

Newslink

State Notes

From New South Wales

Religious Studies at the University of Sydney. The Department of Religious Studies at Sydney completed its tenth year of teaching in 1988, but without time for celebrations! after three years of negotiations, the programme of study offered to undergraduates has been expanded to highly satisfying proportions. First year students of Religious studies can now choose between a general introductory course in the History of Religions, Biblical Studies and Islamic Studies.* After that students can choose from a smorgasbord of semester options in their second and third years - on the Hindu Tradition, Buddhism, New Testament, Christianity,** New Religious Movements, the Sociology of Religion, Symbolism and the Arts, Jewish Civilization, and still more Biblical and Islamic Studies. Students taking Honours enter special option courses in second and third year, and experience a somewhat gruelling fourth year honours work-out, which includes presenting a (sub-) thesis and sitting an examination to test their knowledge of the subject as a whole. Most special option and honours courses focus on methodological issues.

At the post-graduate level, students are engaged in a variety of programmes. Some take special option courses as a means of qualifying for entry to a Master's programme; others decide on the Master's degree (Pass) by course work only - if they can afford it! - and others again are told they should pick up a language or undertake some other course if they hope to write a decent thesis on their chosen topic. Most, however, at both the Master's and Doctoral levels are engaged in thesis-writing. Topics vary enormously: the students have been divided into workshops under the rubrics 'Hermeneutics and Methodology', 'Inter-Religious Dialogue', 'Sociology of Religion', 'Sacred Texts', etc.

Student numbers are healthy. Over a hundred took on the introductory History of Religions course last year, and there are now over fifty postgraduates.

The only unfortunate consequence of all this is that staff/student ratios are too high - on some calculations the highest in the Arts Faculty - at a time when the chances of getting new staff are low! The best news is the steady output of dissertations and successful postgraduate degrees. Some of these theses have been turned into useful books. Among them are Tony Swain's *Understanding Aboriginal Religion* (AASR), from the very first honours (sub-) thesis in the department's history; Adrian Pittarello's *Soup without Salt* (Centre for Migration Studies), a Master's on Catholics of Italian extraction in Australia; Patrick Gesch's *Initiative and*

* Islamic Studies, Jewish Civilization and upper level Biblical Studies are taught within the Department of Semitic Studies as part of our programme.

** Some NT and Christianity courses are taken by Divinity lecturers only.

Initiation (Anthropos), a doctorate on a New Guinea cargo cult, and Gregory Tillet's *The Elder Brother*, RKP, a doctoral thesis on the Theosophist Leadbeater.

Of the overworked staff in the department much can be written, with many anecdotes of their curious exploits to boot. I will limit my comments to their research activities. Professor Eric Sharpe, our most senior academic, has recently completed two books, one on Nathan Soderblom (for the Studies in Religion Series) and a history of ideas work on the Kingdom of God. He is now busily writing a *History of Christianity in India under British Rule*. This might seem to be a continuation of Bishop Stephen Neill's unfinished two volume work, and in a sense that is true, but it will also be a quite independent work. Bill Jobling, who is the department's Reader and specialist in western Semitic matters is currently visiting Professor at the American Centre for Oriental Research in Amman. He is continuing to unravel the epigraphical and archaeological mysteries of west Arabia, and naturally his big publication project is the archaeological report.

Two lecturers joined us in 1988, after Arvind Sharma went on leave to McGill University, Canada. They are Tony Swain, our pioneer honours student, who comes to us from the South Australian College of Advanced Education, and Dr. Rachael Kohn, from McMaster University, Canada. Tony Swain recently co-edited the AASR collection *Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions* with Deborah Bird Rose. He is currently completing a commissioned work called *Aboriginal Religions in Australia - a bibliographical survey*, and is continuing research on a major *History of Australian Aboriginal Religions*. He and Garry Trompf have been asked to complete a volume on religions of the southwest Pacific for the

Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices. Dr. Kohn, accomplished in the fields of Judaism, Chinese Buddhism and the sociology of religion, is beginning her study of the church press in Australia from 1930 to 1980, with special reference reports on Jews and Israel in that period.

Those awaiting news of Arvind Sharma will be interested to hear that he has been appointed to an Associate Professorship at McGill and will resign from Sydney as from the beginning of 1990. We will lose our major Indologist, and are sad to say farewell to a valued colleague and friend. Our association with Arvind will hardly be cut, however, because the journal he edits, *Religious Traditions*, is now being co-published by Sydney and McGill universities. It has become a kind of Commonwealth journal, as subscribers will have already noticed!

Other staff include Dr Adrian Snodgrass, visiting Senior Lecturer from the Faculty of Architecture, whose work *Mandalas on The Symbolism of the Stupa* (in the Cornell Studies in South East Asia Series) are highly acclaimed. Dr Philip Esler is temporary lecturer in New Testament, and has not long since published a sociologically-oriented monograph entitled *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts* (in the Society for New Testament Studies Monograph series). John Cooper, another temporary lecturer (who helps in the teaching of the Hindu tradition and Indian Buddhism), is well under way in collecting and editing the letters of Helene Blavatsky for his doctorate. Our main tutor is Carol Cusack, who also lectures on comparative religion in the Adult Education programme, and who is researching the confrontation and interchange between Christianity and traditional religion in early mediaeval Britain for her doctoral thesis.

The writer, as Associate Professor and Head of the Department, tries to keep his head above the waters of heavy administration while he continues various projects. After returning from a visiting Professorship in History at the University of California, Santa Cruz, last year, he finished *Melanesian Religion: an Introduction Payback: the logic of retribution in Melanesian Religions* (Institute Anthropos series), and *In Search of Origins* (a book on the beginnings of religion in theory and practice, to open the Pacific Studies in Religion series, which is a joint venture between Sydney and the Department of Religious Studies at Victoria University Wellington). He has also finished editing *The Cargo and the Millennium* (a collection on new religious movements for the Religion and Society series) and is now working to finish his studies of Herbert Spencer (for the studies in Religion series) and on Percy Chatterton of Papua, as well as a book about early Christian historiography from Luke to Augustine (for the Transformation of the Classical Heritage series). Future projects involve co-writing with Tony Swain (see above and below) and preparing his second volume on *The Idea of Historical Recurrence* for the year 2000!

After the huge IAHR/AASR meet in 1985, and the big 1986 Waigani Seminar in Port Moresby, members of the department have been wary of involvement in conference organization. In 1990, however, the department will be hosting a unique conference on 'Aboriginal Perceptions of Christianity', several substantial grants having been allocated to set up a secretariat and bring participants to the conference venue. The conference papers, supplemented by other sources, will be edited by Swain, Trompf and Rose, in a volume to complement the

AASR's more academic publication *Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions* referred to above. And in 1991, members will be relieved to hear, Sydney will host the AASR Conference.

