the religious material culture in the landscapes of the Hindu diaspora. She also works in the fields of geography of religion in general -- especially pilgrimage studies and sacred places, geographic education, and women in development issues. She was interviewed for the online edition of *The Hindu*, India's national newspaper, on the subject of Hinduism, on 16 July 2005. A few of her recent publications include:

Doing Geographies of Religion, Carolyn Prorok and Michael Ferber, (forthcoming).

"Demographic Changes in Iran's Officially Recognized Religious Minority Populations Since the Islamic Revolution" by Carolyn V. Prorok with Mohammad Hemmasi (UND) *African and Asian Studies* 2002:1:2:63-86.

"Women's Migration and Quality of Life in Turkey" by Carolyn V. Prorok with Mohammad Hemmasi (UND) *GeoForum* 2002:33:399-411.

"Boundaries are Made for Crossing: the feminized spatiality of Puerto Rican Expiritismo in New York City," by Carolyn V. Prorok, *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 2000:7:1:57-79.

"Dancing in the Fire: Ritually Constructing Hindu Identity in a Malaysian Landscape" by Carolyn V. Prorok, *Journal of Cultural Geography* 1998:17:2:89-114.

She can be reached at carolyn.prorok@sru.edu

Anne Buttimer Reports

NATURE, SPACE AND THE SACRED - TRANSDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

First International Conference of the European Forum for the Study of Religion and the Environment held in Bamberg, Germany, 24-26 May 2007.

Fifty scholars, including graduate students and post-doctoral fellows, from fourteen different countries assembled in the beautiful medieval city of Bamberg for this two-day conference on "Nature, space and the sacred". This was the first international conference of the European Forum for the Study of Religion and Environment which is coordinated by Professor Sigurd Bergmann, theologian, from Trondheim in Norway, and all local arrangements were made by Professor Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, University of Bamberg. A truly wide range of "transdisciplinary perspectives" were shared and throughout the discussions were the themes of space and place, culturally diverse perceptions of nature and environment, landscape, identity and taken-for-granted attitudes on the sacred and the secular. Any geographer would have felt quite "at home" with these themes. For me it was a special delight to deliver one of the plenary lectures entitled "Nature, culture and the quest of the sacred" in the magnificent university Aula, once a Dominican church in the heart of Bamberg.

The programme involved both plenary lectures and parallel paper sessions, a guided walk in the city of Bamberg, a public panel discussion involving the mayors of Heidelberg and Bamberg on sustainable urban planning, and numerous social occasions. The entire atmosphere was cordial and thus allowed for much informal interaction among individuals from widely different fields of expertise. Subjects addressed during the meeting involved a fascinating intermingling of theological, anthropological and historical approaches to particular case studies on the one hand, and critical reflections on practical implications by experts in architecture, ethics and gender equality on the other. The opening lecture by Dr Anne Primavesi on "Transforming religions perspectives on nature in response to climate change" set the tone in its emphasis on the need for critical reflection on conventional attitudes toward nature within the Christian world, thus pointing directly at some ethical aspects of humanity's interactions with nature. My paper attempted a global overview on spatio-temporal distributions of religious groups, illustrating

ways in which religious symbols resonated to the biophysical milieu and lifeways of adherents. Tim Ingold's plenary paper also addressed issues of symbol and metaphor in his discourse on "The Wedge and the Knot: Hammering and Stitching the Face of Nature". The other two plenary lectures dealt with more specific case studies: the Sun-dance ritual of North American Crow Indians by John Grim, and the practices of Ch'i in East Asia by Professor Mary E. Tucker.

Both descriptive and normative elements were evident in papers delivered in the sessions. The mystical poetry of Rumi revealed fresh perspectives on Arab perceptions of nature, while field based studies in the Talas region of Kyrgyzstan showed connections between health and worship at sacred sites. Issues of climate change and biodiversity recurred in several papers, thought provoking essays on aesthetics and ethics of religious practice, gender equality in church structures, green politics and connections between religion and sustainable development. The local geographies of shrines and sacred sites were elaborated in several papers, including intriguing accounts on the revival of local religious practices in Estonia, Lithuania and other places in the former Soviet Union where former restrictions have been lifted. But now tensions arise between local interests in maintaining the sacredness and secrets of these places and commercial interests in promoting tourism. Mapping of sacred places becomes a political issue! Indigenous geographical knowledges of rocks and stones, plants and animals, earth and water – in short of oikos and oecumene – were also described, with detailed accounts of sacred space in China and Japan, Cambodia and Norway.

