

CENTER FOR
THE STUDY OF
RELIGION

2017 NEWSLETTER

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear colleagues and friends of the Center,

It's my pleasure to greet you with gratitude for all your contributions to the productive and illuminating past academic year, with hope that your summer has been lively but peaceful, and with real optimism that we can continue to be a force for enlightenment and mutual understanding through scholarship in the year ahead. Our collective task may seem trickier than usual these days, but it is also more important.

In that cause, we have striven to encourage meaningful engagement, from all members of our community and beyond. Last Fall Quarter, our traditional faculty lecture series invited the public to participate in discussions of everything from the process of enlightenment in Zen Buddhism to the way that prayer shapes Evangelical Christian approaches to modern social problems. In the spring, the distinctive workshop mode of our third annual graduate student conference allowed professors to converse and collaborate with their students in producing constructive commentary on this year's theme of Performing Devotion.

In the present political climate, the work that the Center does – work that both thrives on and necessitates inclusive dialogue among different faiths and cultures – has become ever more critical. We at the Center are committed to expanding these efforts to draw in all members of our community for participation in thoughtful discourse on the subjects that matter to each and every one of us – our faiths, our identities, and our interconnections – in ways that meet the ideals of higher education.

In the upcoming year, we will continue these efforts. When UCLA comes into session in September, it will do so with the added guidance of a Religious Diversity Education Coordinator hired by the Center and tasked with fostering an inclusive environment for all. Next summer, thanks to the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Center will be organizing a program providing K-12 educators with the tools they need to teach about religious diversity. A main goal of this work, as of so much of our work, is an expansion of the potential for a diverse and inclusive environment – not merely through tolerance, but through the kind of deeper recognitions that a high-level academic community can foster.

Although we are filled with pride and much gratitude for all we have accomplished, much still remains to be done. Thank you for your consistent and indispensable support in all of these endeavors.

Carol Bakhos

Professor, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures
Director, UCLA Center for the Study of Religion
Chair, Study of Religion, Interdepartmental Degree Program



PUBLIC EVENTS/ LECTURES, CONFERENCES, COLLOQUIA, SYMPOSIUMS

Lectures:

Jodi Magness, Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism, holds a senior endowed chair in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her lecture on “New Archaeological Discoveries in Israel: The Case of Samson in Stone” provided us with an illustrated account of the exciting work she has been overseeing since 2011, directing excavations in the ancient village of Huqoq in Israel’s Galilee. The excavations have brought to light the remains of a monumental Late Roman (fifth century) synagogue building that is paved with unique mosaics, including the first non-biblical story ever discovered decorating an ancient synagogue.

This spring in Royce Hall, Robert Gregg, the Teresa Moore Professor of Religious Studies (Emeritus) at Stanford University, invited us to consider the way that a broad selection of religious interpretations of Jesus’ death lay bare numerous elaborations of viewpoint and argument. “The Death of Jesus: Comparing Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Accounts” demonstrated how all three religions’ representations of the event promoted very different understandings. Gregg made the case for the death of Jesus as a striking example of the kind of story or teaching that contributed to the divergence and independent existence of the religions, while simultaneously underlining a shared core mentality between them: a conviction in the impending day of judgment.

In November, Charles Taylor, emeritus professor of philosophy at McGill University, participated in a two-part lecture series co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Religion. The lectures were dedicated to his latest books, *A Secular Age* (Harvard University Press, 2007) and *The Linguistic Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity* (Harvard University Press, 2016), and ultimately broadened to encompass his ongoing inquiries into the history and nature of secularism. These discussions, open to the general public, were followed by lively question and answer sessions.



PUBLIC EVENTS/ LECTURES, CONFERENCES, COLLOQUIA, SYMPOSIUMS

Co-sponsored Conferences:

At the end of April, the Center for the Study of Religion co-hosted “The Indian Roots of Global Buddhism,” a one-day conference on Buddhism’s Indian origins, organized by Monica Smith, Navin and Pratima Doshi Chair in Indian Studies at UCLA. Director for the Center for the Study of Religion Carol Bakhos offered the opening remarks on religious studies at UCLA, followed by presentations by seven experts in the field. One was Shahnaj Husne Jahan, Professor and Director of the Center for Archaeological Studies at Bangladesh’s University of Liberal Arts, who spoke on “Re-visioning the Buddhist Landscape of Bangladesh.” Following her talk came “On the Journalistic Trail of Buddhist Heritage in Afghanistan: The Case of Mes Aynak” by the Digital Editor for NPR, Hannah Bloch. And the conference’s final lecture, “Utilizing Reality Capture Technology for Rapid Damage Assessment: Recent Research on Buddhist Myanmar,” was presented by Ross Davison, the Production Lead of CyArk.org, a non-profit organization in the process of creating a free, 3D online library of the world’s cultural heritage sites. These presenters offered insight from a host of both culturally and professionally diverse perspectives.

Just three weeks later, the Center for the Study of Religion co-sponsored its second international conference of the year. “Learning the Other’s Past: History, Education, and Curricula in Israel/Palestine” brought together historians, education scholars, and elementary and secondary school teachers to discuss the way in which Palestinians and Israelis teach their own and other’s history. Over two days this May, presenters and respondents discussed major contemporary issues, including the challenges and potential of a dual historical narrative for Palestine/Israel, how to learn from classroom teachers about integration and implementation of relevant curricula, and strategizing for the future. Underlying all the discussions was the question of whether history could be a tool of deeper understanding, and even reconciliation. The conference was organized by David N. Myers, who holds the Sady and Ludwig Kahn Chair in Jewish History, and co-sponsored by other units on campus as well as non-UCLA institutions: the UCLA Center for Near Eastern Studies, the Alan D. Leve Center for Jewish Studies, the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, the Sady and Ludwig Kahn Chair in Jewish History, the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East, and the University of Haifa.

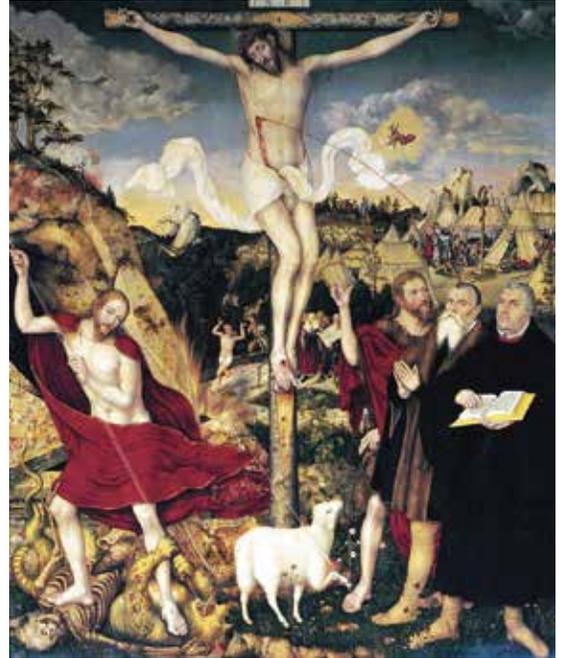


FACULTY LECTURE SERIES

Our Faculty Lecture Series showcases the innovative work of our UCLA colleagues across departments, fields, and disciplines.

Numinous Awareness is Never Dark: The Korean Zen Master Chinul's Excerpts on Zen Practice

The series launched in the fall quarter with Robert E. Buswell Jr.'s talk on his latest book, *Numinous Awareness is Never Dark* (2016). Buswell, a Distinguished Professor of Buddhist Studies in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, and founding director of UCLA's Center for Buddhist Studies and Center for Korean Studies, is the preeminent Western specialist in the Korean Buddhist tradition. At the heart of his talk was the essential question: is "enlightenment" in Zen Buddhism sudden or gradual? In addition to tracing the influence of Chinul's analysis of this issue throughout the history of the Korean tradition, "Numinous Awareness is Never Dark: The Korean Zen Master Chinul's Excerpts on Zen Practice" introduced us to contemporary debates on the subject within Korean Buddhism.



Quaker Mobility and the Threat to English America

Carla Pestana, UCLA History Professor and Joyce Appleby Endowed Chair of America and the World, opened the winter quarter with the lecture "Quaker Mobility and the Threat to English America." The talk took the audience back to the 1650s, when the early Quaker movement was taking the world by storm. In responses to Quaker "witnesses to the truth" travelling widely to spread their message, we learned, nervous authorities used various mechanisms to contain the threat they were seen to pose. Pestana ultimately contended that many major themes in early American and English Atlantic history – including mobility, religious diversity, freedom and suppression – can be explored through an analysis of the early Quakers and the response they invoked.





