Summaries of Doctoral Dissertations

Mary Margaret Anderson [Ph.D.]

Thou Art: On Representation of the Word and the Incarnation of the Human Subject; A Christological Aesthetics

Thou Art is an interdisciplinary and christological aesthetics that theorizes an integral relation among Christ, representation, and the formation of human subjectivity. Through a critical poetics it addresses the space of difference between a theological discourse on the creation of human being in the image of God—understood as creation in Christ, Word (*logos*) incarnate—and a philosophical discourse on the constitution of human subjectivity.

Structured as an inquiry into "the subject of Christ"—a phrase that represents the priority and liminality of the subject—Thou Art thinks the emergence of subjectivity through the languages of image (Gen 1:26–27) and Word (John 1:1). It reads the beginning represented in Genesis 1:3, "Let there be light," and the first verse of the Gospel of John, "In the beginning (*arche*) was the Word (*logos*)," as representing a constitutive event of differentiation intrinsic to the formation of the human as subject. Subjectivity, it claims, begins as an originary locution, a founding event of relation and difference that reiterates the genetic cleft of creation, the archaic division of light from darkness, female from male.

Part I begins with an exposition on *logos* in four Greek philosophies, creating a select genealogy for the beginning inscribed in John 1:1. It then reads a fourth-century definition of an image (*eikon*) to develop a discourse on likeness (*homoiosis*), difference, and alterity in human terms. Thinking a priority and a relation constitutive for an ethical subjectivity wherein reason bears a heart, Part II represents the formation of subjectivity in Christ through three events of the Word (*logos*): beauty and its call (annunciation); eros, virginity, wound (conception); and hypostasis (nativity).

Reading dialogically and intertextually, Thou Art thinks the event of humanity as the emergence of an ethical subjectivity constituted in the Word (*logos*). Whereas Levinas characterizes subjectivity as "the objectivity of the light,"[1] this dissertation

[1] Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other* (trans. Richard A. Cohen; Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1997) 66.

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asserts more: subjectivity is the objectivity of love, an aesthetic and ethical priority that founds human being as a particular and essential relation—the subject of Christ. A person, THOU ART affirms, comes into existence by virtue of this relation.

Advisers: Ronald F. Thiemann and Elaine Scarry

Brian R. Doak [Ph.D.]

The Last of the Rephaim: Conquest and Cataclysm in the Heroic Ages of Ancient Israel

This dissertation explores the role of giants in the narrative and historiographic worlds of symbol, geography, and religion in ancient Israel. The Nephilim, Anaqim, Rephaim, Emim, Zamzumim/Zuzim, some Gibborim, and other individuals (e.g., Goliath) can all be classified as "giants"—not only with respect to their height and other physical properties, but also with respect to the negative moral qualities assigned to giants in antiquity. Previous interpreters have treated giants as merely a fantastical prop against which God's agents emerge victorious. I argue that giants are a theologically and historiographically generative group, through which we gain insight into central aspects of ancient Israel's symbolic world. All that is overgrown or physically monstrous represents a connection to the primeval chaos that stands as a barrier to creation and right rule. In this sense, giants represent chaos-fear, and their eradication is a form of chaos-maintenance by both human and divine forces.

Moreover, I demonstrate a series of affinities between the Bible's presentation of its giants and aspects of Greek epic tradition (e.g., the *Iliad*, *Catalogue*, *Works and Days*, *Cypria*, and the Gigantomachy/Titanomachy), as well as other Near Eastern traditions. Both giants and heroes were thought to represent a discrete "race" of beings, both were thought to be larger than contemporary people, and both lived and flourished, in the historical imaginations of later authors, throughout the Bronze Age and then largely ceased to exist at the end of this period. The size, strength, and physical excess of heroes and giants lead to cataclysmic judgment through the "flattening" effects of warfare and flood. After their death, these figures retain possibilities for an ongoing life in cult, and, in both Greek and Deuteronomistic historiography, the heroes and giants are positioned in a heroic age. This study demonstrates that the Bible's invocation of the giant constitutes a creative evaluation of Canaan's heroic past and stands as a forceful reminder of the place of Israel's deity among the axes of power that giants represent. The biblical engagement with the category of the giant signifies a profound meditation on the category of epic in the ancient world—even a decisive, ultimate rejection of epic and heroism as controlling tropes of the biblical worldview.

Adviser: Peter Machinist

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Eve Samara Feinstein [Ph.D.]