As a whole, the papers included both empirically rich and conceptually evocative studies on religion and environment. The subject has evoked increasing interest in recent times with many new journals and new associations in formation. An edited volume of papers from the conference is planned. At the final plenary discussion of the Forum a decision was taken to organise the 2nd international conference in Turku, Finland in 2009. Further information is available at the Forum website (www.hf.ntnu.no/relnateur/)

- **Anne Buttimer**

Two Upcoming Conferences relating to GORABS

Special Session: "Geographies of Religion, Place, and Environment"

at **Association of Pacific Coast Geographers (APCG) Conference, October 17-20, 2007.**

Organized by Nicholas Bauch and Tristan Sturm (All are grad students studying religion in UCLA Geog Dept)
Nicholas Bauch, nbbauch@ucla.edu "A Natural History of Digestion" This paper uses the perspectives of Environmental History and Geography to address the intersection of health, food, and agriculture as played out at the end of the nineteenth century in and around John Harvey Kellogg's health sanitarium in Battle Creek, Michigan. I ask the question of how the agro-economy of that time and place – one focused on wheat and maize – is tied to the construction of healthy food, particularly through Kellogg's ideas about the digestive system.

Rob Sullivan, sullivanrob@msn.com "Walt Whitman's Consecration of America: How Poetry Sealed the Deal for Manifest Destiny" In his evocation of the American landscape as the divinely ordained place for the United States, Walt Whitman put a poetic stamp of approval on Manifest Destiny. A specifically religious (but non-denominational) tone was imprinted by Whitman on this concept, as if the nation's fate had been decreed by a god of historical inevitability.

Justin Wilford, jwilford@ucla.edu "The Challenge of Place: Trinity Christian City International and the Project of Modern Evangelizing" The geographical study of religion has not yet incorporated many of the insights from debates between proponents and critics of the secularization paradigm, a set of theories and empirical studies that link modernization and the erosion of the social significance of religion. One key lacuna for geographers of religion is secularization's affect on place.

Tristan Sturm, tristan.sturm@gmail.com "Secular and Evangelical Environmentalism" This paper will explore the complex interaction between Evangelicals, environmental issues, and America as a geography of knowledge production. Using primary interview data and secondary texts and utterances, I will compare and contrast what might be called "secular apocalyptic" views of the environment with apocalyptic Christian views of the environment.

Nicholas Howe, nhowe@ucla.edu - Discussant

The 16th World Congress of International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences

Kunming China: 15-23 July 2008. Focal Theme: "Humanity, Development and Diversity"

Main Organisers' Email: iuaes2008@126.com ; iuaes2008@hotmail.com

Web: <http://www.icaes2008.org> ; Link to IUAES: <http://www.leidenuniv.nl/fsw/iuaes/>

Deadline: Request for Papers. Abstract: (500 words + Keywords) by 15 Oct. 2007.

To be sent by Email to the Chairmen, and also CC to the Main Organizers

Call for Papers - Panel 20: 'Pilgrimage Landscape, Cosmogram and Planning the Heritage Cities'

Abstracts submitted and accepted as of 22 September 2007 include:

