Mrs Leni Franken
University of Antwerp, Belgium
Post-doc assistant
leni.franken@uantwerpen.be
State Support for Religion and Constitutional Law: an Autonomy-based Approach

Based on the philosophical work of Ben Colburn, I will argue that state support for religion is not always opposed to the liberal idea of neutrality and that this kind of support is sometimes permitted in order to guarantee "equal access to autonomy", which is a prerequisite in a liberal society. In order to facilitate religion as one of the many 'valuable options' to choose from and, in a broader sense, to facilitate equal access to autonomy, state support for religion is sometimes allowed. This kind of support is, however, only a second-best option. As a matter of principle, basic goods should be distributed in such a fair way that all citizens have equal access to these goods and to a sufficient range of 'valuable options' (religious options included). Nonetheless, given the fact that we do not live in an ideal society, and that citizens' opportunities are de facto not always equal, state support for religions (and other 'valuable options') is sometimes permitted (and even required) as a transitory policy, when this policy is, compared to the free-market mechanism and/or a redistribution of basic goods, more efficient in function of providing adequate options. Since we can only a posteriori decide whether such an active policy of support is needed, and since support without consent can lead to an (indirect) infringement of individual autonomy, the constitutional fixation of state support for religion is not in line with autonomy-based liberalism. Principally, the freedom of religion can be guaranteed without state support for religion and there is thus no reason to fix support for this 'secondary' good a priori (in constitutional or equivalent law). Only democratically sustained support is a legitimate possibility. For the same reasons, the a priori prohibition of state support for religion is also irreconcilable with autonomy-based liberalism.

Professor John Dreher
University of Southern California, US
Associate Professor of Philosophy
dreher@usc.edu
Faith, Belief and Religious Experience

This paper offers an analysis of the conceptual relations among faith, belief and religious experience. The paper argues that neither faith in general nor religious faith in particular can be viewed plausibly as a form of irrational belief, that is, as belief that is unresponsive to reason. On the contrary, the paper argues that religious faith is prompted by certain kinds of perceptual and affective experiences, and that the religious faith that is inspired by those experiences grounds dispositions, disciplines and patterns of behavior that are authentic expressions of faith. Religious belief formalizes religious faith, which in its turn is reinforced by the authentic practices that religious experience inspires. Natural science also involves a kind faith, as the empirical data gathered by natural science are always presupposed in principle to be intelligible to the human mind. More precisely, natural science rests upon the faith that whatever is true of nature can be discovered by the scientific method, and that whatever can be discovered by the scientific method is true. Religious belief is properly contrasted with other forms of belief, especially scientific belief, but the paper argues that after all, religious belief is similar to other forms of belief in that it too is an implicit attempt to systematize and rationalize the experiences that ultimately ground it. The thinkers to whom this paper is indebted include St. Teresa of Avila, Pascal, Newton, Hume and Kierkegaard, as well as contemporary philosophers of religion including Robert Adams, William Alston, and Wittgenstein.

Mr. Axel Takacs
Harvard Divinity School
Doctoral Candidate

atakacs@mail.harvard.edu
Apophatic Perception: Eriugena's Christological Vision

The subject of this paper is the theology and cosmology propounded by the remarkable Irishman, Johannes Scotus Eriugena, in his Periphyseon. Since Eriugena discusses his fourfold division of natura systematically and logically, relying on dialectical reasoning throughout, scholarship thereon has tended to maintain his apparently descriptive and explanatory method. However, when certain parts of this five-volume dialogue are read together synchronically, rather than diachronically in the order Eriugena gives it, it is possible to understand his theology as far more prescriptive, constructive, and transformative. Specifically, I will bring three particular subjects into conversation with each other. First, I turn to his insights into the via affirmativa, negativa, and eminentiae, the last of which culminates in a theology that stretches the mind further into God, while never abandoning the phenomenal world, through his unique use of "plus quam" ("more than") statements about God. Second, I discuss how he portrays the human person's relationship to paradise and this phenomenal world in both the prelapsarian and postlapsarian state. Third, I connect his understanding of Christ's resurrected state, and the recapitulation of all creation by Christ, to the first two topics. I argue that, when these ostensibly disparate topics are read together, a particularly unique theology is constructed that breaks the boundaries separating physical perception and so-called spiritual or mystical perception. Christ, as it were, becomes the example of the interpenetration of the bodily and the spiritual perceptible in this world. Furthermore, Eriugena's use of plus quam statements and metaphor, when read through Paul Ricœur's understanding of metaphor as illustrating "the tensive concept of reality", becomes far more transformative and prescriptive, than merely descriptive, of the self and reality. This theology then becomes constructive of a theological ethics of engagement with alterity that is based on Eriugena's own theological and cosmological principles.

Prof. Joel Campbell
Brigham Young University
Associate Professor
joeljaycampbell@gmail.com
What has Charlie Hebdo wrought? Remeasuring the ethical and legal boundaries of hate speech.

Questions about how a tolerant society should both ethically and legally treat hate speech aimed at religious groups is once again a topic of conversation in the months following the attacks at the French satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo. On Jan. 7, 2015 gunmen killed 12 and sparked three days of terror that left five more dead in a kosher supermarket siege. In the months since, government policymakers and civil libertarians have been remeasuring the limits of free speech around the world. In some quarters, laws have been tightened and greater government invasion into privacy has been justified. In other places, restrictive laws have been repealed. Journalists, writers, cartoonists, politicians, and religious leaders have been divided on legal and ethical boundaries of satire and hate speech. At the same time, people of faith continue to see upticks in hate speech aimed at Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The paper will examine free speech theory as manifest in U.S. First Amendment Constitutional case law, international law, and ethics provisions of religious and journalistic groups. The paper will draw upon current and historical research about hate speech, satire, free speech, and press freedoms. It will also examine how interfaith groups are responding to counter anti-Semitism and similar forms of hateful actions and hate speech directed at people of faith. This paper will examine the following questions: -- Can civil society take a position that concedes that it can restrain harmful conduct, but can do nothing about the advocacy of such harmful behavior? -- What role should government play? If government control violates constitutional guarantees of free speech, then what are the In short, the paper will conclude that the overemphasis on free speech rights is out of proportion with the humane respect for people.

Sr. Enrique Montes
ASSOCIATION MIRAISME® INTERNATIONAL, Spain

presidencia@miraismo.org
Freedom of expression and freedom of religion: the growth of religious intolerance caused by hate speech.

