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*6 On a Panegyric Note: Studies in Honour of
Garry W Trompf*
Edited by Victoria Barker and Frances Di Lauro

Sydney Studies in Religion 6

On a Panegyric Note

Studies in Honour of Garry W Trompf

Edited by Victoria Barker and Frances Di Lauro

With an introduction by Carole M Cusack



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On a Panegyric Note: Studies in Honour of Garry W Trompf

Victoria Barker and Frances Di Lauro eds

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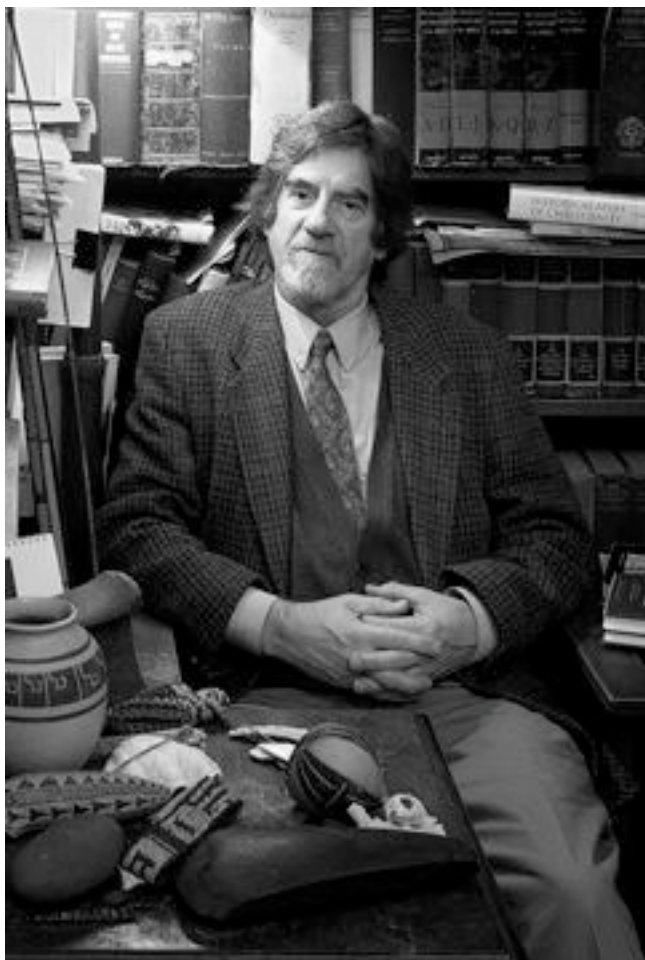
Foreword

Frances Di Lauro

This book was conceived at the retirement of Professor Garry W Trompf from the position of Professor of the History of Ideas in the Department of Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney. Professor Trompf has since been appointed Emeritus Professor in the History of Ideas at the University. He continues to act as an inspiration and a mentor to those of us who have become familiar with his signature brand of intellectual ‘spell’. Emeritus Professor Trompf inspires through his indefatigable pursuit of knowledge. The motivation with which he approaches his research and his excitement at the possibility of finding new ways of synthesising material is exemplary. Internationally respected as an authority on methodological approaches to the study of religion, he is particularly recognised for his development of the theory of retributive logic study of the intricacies of the philosophy of historical recurrence. He embraces with equal enthusiasm a huge variety of research projects, both those that are of perennial concern and those that are newly conceived. His approach is typified by great magnanimity and perpetual calm, and his guidance is imparted with an equal measure of generosity and humility. It is under this ‘spell’ that many of the contributors to this book have undertaken their research.

Many of the papers in this volume report the results of original research conducted under the direct guidance and supervision of Professor Trompf, while the rest are submissions by fellow academics, some of whom are also former students. All papers contribute to the project which Professor Trompf has made his life’s work: to increase the general stock of knowledge of human culture, paying particular attention to the central role of religious belief and religious practice as a well-spring of such culture. There are many others who have expressed a wish to contribute to this volume, but have been unable to do so due to their own time constraints and to the constraints of space of this volume. They are acknowledged in the *Tabula Gratulatoria* that follows.

On a Panegyrical Note



Garry W Trompf

Garry W Trompf: An Appreciation

Carole M Cusack

It is impossible to imagine what Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney would have been like without the contribution of Garry Trompf (b 27 November 1940, in Melbourne). The department (then called Religious Studies) was only two years old, having been established in 1976 by the University Senate,¹ when he took up a lectureship in 1978. Garry had been working in Papua New Guinea since 1972, and it was not until 1986 that he committed completely to Sydney, and gave up the Chair of History at the University of Papua New Guinea. That year he was promoted to Associate Professor² and made Head of Department, a position he held until 1991. I met Garry in the first year of my Bachelor of Arts, when he gave a spectacularly theatrical guest lecture on retribution in the Old Testament for Biblical Studies I, and I came to know him better when I transferred to Religious Studies in 1982 and began attending his classes.

The early years of Religion at Sydney were a delicate balance of Garry's Dionysian enthusiasms and Professor Eric J Sharpe's (1937-2000) more Apollonian musings. However, both shared an insatiable curiosity, and were genuine polymaths, able to pick up a language while on sick leave or develop a familiarity with the scholarly literature in a new field with breathtaking speed. Garry's interests in religion, history, politics and philosophy were apparent throughout his tertiary education. He gained a First Class Bachelor of Arts in History at the University of Melbourne in 1962 (thesis: 'The Political Standpoint of the Historical Jesus'); a Master of Arts at Monash University in 1967 (thesis: 'The Origins of the Comparative Study of Religion'); and a PhD at the Australian National University in 1975 (thesis: 'The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought').

