

PERSPECTIVES *On Religion*

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“We’re Always Seeking to Become” Korean Studies Chair Examines Empowerment

by Suzanne Kelsey



As an elementary school student growing up in South Korea, Hyaewol Choi especially admired a teacher who treated students fairly. “It didn’t matter whether we were under-prepared or academically gifted, wealthy or poor. He didn’t discriminate.”

The same passion for equality and justice that she valued as a young girl is what unites Dr. Choi’s interests now, says the new Stanley Family and Korea Foundation Chair in Korean Studies. Her interdisciplinary, wide-ranging areas of study include gender, religion, and transnational history, with an emphasis on the dynamic flow of ideas, materials, and people across national boundaries.

Choi attributes the drive to pursue such varied interests to her mother, who encouraged her to do what she was passionate about, to be persistent, and to never give up.

The path was not always easy. As a college student in Seoul, Choi noticed that the predominately male faculty treated male students differently from female students. She joined a feminist reading group for support. In her academic studies, she and other young scholars of her generation sought to replace Western with indigenous theoretical approaches to Korean history, society, and culture. Eventually she pursued a doctorate in international education at The State University of New York in Buffalo. There, among other subjects, she researched the contributions of Asian scholars to the West.

Moving to the U.S. shifted her outlook “from parochial to wide-open,” says Choi. “Leaving your own country and living in a foreign culture provides tremendously new, fresh ideas about everything. When American professors, colleagues, and friends asked about Korea, I was able to view my country from a different perspective for the first time.”

Some of the best academic institutions and publishers are located in the U.S., says Choi, which creates “power in terms of knowledge production” that attracts international students. This enabled Choi during her doctoral studies to make friends from all continents, including Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin

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Korean Studies (cont.)

America. “It was such an exhilarating experience, to hear their perspectives without having to travel all over the world.”

Twenty-five years after completing her Ph.D., and after holding academic positions at the University of Kansas, Smith College, Arizona State University, and Australian National University, Choi continues to ask questions about “how people perceive, select, reject, and appropriate elements from old and new” as they find their voices in spite of power inequities. She has used these questions recently to explore the role of a global Christian network in refashioning gender norms and everyday life in modern Korea. Her book-in-progress is tentatively titled *Beyond Domestic Borders: Gender and Protestant Modernity in Korea, 1880s-1937*.

“There are structural issues that can constrain our lives, yet we as humans are really never passive objects; there are ways to be empowered. How do we find those resources? It could be religion, education, family, or friendships—we’re always seeking to become. We may encounter mind-boggling situations in any moment, but we’re always striving for justice, equality, and our own voices.”

She points to influences of western missionaries on Korean women beginning in the late nineteenth century. While missionary work was a form of cultural imperialism, local people also proactively sought new opportunities that the new religion offered, says Choi. The literacy rate increased among commoners as missionaries founded schools and required literacy training for

Bible classes. They also employed women to teach in the villages, thus helping create a group of economically independent women. “Literacy gave women the beginning of a new identity and a new self,” says Choi. “Economic ability gave them tremendous power in comparison to their former lives.”

In the spring 2019 semester, Choi will teach “Gender and Religion in Korean Visual Culture,” which will address the complex experiences of women and men within various religious traditions of Korea from the seventeenth century to the present. Imagery in paintings, films, and photographs will be examined for clues about the historical, cultural, and religious experiences of Koreans.

With North and South Korea in the world spotlight, Choi will also teach “Korea in the World.” Political scientists tend to dominate discussions of the area because of North Korea’s nuclear ambition, but Choi wants students to also understand North Korea from an historical point of view. Her course will trace the historical evolution of the Korean peninsula, as well as socioeconomic and cultural changes in South Korea.

When not immersed in her work, Choi is a yoga enthusiast. She and her husband, who teaches linguistics at the University, are both foodies and film-lovers. After living in dry climates in Phoenix, Arizona, and Canberra, Australia, the couple found Iowa to be so “lush and green” when they arrived last summer. While the winter offers a testing ground after twenty years of mild weather, the couple is enjoying making new friendships.

Choi is also excited about chairing the Korean Studies Program. She will draw from her experiences in building and expanding Korean studies programs at several institutions. She’ll also seek collaboration with other universities in the U.S., as well as academic and cultural organizations in Korea.

Choi envisions working with other colleagues to develop study-abroad opportunities for University of Iowa students. She’ll seek more interdisciplinary connections between her program and other departments and colleges within the University. Outreach to K-12 public schools in Iowa may also be ahead; Choi notes that the example of how South Korea evolved into a democratic society might help students ponder ideas such as what it means to be a member of a community and how people in other countries think about well-being, equity, and citizenship.