With the aim of knowing the socio-cultural factors that foster religious intolerance and the effects of hate speech in the community, the growth of intolerance is analysed and the way in which increasingly more countries are added to the list of those in which severe persecution exists towards those that hold a particular religious belief. The dependent variables that influence this growth are the emergence of new forms of harassment aimed at discrediting and stigmatising and the increase of speech that incites hatred on the grounds of religion or belief. Discrimination against religious minorities appears to be related to the presence of hate speech, so the following hypothesis is proposed: "The misuse of the freedom of expression increases the rate of religious intolerance and the number of cases of religious harassment". In accordance with the above, theoretical research is undertaken that includes the study of factors specific to each society that foster the presence of these acts and the effects of discrimination in identity building and the foundation of fair, peaceful and pluralistic societies. Given the results of this study a short list of effective tools is put forward in order to mitigate the use of negative stereotypes and the stigmatisation of people on the grounds of their religion or belief. Likewise, a mechanism for the harmonisation of freedoms is put forward based on coexistence with respect.

Dr Paul Kerry
Rothermere American Institute, Oxford
Associate Visiting Research Fellow
paul.kerry@rai.ox.ac.uk
Herder's Conceptualization of Tolerance

This presentation will outline Johann Gottfried Herder's development of the idea of tolerance in two of his most important works, Letters for the Advancement of Humanity and Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind. The analysis will be done through a close reading of the texts and also through placing his ideas into context with those of Goethe and Schiller. I argue that Herder's conceptualization of tolerance is a key contribution to the late German Enlightenment discourse on Toleranz.

Maria Ciurchea Barbu
Babes-Bolyai University, Romania
PhD student
ciurchea@yahoo.com
Is Tolerance Possible?

The concept of tolerance seems to occupy a very important place in the Western culture, gaining the statute of a supreme unquestionable virtue. Yet, there are also voices that warn about its dangers. Starting from this premise, the present paper aims to analyze different approaches on tolerance and the difficulties they raise. Starting from the ethical dimension of tolerance, the research investigates the main arguments in favor of tolerance which then serves as a background for a critical examination of the contemporary approaches. The intention is to determine whether the new lines of thought are doomed to failure just like the ones they have replaced. Therefore, the paper examines the flaws related to two undisputed assumptions which constitute the base for the postmodern discourse of tolerance, namely, the pretence of neutrality and pluralism. The inquiry continues with an invesitugatin of unconditional philantrophy. As Taylor notes, the unconditional love required to support this kind of action is, in practice, doomed to degenerate into hatred or indifference. The repetitive failures in the history of tolerance lead to the conclusion that the required unconditinal love is only possible for a consciousness that is engaged in a faith that supports it as an intrinsec value. Therefore, the premise according to which the abolition of absolute truth will lead to peace, is wrong. On the contrary, tolerance is only possible if it is rooted in a

transcendental truth which supports unconditional forgiveness. The final part of the research examines whether the Christian faith can provide the necessary fundament for an unconditional tolerance.

Dr.. Samuel Baker
Corban University, US
Associate Professor & Chair, Christian Ministries Department, School of Ministry
sbaker@corban.edu
The "Circle of Sensibility": Employing Spiritual Type Theory in Examining Kataphatic and Apophatic Approaches to Christian Spirituality.
    The focus of this research is on representation and comparison of spiritual typologies found in antiquated and present day expressions of Christian faith. In recent years, researchers have designed spiritual type theoretical models and assessing mechanisms to investigate and explain preference-based representations of Christian spirituality. Spiritual type theory takes advantage of this phenomenological explanation, delineating a concise overview of key concepts characteristic of the Christian faith tradition. The framework for this investigation comes from a historical and contextual model of apophatic and kataphatic taxonomies fundamental to the "Circle of Sensibility" paradigm espoused by Holmes (1980), Sager (1990), Ware (1995), Westerhoff (1994), and Baker (2003, 2015). Using a two-scaled model, the "Circle of Sensibility" provides an inclusive template for understanding Christian spirituality, which is represented in terms of four emerging spiritual types. The four spiritual types are represented in quadrilateral array along horizontal and vertical axes. The horizontal axis represents the apophatic/kataphatic scale—notably moving from mystical (apophatic) expressions of spirituality at one end of the continuum, to symbolic (kataphatic) forms of spirituality at the other. The vertical axis represents the speculative/affective scale—markedly moving from an illumination of the mind (speculative) type of spirituality at one end of the continuum, to an illumination of the heart (affective) form of spirituality at the other. When the "Circle of Sensibility's" spiritual type schemata have been applied to the context of historical Christian faith traditions, there is generally thought to be a dividing line between eastern and western forms of spirituality. As a consequence, the typical sentiment shared by Christian faith traditions in both east and the west is that little or no commonality exists between the groups, rather distinct and separate differences. In many cases, catechetical models have tended to provide the means by which these differences are encouraged and preserved. These differences are noted as well.

Dr. Mario Bosincu
University of Sassari, Italy
Postdoc
mbosincu@gmail.com
        According to Marco Vannini, modernity has been marked by the loss of the conception of the tripartite nature of man (body, soul, and spirit). The specificity of Thoreau's cultural diagnosis lies in the fact that he regarded America as the place in which the decadence of modern civilization could be overcome. Thus, he contributed to the rise of the American secular religion based on the belief in the U.S. providential and redemptive mission and in their capacity to give birth to a new, undefiled Adam. Hence, the necessity to overthrow the tyranny of interiorized utilitarian morality through a form of askēsis, since American society was characterized by a money-driven activism and by a work-centered time regime creating an "ant-like" "market-man" To this end, Thoreau's books were geared to awakening his readers to their perverted mode of subjectivity and to transforming them from within. He theorized the conversion to a neo-Cynic ars vitae and set himself the goal of revealing to his readers the way to overcome their mode of being after the model of his own care of the self. Furthermore, he devised a kind of pre-Nietzschean, extra-moral and life-affirming nature 'mysticism.' The unio experience thus underwent a radical transformation as a result of the secularization process leading the sacralized Nature to take the

place of the faded Godhead. Correspondingly, the mere instincts superseded the pneuma as the sensorium enabling access to the sphere of the sacred. Thoreau therefore praised a life rooted in the time rhythms of nature, sacralized as an ontophany and as the source transfiguring men into "Antaeus-like" beings overflowing with "the very vitality of vita." It is therefore highly questionable whether Thoreau's thought has a mystical character since mystics pursue the goal of self-annihilation, whereas he envisaged an instinctual self-enhancement.