Sexual Pollution in the Hebrew Bible

This dissertation explores the use of pollution language in the Hebrew Bible to describe problematic sexual relationships and their effects. It argues that while the idea of sexual pollution shares a conceptual framework with other uses of pollution language in the Hebrew Bible, it is a concept unto itself with its own distinct characteristics.

The analysis of sexual pollution in this study is grounded in a general analysis of pollution concepts in the Hebrew Bible. This general analysis proceeds from an examination of specific terms used for purity and pollution as well as other terms in the same semantic domain. Observations on the phenomenon of contagion from the fields of anthropology and psychology augment the terminological analysis and yield the conclusion that pollution language reflects a perception of contagion that is a product of disgust. The use of pollution language in connection with sexuality is a subset of this general usage.

The remainder of the dissertation examines specific biblical texts that use pollution language to describe problematic sexual relationships. Most of these texts reveal a common conception of sexual pollution as a quality that affects women who have sex outside the context of marriage to one man. Leviticus 18 divorces this concept from its basis in sexual property and connects it to the idea of the holiness of all male Israelites. The book of Ezekiel adopts some aspects of Leviticus 18's conception of pollution but retains the convention of applying sexual pollution language to women and not to men. Ezra 9 develops Leviticus 18's concept of sexual pollution into a new idea that foreigners pollute the corporate body of Israel and thereby utilizes the concept to define the boundaries of the Israelite people.

Adviser: Peter Machinist

Aryay Bennett Finkelstein [Ph.D.]

Julian among Jews, Christians, and "Hellenes" in Antioch: Jewish Practice as a Guide to "Hellenes" and a Goad to Christians

Emperor Julian the Apostate ruled the Roman Empire between 361 and 363 C.E. in the midst of its Christianization. Born and raised a Christian, Julian turned to theurgic neoplatonism and converted to Mithraism. As emperor he set out on a contentious policy to turn the empire into a neoplatonic, ethnically ordered realm that his "Hellenes" would dominate.

Julian's project required that he create a "Hellenic" identity based on neoplatonic principles. He also had to counter significant Christian opposition to his program. Julian's rhetorical presentation of Jews played an important role in solving these issues and in the creation of his neoplatonic empire.

This dissertation analyzes Julian's rhetorical representation of Jews in his anti-Christian polemic *Contra Galileos* and in his epistles to his high priests, Arsacius

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and Theodorus. It demonstrates that Julian engaged in scriptural exegesis in order to define ideal Jewish practice. In doing so, Julian defined the boundaries of Jews, "Hellenes" and Christians, *ethne* which he placed on his imperial neoplatonic ethnic map.

Julian's portrayal of Jewish practice was complex. Jewish practice was both a model for "Hellenic" practice and an example of un-"Hellenic" practice. Julian employed a neoplatonic hermeneutic in order to model ideal "Hellenic" practice.

At the same time Julian appropriated Jewish and Christian Scriptures to demonstrate the efficacy of Jewish practice and prove Christian supersessionist claims false. As emperor he could combine interpretation with action to prove the truth of his claims and the superiority of his exegesis while delegitimizing Christian practices and interpretations using the voices of Christianity's own prophets and apostles.

In his effort to destroy Christianity, Julian commented on specific Jewish texts and practices that were hot-button issues in intra-Christian circles so as to persuade the Judaizers in Antioch to question Christian interpretations of Scripture and join with Jews in Jewish practice. In order to appeal to the Judaizers, who were familiar with Jews, Julian's descriptions of Jewish practice resembled Jewish practice in Antioch.

Adviser: Shaye J. D. Cohen

David C. Flatto [Ph.D.]

Between Royal Absolutism and an Independent Judiciary: The Evolution of Separation of Powers in Biblical, Second Temple, and Rabbinic Texts

Even as Jewish political sovereignty waned during Late Antiquity, Judaism experienced a profound flourishing in the legal sphere. Confronting a changing political landscape, while encountering distinctive Greco-Roman power structures, Jewish thinkers and exegetes responded by developing bold and novel juristic conceptions. While much scholarship has examined the loss of Jewish power, this study shifts the focus to address two crucial questions which have been ignored: how did Jews think about power and authority in the absence of power, and how did this inform the political and socioreligious ideologies they constructed? A close study of Second Temple and rabbinic texts demonstrates that Jews drew on their rich legal tradition to proclaim law and legal authority as a unique political alternative to traditional rule. My thesis offers a wide-ranging exploration of this crucial dimension of the Jewish legal imagination in its formative stages.