“I believe that simple exposure could really open up young minds the way my mind was opened,” says Choi. “We need dialogue and open-mindedness in our society at this time. We try to train our students to become sensible, compassionate, conscientious global citizens. My colleagues and I should take up this same role in our public engagement.” It is easy to imagine Choi’s mother and elementary school teacher urging her on.

HOLSTEIN IS STILL INSPIRING JOE RUSSO



This past spring University Alum Joe Russo, co-director of the most recent “Avengers: Infinity War” movie, came to Iowa City with extraordinary words of praise for none other than our own Professor Jay Holstein. Russo was interviewed by the university and every major newspaper in the state. In each context Russo said that the film could not have been made without his undergraduate work with Prof. Holstein. “Unequivocally, the most important

thing I learned was from Professor Holstein,” Russo said of his time in Iowa. “It was about thematic and metaphor and storytelling He was a huge influence on me as a storyteller and my understanding of how story could resonate with audiences.” (Cedar Rapids Gazette, April 27, 2018)

Russo developed a friendship with Professor Holstein, even serving as an Undergraduate Teaching Assistant for him. It was Holstein’s classes where Russo found the most fuel for his creative brain. In an Iowa City Press Citizen article he once again “remembered Holstein as a huge influence on his storytelling abilities, about how a story can resonate with audiences.” When Joe and his brother Anthony Russo were handed “Captain America: The Winter Soldier,” Russo took what he learned from Holstein and went to work.

Russo leaned on Prof. Holstein’s guidance in making the follow-up movies “Captain America: Civil War” and “Avengers: Infinity War.” Russo stated he and his brother will do it again when the 2019’s Avengers movie finishes the story started in “Infinity War.” “If you’re not into thematic . . . you can watch it as a story about a superhero struggling against a villain,” Russo said. “If you want to come out of the theater thinking about the world, and this goes back to professor Holstein, you can view the films with symbolism and metaphor and thematic to make them more resonant for you.” (Iowa City Press Citizen, April 27, 2018).

Here are links to some of the news releases from Joe Russo’s visit to Iowa City in April:

The video of Holstein’s interview with Russo filmed by the University of Iowa Alumni Association: <https://www.facebook.com/universityofiowa/videos/10156174667253847/>

Cedar Rapids Gazette, April 27, 2018:

<https://www.thegazette.com/subject/news/education/university-of-iowa-grad-marvel-moviemaker-joe-russo-to-return-to-campus-20180427>

Iowa City Press Citizen, April 27, 2018:

<https://www.press-citizen.com/story/entertainment/2018/04/27/iowa-city-university-student-movie-marvel-director-infinity-war/553593002/>

Reflections on doing international research – Cuma Ozkan



In the summer of 2018, I spent two weeks in China and one week in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to attend a workshop, give a presentation, and conduct database research for my dissertation, thanks to the M. Willard Lampe and E.P Adler awards from the Department of Religion at the University of Iowa.

After the workshop on “*Ancient Historiography in Comparison*,” at the International Center for the Study of Ancient Text Cultures at Renmin University, I was provided a private room where I conducted a database search for my dissertation. I primarily work on texts on Islam produced in the late-17th and early-18th centuries in China. Religion has played an important driving force for uprisings and rebellions in the history of China including the White Lotus Rebellion (1796-1804), the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864), and the Panthay Rebellion (1856-1872); thus, research on religion in China is considered sensitive because it can have political implications.

I was fortunate during this trip to be able to share my current research with a former colleague from my time at Nanjing University. Prof. Liu Yingsheng, Chairman of the Academic Committee of the Tsinghua Academy of Ancient Chinese Studies at Tsinghua University, gave productive and insightful feedback on my findings and ideas.

I also visited three mosques (Dongsi Mosque, Haidian Mosque, Madian Mosque) whose construction dates back to Yuan and Ming Dynasties where I had a chance to interact with the local Muslim community. Finally, I spent a week in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan visiting several museums including the Museum of Rare Books at Gylym Ordasy, Almaty, and archaeological sites of the Kara-Khanid Khanate (840-1212). I seized this opportunity to explore the possible areas and themes that could further my research on pre-modern connections

Having traveled to China a number of times since 2012 to attend language courses and conduct research for my dissertation, I have a lot of experience with visas and travel permits. Each time I applied for a visa to China, I encountered new rules which required me to make several visits to Chinese consulates, and once included a private interview with the consular officials. I learned quickly that having all appropriate documents from my home institution in the USA and the inviting institution in China does not guarantee a visa. As a citizen of Turkey, I need extra time to handle the additional visa procedures including obtaining approval of my research trip from the Exit and Entry Administration of the Public Security Bureau in Beijing in China. While overseas research is always challenging because of language barriers, long trips, and visa procedures, the current antagonistic global climate fueled by populism and nationalism has made religion research even more difficult to pursue. I have come to think of obtaining a visa as part of my research!