Larry Bridgesmith
Vanderbilt Law School, US
Professor/Coordinator Program on Law & Innovation
larry.bridgesmith@law.vanderbilt.edu
Co-Author: Earl Lavendar, Lipscomb University
Religious Leadership in an Era of Exponential Change
   The "Second Machine Age" gave birth to an era of abundance and collaboration (supplanting prior millennia of scarcity and competition). The growing "on demand" and "sharing" economy (I.e. Uber and Airbnb) requires less material ownership and provides more affordable and efficient delivery of goods and services which empowers this age of abundance. Christianity in particular posits that a "new heaven and new earth" will be known by limitless bounty and lions laying down with lambs. In the now realized world of abundance and collaboration, leaders in all sectors including religion must demonstrate a radically different style than that of the influencers of prior generations. Leading in the digital age requires skills and aptitudes which are permissive rather than coercive, situational rather than rigid, and transparent rather than secretive. Transformative leadership in the exponential age must remove the walls of exclusivity and welcome the interdisciplinary exchange of expertise and experience. The rapid expansion of neuroscience is teaching how humans change behavior and the beliefs that motivate them. Religious practices are critical to this process because faith is at the core of behavior change. Jesus was a religious leader who modeled the transformation of human behavior through influence and inquiry rather than power and control. Effective religious endeavor in the exponential age (as in Jesus' age) anticipates radical cultural and economic change and prepares people for sustainable life through leadership appropriate to the age. Religious leaders in the digital age will model inclusive rather than exclusionary behaviors, lead others by influence and inquiry rather than power and control, and remove barriers to interdisciplinary understanding rather than erect silos. A radically new order of religious leaders will emerge who can change the heuristics of human understanding through cognitive thought, rather than sub-cognitive reaction.

Dr. Louella Moore
Washburn University of Topeka Kansas, US
Professor of Accounting
louella.moore@washburn.edu
Where the Jordan Meets the Ganges: Swami Vivekananda and the Confluence of East/West Culture
      Eastern and Western cultures do not readily fit the rigid categories often used in empirical research (Fang 2003, 2005-6). Even Hofstede (2003) worries that research categories can be misused as a substitute for deep cultural knowledge. Vivekananda's debut address at the 1893 Columbian Exhibition will be used as a focal point for examining the interplay of intellectual currents as they run through India, the U.S., Britain, South Africa, and Russia, impacting disciplines as diverse as philosophy, religion, commerce, and science. Many terms from ancient Eastern philosophy and religion commonly appear in modern Western commercial advertisements, and Vivekananda's contacts with prominent scientists played a role in establishing what once would have seemed an unlikely connection between physical

sciences and ancient metaphysics (Richard & Thuan 2001). Conversely, the study of Vedic documents by those trained outside of India has prompted new perspectives on the underlying meaning of cultural symbols and social categories (Aurobindo 1995, Varenne 1973, 1976). The paper will highlight connections between Swami Vivekananda, Ramakrishna, Gandhi, Tolstoi, and Aurobindo to take a fresh look at Eastern and Western symbols. The author's background as an accounting professor brings to the table a sense of how categories and labels can be used to enhance power and control, especially when they are unquestioned. The purpose of the paper is to open up broad questions that have not been adequately explored in academic discourse. What do we mean by Eastern and Western culture? What happens when commerce and religion intersect? At what point do symbols and categories take on material reality? Do the rigidly policed narrow bounds of academic disciplines in a digital society suggest that academic research itself has become a hyper-symbol for private inurement rather than public consumption? Aurobindo, S. (1995). Secret of the Veda. Lotus Press: Twin Lakes, Wisconsin, US. Carraher, S. (2003). The Father of Cross-Cultural Research: An Interview with Geert Hofstede. Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship, 8(2). Fang, T. (2003). A Critique of Hofstede's Fifth National Culture Dimension. International Journal of Cross Cultural Management 3(3): 347-368. Fang, T. (Winter 2005-6). From 'Onion' to 'Ocean': Paradox and Change in National Cultures. International Studies of Management and Organization, 35(4): 71-90. Richard, M. & Thuan, T. (2001). The Quantum and the Lotus: A Journey to the Frontiers Where Science and Buddhism Meet. Three Rivers Press: New York. Varenne, J. (1973). Le Yoga et la Tradition Hindoue. Culture, Art, Loisirs: Paris. Varenne, J. , translated by Coltman, Derek. (1976). Yoga and the Hindu Tradition, University of Chicago Press.

Garrett Sheldon
University of Virginia, US
Endowed Professor
gws@uvawise.edu
Political Theology and Contemporary Politics
   The Christian Church has a long and rich scholarship on "Political Theology" or major theologians' writings on religion & politics. St. Augustine's CITY OF GOD, St. Thomas Aquinas's essays on Law, and many others provide classical insights into Contemporary issues, not by prescribing specific policies, but by giving broad guidelines for the application of Faith to society.

Tahir Sadiq
NUML Islamabad, Pakistan
PhD scholar
icpsap@gmail.com
Islamic Studies
         Abstract Islamic Studies Islam is also a religion that claims the victory of mankind here and also in hereafter like other religions. Its study calls Islamic studies which consist on Faiths, worships and affairs. Faith: This is the basic aspect of Islamic studies by which it explains to have faith on Almighty, angels, all sky's books, all messengers of Almighty, hereafter and every pain and peace comes from Almighty. So it is obligatory to be a Muslim to admit that; all prophets and books of all religions are true and exact in their respective limitations. Worships: Its religious sense is to be submissive before God in every aspect of life, to attain this environment Muslim performs five times prays in a day, pays 2.5 percent of his total wealth per annum (Zakat),Fasting of one month in a year and pilgrimage minimum once in a life. Affairs: Two kinds: 1. Islamic lawfully affairs: How we have to deal with ourselves and with mankind, it is categorically predicated in Islamic literature, which calls Islamic jurisprudence also. Its main sources are; 1, Holy Quran. 2, Hadith (saying of Holy Prophet PBUH). 3, Consuetude (Collection of Islamic scholar's consensus of opinions on any issue which is not categorically explained in Quran and Hadith). 4, Supposition (apply a rule on another same causes issue). These all are moving to

protect the religion, life, honor, generation, intellects and property of a man and men. These are also the goals of Islamic law. 2. cosmogonic affairs: How we have to deal with this cosmos; there are available a coherence of modern sciences and Islamic studies to understand and utilize this universe. Conclusion: In short a man can't satisfy in this world until he joins a religion, as others religions are satisfying their followers so Islamic study is also providing a complete satisfactory of its followers. Key words: Faiths, worships, affairs, victory, satisfactory.

Dr.. Mujahid Hamza Shitu
Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, Nigeria
Lecturer II
mujahidhamza@yahoo.com

ISLAMO-CHRISTIAN CHRISTOLOGIES, SUFIC PANTHEISTIC MONISM AND THE BIRTH OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN NIGERIA

Islam and Christianity tend to have conflicting perceptions about the person of Christ despite his recognition in both traditions. In Christianity, Jesus is part of a Triune God and the son of God the father. Islam rejects the sonship and deification of Christ and sees it not just as anthropomorphism, but a desecration of God and a blasphemy. Many Sufis in their states of ecstasy made pronouncements which could be perceived as confirmation of Christian beliefs. These pronouncements are rooted in the Sufic theory of al-Fanā (annihilation) in which a Sufi ends in a state of union with God, he seizes to exist, while existence belongs to Allah alone. This explains Jesus' annihilation into the Ultimate Reality and forming part of it. The resuscitation of Tarbiya in the reformed Tijaniyya in Nigeria has led to the spread of ideas of monism and pantheism among the followers of the sect. In addition, due to the interaction with Christians and familiarity with Christianity, some new religious movements with synthesis of the Islamic and Christian Christologies emanated. This paper looks into the Christologies of the Īmāniyya movement and the Isa Zahiran groups.