The Department has been very grateful to be the recipient of generous grants over the years. The Macartney Hill bequest, made available to us through the good offices of Sr Judith Hill (formerly of Sancta Sophia College on the Sydney Campus), has been a crucial support in assisting conference and publication costs. In the past, the Japanese government has funded Dr Snodgrass's position, and at the moment the N.S.W. Jewish Council is contributing substantially to Rachael Kohn's lectureship. The Theosophical Society has recently offered a large sum for the setting up of a part-time lectureship on the Gnostic Tradition. Virtually all of Bill Jobling's epigraphical work has been funded by the Australian Research Council (and its predecessor), and Garry Trompf's fieldwork in Papua New Guinea (when he was not actually teaching there) by the Sydney University Research Grants Scheme, which has also backed the forthcoming aboriginal conference. Research Assistants Lucy Davy (a Semitic Studies doctoral student helping Bill Jobling), at one time Raymond Maxent, but now Ruth Lewin-Broit (Religious Studies post-graduate students largely helping Garry Trompf), and Irene Ulman (an English Master's student who is secretary to the 1990 conference), have all been generously salaried by the University of Sydney.

The department is consolidating, even slightly expanding, in times that are worrying for those working in higher education. Student numbers are not likely to dwindle because of the new fee system, perhaps, since more places are being offered here, and the initiation of a BA/

BD programme from 1989 will probably bring extra second year students. One insidious pressure felt by Religious Studies, however, along with other small departments, is to group into large unities. Thus far inter-departmental negotiations have been for Schools, which preserve a good measure of departmental integrity. It appears that Religious Studies will be joining Archaeology, Greek, Latin, Semitic

Studies and Divinity in one such School, but the writer would like Indian Studies (now a 'Centre') and Indonesian and Malayan Studies to be included as well. This year will see plenty of discussion, hopefully with some creative practical results which will provide our 'place in the sun'.

— Garry Trompf
The University of Sydney

Report on the Second Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Jewish Studies

As the time for the Third Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Jewish Studies (AAJS) draws nearer, it may be found interesting for AASR members to get a review of the previous AAJS conference held in Sydney on 24-27 July last year. AASR members are particularly welcome at these Jewish Studies conferences, and in fact the AAJS offered reduced registration fees at the Sydney conference to AASR members, in recognition of our shared interests and the special role the AASR played in the formation of the AAJS in 1986.

The conference, the second such formal conference of the Association, was held on the campus of the University of New South Wales, in the Sydney suburb of Kensington. It proved to be a very fortunate choice of locale. Shalom College, at the University of New South Wales, provided an inexpensive, comfortable, informal and convivial environment, and the kosher meals at the College enabled participants to spend the whole time at the College and discuss common interests at greater depth.

If one can draw conclusions from the emphases shown in the papers presented

at the conference, the major interests of scholars dealing with Jewish Studies in Australia are, in rank order, Australian Jewish history and culture (some thirteen papers and a panel discussion dealt with some aspect of this), the significance of the Holocaust (eleven papers; at least one-tenth of Australian Jewry are survivors, and a much larger percentage are related to or friends with survivors), and contemporary Jewish culture generally (nine papers, including some on leading artists or writers, others on issues in modern Jewish philosophy, current ideological controversies, etc). There is also great interest in Jewish education (four papers and a panel discussion) and the Second Commonwealth period (five papers). Three presentations related to Israel, and two each were dedicated to topics in Jewish-Christian relations, and medieval legend and history. One paper each dealt with the Jewish Bible and the Talmud.

It is evident from this that scholarship in Jewish Studies in Australia reflects the highly acculturated experience of Australian Jewry and of the scholars themselves. The wealth of material on

contemporary issues was found to be extremely stimulating by all participants, and the participation of the audience in the question periods following presentations often added a great deal to the overall understanding of their topics.

However, the low number of presentations in Torah and Talmud is very striking, and may seem surprising, for these of course are the classics of Judaism and the foundation topics for Jewish Studies. There were certainly fewer presentations on the Jewish Bible than were given on "Old Testament" topics at the AASR conference that immediately followed. A brief digression on this highly anomalous situation might be of interest, since many of my readers from the AASR may have done work in scriptural topics and might be puzzled at this.

Until recently, Jews did not involve themselves at all with Biblical study in the tertiary, gentile academy setting, despite the fact that the pious amongst them avidly pursued Torah study in their own rabbinical academies and in weekly study groups throughout the world. And secular Jews going on to advanced university training, even in the history of religions, avoided the field of scriptural studies in the gentile academy almost completely, even if they were deeply interested in the subject. Such a pattern cannot be accidental, and we find that there have been very good historical reasons for this.

The academic study of Torah in the West has generally stemmed from Christian seminaries where the subject is understandably the Christian "Old Testament", its antecedents in a cult to a clan or tribal god Old Testament scholars familiarly call "Yahweh" (earlier, "Jehovah", the common terms *Elohim*,

God, or *Adonai*, Lord, are usually ignored as being too universal or Fundamentalist), and its usually alleged evolutionary progression from polytheism to tribal henotheism to the universal "Christ" and Christianity. According to those Old Testament scholars, "the cult to Yahweh" by ancient "Israelites" (to be clearly distinguished from the later "Judaeans", Jews) was located in "Palestine" (a name applied by the Romans in the late first and early second century CE to replace "Judea"); these inappropriate and frankly anachronistic terms (eg they ignore the strong Biblical stricture against the familiar use of the Tetragrammaton) and their attendant methodological assumptions often seemed purposely selected as part of an underlying polemic against Biblical Jews and even Biblical Judaism, a polemic that was once outspoken and harsh and that can still occasionally break out in current Old Testament scholarship. Self-affirmative Jews have naturally not been inclined to pursue the subject in such a tendentious setting. Many "Old Testament" introductions still insist that "Judaism" and the "Jewish people" itself only date from the post-exilic period, and cannot apply to the earlier "Israelite" or "Hebrew" or even "Palestinian" religion of most of the bible. Thus, explicit and frank references to the Jewish people, the Jewish land, the Jewish God; and even the Jewish scriptures itself ("Old Testament" or "Law," not "Torah" or even [God's] "Teaching," the correct English translation of *Torah*) have been as far as possible edited out of their own Bible. Fortunately, even if Biblical Studies is still often shaped by these agendas, there is now beginning to evolve a more neutral and therefore inviting disciplinary approach in this field; some departments now understand themselves to be studying "the Hebrew

(or even "Jewish") Scriptures," for example. Non-Jewish scholarship is now more empathetic than ever before to the Judaic aspects of this field, finding that this inevitably transforms and illuminates the subject. In fact, for the first time, we find that non-Jewish scholars are beginning to think of their work in connection with Jewish Studies, which is a very welcome development. In this new atmosphere, both in the United States and in Israel, Jewish scholarship has arisen, and Jew and non-Jew have begun to share common interests. The excellent paper on the biblical period that was presented at the conference reflects this, for it was by a non-Jewish scholar. It would be pleasant to have more such papers, by both Jews and non-Jews.