Student Excavations in Corinth

– Peter Miller and Andrea Scardina



Over the 2018 summer session, Peter Miller and Andrea Scardina travelled to the village of Ancient Corinth to assist with the third season of the Lechaion Harbor and Settlement Land Project (LHSLP) excavation. The project, active since 2016, is seeking to better understand the role that Corinth's northern harbor played in trade and cultural exchange.

Andrea joined the project this year as an excavator, working across the site's three active areas with help from the Department of Religious Studies, a Graduate Student Senate supplemental travel grant, and the Iowa Recruitment Fellowship. Peter returned this year as part of the Total Station and Data Management team for the project with help from the Department of Classics. Their work is aimed at helping answer several fundamental questions about the site, including how it was rebuilt by Roman intervention, and why the site was later abandoned.

With a total of three years of excavation completed, LHSLP has been responsible for producing a notable hoard of Roman era coins which were featured in a Newsweek article in Spring 2018. Full details of the site's findings will be submitted for publication in the coming year.

In addition to its discoveries' critical contributions to our understanding of Roman era Corinth, the directors have opened the site to student archaeologists from across the country. Working in small teams with professional excavators, undergraduate and graduate students take their classroom educations in archaeology and apply them in the dirt.

Underneath two millennia-worth of settlements, Lechaion's students assisted in carefully uncovering the remains of commercial buildings, civic structures, and homes, and piecing together the history of their construction, use, and renovation. As the summer progressed and the students were able to put their theoretical understanding together with their new experiences, Lechaion's trench supervisors drew on them to both plan excavation work as well as interpret findings.

Students also took turns working with specialists on site, including ceramicists, archaeobotanists, epigraphers, and digital archaeologists. Lechaion has had a large diversity of finds, which requires engaging in broad interdisciplinary collaboration to get the most amount of data from each find. By the end of the summer, students have a glimpse of the intensity and breadth of modern archaeology as well as a first-hand look at the history of Roman colonization in Greece.

Corinth is a famous trade city in central Greece, built on the narrow isthmus that connected the Eastern and Western Mediterranean. Lechaion, as Corinth's north-western harbor, was a major site for trade coming to and from Italy, an important position after the city was rebuilt by Julius Caesar. Corinth's role as a trade center would also draw attention from Early Christians, with the Apostle Paul notably writing two epistles to the growing community there.

LHSLP is currently in research season and planning future seasons, which will remain open to students at the University of Iowa and across the country.

RAGBRAI as Research: Energizing Body and Mind – Emma Rifai



As an aspiring academic, I like to think much of my time is spent plumbing the depths of human knowledge. During the last week of July this past summer, however, my deepest thoughts were “I thought Iowa was flat!?” and “If I hear Sweet Home Alabama *one more time...*”

RAGBRAI is an annual bike tour that draws roughly 20,000 daily riders from around the world, many of whom spend seven days biking across the not-so-flat state of Iowa. This year’s route was over 430 miles long and included almost 13,000 feet of elevation gain, which is a tad shocking given that the highest point in Iowa is a measly 1,670 feet. Did I love every minute? No. Would I do it again? Maybe. Would I recommend it to graduate students? Absolutely.

As much as I love grad school, at times, it sometimes seems organized around fairly arbitrary deadlines meeting what often seem to be fairly arbitrary goals. As graduate

students, we live in a liminal space of sorts - an academic purgatory. Coursework. Publishing. Presenting. Teaching. Fellowship applications. Service. It’s a balancing act with each new deadline looming even larger than the last. It’s easy to lose perspective.

One thing I’ve found that combats this is something that might seem anathema to our daily academic routines - rigorous physical exertion. I know; we graduate students aren’t often the most athletic of folk, and I’m no exception. However, each summer of graduate school, I’ve managed to squeeze in some sort of activity that pushed my physical limits. This summer it was RAGBRAI. And I can assure you that there is nothing like biking 70 miles a day knowing that even when I FINALLY pulled into town for the night I still needed to set up camp, find a shower, and vie for an electrical outlet like the data-hungry vulture I am to remind me that there is more to life than writing deadlines and grant proposals.

There is something about hunkering down into our bodies and escaping our “ivory towers” that puts us better in touch with both ourselves and with the community around us. At times I was reduced to counting pedal rotations to distract myself as I climbed yet another hill or thirstily scanning the horizon for the next water station or wondering how much time I would serve if I “accidentally” drove the fellow playing Lynyrd Skynyrd next to me off the road. Other times, I marveled at the sight of 10,000 bikers walking their bikes through small Iowa towns like Harper (population 109) and gawked at the breath-taking simplicity of the sun rising over an Iowa corn field. And, if nothing else, RAGBRAI was a great opportunity to practice my elevator pitch with unsuspecting fellow bikers who may or may not have actually asked me about my research.