Dr.. Alan Weber
Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar
Associate Professor of English
alw2010@qatar-med.cornell.edu

Towards an Islamic Eco-Ethics: Theological and Social Perspectives

Four of the Persian Gulf nations (Qatar, Bahrain, UAE, Kuwait) rank within the top ten per capita emitters of carbon dioxide. Additionally, these same oil and gas rich nations have the highest water and electricity consumption rates in the world due to government subsidization of utilities, including desalinated water. This contribution investigates the theological, socio-cultural, and economic foundations of current consumption patterns as well as attitudes towards the environment spanning the oil-rich developed countries to the more impoverished Muslim nations. Sources will include Qur'an, ahadith, and ijtihad (exegesis) from seminal Islamic thinkers and modern fatawa about nature and creation, as well as the lived experience of Muslims, including traditional modes of environmental thinking such as the hima system of nomadic beddu. The contribution then looks at the ways an ecotheological ethic is evolving in Muslim societies. What would an environmental worldview look like that would have a solid theological basis in revealed texts, be acceptable to a broad spectrum of Sunni, Shia, Isma'ili, Ibadi, and Sufi beliefs, and not substantially alter existing patterns of Muslim life? Unfortunately, previous attempts to answer this question have presented Islam as doctrinally monolithic, and glossed over the significant socio-cultural and economic stratification and diversity of Muslim societies. Keywords: Environmental ethics–Islam; ecotheology–Muslim-majority nations Author Bio: Dr. Alan S. Weber teaches humanities, philosophy, and medical ethics at the Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, a campus of Cornell University. Recent publications include: "Ethics of Food Security Strategies," International Journal of Agriculture and Food Science Technology (2013); "Review of

sustainable and renewable energy activities in the State of Qatar," IRSEC (2013); and "Sustainable tourism in desert regions" in Tourism in Southern and Eastern Europe (2014). He is the co-editor of Tourism Development in the GCC States: Reconciling Economic Growth, Conservation and Sustainable Development (Springer, 2015).

dr. Ushe Mike
National Open University of Nigeria, Lagos, Nigeria
Senior Lecturer
mike.ushe@yahoo.com

RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS AND EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

The persistent religious conflicts and insecurity in Nigeria has given meaningful Nigerians a cause for deep concern in recent times. Many of them wonder why religion which used to be the cohesive factor and core of national unity, peaceful co-existence and national development has become a tool for political manipulation, violence, destruction of lives and property in Nigeria in contemporary time. This paper examines education as a catalyst for resolving conflicts and enhancing national security in Nigeria. The paper first of all defined the terms that are used in this presentation. It also makes a review of some religious conflicts experienced in Nigeria together with their causes and the effects. Furthermore, the paper examined education in Nigeria as a catalyst for sustenance of national security. The paper utilized both secondary sources and observation methods for data collection and presentation. Finding from the research reveals that religious conflicts and insecurity are endemic in Nigeria in the last two decades. The Muslims and Christian adherents have fought wars in Nigeria than they had actually fought for peace, thereby threatening peaceful co-existence and national security among the citizenry. The paper recommends among others, that the government should employ meaningful ways such as education and inter-faith dialogue to enhance peaceful co-existence and national security in Nigeria.

Mr. Ahmed Salisu Garba
Faculty of Law, Bauchi State University, Gadau, Nigeria
Acting Chair, Private & Business Law
ahmedgarbasalisu@gmail.com

Law and Religion in a Democratic Nigeria: Islamic Preaching Board laws and the challenge of Boko Haram in Perspective

Beginning in the mid-1960s, the government of Nigeria's then Northern Region began trying to control Islamic religious preachers through a system of licensing coupled with prohibitions against preaching without a license which practice culminated into legislative enactments from 1970 in Kano state to other states in the region and is still being done in some states of Northern Nigeria. How can these legislative enactments be reasonably justified in a democratic Nigeria? What are the criteria for determining such reasonability? How congruent are the legislative enactments to international freedom of religion clause? The determination of the legal implications and qualifications of such laws has increasingly remained a constitutional riddle given rise to different formulations of standards of judicial review or proportionality tests by courts. This work uses argumentative approach and proposes a substantively positive-non-liberal balancing mechanism for the purpose of determining the reasonability or otherwise of the Islamic Preaching Board Laws in democratic Nigeria especially having regard to the Boko Haram imbroglio in the country. Key Words: Regulation, Democracy, Islamic Preaching, Boko Haram

Dr Frederick Downing
Valdosta State University, US

Professor of Philosophy & Religious Studies, and Head of the Dept
fldowning@valdosta.edu
Co-Author : Mr. Jonathan Downing, Screaming Shi-Tzu Productions
"The Fall of Man or the Ascent of the Human: Aronofsky's 'Noah' and the Rise of Human Consciousness"

The year 2014 was unofficially declared "the year of the Bible" in Hollywood because of the number of biblical films that were released. Darren Aronofsky's "Noah" was one of the modern blockbusters mined from the biblical text. As such, the film is comprised of a diverse collection of elements: part biblical epic with an inventive retelling of the early history of the universe, part legend, mythology, modern allegory or parable, all mixed with Aronofsky's autobiography. In the end there is much that is enigmatic. It is no wonder that some Christians, Jews, and Muslims find this artistic interpretation with its departure from a literal reading quite controversial. The thesis of this essay, however, is that the film can be "read" (understood) as a cinematic midrash which pushes in the direction of the philosophy of human history—what Crossan calls "the radicality of God's nonviolence [which] constantly challenges the normalcy of civilization's violence." In this way, "Noah" is a modern commentary on Genesis 1-11,a re-telling of the classical tale which aims to re-envision human history as well as the human future. Such a reading shows that Aronofsky's Noah is a character on a quest for an understanding of the nature and meaning of faith, God, and human history. Throughout most of the film, Noah wants justice. He is under the influence of what Augustine came to describe, and the Western Church to accept, as the Fall—a paradigm of sin, judgment, and punishment, all meant to explain early human events. In a series of tortuous scenes in which Noah prefigures the action of the Akedah, Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac, Noah proclaims that he "cannot do this." Consequently, he drops the knife symbolic of the attempt to carry out what he thinks is the will of his vengeful creator—to end human life on the earth. He emerges from his transformation closer to Irenaeus, who saw the "fall" as "upward." Aronofsky's Noah anticipates the prophetic ideal of not only doing justice, but loving mercy and walking humbly with God. The human is now capable of a transformed consciousness and living out grace and human goodness. Noah's continued quest will be the beginning of a new age of human possibility in which men and women move away from hatred and vengeance and seek a more humane future. This cinematic midrash is finally parabolic. Here Judaic Studies move in the direction of religious ethics and become one.