1. The World Heritage Villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama, Japan
 ----- Prof. Rana P. B. Singh (India) and Prof. Fukunaga Masaaki (Japan)
 2. Religious and Tectonic acumen of Wooden Architecture of Kerala, India. Prof. Miki Desai (India)
 3. Pilgrimage in the Post-Industrial Landscape: Varanasi as Cosmic Connector. Mr. Matthew Brown (Canada)
 4. Varanasi, India's Cultural Heritage City: Crises, Contestation... Prof. Rana P. B. Singh (India)
 5. Making a Pilgrimage, Making a Pilgrimage Site in China. Dr. Shin-yi Chao (U.S.A.)
 6. Sacred Mountain of Wutaishan, China: Cosmology, Pilgrimage and Representation. Mr. Wen-shing Chou (U.S.A.)
 7. The "Architecture of Light": From Sacred Geometry to Biophotonic Technology
 ----- Arch. Designer Drd. Aritia D. Poenaru & Prof. Dr. Traian D. Stănculescu (Romania)
- Co-Chairmen of the Panel: Rana P. B. Singh [Professor of Cultural Geography & Heritage Studies, Banaras Hindu University, India] # New F - 7, Jodhpur Colony; Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, UP 221005. INDIA ranapbsingh@gmail.com AND Fukunaga Masaaki [Managing Director: International Research Forum on SAARC, IRF-SAARC, Tokyo]. Professor & Assoc. Director, Centre for South Asian Studies, Gifu Women's University, 80 Taromaru, Gifu-shi, Gifu 〒501-2590, JAPAN. Email: office@fukunaga.cc

Three New Books important to GORABS

Geographies of Muslim Identities: Diaspora, Gender and Belonging. Cara Aitchison, Peter Hopkins and Mei-Po Kwan, eds. (Ashgate October 2007) ISBN-13 978-0-7546-4888-8

In recent years, geographies of identities, including those of ethnicity, religion, 'race' and gender, have formed an increasing focus of contemporary human geography. The events of September 11th, 2001 illustrated the ways in which identities can be transformed across time and space by both global and local events of a social, cultural, political and economic nature. Such transformations have also demonstrated the temporal and spatial construction of hate and fear, and of increasing incidences of 'Islamophobia' through the construction of Muslims as 'the Other'. As the study of religion continues to be marginalized within mainstream scholarship, an important gap in the literature remains.

Introduction: Geographies of Muslim identities, Hopkins, Kwan and Aitchison;

Beyond the mosque: Turkish immigrants and the practice and politics of Islam in Duisburg-Marxloh, Germany, Patricia Ehrkamp;

Visible minorities; constructing and deconstructing the 'Muslim Iranian' diaspora, Cameron McAuliffe;

'The other within the same': some aspects of Scottish-Pakistani identity in suburban Glasgow, Sadiq Mir;

Migration and construction of women's identity in Northern Ireland, Gabriele Marranci;

Reconstructing 'Muslimness': new bodies in urban Indonesia, Sonja van Wichelen;

'Safe and risky spaces': gender, ethnicity and culture in the leisure lives of young South Asian women, Eileen Green and Carrie Singleton;

Daughters of Islam, sisters in sport, Tess Kay;

Cultural Muslims: the evolution of Muslim identity in Soviet and post-Soviet Central Asia, William C. Rowe;

Islam and national development: a cross-cultural comparison of the role of religion in the process of economic development and cultural change, Samuel Zalanga;

Young Muslim men's experiences of local landscapes after 11 September 2001, Peter E. Hopkins

Women, Religion, and Space. Karen M. Morin and Jeanne Kay Guelke, eds. (978-0-8156-3116-3) 2007

Contributors to this volume study women who practice or interact with the gender norms and spaces of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. The book focuses on questions of how and why religious and secular authorities seek to regulate women's mobility and access to particular spaces, and how religious women negotiate their agency and mobility within traditional institutions.

Preface / Karen M. Morin

Introduction: Women, religion, and space--making the connections / Karen Morin and Jeanne Kay Guelke;

Repression of Muslim women's movements in colonial East Africa / Jennifer Kopf;

Conversion of native and slave women in Dutch colonial South Africa / Leonard Guelke

Gender, religion, and urban management: women's bodies and everyday lives in Jerusalem / Tovi Fenster;

A feminist geography of veiling in Istanbul / Banu Gökçek;

In the lady's seat: cosmopolitan women travelers in Pakistan / Kathryn Besio;

Missionary women in early America: prospects for a feminist geography / Jeanne K Guelke and Karen Morin;

Korean immigrant women to Los Angeles: religious space, transformative space? / HaeRan Shin

Afterword / Anna Secor.