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Robert Cargill completed his latest book manuscript, *Melchizedek, King of Sodom*, which is presently in preparation for production in 2019 with Oxford University Press. He also presented two papers at the SBL annual meeting in Denver: “From Your Birth to Your Youths: Masoretic Pointing as Anti-Christian Polemic in Psalm 110:3” in the “Masoretic Studies” section, and “If It Quacks Like an Article...: Public Scholarship in the Digital Age” in the “Archaeology of the Biblical World” section. In January, he co-authored an editorial for the Iowa City Press-Citizen entitled “Why We Do Not Support the ‘Bible Literacy’ Bill in Iowa,” in which he explains why a proposed bill to teach the Bible in Iowa public schools was problematic. Locally, Cargill presented a six-lecture series at the Agudas Achim synagogue in Coralville, IA entitled “The New Testament for Jews” in which he offered a survey and a discussion of the importance of the Christian New Testament to the congregation. Following the fatal shootings at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Dr. Cargill was discussed the origins of antisemitism with Iowa Public Radio’s Ben Kieffer on his show, *River to River*, and was part of a panel discussion on campus entitled *Understanding Antisemitism* with Prof. Elizabeth Heineman (History) and Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz (Agudas Achim), which offered some background on the origins of antisemitism.

Diana Fritz Cates concluded her second 3-year term as DEO in August. In the area of research and scholarship, she was selected to be a Fellow of the UI Opioid Ideas Lab, which brought scholars from multiple disciplines together, along with healthcare providers, to address the challenging topic of the opioid crisis in Iowa. Professor Cates also began work as a Guest Editor of a special volume of the journal *Religions* on the topic of “The Morality of the Desire for Payback.” She gave an invited lecture for the Wisconsin Breast Cancer Coalition on “Contributions of the Humanities to Cancer Research Advocacy.” She completed three articles, which are currently in the publication process: “Scholastic Hatred” for the *Sewanee Theological Review*, and two articles for the *Journal of Religious Ethics*, namely, “You Deserve to Suffer for what you Did” and “The Relational Dynamics of Intimacy and Alterity.” She continued work on *The Morality of Love and Hatred*. With respect to teaching, Professor Cates was awarded a 2018 Mentoring Award by the Student Research Opportunities Program of the UI Office of Graduate Inclusion. She re-designed the core course for graduate students called *Teaching and Public Engagement on Topics of Religion*. She made substantial advances in her two online courses on bioethics, and began planning another new course for 2020. Professor Cates gave multiple presentations with

her graduate student Darcy Metcalfe on the use of open-source virtual-world technology in her online courses. She served the profession, department, and community in many ways—for example, as DEO of Religious Studies, as a Trustee of Religious Ethics, Inc., which owns the *Journal of Religious Ethics*, and as the Chair of the Advisory Board of the UI Center for Human Rights.

Hyaewool Choi joined the faculty in August, 2018. She completed her book manuscript, entitled *Beyond Domestic Borders: Gender and Protestant Modernity in Korea, 1880s-1937*, which is currently under review. Her latest article, “Transpacific Aspiration toward Modern Domesticity in Japanese Colonial-era Korea,” will appear in the *Journal of Women’s History* 30, no. 4 (Winter 2018): 60-83. She gave the keynote address, “A Quiet Revolt: Gender, Conversion and Emotional Communities in Modern Korea,” at the conference on the theme: “Emotions, Culture, and Subjectivity in Korea,” which was held at George Washington University, 9-10 November, 2018. She also gave two talks at the University of Iowa—1) “After the ‘Doll’s House’: Global Christian Network and Modern Womanhood in Japanese Colonial-Era Korea,” Department of Religious Studies Colloquium, University of Iowa, September 26, 2018, and 2) “Korea in the World,” Sejong Institute, University of

Iowa, October 26, 2018. She serves as the guest editor of the special issue for the *Journal of Korean Studies* with a theme, “Between the Sacred and the Secular: Christianity as Lived Experience in Modern Korea.” In preparation for this special issue, she led a workshop at Columbia University on November 6, 2018.

In December 2017, **Paul Dilley**, his co-collaborator Professor Brent Seales (University of Kentucky), and their team, imaged a damaged, unopenable 6th-century Coptic manuscript of the Acts of the Apostles, M.910, currently held at the Morgan Library. This was done through X-ray tomography, which was carried out on-site with a scanner provided by MicroPhotonics. The imaging process was covered by several news organizations, including the New York Times, Newsweek, and Iowa Public Radio. In addition, Dilley and his collaborators Professor Iain Gardner and Professor Jason BeDuhn published the critical edition of approximately 80 pages of the Dublin Kephalaia Codex, a previously unknown scripture used by the followers of Mani, an early Christian arch-heretic. This is based on over seven years of on-site work at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, as well as the use of enhanced manuscript images. Finally, in Fall 2018, Paul taught a new Big Ideas Course with co-instructor Fred Boehmke, Professor of Political Science: Information, Society, and Culture, which fulfills the general requirement in religious studies. The class involves the application of basic text mining procedures to the Bible.