Dr Adil Khan
Loyola University New Orleans, US
Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies
ahkhan@loyno.edu
Co-Author : Dr Michael Cowan, Loyola University New Orleans
"A real conversation is never the one we wanted to conduct": Why Christian-Muslim dialogue is not a modest proposal

Fueled by ongoing tragedy, an urgent desire to improve relations between Muslims and Christians leads countless people of good will to seek out "interfaith dialogue" as a pathway to greater mutual understanding. Such conversations take place daily, from personal encounters between ordinary Muslims and Christians to high-profile discussions between representatives of transnational religious organizations. Who could possibly object to such well-intentioned behavior? In their own effort to create such a dialogue, however, the presenters have found that unless the matter of their relative power as Muslims and Christians in the current institutional arrangements they share can be spoken about honestly, "interfaith dialogue" becomes alternating politeness, in which the most profoundly significant matters, the very ones that moved them to dialogue in the first place, are avoided. What leaves one party feeling good about their receptivity, can leave the other feeling used to support current institutional assumptions, policies and practices which in fact limit their full recognition and participation. What is called "interfaith dialogue" too often obscures differing experiences of the conversation partners. In this presentation Dr.

Michael A. Cowan, a Psychologist and Professor of Theology, and Dr. Adil Hussain Khan, a scholar of Islamic Studies and Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, will take seminar participants inside their "interfaith dialogue" and speak about how institutional power has shifted from being an initial barrier to a means of deepening their encounter. They will also reflect on that experience and invite questions and responses from participants.

Dr. Hakan Gök
Mevlana University
Lecturer
hgok@mevlana.edu.tr
Albert Camus and Saīd Nursi on the problem of evil

This article looks into the discourse of French Algerian philosopher Albert Camus (1913-1960) and that of Saīd Nursi (1877-1960) from Turkey in order to compare their insight into the problem of evil and suffering in the world. Camus represents the existentialist/atheist Western point of view while Nursi's is a theistic view rooted in the Eastern Islamic tradition. Camus' perception of the problem of evil and suffering depicted in The Plague is compared with Nursi's defence of the necessity of evil and suffering in his Risāle-i Nur.

Dr. Brad Eden
Valparaiso University, US
Dean of Library Services
brad.eden@valpo.edu
J.R.R. Tolkien and Buddhist concepts in his writings

Much research and discussion has focused on Tolkien's Catholic background and his religious viewpoints when discussing his writings related to the Middle-earth mythology. Very little has been written on how Tolkien incorporates other religious philosophies and doctrines into his writings, specifically those related to Buddhism and the concept of reincarnation within the Elvish race. This paper will examine how Buddhist concepts have found their way into Tolkien's mythology, where they may have come from, and some thoughts on how Tolkien may have adopted such religious philosophies within his mythology that were so different from his own religious perspective. Specific examples will include discussion of the Glorfindel duality, references in Tolkien's letters on his ideas regarding Elves and men and their differences, and Gandalf's own reincarnation after his fight with the Balrog.

Ms Mai Vu
University of Auckland, New Zealand
PhD Candidate
m.vu@auckland.ac.nz
The Buddhist systems thinking towards corporate social responsibility and sustainability

Abstract Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore how spiritual leadership with Buddhist systems thinking approaches can raise awareness and practise corporate social responsibility and sustainability in business organizations. Design/methodology/approach – This paper develops a model that utilizes five main Buddhist concepts: the Eight Fold Noble Path, the Middle Path, the Cause-Condition-Effect, Space and Time, in comparison to Fry's (2003) Spiritual leadership model, Fry's and Kriger's (2009) being-centered leadership model to rationalize the meaning of corporate social responsibility and sustainability in the Buddhist thinking system. The model explores the impacts of the Buddhist systems thinking at individual, organizational levels through a Macro-Meso-Micro analysis. Findings – The paper develops propositions that could demonstrate the possibility to apply the Buddhist systems thinking approach in business organizations to foster corporate social responsibility,

sustainability and well-being; and proposes initiatives that can be taken into businesses and to be further developed in future research through the demonstration of case studies. Research implications/limitations – The proposed model of the paper is limited in exploration since it is contextualized and examined in case studies in Vietnam, where there are particular preferences and beliefs in Buddhism, while the concept of corporate social responsibility remains a luxury within the context. Originality – This paper proposes an alternative path to implement corporate social responsibility and sustainability in business organizations from the Buddhist principles and wisdom, which could lead to greater fulfillment, transformation and integration at individual and organizational levels.

Rt. Rev.. Marc Andrus
California Institute of Integral Studies, US
Ph.D. candidate
trasmond@gmail.com

Thích Nhât Hanh, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Doctrine of Interbeing

This paper of historical theology examines the theological relationship between the Ven. Thích Nhât Hanh and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., focusing on the doctrine of interbeing, prominent over the publishing life of Thích Nhât Hanh, and appearing frequently and importantly in Dr. King's sermons and speeches during the Mountaintop period of his life (1965 - 1968). The paper suggests that the two men had a strong, mutual influence on one another around this doctrine in the potent period of the Vietnam War and the American Civil Rights Movement.

Mr. James Morris
University of St Andrews
Doctoral Candidate
jhm53@st-andrews.ac.uk

Christianity in Japan Before the Arrival of Europeans

This paper expands upon my forthcoming publication in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, which sought to suggest that theories regarding the presence of Nestorian Christianity in Tenpyo Era, Japan are unfounded when prime attention is given to contemporaneous Imperial Documents. It then sought to contextualize the argument of P. Y. Saeki, who sought to illustrate that Christianity had arrived in Japan before the Jesuits in a number of his works from the early 20th Century, suggesting that his theory is best understood as a product of the modernization and imperial expansion of Japan. The aforementioned paper which focused on only two characters theorized to be Christian did not explore developments outside of the Tenpyo Era. In this paper, I seek to expand on this forthcoming research by suggesting that it is historically certain that Christians came to Japan prior to the arrival of Europeans, but that interaction was limited and no missionary presence maintained. Such interactions came through the Mongol Invasions of Japan, which left strong archaeological evidence to suggest that Christian soldiers were present in the Mongolian forces. It is unknown whether or not the Japanese were aware of the different religion by which some of these invaders lived, and therefore the theological significance of Christian arrival prior to European contact is limited. Despite this, the arrival of Christianity in Japan prior to the 16th Century warrants a reformed analysis of Japan's Christian history. In the final section of the paper, I will provide a brief commentary on the Jesuit belief that Christians had arrived in Japan before them, whilst attempting to illustrate that this belief is not linked to modern theories regarding the early arrival of Christianity and attempting to question why this belief never became part of historical narratives.