As for Talmud study in the secular academic setting, this is so seldom found anywhere in the world, and is often so polemically secular when it is, that here too, observant Jews have been turned off, while secular Jews, usually lacking the complex skills in Talmud that are required, and which can still be obtained almost alone through the traditional Talmud pedagogy, have found other more accessible contemporary topics within Jewish Studies. So it comes about that while there are a rabbinical seminary in Australia, plenty of rabbis in Australia who study and teach Torah, and many pious Jews in this country who study Torah on a regular basis for their own knowledge and edification, the Sixth Continent is not a fortress of specialized, academic Torah research. This can only be regarded as a great pity, however understandable it is.

Nevertheless, considering that the Australian Jewish community is still largely a second-generation creation, and only numbers about 90,000 or so, with very few specialized positions available

on the tertiary level in any area of Jewish Studies, the diversity and level of scholarship shown by the presentations at the conference was remarkable. Moreover, our rough survey of the papers presented at the Sydney conference is really not a perfect index of current interests, for it is possible that ratios will shift, perhaps even significantly, for the upcoming 1989 conference scheduled for Melbourne. But it can give a loose idea of the level of focussed and dynamic interchange and stimulation that was present at the Sydney conference. The cross-fertilization of ideas and papers was on-going; discussions often found themselves touching on common themes. Many papers, also, dealt with more than one of the topic headings I have just used: for example, a number of presentations on the Holocaust discussed Australian survivors and their children, so they were interesting not only for those concerned with the Holocaust but also in the context of Australian Jewish culture; I have counted them for both categories. A total of 38 papers and panel discussions were scheduled, providing an intensive experience over the three days of the conference. A tour of historical Jewish sites in Sydney was provided for interested participants. It was not only fascinating in itself and often quite touching, but helped further to cement friendships that were first made at this conference.

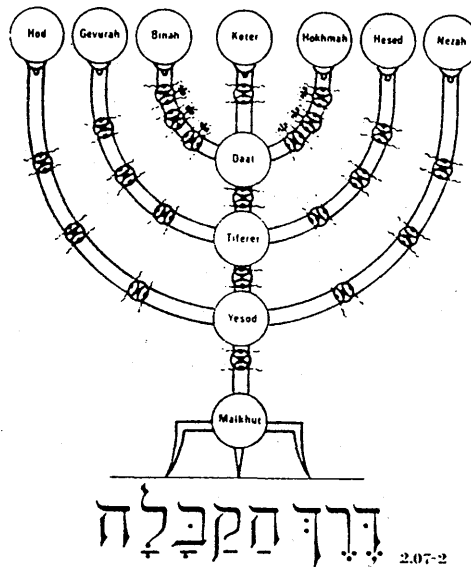
The pleasure of the encounters was considerably heightened by the locale, as has already been mentioned: somehow, despite the intensiveness of the setting, the three days were not exhausting, probably very much due to the relaxed and very warm atmosphere. Many participants commented that they had never enjoyed a conference more. Even many months later, I personally must

count it as one of the two most pleasurable and even exhilarating conferences I have ever been at in two decades of conference attendance here and abroad. The quality of the papers was high, the setting intimate, the participants warm, intelligent and charming, and the numbers attending, while not small, were also not so large as to give an impersonal feeling.

Plans are already well advanced for the Third Annual Conference of The Australian Association for Jewish Studies. It will be held in Melbourne, at St Hilda's

College on the campus of the University of Melbourne, from Sunday, 2 July to Wednesday, 5 July. Participants from The Australian Association for the Study of Religion are most welcome. Those wishing to present papers or simply to attend should contact Assoc. Prof. W.F. Rubinstein, School of Social Sciences, Deakin University, Waurn Ponds, Vic. 3217 (Tel. [052] 47-1361), as soon as possible.

— *Evan M. Zuesse*
President AAJS



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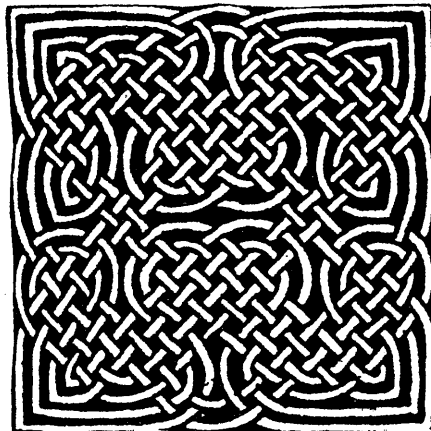
News from the Irish School of Ecumenics

In October 1988 the Irish School of Ecumenics was able to launch a new Master's programme in Peace Studies. Like the School itself, with its integrated courses on Interchurch/Interfaith and Justice and Peace issues, this programme is unique not only in Ireland but in Europe. M.Phil. and Diploma degrees are offered in association with Trinity college, Dublin, in the framework of a welcome Anglo-Irish consultation with the School of Peace Studies, Bradford. The course is designed around three core components: International Politics, Development Studies and Ideological Conflict, but it overlaps with the treatment of the ethical, biblical and inter-religious bases of peace offered to ecumenics students and also offers case studies of areas of conflict such as Northern Ireland and the Middle East.

From October to December 1988 I was visiting professor in the University of

Frankfurt's innovative series *Theologie Interkulturell* (my predecessors having been an African, an Indian and a Filipino). My theme was "Theology in the Pacific". A tradition has already been established of inviting the visiting professor to lecture at other European centres, in my case including Hamburg, Graz, Fribourg, Tübingen, Saarbrücken, Aachen and Louvain. It was a unique chance to present to German speaking audiences the whole scope of the interaction between Christianity (and incipiently Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism) with the rich variety of religious traditions in the South Pacific, including the Australian Aborigines. The lectures will be published by Patmos (Düsseldorf) in the (European) autumn under the title *Christus Initiator: Theologie im Pazifik*.

— John May
Director



Interfaith Dialogue in South Australia

Inter-faith dialogue is under way in South Australia! The two groups to which I belong vary in organization but are complementary in increasing understanding and tolerance between people of different religions.

One group has been successfully operating for nearly eighteen months. It was initiated by Jeff Drake and Pandit K. Sharma, who for some time had been discussing the possibility of forming a group for inter-faith dialogue. After serious consideration they came to the conclusion that a group of interested people, eager to learn from each other in an informal and friendly manner, but not answerable to any organization, could enter into dialogue and promote its cause in a unique way.