In particular, this study examines representations of legal authority in seminal Jewish texts from the Second Temple and rabbinic periods. Given the primacy of law within Judaism, Jewish sages, thinkers, interpreters, transmitters, and jurists from this era grappled with the ideal nature of the administration of justice and produced an impressive array of juristic schemes. Nevertheless, certain essential overriding themes pervade this diverse body of material.

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Whereas ancient jurisprudence presumed that law emanates from the seat of power, with an absolutist king or emperor commanding authority in all realms, including the legal domain, a distinctive strand within Jewish jurisprudence advanced a different paradigm. Although ancient Near Eastern and much biblical literature projected the king as the supreme judge, Deuteronomy 17 (the primary normative text about kingship and legal authority) dramatically revised this approach by establishing independent judicial officials operating beyond the reach of the king. This seminal, if anomalous, text assumed heightened significance in post-biblical literature.

Elaborating on Deuteronomy 17, post-biblical commentators presented a variety of models of judicial administration. Philo attempted to harmonize Deuteronomy with the dominant biblical attitude toward kingship by restoring the monarch's judicial role. Various Qumran texts sought to circumscribe the sovereign, and largely located justice outside of the royal domain in priestly quorums. Moreover, certain writings built upon the Deuteronomic foundation in striking ways. A leading voice within Tannaitic literature extended and institutionalized the role of the judiciary and sought to purge the legal edifice from additional influences of power (beyond royal intervention). At the same time, Tannaitic writings elevated the distinct political responsibilities of a sovereign. A very different voice in early Jewish jurisprudence, especially manifest in Josephus's writings, aimed to eliminate political authority altogether and reconstituted the ideal polity upon the foundation of the rule of law. Abandoning the regnant notion of imperial law, such writings advanced robust visions of law's empire.

Proclaiming the supremacy of law and widening its scope, post-biblical writers insisted that a legal system must operate independently of powerful political rulers. Without a land, sovereign authority, or coercive powers, and with restricted legal jurisdiction, leading Late Antique Jewish writers promoted legal constructs that diverged from the surrounding cultures, and in certain remarkable ways prefigured—or even eclipsed—ideas that only entered into Western political and legal tradition centuries later. This dissertation demonstrates that Jewish legalism was not an inevitable, or even a reluctant, response to disempowerment, but rather a deeply-rooted ideology revolving around the centrality of law and its profound potential to structure a society and a polity.

Adviser: Shaye J. D. Cohen

Philip Francis [Th.D.]

We Dive and Reappear in New Places: Aesthetic Experience and Fundamentalism Undone

The stories of these men and women come to me firsthand, in the thousands of pages of memoirs they have written for me and in the hundreds of hours of conversation we have shared. I discovered their names in the alumni lists of the Bob Jones University School of Fine Art, a fundamentalist Christian college in Greenville, South Carolina,

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and of The Oregon Extension, a semester study-away program in the Southern Oregon Cascades that draws its students primarily from conservative Evangelical Christian colleges and universities. I immersed myself in their stories, the twists and turns of their journeys away from religious conservatism and fundamentalism, and I did so in part because I found it fascinating that aesthetic experience had played such a vital role in the relinquishment of their conservative and fundamentalist beliefs and practices. In many cases, aesthetic experience both occasioned and was the means for negotiating the complex processes entailed in self-transformations of this sort. I undertook this study because I wanted to understand what it is like to undergo such a totalizing revision of one's most deeply cherished beliefs and practices and because I found the stories of these men and women to be a unique site for reflecting on the role that beauty and the arts may play in the sea-change of one's religious identity. Throughout these pages, the reader is asked to think and feel, as much as possible, with the memoirists whose stories fill this study, and to consider what it is like to have your guiding stars go dark, be shuffled, and then rearranged in strange new constellations.

Advisers: Amy Hollywood and Michael D. Jackson

George J. González [Th.D.]

The Spiritual Disciplines of Contemporary Business Management at Seeing Things Whole: The Lived Metaphors of Shape-Shifting Capital

This dissertation applies a phenomenological and existential ethnographic method to encounter and engage the formal theology and ritual practices of one group of workplace reformers that is comprised of business leaders, organizational managers, lay Christian leaders, and management academics. The group, Seeing Things Whole, has deep historical roots in both organizational management and American Christianity. Seeing Things Whole runs workshops for managers, has published a "theology of institutions," and engages in ritualized group meditations on sacred, humanistic, and scientific texts and images in hopes of producing and generating spiritually inspired solutions to concrete organizational quandaries. In its work and in its theoretical reflections, the group shares in larger national and international trends to formally introduce "spirituality" into workplace practices and organizational theory.