Bryce Taylor

Heidelberg University, Germany
brycehaltaylor@gmail.com
During my graduate studies at Heidelberg University, I came across Leo Tolstoy's philosophical treatise, The Kingdom of God is Within You, which was first published in Germany due to its being banned in Russia. The early pages were filled with verbatim quotations from a historically neglected nineteenth-century New England preacher, Adin Ballou, whom Tolstoy later identified as the "greatest of American writers." This statement by Tolstoy led to a further study of Ballou which eventually culminated into two research trips to the various libraries in New England that hold the majority of Ballou's musings. This paper uses his writings to open an intimate window into abolitionism's failure to liberate the slave using non-violent methods prior to the Civil War. The research objective of this paper is to identify the doctrinal shift and struggle among abolitionists to use force of arms to free the slave in America. I will show, using Ballou, that New England abolitionism nearly collapsed amidst its theological battle over Jesus Christ's declaration to "resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." My findings indicate that Ballou was the quasi-leader of the branch of abolitionists who remained fixed in their belief against the use of force by "godless governments." Ballou's biblical exegesis left no flexibility in regard to Christ's admonition of peace and forgiveness despite Ballou's fluid interpretations of other supposedly concrete Christian doctrines. I conclude, that Ballou identifies the primary moral dilemma among abolitionist leaders leading up to the Civil War that almost caused the destruction of abolitionism in America, namely if God providentially sanctioned the use of force to free the slave.

Dr. Rocco Capraro
Hobart and William Smith Colleges, US
Dean of Studies
capraro@hws.edu
 "An American Reckoning with Catholic Masculinity: A Men's Studies Perspective on James Carroll's An American Requiem"
   What kinds of messages about being a man do men receive from their faith communities? This paper presents a men's studies perspective on the life of noted author and former Catholic priest, James Carroll, as represented in his memoir, An American Requiem: God, My father, and the War that Came between Us. As such, through this "case study" within a broad interpretive framework, knowledge of the "intersectionality" between religion and gender in the formation of men's identity is advanced. Men's studies is an emerging interdisciplinary discourse about men's identity and experience. The field includes a rich discussion about men's religious identity, in such texts as Harry Brod' classic study of Jewish masculinity, A Mensch among Men, and Gar Kellom's groundbreaking exploration of college men's discernment, Engaging College Men. While Carroll frames his own life narrative around the never resolved conflict between him and his father, who was a naval officer and defense department official, about the ethics of the Vietnam war, this paper re-visits that narrative as a conflict within Carroll himself between contrasting visions of what it means to be a man in the Catholic Church. From the point of view of masculinity, the ideal man in the Catholic Church is the priest, and Carroll is ordained and takes on that role. With the emergence of the Vietnam war, though, his role as priest becomes complicated. Initially, with pontifical support of the war, in part because it was perceived as supporting Vietnamese Catholics, support for the war was straightforward: obedience to God, country, and his own father, with congruence between faith, patriotism and patriarchy/family. However, when radicalized by the anti-war activist Catholic priest, Daniel Berrigan, Carroll comes to see the war from a different perspective. It also constructs a conflict for him about the idealized Catholic man in so far as "being a priest," itself, is now complicated. Which kind of priest/ Which kind of man?: Pro-war or anti-war? This paper presents close and careful readings of the text of Carroll's life interpreted through the extensive body of men's studies theory and accounts of men's experience.

Dr. Carole Riley
Duquesne University
Professor
rileyc@duq.edu
Spirituality for Minorities

   Using the science of Formative Spirituality developed by Dutch educator, Adrian Van Kaam, Dr. Riley will present 3 strategies for ministering/teaching spirituality among the illiterate, rural minorities and those who are discovering their 'sense' of God. The strategies can assist those 'churched'.

JEAN DSOUZA
H.A. COLLEGE OF COMMERCE
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
jean4dsouza@gmail.com

   Poetry as a genre that calls for a predominantly emotional response, both in the writing of it as well as in its reading, invites its exponent to plunge into its spontaneity and its overflow. Mystical poetry of the West and Bhakti poetry of the Indian sub-continent seem to take this plunge more intensely. This paper intends to observe rather than conclude, and will hence look at the different aspects of Bhakti poetry, evoking reminders of mystical poetry of the Judeo-Christian tradition and the Sufi tradition. It aims to discuss how Bhakti poetry is different from other religious poetry and hymns, what is the character of God that emerges through such poetry, and whether this type of poetry assists the human connect with the divine. The English translations of the poems of Mirabai, Kabir and Narsinh Mehta will be taken as examples of bhakti poetry, and references will be made to Christian and Sufi mystical writing in the course of the paper. Much of the poetry is translated from Indian languages into English, and hence results in the loss of its rhyme, metaphor and meter. However, the overflow of emotion in it, its lyricism, and its aesthetic quality authenticate the translations as Indian English poetry. To draw conclusions in a paper of this type does not seem possible or plausible; however, the observations made here will probe into, perhaps even challenge, religious practices, belief systems and concepts of "God" and "Love".

Suzan Abed

Alexandria University

Research – postgraduate

susan.abed@bibalex.org

Shims, and its impact on the Inscriptions of Ikhanind religious buildings of Iran

   Shi'ism and its impact on the inscriptionof Ilkhanid Religious Buildings In Iran By: suzan Abed The period of Ilkhanid in Iran is one of the most important time of Islamic architecture there. They ruled Iran for about hundred years and in the year 709 H./ 1309-1310 A.D Ulgaytu convert from sunni to shii. and for sure it has a very important impacts on Architecture and Inscriptions. The research consists of several Topics based on field study: - introducing of Shi'ism in ilkhanid period. - Case study: (The name of Ali علي - Ali wali allah علي ولي الله - The twelve imams الأئمة الأثني عشر (الأئمة الأثني عشر) - inscriptions of : Examples from: - mosques: (Mosque of varamin, ashturjan - yazd and Ali shah in Tabriz ... etc). - Madrasa - Khanqah: (khanqah abd el samd in natanz - jilbi oghlo in sultaniyya). - Tombs: (Tomb of Ulgaytu, pir bakran and tombs of Imamzada). - The research Methodology is based on description, analysis and comparisons between inscription of earlier buildings of Iran and the topic of the study. - The study is supplemented with a credible collection of resources and references specifically related to the research topic (in Arabic,

Persian and English). - i visited Iran (March - May 2013), and i have my own collection of photos and sketches about the research.

Mr. Tyler Tully
Chicago Theological Seminary, US
tylertully@gmail.com
The Exorcism of Mary Magdalene: Engaging Luke 8.1-3 from the Subaltern
        Mary of Magdala is a historical figure from the Bible that deserves closer investigation. In the Western tradition, she is popularly remembered as the great sinner and prostitute who repented of her ways and followed Jesus. Taking a deeper look into the Biblical Mary Magdalene, this paper investigates the ways her possession and exorcism in Luke 8.1-3 can be understood from a postcolonial perspective in conversation with Stephen D. Moore and other's work on the Gerasene Demoniac pericope of Mark's gospel. After constructing a historical image of Mary Magdalene using archaeological and material culture as well as her appearances within the Biblical narratives, I argue that the Magdalene is positioned as a figure of ambiguous hybridity in the gospel of Luke. Although Luke never includes the details of how or when or where Mary Magdalene experienced her exorcism, she stands out as a figure uniquely 'exorcised' from crucial events in Luke's narrative 'community' when compared to the other gospel accounts. I conclude that Mary is an independent woman from Magdala, the first named among all female disciples in all gospel accounts, and the first witness of the resurrected Jesus who is commissioned as the 'apostle to the apostles'.