So far, this has been proved to be true. There is a stable membership of twelve people. Besides Jeff Drake, who is a retired Uniting Church minister, and Pandit Sharma, a Brahmin Hindu, members include an Imam from the Sunni Islamic tradition, a Sufi priest, and lay people from backgrounds of Hinduism, Shi'ite Islam, Theravada Buddhism, Sai Baba teaching and Christianity.

The group meets in a different home each month. We begin with one member giving a scripture reading or prayer from his or her particular religion and then we have a discussion on a chosen topic, when all members can share aspects of their own beliefs and ask questions of others. A noticeable frankness and trust has developed, and we have grown from being tentative individuals into a close-knit group of friends.

Other activities have included visits to each other's place of worship, and sharing or observing special celebrations (e.g. the

Hindu Diwali Festival, and the Christian Easter Sunday celebration). We also have social activities, such as picnics, which include our families.

An important feature of this group, and indicative of the friendships which have developed, is the way members visit or phone each other in between organized events. We exchange books, discuss the joys (and agonies!) of family life and introduce each other to different foods. We are learning about each other in many ways and most importantly, seeing how religious beliefs and practices are an integral part of each person's daily life.

I believe that each member has a realistic appreciation of the group's possible fragility, but there is no doubt that each one regards our meetings as very valuable for inter-faith dialogue between ordinary people, and that they are worthy of strong commitment.

The other group to which I belong is the newly formed Multi-Faith Association of South Australia. Since December 1986, a committee of the South Australian Council of Churches had been meeting to consider the possibility of the churches' involvement in inter-faith dialogue; this led to a group of interested people being invited to hear the Rev. Jim Houston, from the Melbourne Multi-Faith Resource Centre, speak on "The Religious Dimensions of Multi-culturalism". This sparked considerable enthusiasm, and in May 1988, representatives from the Buddhist, Ba'hai, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, and Islamic Religions and Sai Baba devotees, met to discuss the formation of a Multi-Faith Association in South Australia.

In contrast with the other group whose great advantage lies in its informality, the

Multi-Faith Association moves more slowly. With a sensitive awareness of the people they represent, an interim committee began the difficult task of drafting the Constitution. It required patience, a sense of humour (and some spontaneous inter-faith dialogue!) and a constant vision of the ultimate aim. In February 1989, the Constitution was finally accepted. The incorporation of the Association was established, and on 12th March 1989, the first Annual General Meeting was held. An executive committee, with Rabbi Ian Morris as president and Father Jeffries Foale as secretary, was duly elected.

The objectives of the Multi-Faith Association are:

- a) To bring peoples of all religious faiths to appreciate each other's distinctive beliefs and practices;
- b) To foster the study of these religious faiths to discern and appreciate their common spiritual dimensions, values and aspirations;
- c) To promote the study of and research into the historical, political, economic, social, religious and ethnic causes of conflicts between

people of different creeds and colour in order to seek to overcome conflict, ignorance, fear and mistrust through education about each other's faith;

- d) to promote for the benefit of the community, education in those fundamental ethical teachings common to all faiths which foster respect and understanding between people of different creeds.

Membership will soon be offered to interested people and activities promoting the objects of the Association will begin. Among these will be the continuation of the Multifaith Tours, (visits to different religious centres, advertised publicly and previously called Three Faith Tours) which have already proven to be successful.

As a Christian lay person and a student of Religion Studies, I have been greatly encouraged by the formation of these two groups and hope they will be the means of bringing interfaith dialogue to the community at every level.

— Margaret Pascoe
Adelaide

Interfaith Directory

The First of its Kind Edited by Dr H Francis Clark

In service to the Worldwide Interfaith Movement, the Council for the world's religions has sponsored the production of the Interfaith Directory, a guide book to interreligious organisations. Editor H Francis Clark has compiled the addresses and descriptions of over 800 interfaith organisations into the first volume of its kind. The Interfaith Directory is an invaluable resource for interfaith work.

Copies may be obtained from:

Michael Treacy,
The International Religious Foundation,
G.P.O. Box 1151,
CANBERRA ACT 2601

\$15.00 per book plus \$3.00 postage and packing.

News from the British Sociological Association, Sociology of Religion Study Group

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Theology Department
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PO Box 363
Birmingham B15 2TT

Convenor

Grace Davie
Sociology Department
University of Exeter
Amory Building
Renner Drive
Exeter EX4 4RJ

Dr Grace Davie has sent the AASR a copy of the BSA Sociology of Religion Study Group's Research Register and Bulletin 1988/89. It is in two parts:

Part A comprises information from the Convenor of the Group and includes the minutes of the 1988 AGM, and brief details of CISR, ASR, RRA and SSSR and their forthcoming conferences.

Part B is the Research Register of members and includes 1987 and 1988 publications and current research interests.

Enquiries about the Register and the BSA Sociology of Religion Study Group should be made directly to Grace Davie.

Some Forthcoming Conferences....

**The XXth CISR (Conference
Internationale de Sociologie des
Religions) in Helsinki (Finland)
21-25 August 1989.**

Theme: The State, the Law and Religion
Plenary Sessions on: Models of State
Regulation of Religion
Pluralism and Regulatory Bodies
Religion and the Media

For CISR membership, write to:

Roland J Campiche
General Secretary CISR
Terraux 10
1003 Lausanne
SWITZERLAND

**The 29th International Congress of the
International Institute of Sociology
12-16 June 1989 in Rome.**

Theme: The Status of Sociology as a
Science and the Problem of Social Policies

There will be a session devoted to the
Sociology of Religion.

Information from:

Roberto Cipriani,
Department of Sociology,
via Della Chimica 8, 00144, ROME.

**The Association for the Sociology of
Religion annual meeting
6-8 August 1989, San Francisco.**

Theme: Religion, Social Problems and
Religion as a Social Problem

Contact:

Lorraine d'Antonio,
Room 108, Marist Hall,
Catholic University of America,
Washington, DC 20064.

**The Society for the Scientific Study of
Religion Conference, 27 - 29 October
1989, Salt Lake City, Utah**

Theme: Religion, Diversity and Change

Contact:

Lorraine d'Antonio
(address above)

**Religion Research Association
Conference, 27 - 29 October, 1989
Salt Lake City Utah.**

Theme: Different Views: Religious
Institutions and Diversity

Contact:

Lorraine d'Antonio
(address above)

**BSA Sociology of Religion Study Group
Conference, 2 - 5 April, 1990,
Edward King House, Lincoln**

Theme: The Sociology of Ecumenism

Convenor:

Grace Davie

**BSA Theory and Sociology of Religion
Groups Joint Conference, 4 - 6 January,
1990. University of Bristol.**

Theme: Sociology and the Human
Condition

Convenor:

Kieran Flanagan,
Department of Sociology,
University of Bristol,
12 Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1UQ

**ISA World Congress
9 - 13 July, 1990, in Madrid**

Information from:

Roberto Cipriani,
Department of Sociology,
Via Della Chimica 8, 00144 Rome.

**BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR THE
HISTORY OF RELIGIONS**

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

22-24 SEPTEMBER 1989

**THEME
RELIGION AND GENDER**

INFORMATION FROM

**Peter Moore, Darwin College,
The University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7NZ**

Building Understanding and Respect Between People of Diverse Religions or Beliefs

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

on ways to promote the 1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

**May 14 - 18, 1989
WARSAW, POLAND**

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief is a right proclaimed in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. On November 25, 1981, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. This Declaration proclaims support for Article 18 and specifies measures to protect freedom of religion or belief.

The Second International Conference on Ways to Promote the 1981 UN Declaration in Warsaw, Poland, May 14 - 18, 1989, will stimulate dialogue from diverse intellectual and cultural perspectives on the root causes and contemporary manifestations of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief. The Warsaw conference is designed to explore creative ways of conflict resolution and will combine both academic and action approaches, coordinating analysis with concrete strategies for change.

A major contribution of the Second International Conference on Ways to Promote the 1981 UN Declaration will be to continue the process of encouraging

governments, religious institutions, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations to contribute their time, thought and resources to implementing freedom of religion or belief. The conference recognizes there are a wide variety of ways in which this can occur. There are four general areas from which recommendations are expected to come:

1. Law - ways in which efforts can be supported to examine international structures, national constitutions, national and local legislation, to make sure there is a legal framework for the Declaration in each member-state of the United Nations.
2. Education - programs of education can be developed through universities, religious and non-sectarian educational institutions, churches, seminaries, governments, voluntary organizations and the media.
3. Arts - way in which the "spirit" of the Declaration can be expressed in painting, sculpture, dance, music, theatre, poetry and other artistic means.
4. Development - ways in which governments, religious institutions and non-sectarian organizations of diverse ideologies, may be able to work together on humanitarian service projects in the "name" of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1981 UN Declaration, with mutual understanding, tolerance and respect for each other.

The Warsaw conference is being sponsored by the Institute of State and Law of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Norwegian Institute of Human Rights, the University of Minnesota, College of Liberal Arts and the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

The Warsaw conference includes a memorial tour to Auschwitz.

Conference addresses will be given by:

Rev. David Preus, Vice-President
Lutheran World Federation

Adam Lopatka, Chief Justice,
Supreme Court of Poland

Rev Howard Mills, Sec General,
United Church, Canada

Sulak Sivaraska,
Bangkok Buddhist Lawyer

Einar Vetvik,
Professor Political Science, Oslo

Raffat Hassan,
Professor of Religion, U. of Kentucky

Jaap Walkate,
Netherlands International Lawyer

Kevin Boyle, Executive Director,
Article 19, London

Donna Sullivan,
Project Director for legal interpretation
of the 1981 UN Declaration

Aviezer Ravitzky, Professor of
Philosophy, Hebrew University

Tamas Foldesi, Dean,
University of Budapest Law School

Franklin Littell, Em.
Professor of Religion, Temple
University, Philadelphia
Andrzej Stelmachowski, Chair,
Warsaw Catholic Intelligentsia Club

Mdam Mjoya, West African Muslim
member of UNESCO Exec. Committee

Arun Ghandi, grandson of
MK Ghandi, Bombay

John Taylor, Sec. General,
World Conference on Religion and
Peace, Geneva

Sister BK Jayanti, Director,
Brahma Kumaris University, London

Juliet Sheen, Research and Policy
Coordinator, NSW Anti-discrimination
Board, AASR member, and Australian
representative to 1984 UN Seminar on
the 1981 Declaration

Liu Ze Hua, Chair, History,
University of Nankai, Tianjin, China

Margaret Kenyatta, representative to
UN Environment Program, Nairobi

B.G. Ramcharan, Office of the Sec.
General of the United Nations

For further information, contact:

Lori Graven, Program Director,
Professional Development and
Conference Services,
217 Nolte Centre,
315 Pillsbury Drive SE,
University of Minnesota,
Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA

or Dr Juliet Sheen,
NSW Anti-Discrimination Board,
11th Floor, 8 Bent Street,
Sydney, NSW, 2000



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The GK Chesterton Revival: a Religious Sign of the Times

From the stand point of Religious Studies, *The Chesterton Review*, published quarterly from a college in the University of Saskatchewan and now in its fourteenth year, is more than just another (and rather surprising) literary journal. Its very existence and success is a religious sign of our times, for there can be no doubt that it is primarily as a Christian apologist and social critic that this flamboyant English eccentric from the early years of our century is finding a new and growing public all over the world decades after his death, when most of his contemporaries would have expected him to have faded into oblivion.

In his own day his popularity was as an almost comic figure strutting the London scene, a caped, cane-wielding Don Quixote with the bulk of Gargantua who devoted enormous energy to tilting at windmills in the name of a conservative Christianity which seemed to most educated readers like a mere historical survival. Today it is clear that some of those windmills were actually embryos of real monsters - for example, the arrogant assumption of many scientists that a proper technical fix can solve all human problems, the tendency of social planners to ride roughshod over the special needs of individuals and local communities in the name of a supposed greater good, the mechanistic psychological theories which brand non-conforming behaviour and religious feeling as mental illness, and the cruelty of putting a taboo on ageing and death with put-down terms like "morbid". In a world where these monsters threaten to trample the earth into a spiritual or even a literal desert, Chesterton's immense gift for unmasking lies, exposing fallacies and bringing theological ideas to life comes to many

people like a spring of lifegiving water, with considerable entertainment - value thrown in as a bonus.

His literary output was immense - novels, the famous Father Brown detective stories (he helped Dorothy Sayers and Agatha Christies found the famous Detection Club in pre-World-War 2 London, but in his case every story was the vehicle for a cunning theological point), poems, plays, essays, literary criticism, history, straight apologetics, an autobiography (published posthumously after his death in 1936) and a mass of journalism, much of it in his own weekly newspaper. The expiry of copyright in 1986 brought some of these into print again, notably a very clever selection, with an introduction by PJ Kavanaugh, in *The Essential GK Chesterton*, published in Oxford University Press's "Twentieth Century Classics" series. But much has never even been put between covers, and one task of *The Chesterton Review* has been to rescue a great number of important minor pieces from obscure archives. It also has special issues devoted to authors who have championed some of the same religious and social causes as Chesterton, as well as contemporary updates of his thinking.

It maintains a very high standard both of content and production, and can be obtained by subscribing to the Australasian branch of the international GK Chesterton Society at \$25 per annum - astonishingly good value for the money. The Secretary is Mr Hilary Hayes, "Long Swamp", Osborne's Flat, Wodonga, Victoria 3691.