FACULTY LECTURE SERIES

From the Arc of Ascent to the Arc of Descent: Writing of Baha'u'llah, the Founder of Baha'i Faith

The lecture series continued with the research of Nader Saiedi, adjunct professor of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures and the inaugural holder of the Taslimi Lectureship in Baha'i History and Religion in Iran. "From the Arc of Ascent to the Arc of Descent: Writing of Baha'u'llah, the Founder of Baha'i Faith" explored the chronological and logical order of the stages of Baha'u'llah's writings. Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith, wrote a multitude of letters and books over forty years of his ministry (1852-1892), and Saiedi guided us through these years and these writings, dividing them into three distinct stages that each emphasized a certain mystical and social principle.

Lucas Cranach and Martin Luther: Sacred Art at the Dawn of the Reformation

Spring quarter got underway with Art History Lecturer Gregory Harwell's lecture on "Lucas Cranach and Martin Luther: Sacred Art at the Dawn of the Reformation." Harwell made the case that the allegorical paintings and altarpieces that Lucas Cranach made in Wittenberg during his association with Martin Luther reveal a Reformation that is quite different from the one we think we know. He went on to examine for us the iconography of early Protestant artwork made by some of the greatest artists of the German Renaissance, with an emphasis on the paintings that Cranach produced at the epicenter of the Reformation.

How Prayer Solves Problems and Creates Them: Spontaneity and Certainty in Evangelical Spiritual Life

In the series' culminating lecture, Assistant Professor of Sociology Jeffrey Guhin addressed the crowd in Royce Hall on the subject of "How Prayer Solves Problems and Creates Them: Spontaneity and Certainty in Evangelical Spiritual Life." Guhin drew on Heidegger and other studies of technology to think about how particular "cultural tools" become useful and habituated – and how they then create new problems that might not be solvable with the original tool. His talk focused on two key problems, spontaneity and certainty, and went on to draw our attention to the important political implications of this Evangelical optimism about prayer. Notably, Guhin argued, by emphasizing the importance of spontaneity, authenticity, and individual relationships over more prosaic and traditional organizational structures, this optimism has shaped Evangelicals' relationship to contemporary social problems.

TRIALOGUES

This past fall, posters began to appear across campus bearing the 1963 mug shot of Martin Luther King, Jr. The event they advertised was “Protest in God’s Name – Religious Dissent in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam,” a highly anticipated December panel open to all members of the UCLA and wider Los Angeles communities. Reinhard Krauss, a lecturer with the Center for the Study of Religion, organized and moderated a discussion between Rector and Professor of Philosophy at the American Jewish University Elliot Dorff, USC Professor of Religion James Heft, and Professor of Theological Studies at Marymount University Amir Hussain. The event was the first of the school year’s trialogues, or conversations exploring the interactions between alternative religious perspectives on a range of key contemporary and relevant subjects.

In June, Reinhard Krauss once again organized and moderated the school year’s second triologue, “Spiritual but not Religious – Perspectives on a Perceived Disjunction,” a conversation between Associate Vice Provost and Director of the UCLA Spirituality in Higher Education Project Jennifer Lindholm, UCLA Dean for Students Maria Blandizzi, and Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Dean of the Wallace All Faiths Chapel at Chapman University Gail Stearns. After each panelist spoke about their own experience, the audience in Royce Hall was invited to engage in an invigorating question and answer session on the topic of interest.

The annual events, co-sponsored by the Academy for Judaic, Christian, and Islamic studies, were the culmination of the upper-division seminar course Religion 120, designed to introduce an analysis of the complex interrelatedness of the three faiths to students from a broad spectrum of academic disciplines, cultural backgrounds, and religious traditions.



THE 2017 GRADUATE CONFERENCE ON RELIGION: PERFORMING DEVOTION

On May 11-12, 2017, the Center for the Study of Religion hosted the third annual graduate conference on religion at UCLA. The theme this year was Performing Devotion: Religious Rituals and Religious Practices. One of the founders of performance studies in the United States, Richard Schechner, writes that “in religion, rituals give form to the sacred, communicate doctrine, open pathways to the supernatural, and mold individuals into communities.” Embodied performance has played important roles in world religions throughout history, and the conference sought to stimulate the productive and often surprising insights that its study yields. This year’s conference welcomed papers addressing many aspects of religious embodiment or enactment.