Brandon Harrington
Salve Regina University
Senior Student
brandon.harrington@salve.edu
Moving out MOVE: A Politico-theological Case Study of Institutional Domestic Terrorism in the USA
    On May 13, 1985, Philadelphia law enforcers executed the only aerial police bombing in the United States' history. Their intention was to drive out the predominantly African American anarcho-primitivist group called MOVE from their headquarters at 6221 Osage Avenue. The severity of this event calls into question the actions of law enforcement, but begs for more than a merely political or legal interpretation. In this paper, I attempt to rethink the factors that led to the MOVE bombing through a theological lens, utilizing the theoretical frameworks of politically inspired religious violence set forth by Mark Juergensmeyer and Catherine Wessinger. This approach prioritizes the opposition between MOVE's anti-establishment worldview and the city of Philadelphia's equally ideologically-driven responses, both of which far exceeded the scope of law and order and developed out of a violent clash between antithetical epistemes. Stepping outside of a strictly political arena posits a wider hermeneutical context which goes beyond the interpretations offered by merely secular considerations - considerations often subservient to the ends of conventional law and order. The wider politico-theological framework provides, I argue, an explanation for the event's unprecedented intensity and an indictment of the governing entities themselves. I use this critical position to interpret the city of Philadelphia's excessive force on May 13th as an act of institutional domestic terrorism, according to contemporary federal definitions, both to argue that institutional domestic terrorism is possible and also to problematize the judicial inability to implicate institutional crimes. But most significantly, I attempt to underscore the importance of understanding radically-charged political situations such as the MOVE crisis with the innovative social thought afforded by secular theologies. Finally, I attempt to apply the example of MOVE to the contemporary social

rupture in the United States concerning race relations and excessive police force. We are currently faced with a similar demand to decentralize focus on the powers of institutions, governmental or otherwise, and to privilege the role of radicalism as a progressive sociotheological mechanism.

Dr. Hellen Dayton
Independent Scholar, United Arab Emirates
hdayton@post.harvard.edu
What could icons of the Mother of God really have to do with interdenominational and interreligious wars?

"What could icons of the Mother of God really have to do with interdenominational and interreligious wars?" – I first puzzled glancing through Church Slavonic manuscripts and old printed books on-line (http://old.stsl.ru/manuscripts/). Russian Orthodoxy ascribes to "meetings" of the icons "Theotokos of Vladimir" and "apparitions" of "Theotokos of Kazan" certain victories over Catholics and Muslims (https://ru.wikisource.org/wiki/Энциклопедический_Словарь_Брокгауза_и_Ефрона, v.VIa, p.636; v.XIIIa, p.901). Historical research and textual analysis of the Church Slavonic archive demonstrate that the icons have nothing to do with wars, but their ecclesiastical services do. The secret of the 'victories' is that certain Turkic-originated populations, attracted to ecstatic ecclesiastical services, became a desired flock for 'spirituals' - Sufi, Orthodox Christians, and Jesuits - but only Russian Orthodoxy legalized these services in the 16th-17th centuries (РГБ, f.4, n.122, n.139, 159-60). These services dedicated to icons present a lure for crowds: brain-entrainment chanting of the melodies of psalms, and chains of associative connections between the imagery of the prayers, aim to supplant everyday logic. Liturgies should "withdraw" people from their life in order to "modify" their inner world, making them able to change their life. Addictions may originate in wartime situations and Orthodox services attempt to replace these lapses by spiritual attraction through compunction, which may be promoted by the binaural frequencies used in the services. No one has yet complained of addiction to binaural frequencies, so it appears a 'safe' opportunity for 'afesis.' Secretly created new icons first 'prove themselves by miracles', and only later does the Church approve services for the icons. The icons of Mary are neutral – different Christian denominations can use them after writing their own denominational prayers. The principle which may liberate from wartime addictions is personal compunction with tears before the heart-touching image – and this is an interfaith phenomenon, which does not need specifically Russian Orthodox services.

Dr.. Wan Norhasniah Wan Husin
National Defence University of Malaysia, Sungai Besi Camp, 57000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Associate Professor
hasniah@upnm.edu.my
Death Penalty to Drug Traffickers from The Perspective of Siyasah Syariyyah

In Malaysia, drug abuse and drug trafficking began affecting the society seriously around the 70s and, the trend has continued unabatedly in the first decade of the new millennium. The effects resulting from drug abuse are staggering, as it is the cause of various social ills such as murder, burglary, prostitution, and even causes family disintegration and erodes social relations. As drug trafficking could lead to a myriad of destructive effects, the main objective of this study is to analyze from the Islamic viewpoint on the death penalty based on the siyasah syariyyah principles. This is because punishment by death for drug trafficking is not an offence directly stated in the al-Quran and al-Sunnah under the hudud law. Based on textual analysis, the study finds that the death penalty meted out against drug traffickers is justified based on the severity of the act in affecting the individual involved, society and the nation.

Dr. Glorianna Pionati

Al Akhawayn University, Morocco
Psychology Professor/Counselor
gloriannapionati@prodigy.net
Religious and Other Belief Systems: Diversity and Internal Conflict in a Digital World

The onset of globalization has provided young people of the world with access to information that incites new behaviors and attitudes on diversity. Current research finds that contemporary youth have more in common with each other than they do with previous generations of their own culture or religious affiliation. Said commonalities can partially be attributed to the new digital world which provides access to information and events in the most remote locations, where individuals can see the world in a way never before possible. External factors such as immigration and war force choices on individuals and groups to find new ways to live the experience of diversity, usually without the help of specific programs that can address and assist in softening resultant internal and external conflicts. This paper defines internal and external conflicts that challenge religious and other belief systems, and threaten the homeostasis of individuals and communities. Solutions are offered as to how these conflicts can be mitigated through appropriate education and outreach programs, serving to assist world citizens in meeting the diverse 'other' in a reflective process.