Forthcoming: Sacred Geography of Goddesses in South Asia: Essays in memory of David Kinsley Rana P. B. Singh and Ravi S. Singh (eds.) Sundeep, New Delhi. 2007. A festschrift to (the late) David Kinsley who introduced the interdisciplinary frame of sacred geography to study goddesses, especially in South Asia. Includes a review of Kinsley's work on goddesses (by Mann, USA), a detailed appraisal of goddesses' landscape and ritualscape of South Asia, and twelve essays: spatiality and symbolism (Singh & Singh, India), Mental journeys and cosmic topography (Wilke, Germany), Devi pilgrimage sites in the Siwalik (Foster and Stoddard, USA), Spatiality and ordering of goddesses in Kashi (Singh & Singh, India), Mahavidyas' Yatra as a contemporary pilgrimage (Zeiler Germany), Sacred geography of Vindhya goddess territory (Singh, India), Sacredscape of goddess Chinnamasta at Rajarappa (Ravi Singh, India), Circulation in ritualscape of the Matrikas in Kathmandu Valley (Amazzone, USA), Kamakhya Pitha of India (Ramasso, Italy), Sacred abode of the Durga in Varanasi (Rodrigues, Canada), Landscape of the Mother Goddess Kalika at Pavagadh (Sinha, USA), Shaman-Healer and Priestess to the Devi (Gadon, USA), and Goddess Ganga River: Pure or Impure Today (Alley, USA).

Sponsored Sessions at the 2007 AAG Conference in San Francisco

Papers presented at our 8 sponsored sessions

Many of us debated these while eating in San Francisco!

Muslims in the West: youth, politics and belonging

Kathrin Hörschelmann, University of Durham, UK - Youth and the Geopolitics of Risk after 11th September 2001

Peter Hopkins, Lancaster University, UK - Global events, National politics, Local lives: Perspectives of a Young Scottish Muslim man
Rachel Pain, Univ of Durham, Ruth Panelli, UCL, Sara Kindon, Univ of Wellington, New Zealand, Jo Little, Univ of Exeter, The War on Terror, Fear and Muslim Young People

Jenny Pickerill, Leicester Univ, UK - Walking side by side? Muslim anti-war activism in Britain

Claire Dwyer, Univ College London, UK - Muslim state-funded schools: Contested spaces of faith and citizenship

Muslims in the West: performances of gender and sexuality

Graeme Mearns, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK, Virtual space and the increasing visibility of gay Muslims in Germany.

Anna Mansson McGinty, Univ of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA, Alternative Femininities and Sisterhoods among Muslim women: Ethnographic approaches to Gender and Identity

Kevin M. Dunn, Univ of New South Wales, Public discourses about hijab-wearing in Australia

Catherine Alexander, Univ of Durham, Abayas, Niqabs and Hijabs - the embodiment of Fear in Fenham?

Mapping of Religions

John T. Bauer, Univ of Nebraska, Stability and Change in US Religious Regions, 1980 – 2000

Catherine Carter, Univ of Maryland, Heaven on Earth: The Shakers and their Maps

John Kostelnick, Haskell Indian Nations Univ, Tracing the History of Thematic Mapping of Religion in the US

Darrel L. McDonald, Stephen F. Austin State Univ, Aspects of Sacred Space Spatiality Arising from Mapping East Texas Cemeteries

Brandon Plewe & Richard H. Jackson, Brigham Young Univ, Design Considerations for a Multimodal Atlas of Church History

Christian Missions and Christians Overseas

Edward H. Davis, Emory & Henry College, Christian Proselytizing in Muslim North Africa

John S. Benson, Minnesota State Univ Moorhead, Pagans to Partners: An American Church Explains its Mission to its Members.

Chad Emmett, Brigham Young Univ, Bribery and humanitarian aid as agents of Christianization (Indonesia)

Joseph Mensah, York Univ, Doing Religion Overseas: Functions of Ghanaian Immigrant Churches in Toronto

Religious Communities on the Edge

Barry A. Vann, Lincoln Memorial Univ, Ethno-religious Policies of the Plantation of Ulster, 1590-1690.

David Butler, Univ College Cork, Ireland, Southern Protestants Sidelined?: Perceptions and Experiences in Ireland since 1920.