The keynote address, “Paradisiacal Realms in Ancient Egypt and Early China,” was given by Dr. Anthony Barbieri-Low, Professor of Chinese History at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His lecture explored the concept and representation of post-mortem paradises in Ancient Egypt and Early China and focused on the ritual practices that would assist oneself or one’s deceased relatives in attaining entrance to paradise, including the playing of ritual board games like *senet* and *liubo*. His stimulating lecture provided an interesting paradigm to follow for the comparative study of religions.

Six UCLA faculty members and graduate students served as moderators or respondents to the thematically organized panels. The UCLA Graduate Conference on Religion has a distinctive workshop focus, and the faculty engagement produced commentary that is constructive for the student presenters. This year, the conference also hosted a professional development panel entitled “State of the Field and Prospects for Graduates” featuring the Director of the Center for the Study of Religion Carol Bakhos, the UCLA Dean of Humanities David Schaberg, and Professor Diane Winston from USC.

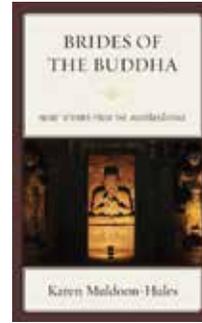
The 2017 conference was sponsored by the UCLA Asia Institute. Generous support was provided by the Department of Asian Languages & Cultures, Department of English, Department of History, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Department of Philosophy, and Department of World Arts & Cultures/Dance.

Conference Coordinators: Michael Chen, Silvio Curtis
Faculty Advisors: Carol Bakhos, Robert Gurval



FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

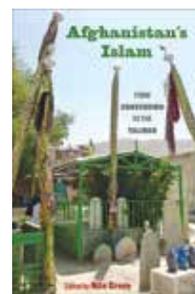
In her new book *Brides of the Buddha: Nuns' Stories from the Avadanasataka*, UCLA lecturer in the Asian Languages and Cultures Department and the Center for the Study of Religion Karen Muldoon-Hules draws on ten stories from the *Avadanasataka*, the collection of Buddhist narratives compiled from the second to fifth centuries CE, to examine the social landscape of early India. Prior to Muldoon-Hules' study, there was little in the way of systematic examinations of the evidence on marriage customs among Buddhists of this time. *Brides of the Buddha*, published this past June, is one of the first studies to analyze marital customs and the development of nuns' hagiographies, while revealing regional variations of Buddhism in South Asia during this period.



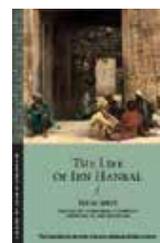
In his latest book, *The Middle English Bible: A Reassessment*, UCLA Distinguished Research Professor of English Henry Ansgar Kelly engages with debate over Middle English translations of the Bible. Kelly argues that the traditionally-accepted bases for the Wycliffite origins of the Middle English Bible are mostly illusory. While there were attempts by the Lollard movement to appropriate or coopt it after the fact, the translation project, which appears to have originated at the University of Oxford, was wholly orthodox. Further, the 1407 Council did not ban translations but instead mandated that they be approved by a local bishop. It was only in the early sixteenth century, in the years before the Reformation, that English translations of the Bible would be banned.



UCLA's Nile Green is a Professor of South Asian and Islamic History whose latest publication, *Afghanistan's Islam: From Conversion to the Taliban*, provides the first overview of the history of Islam in Afghanistan. Green edited the volume, which is divided chronologically and thematically and written by leading international experts. Looking beyond the unifying rhetoric of theology, the book reveals the disparate and contested forms of Afghanistan's Islam.