Utilizing a mixed approach that includes participant-observation, formal interviews, and rhetorical analysis, I carefully consider the deployment of metaphors as a way to gain some analytical purchase over broader epistemic shifts in the public construction of the "spiritual," "organic," and "holistic" capital of today's "knowledge" and "service" economy. As themes, "spirituality," "holism," and "organicism" are championed by the self-styled spiritual reformers of "new capitalism" and contrasted with the "mechanistic" capital of twentieth-century Fordist industrialism that they understand to be a pervasive condition of American capitalism that must be overcome. While flagging certain metaphorical combinations as evidence of

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shared, publicly accessible "patterns of intersubjective experience," I foreground the idiosyncratic and irreducible dimensions of "workplace spirituality" by narrating the highly personalized ways in which shared metaphors are actually used in practice and in everyday speech by individuals. I do so in an effort to track the personal stories that necessarily fuel any large-scale change in the public narratives of capitalism and its metaphorical shape and form. I resist the extreme view that "spirituality" is either a moral elixir or an oppressive opiate and stress the inherent ambiguities of the discourse. Finally, I consider the continued relevance of Marxian critical theories for the study of contemporary capitalist spirituality.

Adviser: Michael D. Jackson

Shai A. Held [Ph.D.]

Reciprocity and Responsiveness: Self-Transcendence and the Dynamics of Covenant in the Theology and Spirituality of Abraham Joshua Heschel

This dissertation seeks to fill a major lacuna in the scholarship on Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972), one of the most influential Jewish thinkers in modern times. Although academic study of Heschel's work has burgeoned in recent years, nearly four decades after his death we still do not have a book-length investigation of his work that is at once sympathetic and critical. This study explores the central themes in Heschel's thought, clarifying his approach to key questions while also exposing the weaknesses and evasions therein.

Heschel's rich and evocative style has led many to mine his vast oeuvre for spiritual insights and devotional aphorisms, but it has, unfortunately, also caused many to miss the overarching unity in his thought. This dissertation argues that the animating theme of Heschel's work, altogether unnoticed by many scholars and underappreciated by virtually all, is his concern with self-transcendence. The primary meaning of self-transcendence, for Heschel, is the overcoming of egocentricity and the development of concern for the well-being of others.

Heschel's theology pivots around the idea of a God who is absolutely selfless and completely concerned for the well-being of others, especially the oppressed and downtrodden; his attendant spirituality focuses on the human attempt to achieve moments of self-transcendence, to cultivate what he calls "transitive" concern in addition to "reflexive." According to Heschel, the covenants between God and Israel, and between God and humanity more generally, are essentially about a self-transcendent God beckoning human beings to self-transcendence.

The dissertation uncovers and probes another crucial dimension of self-transcendence in Heschel's theology and spirituality. In Heschel's view, God restrains his own power in order to make space for human freedom. But human freedom all too easily runs amok, with horrific and murderous consequences. Like God, then, human beings must learn to restrain their immense power so as to make room for others. Thus, according to Heschel, the covenants between God and Israel,

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and between God and humanity, are also about the self-limiting God beckoning human beings to limit themselves.

The discussions in this study necessarily involve the investigation of a variety of topics in which Heschel's characteristic concern for self-transcendence in a covenantal framework manifests itself, often in subtle ways, such as his phenomenology of wonder, awe, and indebtedness; his insistence on the reality of pre-conceptual experiences of God; his approach to theological method and to religious anthropology; his attempt to take historical criticism seriously while continuing to affirm that the Bible is divine revelation; his understanding of the pathos of God, and his polemic against the hellenization of Jewish theology; his complex and multifaceted theological response to the Shoah; and his conception of prayer as an act of human self-transcendence in order to make space for God in the world.

Adviser: Jon D. Levenson

Mari Johanna Jyväsjärvi [Ph.D.]