Caleb Parker, East Carolina Univ, Sanctuaries of Silence: North Carolina's United Methodist Pastors Respond to Homosexuality.

Reinhard Henkel, Univ of Heidelberg, In the Shadow of the Duopoly: Free Churches in Germany.

Religion and Environment I

Whitney Bauman, Graduate Theological Union, The Death of God and the Death of Nature: Religious Grounds for Earth-healing in an Era of Climate Change.

Johanna Haas, Illinois State Univ, Promised Land: The Cult of Private Property as Represented in early Appalachian Religious Practices.

Tristan Sturm, UCLA, The Environment as Apocalypse.

Religion and Environment II

Richard Carp, Appalachian State Univ, Spatial Cosmologies Embedded in Scientific Language: Ecology vs. Environment.

Denis Thalson, Graduate Theological Union, Bay Area Memorial Shrines: A Typology Based on Place.

Christopher Limburg, Univ of Wisconsin Madison, Place, Nature and Knowledge: Toward a Spiritual Ecology of the Kathmandu Valley.

Problematizing the Dialogue between Geography of Religion/Belief and Emergent Paradigms and Theories

Panelists: John A. Agnew, UCLA, Gertjan Dijkink, Jeanne Kay Guelke, Univ of Waterloo, Nicolas Howe, UCLA, Avril Maddrell

Report from the 2007 AAG Conference (continued)



GORABS Specialty Group Board and Officers

Chair (2007-2009): Ed Davis ehdavis@ehc.edu

Previous Chair (2007-2009): David Rutherford druther@olemiss.edu

Secretary/Treasurer (2007-2009): Peter Hopkins peter.hopkins@ncl.ac.uk
& Elizabeth Olson elizabeth.olson@ed.ac.uk

Board Member (2006-2008): Tristan Sturm tristan.sturm@gmail.com

Board Member (2006-2008): Darrel McDonald dmcDonald@sfasu.edu

Board Member (2007-2009): Mike Ferber mike.ferber@mail.wvu.edu

Board Member (2007-2009): David Butler d.butler@ucc.ie

Grad Student Rep (2007-2009): Chris Limburg cjlimburg@wisc.edu

Minutes, GORABS Specialty Group Business Meeting - 18 April, 2007, San Francisco, CA, USA

1. Called to order at 7:10 pm by David Rutherford.
2. Minutes from the 2006 Meeting presented by Ed Davis and approved.
3. Financial Report presented by David Rutherford
4. Activity Report presented by David Rutherford and Ed Davis
 - a. Volume 1, Issue 1 of *Geographies of Religions and Belief Systems* (online journal), edited by Elizabeth Leppman was posted on the GORABS website in October 2006, with 3 papers and 2 book reviews. Tristan Sturm and Chris Limburg asked that the group consider making a special theme issue – all members present were in support of this idea.
 - b. Two issues of the GORABS newsletter were published in 2006 edited by David Rutherford.
 - c. The GORABS website continues to be updated and contains considerable info, mastered by Mike Ferber. Mike would like pass these duties. Darrel McDonald volunteered.
 - d. Nine sessions were GORABS-sponsored at the 2007 AAG meeting.
 - e. *Geographies of Religion*, Mike Ferber and Carolyn Prorok, eds., Sage is out soon. The authors include: Jeanne Kay Guelke, Daniel Olson, Michael Pacione, Jesse Rouse, Sue Bergeron, Len Guelke, Michael Ferber, Tristan Sturm, Gregory Levine, Carolyn Prorok, William Norton, Thomas Tweed, and Rob Kruse.
5. Awards presented by Ed Davis
 - a. Robert Stoddard Award for Service and Research had no nominations. It was established in 2004, first awarded to Robert Stoddard in 2005, awarded to Carolyn Prorok in 2006.
 - b. David Sopher New Scholar Award was given to Ramin Zamanian for his paper, "A Material/Conceptual Landscape Analysis of the Virgin of Guadalupe Pilgrim-age Site in Mexico City, Mexico"
6. Board members and officers - election facilitated by Ed Davis