Robert Gerstmyer has focused his efforts on developing an online course in Religion and Science Fiction to be offered in 2020. The course will have a substantial movie component, in addition to readings from novels and short stories. The movie component of the course will focus on shorter lengths of the several movies; rather than watching a film from beginning to end, students will watch a segment and then answer questions focusing on particularly issues and characters in that segment. He took a course on the “Zoom” technology, which will allow for students to interact with one another in real-time over the internet.

Raymond Mentzer continues to teach an entry-level sequence of courses on medieval and modern religious culture as well as more advanced courses on the history of religious transformation and confessional violence in early modern Europe. This past spring, the Faculty of Letters and Civilizations and the University Jean Moulin Lyon 3 conferred an Honorary Doctorate (Doctorat Honoris Causa) on Mentzer in recognition of his longstanding contributions to French culture. The award ceremony took place in Lyon on Monday 18 June 2018. In July, friends and colleagues honored Mentzer with the publication of a *Festschrift*: *Emancipating Calvin: Culture and Confessional Identity in Francophone Reformed Communities. Essays in Honor of Raymond A. Mentzer* (Leiden: Brill, 2018). In early November, the Society for Reformation Research presented him with

the Bodo Nischan Award for Scholarship, Civility and Service. Mentzer’s ongoing research program includes six articles and book chapters in various stages of production. Recent book reviews appeared in *H-France*, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschicht*, and the *Revue d’histoire du protestantisme*. He chaired a session at the annual meeting of the annual meeting of the American Society of Church History in Washington, DC in January as well as a session at the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference in Albuquerque in November. This past October, he gave a series of three public lectures on the Reformation at First Presbyterian Church, Cedar Rapids. Mentzer continues to serve as the Endowment Chair for the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference, and recently completed an eight-year term on the Governing Board of the H.H. Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is a member of the editorial board of the *Sixteenth Century Journal*, the *Revue d’histoire du protestantisme* (Paris) and *Cristianesimo nella Storia* (Bologna). In addition, he serves on the editorial committees of several monograph series, including the *History of Christian Ecumenism* (Bologna), the *Archives des Églises réformées de France* (Paris), and *Early Modern Studies*. He is the American representative to the International Commission for the History and Study of Christianity, a subunit of the International Commission of Historical Sciences (a UNESCO organization).

Kristy Nabhan-Warren is coming off of a restful and productive year-long research leave. Thanks to a one semester cda from the University of Iowa (formerly known as sabbatical!) and generous funding from a Louisville Institute Sabbatical Grant for Researchers, she was able to take long runs with her pup Rosie as well as devote herself to writing a draft of her forthcoming book, her third manuscript, *Cornbelt America: Work, Food, and Faith in the Heartland*. In *Cornbelt America* Kristy draws on several years' worth of ethnographic fieldwork in Iowa and aims to inculcate a sense of empathy and awareness for Latinx immigrants, refugees, and the working poor, as well as the dilemmas facing religious leaders who work with them. A short preview of the kind of work she does in the book will appear in the forthcoming University of Iowa Press (Spring 2019) edited book *As Far as the Eye Can See* in which she has an essay about being a religious studies scholar in the Midwest. Kristy is also the Editor for the Oxford University Press Handbook *Latinx Christianities in the United States* and is overseeing 23 authors as part of this project (forthcoming Spring 2010). Based on this experience, she has a newfound appreciation for the work that editors do! She is also co-editing a special issue "Anthropologies of Catholicism" with James Bielo (Miami of Ohio University) of *Exchange: Journal of Christianity and Context*" (forthcoming, Fall 2019). She is enjoying editing her book series with The University of North Carolina Press, "Ethnographies

of Religion," and recently signed the first two scholars whose books will appear in the series. Kristy is enjoying the editing process and mentoring scholars in this process. She is thrilled to be shaping the field of anthropology of religion by focusing on innovative and cutting-edge ethnographic methods and studies of religion in the Americas. She is back teaching and is really enjoying being in the classroom again. She remains a busy mom of three kids now ages 15, 12, and 9 and derives her ultimate joy from seeing her children grow and thrive.