Fragile Virtue: Interpreting Women's Monastic Practice in Early Medieval India

This dissertation examines the representations of nuns in Indian Buddhist and Jain monastic commentaries from the sixth and seventh centuries C.E. Although these texts comment extensively on the rules for nuns in the two traditions, they have been hitherto virtually overlooked by scholars investigating the history of Buddhist and Jain nuns. In an effort to bring to light some of this rich material, this work analyzes the rhetorical construction of women's monastic virtue in the commentaries of two roughly contemporaneous monastic scholars: the Mūlasarvāstivādin Buddhist Guṇaprabha and the Śvetāmbara Jain Saṅghadāsa. I suggest that, in defining the way of life of a nun, these commentators were participating in wider conversations regarding the roles and practices appropriate for women and the importance of demonstrable female virtue for the prestige of a community. Other texts from around this period—such as debates over women's eligibility for ascetic life in the Brahminical Dharmaśāstras, and portrayals of female ascetics as morally questionable in a range of genres—indicate that female renunciation was a contested issue across religious boundaries in early medieval South Asia.

Through a close analysis of the Buddhist and Jain monastic commentaries' sections on nuns, this dissertation argues that their authors were aware of, and responding to, these contestations, particularly to the negative associations of renunciant women with immorality. Such perceptions presented a problem for male monastic authorities, for they had implications for the reputation and prestige of the monastic communities at large and, one might argue, for the public image, and self-image, of a celibate male monastic who is associated with a group of nuns. The commentators' prescriptions for nuns seek to create a visible distinction between them and the stereotypical loose and worldly renunciant woman. They

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prescribe practices and gestures that mark the nuns in *their* communities as modest and disciplined, while deflecting charges of immorality onto female renunciants of other groups. On the other hand, the commentators must also demonstrate that their nuns are not independent or uncontrolled, but supervised and guarded by monks. The resulting, mutually contradictory portrayals of the nuns in these texts—as superior in virtue to the female members of other communities, yet weak, incapable, and morally corruptible in comparison with monks—reflect the contradictory position in which the monks find themselves, as celibate men institutionally in charge of women.

Adviser: Anne E. Monius

Marcie E. Lenk [Ph.D.]

The "Apostolic Constitutions": Judaism and Anti-Judaism in the Construction of Christianity

Because of its anti-Jewish rhetoric, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, composed in fourth-century Antioch, has been classified by some scholars as part of the "Adversus Ioudaeos" literature ubiquitous among early Christian writings. At the same time, for over a century scholars of Jewish and Christian liturgy have commented on the "Jewish" prayers in Books 7–8. Adding to the confusion are the facts that the compiler of the *Apostolic Constitutions* has a positive view of the law, including Sabbath rest, and uses Scripture, particularly Hebrew Scripture, to authorize his model of the church.

This dissertation examines the ways in which the compiler uses Scripture, writes about the law, and incorporates "Jewish" prayers into the Christian liturgy of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. What kind of Christian accepts Jewish prayers (albeit in Christianized form) and promotes observance of the Sabbath? How does this fit with his anti-Jewish statements, as well as his distinctions between natural law and *deuterosis* (second law)?

In this study of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, I have found that there were looser boundaries between Jews and Christians than have been presumed by scholars who seek to classify early Christian literature as orthodox, heretical, or Jewish-Christian. This close reading of the Judaism and Jewish practices in the *Apostolic Constitutions* has shown that the compiler uses Judaism as a way to negotiate what he believes a Christian should be and do, at the same time that he expresses his separation from Judaism with his anti-Jewish rhetoric. The compiler of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, like many early Christian writers, was negotiating the problem of Christian identity.

Adviser: Karen L. King

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F. Dominic Longo [Ph.D.]

Spiritual Grammar: A Comparative Theological Study of Jean Gerson's "Donatus moralizatus" and ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī's "Naḥw al-qulūb"

This dissertation is a comparative theological study of a Christian text and an Islamic text, which, though seemingly unrelated, share a commonality that allows one text to illuminate the other. The first is *Donatus moralizatus* by Catholic theologian Jean Gerson (d. 1429), and the second is *Naḥw al-qulūb* by Sufi master ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī (d. 1072). My study reveals that both texts represent a hybrid genre, an intermixture of the grammatical and religious, for which I have coined the name "spiritual grammar."

A central finding of my inquiry is that the mystery of grammar, the structure of that reality within us and within which we abide, provides the two masters with a way of explaining spiritual reality to their pupils and a discipline for training wayfarers in how to conduct themselves properly in the language of reality. An equally important finding is that, while these texts are just two vivid examples of "spiritual grammar," this hybrid genre is a pervasive phenomenon across historical periods and religious traditions. The defining marks of "spiritual grammar" are interconnected metaphorical schemes relating language to spiritual reality, on the one hand, and relating grammar to the structure of that reality, on the other. This is of enduring interest because it so powerfully expresses the interconnections among the linguistic and spiritual dimensions of the human condition. Put in Ricœur's terms, this genre epitomizes the hermeneutic relationship between textuality and subjectivity—a relationship that holds for all texts.