Professor Michael Cooperson of the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department has recently published a prizewinning abridged translation of *The Life of Ibn Hanbal*, the biography of Ibn Hanbal by the Baghdad preacher, scholar, and storyteller Ibn al-Jawzi. Ahmad ibn Hanbal, a major figure in the history of Islam, was renowned for living according to his own strict interpretation of the Prophetic model and resisting rationalist doctrine. This principled resistance influenced the course of Islamic law, the rise of Sunnism, and the legislative authority of the caliphate. Set



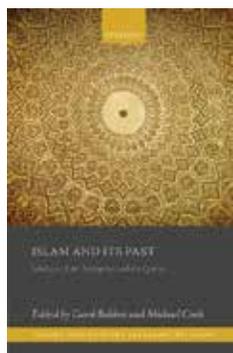
against the background of fierce debates over the role of reason and the basis of legitimate government, *The Life of Ibn Hanbal* tells the formidable life tale of one of the most influential Muslims in history.



Over the past year the prolific Sung-Deuk Oak, Dongsoon Im and Mija Im Endowed Chair and Associate Professor of Korean Christianity, has published three separate major works. *A New History of Early Korean Protestantism* (2016) is a critical study of many accepted, yet distorted narratives of early Korean churches up until 1910. *The First Forty-five Events of Early Korean Protestantism* (2016) selects and explores forty-five first figures and events in the early history of Korean Christianity, including the first visiting missionary, the first vernacular Korean Christian tract, and the first baptism in Pyongyang. Finally, earlier this year Oak published the first four volumes of *Sources of Samuel Austin Moffett*, a projected ten-volume series that compiles all the English materials of the first American missionary couple to Pyongyang and translates them into Korean, with accompanying annotations and photos.



This past spring, Professor of World Arts and Cultures Mary “Polly” Nooter Roberts presented in *African Arts* an extensive preview of her latest major exhibition. Roberts is a co-editor of *African Arts*, a peer-reviewed scholarly journal now into its sixth decade of publication at UCLA. Her exhibition, “The Inner Eye: Vision and Transcendence in African Arts,” was held in the Resnick Pavilion of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art through early July, and consisted of a collection of about a hundred sculptures dating back to the 13th through the early 20th century, and originating from a variety of cultures in West, Central and East Africa. Roberts divided “The Inner Eye” into eight thematic sections, including “Beholding Spirit,” “Envisioning Origins,” and “The Maternal Gaze.”



Islam and its Past: Jahiliyya, Late Antiquity, and the Qur'an (2017) brings together scholars from various disciplines and fields to consider Islamic revelation, with particular focus on the Qur'an. Carol Bakhos, Chair of the Study of Religion and Director of the Center for the Study of Religion at UCLA, co-edited the collection alongside Michael Cook, a renowned scholar of early Islam at Princeton University. Their work provides a wide-ranging survey of the development and current state of Qur'anic studies in the Western academy. It shows how interest in the field has recently grown, how the ways in which it is cultivated have changed, how it has ramified, and how difficult it now is for any one scholar to keep abreast of it.

UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL OF RELIGION

This year witnessed the re-launch of the UCLA Journal of Religion, an undergraduate publication run by and for students. The journal reviews previously unpublished student work in the general field of religious studies and highly encourages interdisciplinary submissions. Study of Religion Lecturer Ryan Gillespie, who serves as faculty advisor for the Journal, spoke with us.

Where did the initial idea for the journal originate?

Part of the idea for this journal came from the CSR's previously published undergraduate journal, Epoché. Dr. Bakhos suggested reinvigorating the student journal, so we set about to restart a student led and student run undergraduate research journal for the study of religion, with a new name. An excellent editorial collective came together and undertook the task. I'm very proud of this crew. Not just taking up the editorial task of a journal – which is challenging enough – but they started one from scratch!

Who is the targeted audience?

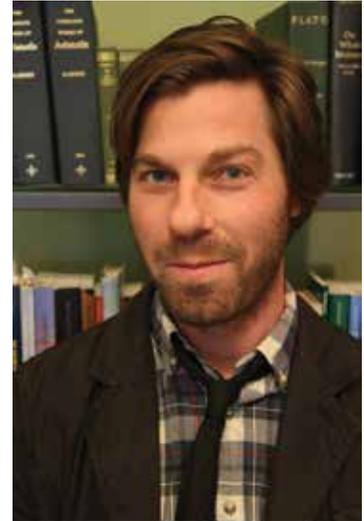
The target audience is students of religion – with students being broadly conceived to include both formal students and those interested in religion more generally. I imagine the concrete audience, at least initially, will consist largely of friends of CSR and UCLA students, though there is nothing limiting the journal's scope or reach to just UCLA or Los Angeles.