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Chair for 2007-2009 = | Ed Davis, replaces David Rutherford |
| Previous Chair for 2007-2009 = | David Rutherford, replaces Mike Ferber |
| Board Member 2006-2008 = | Tristan Sturm continuing |
| Board Member 2006-2008 = | Darrel McDonald continuing |
| Secretary/Treasurer 2007-2009 = | Peter Hopkins & Elizabeth Olson were elected |
| Board member for 2007-2009 = | Mike Ferber was elected |
| Board member for 2007-2009 = | David Butler was elected |
| Grad Student Rep, 2007-2009 = | Chris Limburg was elected |
7. Forum – facilitated by David Rutherford - Members present discussed several ideas:
 - Spending the uncommitted funds we have in our account?
 - A Paper-poster session and/or Panel session on the new book for the 2008 AAG?
 - Inviting special guest speakers to 2008 AAG?
 - Abstracts to go in the Newsletter?
 - Creating a List-serve with the subject line "Geography of Religion"?
 - Changing the Sopher paper award announcement and deadline?
 - Possible Stoddard Award nominees?
8. Adjourned by David Rutherford at 8:10 pm – followed by a social at an Indian Restaurant

DAVID E. SOPHER NEW SCHOLAR AWARD

The following announcement is presented here to encourage new scholars in the sub-discipline of geography of religions and belief systems to consider applying for the Sopher Award. The deadline for submitting the completed paper for consideration is 15 February 2008. However, the paper must be presented at the AAG annual conference in Boston in April of 2008, so if you intend to submit a paper for the award competition, you must submit the paper title and abstract to the AAG before the conference deadline of 31 October 2007.

Description:

The purpose of the David E. Sopher New Scholar Award is to promote intellectual enquiry from new scholars into geographies of religions and belief systems through the presentation of papers at the [AAG meeting](#). Papers will be judged on potential contribution to the field of Geography of Religions and Belief Systems, organization, and written composition.

Eligibility:

Both graduate students and untenured faculty who are not serving on the GORABS board can apply for the award.

Award:

The amount for the 2008 award is a travel grant of \$250. The recipient will also be given an official certificate at the AAG awards luncheon.

Disbursement:

A check will be disbursed to the winner at the 2007 Geography of Religions and Belief Systems annual business meeting at the AAG event.

Requirements:

The paper and application form must be emailed to the GORABS chair in rich text or Microsoft Word format no later than midnight, February 15th. The paper must subsequently be presented at the national AAG meeting, though it does not have to be in a GORABS sponsored session. A panel of previous GORABS chairs will judge the papers and determine a recipient. The winner will be announced in time to attend the awards luncheon with a GORABS representative. GORABS reserves the right to not make an award in a given year.

Application Form:

[In Microsoft Word](#)

[In Adobe PDF](#)

[In HTML](#)

More Information:

For more info please contact the present GORABS chair, Ed Davis, at ehdavis@ehc.edu.

Seven Sessions Being Organized for the 2008 AAG in Boston

Call for Papers – A Session on Geographies of Religious Fraternalism I'd like to express my interest in organizing a session on the Geographies of Religious Fraternalism. I am looking for papers that discuss and address the geographic dimensions of religious fraternalism, such as the historical diffusion of religiously motivated fraternal orders, the socio-spatial impact of fraternal orders through acts of charity, and more. If you are interested in contributing, please contact me with a paper idea and a title for their presentation by Oct 15. My email is okuhlke@d.umn.edu. **Olaf Kuhlke**, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, University of Minnesota - Duluth

Call for Papers – A Session on Religion, Age and Everyday Lives Organized by Peter Hopkins (Newcastle) and Elizabeth Olson (Edinburgh) This session draws upon a conversation emerging from across the social sciences, addressing the relationships between religion, relationships and age. As states become increasingly attuned to the politics of religion and managing the religious body, the religious lives and practices of young people, adults and elderly are often reduced to their symbolic accoutrements. Little attention is paid to the differentiated meanings of 'religion' and spirituality across age groups, or how religion is experienced, generated, shaped, or asserted through relationships and across space. Our hope is to contribute a geographical perspective to this conversation by engaging any range of intersections between the lived practices of religion and spirituality and the conduct (or conscription) of everyday lives of different generations.