A further contribution of my study can be seen in the interdisplinary methodology matching the hybridity of the authors' own compositions. From the field of theology, I draw on the pioneering approach of Francis X. Clooney, who engages in a form of back-and-forth comparison that is "vulnerable" to the truth claims of texts from one's own and other religious traditions. From contemporary genre theory, I draw on Jauss, Derrida, and others who challenge outmoded taxonomic models of genre.

My methodology is also historically grounded through a comparison of the respective educational and sociolinguistic contexts of the two "spiritual grammars." I thus elaborate the most detailed comparison to date of the Latin Christian and medieval Arabic Islamic sociolinguistic contexts.

Adviser: Wolfhart P. Heinrichs

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Piotr Józef Małysz [Th.D.]

"Elementally Interrupted": Divine and Human Freedom in the Thought of Eberhard Jüngel

The principal goal of this study is to engage Eberhard Jüngel's views on freedom and, with the help of this engagement, to think through the intimate connection between the doctrine of God and anthropology. This larger goal contains within it two objectives. The first is investigative and has to do with analyzing the divine-human togetherness in Jüngel's theology through the lens of freedom. The second, constructive objective is to ask critically whether Jüngel's doctrine of God is able to support the anthropological effects that Jüngel ascribes to God's being, and, in light of this study's findings, to put forth a way of intertwining even more closely and seamlessly trinitarian and anthropological conceptualities.

The argument unfolds in four major moves. First, I examine Jüngel's critique of the modern notion of freedom as rooted in the self-securing and self-possession of an allegedly autonomous subject. Second, I analyze Jüngel's account of divine freedom. This analysis shows Jüngel's construal to be ultimately dissonant in its two central emphases: the inalienable spontaneity and creativity of God's being, on the one hand, and the intersubjective character of God's self-determination as a trinitarian event of love, on the other. God's subjectivity is shown to border, as a result, on predominant self-relatedness, which Jüngel rejects as unfreedom in anthropological terms. In its third move, the argument then turns to the being of the person as elementally interrupted and so not only freed but brought into correspondence with God. My focus here is chiefly on the person's two acts of existence. Finally, I develop the ontological implications of the two existential acts of the free person. With their help I offer a way of resolving the ambiguity present in Jüngel's account of God's self-determination. This study's central, constructive claim is that in God also there are two acts of existence grounded in two distinct manners of trinitarian relationality. Next to what I call the logic of love, there is the logic of freedom. Without sacrificing God's originary creativity, it enables God to enter into a successful togetherness with the humanity God liberates and thus to determine God's self in an intersubjective manner as an event of love.

Adviser: Ronald F. Thiemann

Zachary A. Matus [Ph.D.]

Heaven in a Bottle: Franciscan Apocalypticism and the Elixir, 1250–1360

This dissertation examines the Franciscan engagement with medicinal alchemy between 1250 and 1360. It investigates the works of three generations of Franciscan alchemical and apocalyptic authors: Roger Bacon (ca. 1214/20–ca. 1292), Vitalis of Furno (1260–1327), and John of Rupescissa (ca. 1300–ca. 1366). Working across the disciplines of religious studies and the history of science,

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this study demonstrate that attention to the material process of alchemy inflected Christian conceptions of apocalypse, resurrection, and prophecy.

The three principals of this study authored apocalyptic or prophetic texts that acclaimed the virtues of cure-alls variously known as the elixir of life, theriac, or quintessence. With ingredients ranging from blood to viper flesh to distilled alcohol, these concoctions possessed powers far greater than the sum of their parts. Roger Bacon and John of Rupescissa made explicit reference to their elixirs as necessary to combat the antichrist and sustain the Christian church during the imminent apocalypse. This dissertation focuses on these Franciscans not only because of the order's somewhat turbulent relationship with radical, literal apocalypticism during the period covered by this study, but also because they offer detailed discussions of the elixir during the era under consideration.