¹ W F Connell, G E Sherington, B H Fletcher, C Turney and U Bygott, *Australia's First: A History of the University of Sydney*, Volume 2 1940-1990 (Sydney, 1995) 171.

² *Ibid*, 172.

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Some of these titles are familiar, because they later became the basis of two of Garry W Trompf's best-known books, *The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought* (University of California Press, 1979) and *In Search of Origins* (Oriental University Press, 1990).³ Garry has also published many other highly regarded books, including *Melanesian Religion* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), *Payback: The Logic of Retribution in Melanesian Religions* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), and *Early Christian Historiography: Narratives of Retributive Justice* (Cassell, 2000). Garry's career achievements also include the Editorship of *Gnostica*, the Assistant Editorship of *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, the Editorship of *Sydney Studies in Religion* and the Chairmanship of the Association for the *Journal of Religious History*. In addition to writing, Garry is a passionate collector of books and this was highlighted by photographers Lisa Giles and Murray Fredericks in their *University of Sydney Gazette* feature, 'Braincells' in October 2004. This illustrated piece showcased five remarkable offices of University of Sydney staff. Garry was photographed in his floor-to-ceiling book-lined room Woolley N413, admitting that he felt 'a close affinity for French savant Pierre-Daniel Huet, who died when his library collapsed on top of him in 1721'.⁴

Garry retired on 31 December 2005 and was appointed Emeritus Professor in the History of Ideas by the Senate of the University of Sydney on Monday 18 June 2007. This volume in his honour was conceived during the planning stages of the Farewell Symposium and Dinner (organised by Carole Cusack) to celebrate the career of Garry W Trompf, which took place on 25 November 2005. This event was a great success, attracting approximately one hundred attendees, with the following papers being presented by close friends and colleagues:

Ian Weeks (Philosophy and Religion, Deakin University), 'Out of the Crooked Timber of Humanity...'; Stuart Rees (Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney), 'A Passion for Peace'; Donald

³ Suzannah Pearce (ed), *Who's Who in Australia* (Melbourne, 2007) 2045.

⁴ Lisa Giles and Murray Fredericks, 'Braincells,' *University of Sydney Gazette*, October 2004, 5-7.

Carole M Cusack

Denoon (Pacific and Asian History, Australian National University), ‘Academia and Politics at the University of Papua New Guinea in the 1970s’; Vrasidas Karalis (Modern Greek, University of Sydney), ‘Is Christianity an Unexpected Consequence of Paul’s Bilingualism?’; and Paul Crittenden (Philosophy, University of Sydney), ‘The Theme of Conversion in Sartre’s *Ethics*’. The respondents were Christopher Hartney, Frances Di Lauro and Carole Cusack (all University of Sydney), David Dockrill (University of Newcastle) and Ian Weeks (Deakin University). After the paper presentations there was a drinks reception with personal tributes to Garry and dinner for fifty guests at Osteria dei Poeti, at 73 Glebe Point Road, Glebe.

Retirement has not slowed Garry W Trompf at all. He is still a crucial part of the department of Studies in Religion, albeit now domiciled in the much smaller room N421. His research postgraduates queue along the corridor to consult with him regarding their projects and he is invaluable as a thesis examiner. In August 2007 he delivered the opening address at the Oxford Round Table’s meeting (theme, ‘Lessons of History (from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), with particular reference to the Nature of Empire in History and International, Politics’) on the origins of modern liberalism. The *University News* published an article and photograph in August 2007, entitled ‘Trompf Triumphs: still full of good ideas,’ which congratulated him on the publication of *Religions of Melanesia: A Bibliographic Survey* (Praeger, 2007).⁵ He was assisted in the production of this comprehensive work by Studies in Religion’s distinguished Honorary Associate, Dr Friedegard Tomasetti. We hope that this *Festschrift*, offered to Garry in a spirit of love and admiration, is graciously received. Our sincere thanks are due to Professor Geraldine Barnes, the Head of the School of Letters, Art and Media, who made \$2000 available for the production of this book, and to the Macartney Hill Bequest in Studies in Religion, which supplied the balance of the funds.

⁵ Lauren Smelcher, ‘Trompf Triumphs: still full of good ideas,’ *University News*, 10 August 2007, 7.

Tabula Gratulatoria

Edward F Crangle

Jay Johnston

Steve Bevis

Andrew Wearing

Glenys Eddy

Ian Weeks

Vrasidas Karalis

Michelle White

Alanna Nobbs

Katharine Buljan

Hazel Burgess

Paris Mawby

Graeme Watts

Roland Clark

Matthew Charet

Colette Rayment

Valentin Vasilev

Peter Salomonsen

Eve De Morgan

David Dockrill

Birgitta Sharpe

John Gascoigne

Andrew McGarrity

Octavian Sarbatoare

Dan Bray

Rabbi Brikha Nasoraia

Carrol Besseling

Iain Gardner

Friedegard Tomasetti

Milad Milani

Julian Droogan

Paul Crittenden

Donald Denoon

Stuart Rees

Christine Winter

Patricia Ricketts

Leon Wild

Vanessa Crosby

Graeme Smith

Jono Lusthaus

David Kim

David Pecotic

Lee Miena Skye

Mark Levon Byrne

Angus Brook

Shannon Hughes

Peter Oldmeadow

Tricia Blombery

Mehrvavar Sourosh Kaboli

Omid Tofighian

Ryan Pickard

Donald Barrett

Raquel Hasofer