We are interested in a range of different topics related to age, aging and lived religion, including but are not limited to:

- The influence of age upon the constructions of religious identity
- The meaning of religion for different age groups
- Religion in the everyday lives of children, young people, adults and the elderly
- Religion, gender and generation
- Sexuality and religion
- The role of religion the construction of public and private spaces among different age groups
- Marking of religious spaces for children, young people, adults and older people in schools, workplaces, communities...
- The global governance of aged religious identities
- Youth embodiment of religious identities through clothing and consumption
- Religion in and among the household, the nursing home, etc.
- Youth (or elderly) transitions and religion
- Radical youth religions

Please send abstracts of no more than 250 words to **Elizabeth Olson** (elizabeth.olson@ed.ac.uk) by Oct 10.

Call for Papers – A Session on Interfaith Geographies My area of interest is geography and religion, but in particular "interfaith" activities in the U.S. The title of my dissertation is "The Interfaith Center: The construction and consequence of interfaith space." I wonder if anyone else is exploring similar themes and would be interested in participating in a session about this theme. For example: How does 'interfaith' fit into geography of religion; Impact of the Interfaith Center or similar organizations; Interfaith sacred space; Need for different congregations or religious groups to share space based on economics; Reaction to different faith groups entering relatively homogenous neighborhoods; Exploring/documenting religious pluralism in the United States on a local level; Impact of interfaith cooperation versus noncooperation on social well-being.

The first few are ideas that I have been working on. I hope there will be others. Please send replies to: Cristina Notaro, Doctoral student at CUNY Graduate Center, 516-313-5228, cnotaro@gc.cuny.edu or CrisNotaro@aol.com.

Call for Papers: A Session on Spatial Polity and Practice in the Anglican Communion Organizer: Michael R. Glass, Ph.D. (The Pennsylvania State University) The Anglican Communion spans 38 provinces and includes approximately 84 million members worldwide, making it the third largest Christian denomination behind Roman Catholicism and the Orthodox Church. Each Anglican province is organized on national or regional grounds; led by a Presiding Bishop the provinces have significant local autonomy, yet acknowledge their global interdependence through four historic 'Instruments of Unity' – the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the decennial Lambeth Conference (next held in 2008), the Anglican Consultative Council and the regular Primates' Meeting. During the last thirty years, the instruments of unity and traditional concepts of provincial autonomy have been challenged. The Anglican Communion and The Episcopal Church (USA) are currently embroiled in a number of debates concerning parochial and provincial authority,

while many traditional conventions of local and global authority and alignment are being put to the test. These debates are lubricated by modern communication technologies. There is also an interesting realignment whereby the 'Global South' - i.e. diocese and provinces in developing nations are seen by American conservatives as the source region for the re-evangelism of a post-Christian West. In all cases, the nature of the debates and changes underway threaten the traditional capacity of Anglicans to navigate a 'middle way' between absolute hierarchy and autonomy in church governance.

This session will bring together scholars interested in the political geography of church governance. There are a range of theoretical issues which participants can address using the lens of the Anglican Communion, including the nature of church polity under globalization, post-colonial relations, and political geographies of scale and power. The Boston AAG provides a timely forum for discussion and debate, as it precedes the decennial Lambeth Conference and marks five years of strident debates in the United States regarding the direction and autonomy of The Episcopal Church (USA). Please contact Dr. Michael Glass (mrg202@psu.edu) with an expression of interest; a title and brief abstract (max. 200 words) will be required before Oct. 15.

Call for Papers: A Session on Teaching about Islam, against the “War on Terror” The teach-in against war, sexism, human rights violations, environmental degradation or other evil is a time-honored way for scholars to quickly disseminate information necessary for understanding current events. The “War on Terror” (and on Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalis, and dissention) in which Islam is racialized and politicized is entering its seventh year. Attacks on Islamic thought and societies are becoming commonplace, as is bigotry against Muslim individuals. The decreasing ability of these attacks to shock is increasingly alarming. As these attitudes and political-economic alignments become entrenched, teach-ins on the War on Terror are rarely held. Neither instructors nor the public can maintain the energy needed, especially as the endless nature of the war becomes clear. Long-term strategies are needed in the face of these political and cultural changes within “coalition” countries.