Morten Schlütter became the Chair, or, as it is called at the UI, Departmental Executive Officer (DEO), of the Department of Religious Studies in August 2018 (see "From the Director's Chair"). He will also continue his directorship of the UI Center for Asian and Pacific Studies (CAPS) until the fall of 2019. Aside from these administrative duties, Dr. Schlütter is continuing his teaching and research on Buddhism and Chinese religions. In 2018, he gave conference presentations at the University of Arizona, at Komazawa University in Tokyo, and at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion. He also gave invited lectures at the University of Calgary and at Duke University. An overview of recent research on the famous Chinese Buddhist master Hongzhi Zhengjue (1091–1157) written by Dr. Schlütter will appear in Brill's *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* (expected late 2018).

Frederick M. Smith continued with his many scholarly projects over the last year. He has written several new articles, on contemporary pilgrimage to the source of the Ganges river in the Himalayas, on pilgrimage among the sect of Krishna devotees in Northern India called the Pushti Marga, on new directions in the study of classical Indian religions, on challenges confronting the indigenous medical science, Ayurveda, in modern India, and on local Māhābharata performance in the Himalayas and its relationship with different textual renditions of the epic. He has published several book reviews, continued with his translation of the Sanskrit Māhābharata, and has finalized a relationship between Harvard University Press and the University of Heidelberg library on the publication of an edition and translation, with video clips, of the Māhābharata in a dialect of the Garhwali language spoken in only one river valley in the Himalayas. He and his team of translators will meet regularly in Heidelberg and India for the next year or two until this is completed. He has given talks at several major conferences, as well as invited talks in Amsterdam, Heidelberg, and New Delhi. Professor Smith continues as Department Chair (DEO) of the Department of Asian & Slavic Languages & Literature (ASLL). This department is responsible for instruction in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Indian language, literature and culture. In teaching, he has continued to teach his class on Religion and Healing, which addresses healing practices described

in all the so-called world religions, as well as in more recently developed alternative and complementary healing practices. He is spearheading the development of an online introductory course to be called Journey Through World Religions.

Jordan Smith, Lecturer in Biblical Studies, is enjoying another fun but busy year. In the spring, he is taking over the role of Director of Undergraduate Studies for the department, and he is focused on bringing greater visibility to the department both on campus and in the local community. In addition, Jordan continues to teach First Year Seminars and create courses intended to highlight the relevance of religious studies to our world. His new course, Politics, Sex, and the Bible, was just accepted for the Diversity & Inclusion GenEd requirement. He greatly appreciates the hard work and help of our dedicated undergraduate and graduate students in putting on events to increase the department's visibility on campus.

While on research leave, **Prof. Ahmed Souaiaia** finished work on two journal articles dealing with legal and political

developments resulting from the protest movement of the 2011, popularly known as the Arab Spring. As part of the projected ten year study of these events, he started indexing a database of images, texts, and videos documenting the 2011 war in Southwest Asia and North Africa (SWAANA) as well as building the digital archive of searchable primary sources on the 2011 SWAANA War. In the fall of 2017, Prof. developed and taught a new course on Economics and Islam in addition to the survey General Education course, Introduction to Islamic Civilization. Currently, He is advising five SJD and Ph.D. students, who are conducting professional and graduate research in the area of Islamic and Middle Eastern studies.

Jenna Supp-Montgomerie researches the role of religion in the negotiation of technological change. This fall, she completed her book manuscript on the important role of religion in the invention and establishments of networks and submitted it for review. She is enjoying participating in a select group of ten scholars of religion and media from around the world to collaborate on public

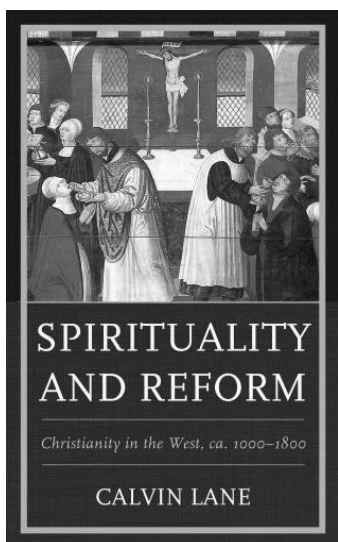
scholarship, funded by the Henry Luce Foundation. She continues to build a laboratory of old media (telegraph machines, typewriters, early computers, floppy disks, etc.) in the Becker Communication Studies Building that will be a space of learning and experimentation for research, teaching, and members of the community. If you have an old computer or typewriter or slide projector in your attic, please consider donating it! One of the highlights of her work at the University of Iowa continues to be a monthly reading group in critical theory for graduate students and faculty from Religious Studies, Communication Studies, English and related departments.

Professor Richard Turner published an article, "Islam and the Atlantic World" in Oxford Bibliographies in Atlantic History, Ed. Trevor Burnard (Oxford University Press, 2018). He worked on the committee that established a new African American Studies Graduate Certificate in 2018 and presented a lecture on "Jazz Religion, the Second Line, and Black New Orleans" at the Iowa City Soul Festival in August 2018.