Radical apocalypticism and religious alchemy share a defining characteristic: a concern with manifesting spiritual truth on the physical plane. In the case of the apocalypse, evil is not abstract, but is personified by the antichrist and his followers. The New Jerusalem is not merely a vehicle for spiritual reflection; it is a promise to the elect. Therefore, those who will be resurrected in body and inhabit the New Jerusalem will manifest heaven writ on earth. Alchemy represents an even more present possibility of literally distilling a heavenly reality. The alchemist's theoretical ability to create a post-resurrection body or to use the substance of heaven to cure all manner of ailments, drive away demons, and bestow courage on the enemies of the antichrist not only effaces the separation of heaven and earth, it offers unmediated access to miraculous power.

As much as Bacon and Rupescissa enmeshed alchemy and apocalyptic expectation—and, more generally, Christian cosmology—neither fully theorized the ramifications of bottling heaven. A means of harnessing heavenly power that required no priestly training, no ordination, and no special sanctity presented a challenge to Christian orthodoxy that they failed to resolve. However much Rupescissa believed the creation of the elixir to be miraculous, his enjoinments to secrecy suggest that the unworthy too may well have had the power to distill it. Bacon's elixir would seem to have been safeguarded from the unworthy by the fact that, properly made, the elixir drew one naturally to Christianity. Yet he too stopped short of revealing all of his alchemical knowledge. More research on the relationship of alchemy to ritual miracles, such as the sacraments, as well as to other rituals like learned sorcery is necessary, however, before these issues can be fully addressed.

Adviser: Kevin J. Madigan

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Shady Nasser [Ph.D.]

The Transmission of Variant Readings of the Qur'ān: The Problem of Tawātur *and the Emergence of* Shawādhdh

This dissertation studies the transmission of the variant readings of the Qur'ān, the canonization of the system readings, and the emergence of the non-canonical (*shawādhdh*) readings. I argue that Ibn Mujāhid and the Muslim scholars before him had different criteria from the later Muslim scholars for accepting a Qur'ānic reading as canonical, and that Ibn Mujāhid treated the variant readings of the Qur'ān as legal rulings (*aḥkām*). *Uṣūlī*s (legislators of Islamic law) and *ḥadīth* theoreticians were the ones mainly responsible for moving the discipline of *qirā'āt* (variant readings) from the realm of *fiqh* (law) into the realm of *ḥadīth*, thus replacing the important criterion of consensus (*ijmā'*) by sound transmission (*isnād*). After studying the theories of *tawātur* (concurrent transmission) in detail, I show that the transmission of the system Readings of the Qur'ān failed to meet the conditions of *tawātur* set by the *uṣūlī*s, and thus I emphasize the importance of distinguishing between the transmission of the consonantal text of the Qur'ān and the ways in which this text could be read.

After studying the chains of transmission of the seven canonical Readings, I highlight the role played by the immediate transmitters of the eponym Readers to determine the identity of the two canonical *rāwīs* (transmitters) of each system Reading and the generation from which those *rāwīs* were selected. I also show through detailed study of the *isnād*s how the *shawādhdh* readings started to emerge through single strands of transmission that were not followed up and corroborated. Diverging from the *ijmā'* caused many of these readings that were originally attributed to the eponym Readers to be deemed irregular, and they gradually entered into the *shawādhdh* literature. Finally, I create a database of variants from the Qur'ān and early Arabic poetry and compare these variants to each other after categorizing them. These concordances show similar aspects in the transmission of poetry and the Qur'ānic readings, where the different proportions of each category of variants in both literatures reflect the restrictions of the consonantal outline of the Qur'ān and the poetry meters.

Adviser: Wolfhart P. Heinrichs

James F. Osborne [Ph.D.]

Spatial Analysis and Political Authority in the Iron Age Kingdom of Patina, Turkey

The ancient Near Eastern culture conventionally known as Syro-Hittite flourished in what is today northern Syria and southeastern Turkey during the late second and early first millennia B.C.E. A collection of a dozen or so Syro-Hittite city-states were prominent features of the region's political world during the Iron Age II period, roughly 900–725 B.C.E. This dissertation seeks to understand how

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these city-states operated politically by examining in detail the city-state of Patina as a case study.

The study of the Syro-Hittite polities has traditionally been concerned with understanding their cultural evolution—how and why they emerged out of the rubble of the preceding Hittite Empire, what they looked like in their earliest manifestations, and the causes that led to their eventual demise at the hands of the Neo-Assyrian Empire from northern Mesopotamia. What has been less studied is how they actually operated as political entities. This project aims to redress this imbalance by adopting a synchronic approach, shifting the focus from studying these city-states' change over time to studying their political behavior during the single period of their greatest achievements, the Iron Age II.