Prof. Michel Clasquin-Johnson
University of South Africa
Professor
clasqm@unisa.ac.za
Minister for a Day - Online Ordination and the Place of Religion in the 21st Century

Traditionally, a wedding in the Christian world has been conducted by a minister of religion, using that term broadly to include equivalent ranks in other traditions. In fact, this tradition is neither as ancient nor as universal as is commonly accepted, but it is the archetypal meaning attached to the term "wedding" in the Anglophone world, at least. Secular alternatives to the church wedding exist everywhere in the western world (except Israel). Indeed, it is not that hard to find a broad-minded minister willing to marry two people who do not qualify under a strict interpretation of church law. This leads one to ask "why is there a demand for online ordination?" That such a demand exists is undeniable, but the social need that drives this industry is obscure and under-researched. Next, why is this demand largely restricted to weddings? Why does there seem to be no demand for online-ordained persons to deal with other rites of passage such as baptisms or funerals? What is it about the wedding, precisely, that requires the presence of an ersatz minister? This presentation will present an overview of the purveyors of online ordination and a typology of online ordainers. The legal status of online ordination in a number of countries will be explored briefly. The presentation will then engage with contemporary developments in secularisation theory and attempt to formulate a theoretical perspective on the historical development, current role and likely future of online ordination. The existence of online ordination may help us come to a clearer understanding of what 21st-century people in the developed world expect from religion, indeed, what they think religion to be.

Rui Coimbra Gonçalves
Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Portugal
Researcher
e.ruigoncalves@sapo.pt
The origins of the apprenticeship of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Portugal

When the first echoes from the apprenticeships of Saint Thomas Aquinas had reach the Dominican communities in Portugal, mainly St. Dominic of Santarém and the Cistercian abbey of Alcobaça, it were received in the bottom of a real familiar community. It happened in first place because the text circulation in a peripheral territory as that was weak, and the oral tradition assumed an outstanding importance.

Alcobaça represents, in that level, an exception. But even more increased was the manner by which the own Thomas Aquinas dictated his books still from his time of master in progress (baccalaureus biblicus), at Cologne, between 1248 and 1252, and how it could arrive to the lands of the western Iberia. Those writings were expressly destined to his colleagues («ad fraters et socios»). We are dealing here with De ente et essentia and De Principiis Naturae, and these works were brought to Santarém even many years after the master's death, when were still alive monks that had been attended the lessons from his own mouth. One of them was Brother Arnaldo Segarra, colleague of Thomas under the direction of Albert the Great. Segarra was father provincial of the Dominican Order of Preachers in Spain (whose religious territory included in that time Portugal also), when all a second generation of common and direct theological students were disciples of Thomas, later in Paris, between 1256 e 1259. These then former students sought probably the Spanish monk in Santarém, where he retired and dead in 1274, to hear from him about witnesses of the Thomistic legacy, a second time as members of these same familiar proceedings, so typical of the intellectual coenobitic life at the core of the convents in the XIIIth century. We can conclude that, despite the peripheral settlement in the western Iberian Peninsula, Portugal was able to make a serious effort to keep an account concerning the main ideas present in Saint Thomas and in the early Thomistic Philosophy.

Monika Brodnicka
The Ohio State University, US
Assistant Professor
brodnicka.1@osu.edu
Divine: The Pursuit of Sacredness in the Human Being through West African Spirituality
According to Amadou Hampaté Bâ, a Malian traditionalist living during the 20th century, the human being is a receptacle of all of the forces existing in the universe that incessantly move in and out of our core. In the Fulani and Bambara traditions of which Ba was a part, not only is the human being a medium of interaction between various universal forces but also, in connection to this universal status, a potential interlocutor of the Supreme Being. However, in her or his role as a medium, the person is vulnerable to the duality of forces that often lead to contradiction from within and without. Consequently, the role of the human being is to surmount these contradictions, in order to become harmonized with all of the energies that penetrate the human core, which, in turn, leads to the capacity to communicate with the Supreme Being. Once the balance is established, the person becomes the guarantor of harmony between beings in the material and spiritual worlds and the interlocutor with the Divine, controlling the movements and flows within the self and the environment and receiving and relaying the messages from the Creator. In my research on the phenomenon of personhood in West Africa, I use Bâ's esoteric methodology that he calls the "living tradition" to comprehend the rarely examined mystical role of the human being in the Fulani and Bambara traditions. My findings lead me to conclude that by becoming the guarantor of harmony and the interlocutor of the Supreme Being, the person attains a direct connection with the Divine, as a reflection of the Supreme Being is all of its grandeur. These findings are supported by two other West African traditionalists: Leopold Sedar Senghor from Senegal and Boubou Hama from the Niger.

Mrs AYSE AMBAROGLU
MARMARA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, TURKEY
PhD. Canditate
ayseambaroglu@gmail.com
WOMEN'S SOCIAL TASKS IN THE FIRST PERIOD OF ISLAM
I would like to express how women have been complimented by integrating themselves in the social life in the period of prophet Muhammad. In Arabia, in the A.D, 7th century girls were seen as a source of dishonor by their fathers. Slavery, cuncubinage and polygamy were widespread in Arab society. Islam states that women equal to men in Islam worship. I would like to work ongoing discussion about

constraints on women's social and individual rights how the Islam reacted during the prophet Muhammad. Prophet Muhammad's wife – Hz. Abu Bakr's daughter – Aisha became wise example to other women about hadith, fıqh, medicine and history. That limitation of covering of women, inheritance and testimony are comparatively more than men in Islam doesn't mean that women in Islam is completely isolated in social life. According to historical sources of Islam, during the prophet Muhammad, women were employed in occupations such as police, teachers and hairdressers. Islam can not be considered a religion which excludes women social life. Like that we must understand correctly that Hz. Aisha and other women's social roles. If the prophet Muhammad hadn't permitted to social, economical and individual rights of women, then the example above wouldn't have been worked out. In my opinion, because of exclusion of women in social life in the Ummayad period, Islam's practise of female former has been damaged

Mr Mala Ravikumar
Centre for Economic and Social Studies, India
Research Scholar
malaravikumar21@gmail.com

Appropriation and Assimilation of local deities into Hinduism
There are historical epochs evidenced the rise and fall of certain religious expression, either in Hinduism or Christian or Islam or Buddhism or any other. Of these few spread across the nations and became dominant and are striving to propagate it further, while doing so, these are incorporating and absorbing the native religious elements, influenced in its realm, distorting other. Worship of mother goddess is considered to be the most ancient and has no vedas or any other literature that explain them, however, there are legends based on which festivals associated. These are conceived as village deity, that they 'symbolize only the facts of village life'. This form of religion is perceived to be the religion of the Davidians and with dominance of female. This religious tradition has undergone tremendous change, due to the conquest of Aryans over south India. The Aryans attempt was to bring the people into the Hindu fold along with their native religion, by relating them with Hindu pantheon. But in the later period this religion of the majority is being practiced by all the caste Hindus with added mythological changes, developing nexus with sanskritic pantheon, in the name of Saktism and the rituals associated with these as Tantrism. This paper enunciate such process of appropriation and assimilation of religious elements of an age old tradition, practiced largely by South Indians, through re-presented myth and change in rituals of the goddess by the dominant religious caste Hindu upper castes (Brahmans) with reference to Hyderabad of Telangana State. This paper is based on empirical data and field work based in Hyderabad.