Alumni Books

Spirituality and Reform Christianity in the West, ca. 1000–1800

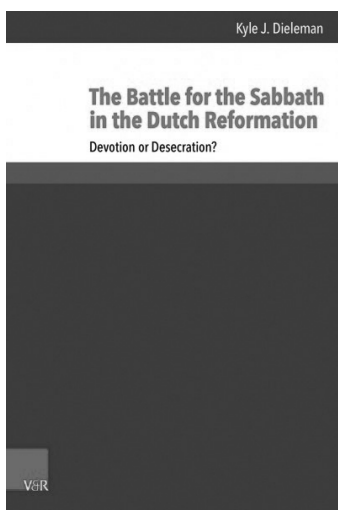
Calvin Lane



In colorful detail, Calvin Lane explores the dynamic intersection between reform movements and everyday Christian practice from ca. 1000 to ca. 1800. Lowering the artificial boundaries between “the Middle Ages,” “the Reformation,” and “the Enlightenment,” Lane brings to life a series of reform programs each of which developed new sensibilities about what it meant to live the Christian life. Along this tour, Lane discusses music, art, pilgrimage, relics, architecture, heresy, martyrdom, patterns of personal prayer, changes in marriage and family life, connections between church bodies and governing authorities, and certainly worship. The thread that he finds running from the Benedictine revival in the eleventh century to the pietistic movements of the eighteenth is a passionate desire to return to a primitive era of Christianity, a time of imagined apostolic authenticity, even purity. In accessible language, he introduces readers to Cistercians and Calvinists, Franciscans and Jesuits, Lutherans and Jansenists, Moravians and Methodists to name but a few of the many reform movements studied in this book. Although Lane highlights their diversity, he argues that each movement rooted its characteristic practice – their spirituality – in an imaginative recovery of the apostolic life.

The Battle for the Sabbath in the Dutch Reformation Devotion or Desecration?

Kyle J. Dieleman



Kyle J. Dieleman focuses on the doctrinal and practical importance of Sunday observance in the early modern Reformed communities in the Low Countries. My project investigates the theological import of the Sabbath and its practical applications. The first step is to focus on how Dutch Reformed theologians conceived of the Sabbath. The theology of the Sabbath, I argue, moves over time from an emphasis on spiritual rest to participating in the ministries of the church to a strict rest from all work and recreation. The next step is to explore congregants’ actual Sunday practices. By attending to church governance records at the national, regional, and local levels the importance of proper Sabbath observance quickly becomes clear. The provincial synod records, classes’ records, and consistory records indicate that church authorities were adamant that church members faithfully attend sermon and catechism services, refrain from sinful practices, and abstain from recreational activities. Equally as telling as the observance demanded of church members is how church authorities responded. The church records portray these authorities as fretting over the disordered and unregulated nature of improper Sabbath

observance. Having established the importance of the Sabbath in Dutch Reformed theology and lived piety, I argue the emphasis on Sunday observance is best understood as resulting from two main factors. First, the emphasis on proper Sunday observance is a result of the Reformed church authorities attempting to maintain the pious reputation of the Reformed faith and establish the identity of the Reformed Church amid multiple other confessional identities. Second, proper observance of the Sabbath was important because it ensured order within the church and society more broadly.

Goodbye to the University – *Micheline Pesantubbee*



It is with a touch of sadness that I leave the halls of Gilmore as I embark on the next stage of my life – Retirement. The Religious Studies Department, faculty, staff, and especially the students have been such a large part of my life for the last fifteen years. I came to the U of I in 2003 as a joint hire in American Indian Native Studies Program and the Department of Religious Studies. I relished the joint appointment as it let me express my two passions, giving voice to Native American perspectives of their histories and cultures and understanding the ubiquitousness of religious ideas in every aspect of culture and society. Later, with a full-time appointment in Religious Studies I profited from the department's emphasis on diversity and faculty specialization which allowed me to continue teaching courses that I found fulfilling and important to a university education. Although I loved all my classes perhaps I felt a

little more favoritism for American Indian Environmentalism. This course drew students not only from AINSP/NAIS, religious studies, and environmental policy and planning but also from other programs across the college. The students who took this course were passionate about the environment, many were activists for the environment, and they were open to learning about environmental racism that plagues Native nations and eager to hear about collaborative projects to restore the environment including the land, animals, water, and even the stars. This was also a course where I was most creative in designing student projects including poster and video projects and public presentations at the Learning Commons.