Many instructors have developed teaching units at various levels to meet this challenge. Islam is appropriately at the center of these units, because Islam itself is targeted in the “War on Terror”. Teaching against the war requires both deconstructing the discursive formations that produce the Orient, including Islam, and also understanding the geopolitical-economic structures that materially shape the world into East and West, North and South. These topics are being developed in traditional courses on political geography, geography of religion, economic geography, critical theory, and regional geography. Introductory courses at a global scale may spend a day or two on such concerns, or may briefly revisit them several times during the semester. Graduate seminars discussing topics from global cities to questions of representation may also grapple with these issues.

This session is a place to present experiences in teaching about the War on Terror and to encourage development of teaching against the war. Suggested topics include: course challenges and victories, materials and teaching methods, short exercises and course structures, philosophies and practices engaged in teaching against the war, in any sub-discipline.

The session is co-sponsored by the following specialty groups of the AAG: Geographic Education; Geography of Religion and Belief Systems; Cultural Geography; Political Geography; Ethics, Justice and Human Rights

Depending on paper quality and interest level of participants, attendees, and editors, papers may be published as a forum in *The Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, *Area*, *The Professional Geographer*, or another similarly high-exposure journal. To participate, please send your abstract and PIN to Jennifer Kopf at jkopf@wtamu.edu by Oct. 15.

Call for Papers - A Session on Religious Beliefs and Nature

Janel Curry, Dean for Research and Scholarship and Professor of Geography at Calvin College, may help us organize a session for the AAG on the topic of religious beliefs and nature. She gives the example of her current analysis of sermons from a variety of denominations post-Katrina and post-Asian Tsunami. She looks at the relationships between nature and God. If you are interested, please send your idea to Janel at jcurry@calvin.edu.

Call for Papers - A Panel Session on Integrating Geographies and Libera Terra

Libera Terra runs agricultural cooperatives in Calabria and Sicily on land confiscated from the mafia. The group's slogan may translate as: "The taste of legality: for a conscientious consumption: because also in this way it is possible to defeat the mafia." It is a sub-group of Libera, a nonprofit founded in 1995 to fight the terror and exploitation meted out by the mafia in Calabria and Sicily. See more at: <http://www.libera.it/index.asp?idpagina=549#>. Libera has education, agricultural cooperatives and other projects, with the goal of restoring a free, just and equitable society in Southern Italy and Sicily. Just this year there have been acts of violence and intimidation against these projects.

"I will invite Father Don Luigi Ciotti, president of the group, to discuss their successes and struggles against the mafia to establish a peaceful and productive society, culture and economy in the region. Father Ciotti has been an anti-drug, anti-drug trade, anti-mafia activist and is the author of several books on these themes. The role of the church in Libera Terra is my main interest in organizing the session (but I invite other perspectives). I think making a distinction between the church as a social and political entity on the one hand and as a spiritual and sacred one on the other would be one question. What attracts me most strongly to the group is that it is led by a priest. I see possible connections to Liberation Theology and other points of intersection between religion and politics, respecting the cooperative, environmentalist, free-market orientations of the group. Having someone on the panel who could expertly ask these questions would be an essential component to the discussion." - Thomas Puleo, ABD in Geography, UCLA. On this website you may learn more about Thomas and how he uses the concept of "integrating geographies": http://www.geog.ucla.edu/people/grads.php?lid=3368&display_one=1.

There will likely be a few more organized sessions developed before the end of October. Watch for notices on the GORABS listserve, or send them yourself, but send requests for GORABS sponsorship directly to the Chair, Ed Davis, at ehdavis@ehc.edu.

Resources for teachers:

One of the pleasant benefits of the internet today is access to images of religious landscapes. A fine website called The Museum of Family History has a great collection of images of Jewish cemeteries and memorials in Poland. I highly recommend it to teachers, with permission, of course, from the webmaster. On the left is one of the monuments at Treblinka, and on the right is the Memorial to the Jews of Łuków. - Ed Davis



Source: www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/hme-poland.htm