— John Wren-Lewis
Bundeena NSW

News from the Asian and Comparative Philosophy Society of Australasia

Conferences...

**Update on the Sixth East-West
Philosophers' Conference**
(July 30 - August 12, 1989, East-West
Center, Honolulu)

We have heard from the Director of the upcoming 6th East-West Philosophers' Conference that preparations are proceeding in full force. Apparently the response has been overwhelming, from both Eastern and Western philosophers. Among the plenary speakers listed, there appear such luminaries as Arthur C Danto, Alasdair MacIntyre, Hilary Putnam, Richard Rorty, Ninian Smart, Fenq Qi, Chang Tainian, Julie Ching, Karl-Otto Apel, Liu Shu-hsien, Kwame Gyekye, JN Mohanty, Bimal Matilal, Agnes Heller, Richard Bernstein, among others.

It is not too encouraging to notice that so far only one participant from Australasia is listed (namely, the ACPS Secretary). We had sincerely hoped that there would be more people interested, and it would seem not too late, for those still interested, to plan on attending the conference. A list of the conference participants and some information on accommodation and so forth can be had from the Secretary of ACPS.

For further information, one may write to:

Professor Eliot Deutsch
East-West Philosophers' Conference
2530 Dole Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

**The International Society for Chinese
Philosophy Sixth Biennial Conference**
(1989).

This conference is being organized for July 24 - 29, 1989, to be held at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hawaii.

Keynote Speaker: Joseph Needham

Theme: Mind, Nature and Reason in
Chinese and Western Philosophy.
Subthemes: Passions and Reason; Logic
and Perception; Li, Fa, and Tao; Chi,
Physical Body and Mental Health;
Psychoanalysis; Truth and Reality.

Contact: Professor Hsueh-li Cheng, Chair,
Department of Philosophy and Religious
Studies, University of Hawaii, Hilo,
Hawaii, 96720-40891.

**The 9th International conference of the
International Association of Buddhist
Studies (1989)**

Taipei, July 26-28, 1989

Hosted by the Institute for Sino-Indian
Buddhist Studies, the National Central
Library and the Research Centre for
Chinese Studies in Taipei, Taiwan.

Contact: Luis O Gomez, General
Secretary, IABS, Department of Asian
Languages and Cultures, The University
of Michigan, Frieze Building, Ann Arbor,
Michigan, 48109-1285, USA.

— *Purusottama Bilimoria, Secretary ACPS*
School of Humanities,
Deakin University, Geelong Victoria 3217

XVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions, Rome, September 3 - 9, 1990.

The Theme of the Congress:

The notion of 'religion' in comparative research.

Correctly understood, the theme of the Congress will not be dealt with speculatively or normatively, but on a positive and inductive basis, with reference to research being carried out on the various cultural and religious areas and with particular attention to the varying notional and factual implications of the use of the term "religion". Far from being the object of mere terminological or "definitional" study, the term will be tested as an instrument and a problem for historical and comparative research, from its Latin origins down to Latin-speaking late Antiquity, Medieval and Modern Europe, with particular attention to the problems involved in the use of the term by European-trained scholars dealing with extra-European cultures as well as by scholars belonging to these and expressing themselves in European languages. Special attention will also be given to such partially alternative notions as "Law" and "Path" and to problems of notional continuity and discontinuity between pre-Christian and Christian, pre-Islamic and Islamic, pre-Buddhist and Buddhist use of "religious" terminology.

Proceedings of the Congress:

The official languages of the Congress will be English, French, German and Italian.

The proceedings themselves will be divided into plenary sessions and a

number of sections and panels. The plenary sessions will be reserved to inaugural speeches, to general reports - at the invitation of the Organizing Committee - to reports on the work carried out by the sections and the panels, and to retrospection on the work of the Congress. The individual sections will concentrate on specific regional and cross-cultural topics within the framework of the central theme of the Congress. In addition, other freely chosen subjects of interest for the History of Religions will be dealt with within the sections. Panels will be organized for special purposes of current research, to accommodate, as far as possible, specific requests coming from groups of participants or affiliated bodies. The length of the general reports will be 40 minutes and that of the section and panel communications will be 15 minutes.

Sections of the Congress:

The following sections of the Congress are envisaged:

1. Prehistory;
2. Australia, Oceania and peripheral cultures;
3. African religions;
4. American native religions (excluding Mexico and Peru);
5. Mesoamerica and Peru;
6. East Asia;
7. India and South Asia;
8. Iran and Central Asia;
9. Ancient Egypt;
10. Ancient Near East;
11. Greece and Rome, Hellenism;
12. Pre-Christian Europe;

13. Old Testament and Judaism;
14. Christianity;
15. Islam;
16. Buddhism;
17. Religious folklore;
18. The "new religions";
19. Historical typology; phenomenology; anthropology; and their contribution to historical and comparative research in religion (where "historical" is not limited to literate cultures, or coextensive with "philological" in the strict sense of the word, or with merely "descriptive"). According to necessity section 19 will be divided into subsections.

Panels:

Possible themes for panels include at this moment the following: "primal"

religions and their place in the history of religions; cosmopolitic and universalistic religions; Egyptian cults in Rome; the notion of religion and the study of Islam; religious biography in Asia; Buddhism and religions; methodology and epistemology in their relation to themes of the discipline and concrete examples. For further suggestions write separately to the Secretariat.

For detailed information, Registration Forms etc, please write to:

Dipartimento di studi storico-religiosi
XVI congresso I.A.A.H.R.
Facolta di Lettere e Filosofia
Universita di Roma 'La Sapienza'
Piazzale Aldo Moro 5
1-00185 ROMA Italy

STOP PRESS

Professor Ursula King has very recently notified all interested in the Congress that there will be a PANEL on RELIGION AND GENDER...

'...the IAHR is concerned with many different aspects of the contemporary study of religion, and its forthcoming congress is planned to include 19 different sections. Two circulars have been sent out so far...I early pointed out to the President of the congress, Professor Ugo Bianchi, that unfortunately none of the official sections gave any attention to the important contemporary work on 'Religion and Gender' whereas the IAHR Congress in Winnipeg (1980) included a separate section on 'Femininity and Religion', and the Sydney Congress (1985) saw a parallel event organised by women scholars on 'Women and Religion'. However, neither of these two is reflected in the published Congress Proceedings so that the work of women scholars as a group remains invisible yet once again.

Professor Bianchi and the IAHR Committee take the view that they have too many sections already at the Rome Congress to add another one, but they have agreed that a panel can be organised on 'Religion and Gender' to be publicised in the next circular and in the Congress programme. I am willing to initiate and undertake the organisation of such a panel provided that its programme becomes an official part of the Congress and will be recorded in the official Proceedings to be published after the Congress...'