What are the journal's goals?

The journal's goals depend on the perspective. There are the goals of the journal from a faculty/CSR standpoint, and there are the goals of the journal from a student, content standpoint, though of course both perspectives intertwine too. From the faculty/CSR standpoint, the goal is to have a student-led, student-run undergraduate journal dedicated to religion, with emphasis on the pedagogic element of evaluating peer research and writing. And I'll admit that there is a little bit of pride in there, too – that we are proud to show off the great work of student editors and writers. From the student/content of the journal standpoint, the goal is to publish the best undergraduate work in the study of religion from across the world. Almost all of the submissions for the inaugural issue came from the UCLA community, so another goal is to solicit submissions from other universities in the near future.

I am very proud of everything that the editorial team did this year, and also very proud in terms of the quality of what we are publishing in the inaugural issue. I think there is a tremendously bright future for the UCLA Journal of Religion. Join us in reading, submitting, or editing this year!

More information about the journal and its submission guidelines can be found at <http://religion.ucla.edu/ucla-journal-religion/>. You can also follow the journal on facebook @UCLAJournalofReligion and on twitter @UCLAreligion.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2017-2018 STUDY OF RELIGION COURSE OFFERINGS

RELIGN 11 Religion in LA (Fall term)

This course examines the relationship between Los Angeles and religions in historical and contemporary context, considering unique contributions, rearticulations, and innovations to practices of religions and understandings of the transcendent more generally. Los Angeles is presented as a microcosm for the celebrations and challenges of religious diversity and interfaith dialogue in the U.S. and beyond, as are themes of entertainment, branding, and money in sacred-profane negotiations of spiritual and everyday life.

RELIGN 160 Religion, Film, and Media (Winter term)

This lecture course delves into the complex relationship between religious traditions and various media (e.g., print, film, photography, television, radio, and electronic) as they have intersected in specific historical and cultural contexts. The class pursues historical, sociological, and anthropological approaches in concert with various methodologies current within media studies in order to explore the role of media in forming and expressing religious ideas, practices, and identities, representations of religious groups, visual and aural piety, identity formation, interreligious conflict, religious education, and use of media technologies for propaganda or proselytizing purposes.

RELIGN 150 Women, Gender, and Religion (Spring term)

This course investigates the roles, status, and representations of women and gender in one or more religious traditions. This includes an examination of how cultural conceptions of gender as well as social realities (as far as they can be known) for women and men in particular historical periods shape and are shaped by these religious traditions, including ritual practices, spirituality, sexuality, sexual renunciation, religious authority, marriage and family life, fertility, conceptions of body, public life, and/or literary representations of gender (including those of divine). Feminist, literary, historical, sociological, and anthropological approaches are all employed in these discussions.

RELIGN 177 Variable Topics: Religion & the Ends of Medicine (Fall term)

This course will chart historically and analytically the major conceptual shifts in the ends of medicine from antiquity to the present, with special emphasis on the tensions between religious/transcendent ends and secular/immanent ends. Major topical themes include theology, suffering, extending life, dignity, and patient autonomy. The challenges of neoliberalism to articulations of any substantive end and its practice institutionally in a capitalistic democracy are theoretically and practically grounded as well. The class explores contemporary case studies – both philosophical and on-the-ground – of alternative visions to the secular status quo.

RELIGN 177 Variable Topics: Contemporary Hinduism (Fall term)

One of oldest religions, Hinduism today encompasses an extraordinary range of practices, traditions, and worldviews that enrich its landscape in India and beyond. The course features both exploration of Hinduism's contemporary forms in rural, urban, and global settings as well as discussion of texts, beliefs, practices, and their impact on social and political domains. A recurring theme is Hinduism's current negotiations with other religions.

**RELIGN 177 Variable Topics:
Religion and Politics (Fall term)**

This class examines the multiple roles of religion in politics, both historically and today. It focuses on debates about the historical development of “religion” as a category in modern times, the relationship between religion and secularism, and the role of religious actors in the contemporary world. We will also take into consideration the emancipatory potential of theology in political conflict mediation and resolution.