I want to thank all the students I have had in my classes because in some way each and every one of them influenced my teaching and so many of them reinforced my belief that their generation is capable and willing to work towards creating a better world. I appreciate their personal stories that some of them chose to share with me as they negotiated their way through the major and the degree. I most cherish the times when students, and sometimes their parents, thanked me because my classes gave them opportunity to discuss Native American history, culture, and religious traditions around the kitchen table. Occasionally, a parent returned the favor by sharing stories they heard about Native Americans and places in the towns where they grew up. I also want to express my gratitude to Robin and Maureen and the DEOs who supported me through personal challenges including the loss of my mother during my first month at the U of I. The collegiality and support of my colleagues has also been important. I appreciate those who often stopped at my office door to chat. Those conversations are what makes the department a community of colleagues. Finally, I want to thank the graduate students that I have worked with in various capacities. Their energy, their enthusiasm, and their dedication to their research papers, masters theses, and dissertations fueled my own enthusiasm. I enjoy the conversations we continue to have at the annual AAR meeting or by email. To all of my colleagues—faculty, staff, students—I thank you for making this department a community of colleagues.

2018 AAR Reception – Denver

Thank you to Eric Dickman and Heidi Nordberg for taking all these candid shots at the department's reception in Denver. It was wonderful to see everyone!



Spring Lectures and Colloquia

Below is a tentative schedule for our Spring 2019 lectures and Colloquia:

- January 29: Morten Schlutter, *Religious Studies*
February TBA: Aldrin Tinashe Magaya, *History*
March 12: Paul Dilley, *Religious Studies & Classics*
April 9: Diana Cates, *Religious Studies*
April 25: E.P. Adler Lecture:
Kathleen Sprows Cummings, *University of Notre Dame*

SUPP-MONTGOMERIE CREATES “HOTLab”

The History of Technology Lab (HOTLab) is a space in which students, faculty, and researchers across the University of Iowa can play and create with old media. Our holdings include typewriters, early Apple computers, camcorders, magnetic tape recorders, and even a telegraph machine. Immersive, multi-sensory experiences with old media can illuminate how media have changed, how they have stayed the same, and what we gain and lose with technological shifts. We are hoping to continue to grow our collection and welcome donations!



THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Department of Religious Studies
314 Gilmore Hall
Iowa City, IA 52242-1376

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR 2018



Morten Schlütter

Since August 1, I have had the honor and responsibility of assuming the position of Departmental Executive Officer (Chair) of the Department of Religious Studies. After six years of tireless and dedicated service to the department, Diana Cates has gone back to focus on her research and teaching.

My task is now to lead the department through the challenges of the next several years. These are difficult times for the humanities, and perhaps especially Religious Studies. Still, we have much to celebrate. Our course enrollments have been going up recently, even if they are still not up to the level they were at 6-8 years ago. We are continuing to develop new courses, some in on-line format, through which we hope to reach a growing number of UI students and students at other institutions as well. We have a wonderful group of graduate students, who work on a range of different projects that cross traditional academic boundaries and that address many topics that are highly relevant to the world today. Faculty in the department continue to be leaders in their fields: interacting with other scholars and the public nationally and internationally, taking part in grants and collaborative efforts, presenting distinguished lectures, and publishing groundbreaking books and articles. The department is also lucky to have some amazingly competent and helpful staff members.

Furthermore, this fall, we were very happy and fortunate to welcome Professor Hyaewool Choi to our department. Hyaewool is the new appointee to the C. Maxwell and Elizabeth M. Stanley Family and Korea Foundation Chair in Korean Studies; and prior was the ANU-Korea Foundation Professor at Australian National University. She is a very well-known and highly respected scholar of modern Korea who has worked extensively in the areas of gender, religion and transnational history. The search was open to all departments in the social sciences and humanities, and Religious Studies is extremely lucky that she has become a member of our department (see the story about Hyaewool elsewhere in this newsletter).

One less happy piece of news that I must share is that Michelene Pesantubbee, who is a specialist in Native American Religious Traditions and whose research has focused on religious change in native American communities from the 18th to the 20th centuries, has announced that she will retire at the end of the fall semester 2018. Michelene has been a wonderful colleague in the department since 2003, and in recent years she has been an especially effective and creative Director of Undergraduate Studies. We and her students will miss her greatly. Her departure will create a serious void in the department, which we hope to be able to fill, at least partially, soon.

As we move towards 2019, I am grateful to be working with the extraordinary members of the Department of Religious Studies, and excited about the possibilities for the future. Thank you to all alumni and friends of the department for your continuing support; we greatly appreciate your gifts that have done much to help our students and enhance our scholarship and teaching.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Morten Schlütter".

Morten Schlütter
Professor and Chair
Department of Religious Studies
314 Gilmore Hall
The University of Iowa
Iowa City IA 52242
319-335-2162
morten-schlutter@uiowa.edu

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Diana Fritz Cates
Director
Maureen Waltherhouse
Editor

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