Can we hope for *aggiornamento* in the IAHR in Rome?

AASR members can write to Professor King to give support and/or offer a paper for the Religion and Gender panel. Her address is:

Professor Ursula King
Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Bristol
36 Tyndall's Park Avenue, Bristol BS8 1PL, ENGLAND

Australian Council of Churches Commission on the Status of Women

Announcing a New Publication

The National Ecumenical Women's Journal

The ACC Commission on the Status of Women has been successful in its application for a publication grant from the WA Government "Women's Trust". The seed grant of \$2,500 will enable the Commission to launch the quarterly National Ecumenical Women's Journal *Voices from the Silence* by early July. We are budgeting for an initial mailing list of 800 and hope the mailout will be state and nationwide. To commence the project the Journal will be sent out with our best wishes, however, we hope that our readers will eventually consider it worthy of a \$5 yearly subscription, even an occasional donation, so we can continue publication beyond the completion date of the grant report, due 1 March 1990.

We ask your assistance in providing us with names and addresses of individual women/men/ groups etc. you believe would be interested in receiving our publication. The first edition will include a lead article concerning the Aboriginal women in Perth committed to the claims

of the sacred site of the Waugal. Each edition will also include items of interest on the WCC Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women, and will monitor and report on the various programmes being undertaken by women around the world.

We all know there is much to share ecumenically and perhaps the Journal can also serve the purpose as a clearing house for information. We are keen to provide news of, and promote, any seminars, forums, guest speakers, special services, new publications etc. concerning the ongoing struggles of women in the Church - in Australia and overseas. We are willing to promote a Calendar of Events in each edition, the details of which you will provide. We anticipate printing and mailing will be in the last week of June, September, November and January.

Looking forward to your positive response, long lists and exciting seminar notices!

— Leonie B Liveris
Executive Officer
Commission on the Status of Women
C/- Conference of Churches WA
10 Pier Street, Perth WA 6000



The Action Group for Religious Liberty

The Action group for Religious Liberty was formed over three years ago to pursue a number of courses of action. After having observed a need for the protection of religious freedoms within Australia, members of the larger established churches and newer minority religious groups came together to formulate a set of objectives which form the basis of activities performed by the group.

It may be stated that religious freedom is guaranteed within the Constitution and that no one needs to worry about their religious freedom being transgressed. Contrary to a common misconception, our Australian Constitution assumes religious freedom but it does not guarantee it. It has been seen, especially in recent months, that minority religious groups have come under attack from different sources and these attacks are detected as being symptomatic of a trend which could lead to the restriction of liberties for all. With these occurrences in mind the group has a broad scope of activities which are as follows:

- * The long term attempt to develop accurate knowledge in the community about the beliefs and practices of religious groups.
- * The monitoring of the media for instances of negative stereotyping, prejudice and contravention of ethical standards in reporting on religious groups.
- * The monitoring of legislation and implementation of law to detect any discrimination against particular religious groups and any effective restrictions of religious liberty.

Over the past two years the pursuit of these objectives has involved:

- * Correspondence with the media about specific instances of inaccurate and unjust reporting.
- * The education of the members of the Group itself to the beliefs and practices of older and newer religious groups.
- * Attempts to encourage dialogue between religious groups.

A quick overview of AGRL activities over the past year shows these to have been of three main types; viz., 'self-education', 'consciousness-raising' and 'trouble-shooting'.

Members' 'self-education' included:

- * Address at meetings from: Pastor Harry Ballis, on Seventh Day Adventism; from Father John MacMillan, on Freemasonry; from Dr. Frank Maber, on the Law and Religious Freedom; from Father John Stockdale, on Religion in the work place.
- * Study of publications and public utterances from 'anticultists' and others whose activities could be seen as prejudicial to religious freedom.
- * Attendance by several committee members at the International Religious Foundation's conference in Melbourne.

AGRL's 'consciousness-raising' activities included;

- * Forwarding the AGRL Objectives to the Constitutional Commission, for

- its hearing on a proposed change;
- * Correspondence with federal senators pursuant to the matter.
 - * ABC interview of two committee members by Terry Lane.
 - * ABC National Radio Talk "Look out the cult-busters don't get you!" by one of the members, and subsequent publication of it in *Religious Studies Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2.
 - * Circulation of AGRL Newsletter to Mailing list.

'Trouble-shooting' included:

- * Correspondence with Melbourne AGE, *Cosmopolitan*, *New Idea*, *Women's Day*, *Women's Weekly* and Australian Press Council over unfair typification of certain minority religious groups.
- * Action to bring about removal from the Yellow Pages of an offensive

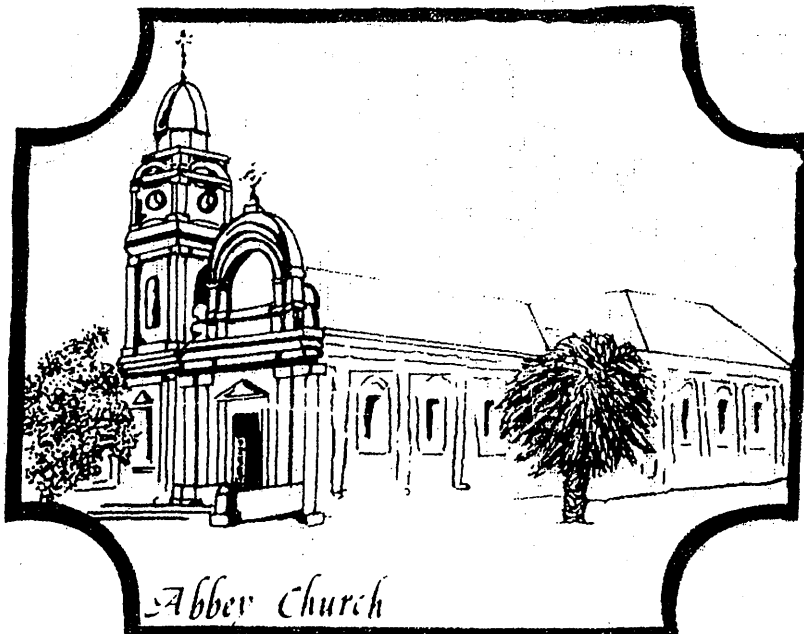
advertisement for a firm of private investigators.

- * Correspondence with Adelaide ADVERTISER and the Uniting Church in South Australia, over restrictions on ISKCON activities in Adelaide; also with Soviet officials over treatment of ISKCON in the USSR.