**RELIGN 177 Variable Topics:
Exploring Islam (Winter term)**

By exploring different ways in which Muslims have interpreted and practiced their religion, this course provides an introduction to some of the most important features of Islamic religious tradition. We consider the subjects of discussion – including the life of Prophet Muhammad, Qur’an, law, ritual, mysticism, theology, politics, and art – with reference to their proper historical contexts. Topics covered include abortion, gender, rebellion and violence, and the visual vocabulary of Islamic paintings. No prior knowledge is required for students, who will be exposed to important theories and methods in the academic study of religion.



STUDY OF RELIGION UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Honors Thesis: Kitzmiller, the Public Sphere, and the Necessity of Epistemic Attitude. Author: Derek Bergmann

Abstract: The challenge for any democratic regime is to maintain solidarity between citizens who may possess dramatically different conceptions of justice and the good life. This tension becomes especially pronounced when individuals take starkly opposing positions towards legislation or jurisprudence based on their respective ethical or religious beliefs. Through examining the dispute between advocates for evolution and intelligent design in *Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District*, I will consider how members of the public sphere might seek to overcome intrinsic differences in comprehensive doctrines in order to maintain democratic stability. This argument will draw most extensively from the work of John Rawls and Jurgen Habermas. Ultimately, I will argue that Habermas' notion that the process by which one translates their religious and ethical positions into the public sphere, what he calls epistemic humility, is essential for resolving such heated disputes in the public sphere. I will then expand Habermas' notion of posture utilizing the work of Cornel West and Judith Butler.

Honors Thesis: Major Factors and Influences on the Formation of the New Testament. Author: Brandon Tomassian

Abstract: The New Testament arose out of a four-hundred-year process in which the church fathers cited, and thus legitimized, different works in their writings, made authoritative lists as the concept of a canon developed, and ultimately debated their conclusions in councils. However, Christians did not set out to create a canon, for they began with the Hebrew scriptures and oral traditions passed down from Jesus Christ. Despite this lack of a formal canonization process, the church fathers applied a largely consistent set of criteria in deciding whether a text was a legitimate candidate for the canon. The most important of these was apostolicity: a text's direct link to the authorship or verified teachings of the apostles. Nevertheless, explicit reference to a unified canon only occurred after various heretical movements prompted development of the church's orthodox beliefs in response to them. Marcionism, especially, led the church to unify its teachings in an effort to combat Marcion's beliefs. Together, these disparate processes came together to create the New Testament.



EDUCATION AND PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

The Center for the Study of Religion is currently in the final stages of hiring a Religious Diversity Education Coordinator to promote tolerance within the UCLA community and beyond. Under the supervision of Director of the Center for the Study of Religion Carol Bakhos, the Coordinator will work to foster an inclusive environment, and contribute to the university's endeavors to create and maintain a hospitable campus climate. Through workshops, classes and informal gatherings, the Coordinator will also be tasked with helping students, staff and student leaders develop tools for dealing with negative attitudes toward believers and practitioners of religious traditions other than one's own, or toward religion in general. Specific duties will include serving as a campus resource on issues related to religious diversity, facilitating workshops in which students can explore their own religious identities, and helping to develop classes for K-12 educators on topics such as inter-cultural understanding.

We are excited to be hiring for this new position, for we feel that the need for it is greater than ever. Exposure to different ways in which people express their religious beliefs and spirituality can lead to greater sensitivity and appreciation not only for religious pluralism but also for cultural diversity. By learning about and engaging with members of religions other than our own, we become more empathic and appreciate that which we share in common, where and why we differ, and what we can learn from each other, and how we can work together to build a better community locally as well as globally.



CENTER, FACULTY COMMITTEE, STAFF INFORMATION

Center for the Study of Religion
csr@humnet.ucla.edu
310-206-1868

STAFF

Carol Bakhos
Director, Center for the Study of Religion
Chair, Interdepartmental Program, Study of Religion

Isamara Ramirez
Student Affairs Officer

Sunny Kim
Program Coordinator

FACULTY COMMITTEE IDP SOR COMMITTEE

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Jacco Dieleman
Near Eastern Languages and Cultures
John Carriero
Philosophy

Humanities Building 351, Los Angeles, CA 90095

Fax: 310-206-6456

www.religion.ucla.edu

Editor and Copyeditor: Emma C. Watson

Art Director: Charlie Hess (www.chessdesign.com)