For further information about the Action Group on Religious Liberty contact the Secretary:

Judy Tampion
PO Box 549D
GPO Melbourne 3001

*Excerpts from The AGRL Review
Autumn 1989 Newsletter of the
Action Group for Religious Liberty.*



Announcing the Australasian Religion Index

Despite the fact that there are more than 200 theological and religious serials published in Australia and New Zealand, there is at present no comprehensive indexing service devoted specifically to this literature. Furthermore, indexing and abstracting services of a more general nature, whether Australian or foreign, provide inadequate treatment of this Australasian output. To fill this gap the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association (ANZTLA) and the Centre for Information Studies (Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, New South Wales) have joined forces to begin producing the Australasian Religion Index (ARI).

ARI is a comprehensive author, subject and scriptural passage index to a selected list of religious and theological serials published in Australia and New Zealand and representing all religious traditions. It also provides selective indexing of certain other serials published in these countries which occasionally include articles of theological or religious interest. The number of indexed serials is currently set at sixty, but this will increase as additional titles are suggested and approved for inclusion. ARI indexes articles, scholarly notes and book reviews in religious studies, theology and related fields in the humanities and social sciences which are pertinent to research or

which reflect social or pastoral interests of clergy and others concerned with religion. Accordingly, intended users of ARI are those engaged in theological or religious study at all levels, clergy and other religious leaders, and the general reader interested in religious issues in Australia or New Zealand.

Beginning in June 1989, ARI is to be published twice yearly in June and December, the latter being an annual cumulation. It is compiled by professional librarians and indexers in Australia and New Zealand using descriptors from the *Religion Indexes Thesaurus* by arrangement with the American Theological Library Association, and other authority files as required.

The Editorial Management Committee of ARI, convened by Dr Lawrence McIntosh of the Joint Theological Library at Ormond College in Melbourne, would welcome subscriptions from libraries and individuals at an annual rate of A\$50.00. Subscriptions should be made payable to the Centre for Information Studies and sent to Mr S.J. Henn, Centre for Information Studies, Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, PO Box 588, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650, Australia. Further information on the project may be obtained from the Coordinating Editor, Fr G.E. Gorman at the above address.

Announcing the
FOURTEENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**THE AUSTRALIAN
ASSOCIATION FOR THE
STUDY OF RELIGIONS**

**Wednesday September 27
to Saturday September 30, 1989
at
St Thomas More College
University of Western Australia**

(In conjunction with the 12th Joint Annual Conferences of—
The Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools and;
The Australian and New Zealand Society for Theological Studies;
AND
The Australian Anthropological Society National Conference)

Australian Publications in Religion/s 1988

The listing which follows is not complete. REVIEW readers are asked to contact the Editor for guidelines on entries for a supplementary list to be published in the August or November issue. To be included in 1989 issues of the ARS REVIEW, works must be in print between January 1, 1988 and April 30, 1989.

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Trompf, G.W. 'Melanesian Religion in all its Aspects'. *Catalyst*. Vol 18, Issue 2, 1988. 155-162.

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Australian Religion - 1 Aboriginal Religion/s

Gell, John Philip. 'The Vocabulary of the Adelaide Tribe' (As published in the *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics*, v.1, 1842, p.109-124). *Journal (Anthropological Society of South Australia)*, v.25 (ie v.26), No. 5, Jul 1988: 3-15.

Hansen, Don. 'Digging for Australia's Religious Roots'. *Illus., (Part col.) Bibl., Signs*, May 1988: 2-5.

Harris, John. *Christianity and Aboriginal Australia* (Series of Parts) Part 4: Justice and injustice at the beginning of the 20th Century. *ibid., Series (Zadok Centre)*, No. S38 1988: (2)-12.

Jackson, Hugh. 'White Man got no Dreaming' (Religious feeling in Australian History). *Bibl., Journal of Religious History*, v.15, No. 1, Jun 1988: 1-11.

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Australian Religion – 2

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D'Arcy, Eric. 'Religious Belief in Australia' (Roman Secretariat for Non-Believers: Bishop D'Arcy's address to Plenary Assembly). (1988). *Australasian Catholic Record*, v.65, No. 4, Oct 1988: 387-395.

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Kaye, B.N. 'Manning Clark's Interpretation of Religion in Australia'. *Australian and New Zealand Religious History 1788 - 1988*. (Ed. Robert Withycombe) Canberra. ANZSTS. 1988. 93-112.

Landy, Lukman. 'Islam comes to Australia before the Union Jack'. Illus., Bibl., *Australian Minaret*, v.20, No. 3, Mar 1988: 31-34.

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- O'Farrell, Patrick. 'The Cultural Ambivalence of Australian Religion'. *Australian Cultural History*. (Ed SL Goldberg and F.B. Smith) Cambridge University Press, 1989.
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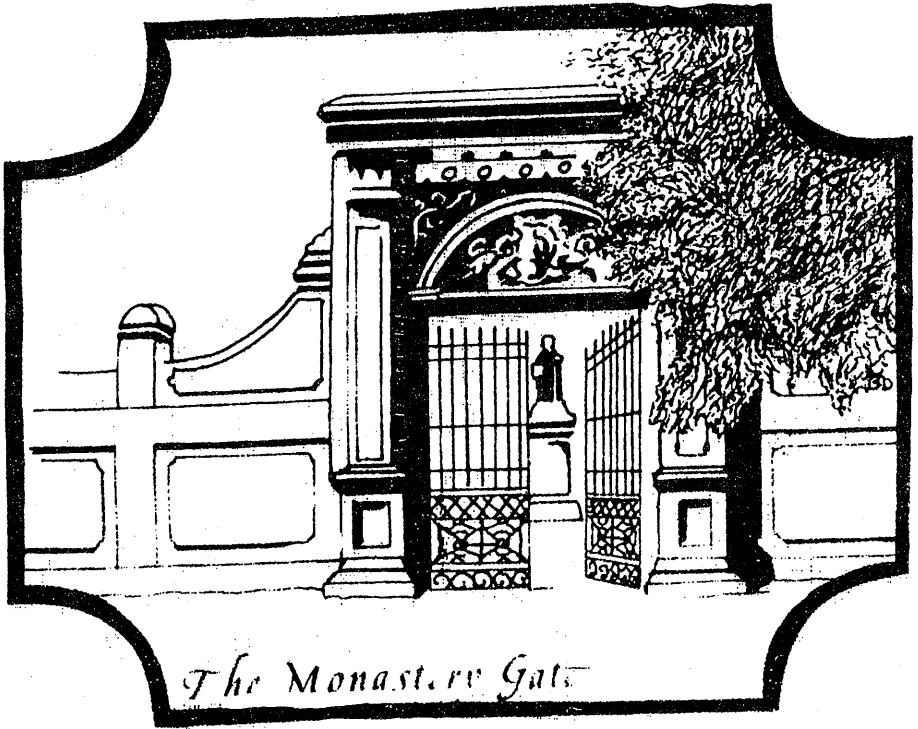
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