To accomplish this goal, this dissertation employs a series of methods that are collectively termed "spatial analysis." Current research in anthropological archaeology is demonstrating that spatial analysis can be one of the most productive tools with which to understand political processes of early complex societies. In particular, this study adopts a multi-scalar approach to spatial analysis by examining the archaeological and historical record of Patina at the regional, the settlement, and the architectural scales. Such an approach has the benefit of providing a textured and complex vision of political behavior that might otherwise be misleadingly simplistic.

Patina is shown to have operated under complex and highly variable principles of political authority at each of the three scales under investigation. These principles find expression both in the Syro-Hittite symbolic world evidenced in texts and iconography, and in their material world evidenced in their archaeological remains.

Adviser: Lawrence E. Stager

Margaret L. Stevenson [Ph.D.]

"This Man Does Many Signs" (John 11:47): Controversies over Raising the Dead

This dissertation examines a controversial moment in the Gospel of John—the raising of Lazarus—in light of three interrelated discourses in antiquity, which counterpose "miracle" and "magic."

Part I, "Prophecy and False Prophecy," traces a discourse that John shares with rabbinic writings, that of identifying the false prophet (based on Deuteronomy 13 and 18) as one who deceives Israel by specious miracles (called "signs"). False prophecy and magic contribute to historical reconstructions of Jesus's trial (chapter one) and are overlaid in John by ethnic rivalries, themes traced exegetically (chapter two). Lazarus functions exegetically to bridge the Jewish and Roman trials (chapter three); the Roman trial, while explicitly about kingship, continues the earlier "signs" disputes, laced by insinuations of magic and false prophecy.

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Part II, "Discourse of Prophecy and Royal Legitimation," explores the "signs" controversies, and the raising of Lazarus, in the Roman imperial context, considering legal, social, and religious debates about norms that would distinguish sanctioned from unsanctioned kinds of prophecy and the limits between royal legitimation and subversion. Studies of three works—the *Sibylline Oracles* (chapter four), Josephus's *Jewish War* (chapter five), and some Roman imperial sources (chapter six)—provide case studies for exhibiting this discourse. Here, the "sign" of raising Lazarus is understood in terms of omens authorizing the emperor's regime, while "magic" is associated with subversive plots. A hypothesis about Lazarus is tested: John deploys the image of Jesus as *magos*, an oriental holy man proficient to raise the dead, while countering suspicions of magic and sedition. Raising the dead, a symbol of tyrannical kingship in the *Sibylline Oracles*, becomes in John a sign of divine rule. Necromancy and false prophecy are associated, in Josephus and other Roman imperial sources, with civic unrest; John converts such turbulence into birth pangs for the new age, heralded by the Son of God.

Part III, "Discourse of Miracle and Magic—High Christology," identifies shared strategies, in John and Justin Martyr, that serve to distinguish "right" from deviant belief, deviance being paired with magical deceit.

Adviser: François Bovon

Wei Jen Teng [Ph.D.]

Recontextualization, Exegesis, and Logic: Kuiji's (632–682) Methodological Restructuring of Chinese Buddhism

This dissertation is a close examination of Kuiji's (632–682) endeavor to restructure the methodology of the Chinese Buddhist intellectual practice of his time. More precisely, it focuses on the three methodological dimensions that I found to be the most characteristic of Kuiji's endeavor: namely recontextualization, exegesis, and logic.

Following in Xuanzang's footsteps, Kuiji continued the task of setting the earlier Chinese understanding of Buddhism aright by reorienting it toward Indian Buddhism. However, what is constituted by this reorientation was not mere advocacy of the Yogācāra system of thought as modern scholars of Chinese Buddhism would understand it. I would argue that more fundamental and potentially significant contributions of this reorientation lie in Kuiji's construction of the methodological foundation for a more systematic understanding, interpretation, and evaluation of the Buddhist teachings.

Consequently, this study addresses two broader issues in the history of Chinese Buddhism specifically and in the field of intellectual history more generally. By focusing on the methodological aspect of Kuiji's commentarial works and doctrinal treatise, I address the overemphasis on the study of thoughts and ideas in the field of intellectual study.

Adviser: Parimal G. Patil

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Richard Jude Thompson [Ph.D.]

The Deuteronomistic Covenant and Neo-Assyrian Imperial Ideology: A Study of the Deuteronomistic History in Its Historical Context

This study investigates Martin Noth's conclusion that the Deuteronomistic History (DH) portrays the people of Israel as having committed apostasy, ceased to obey the law code of YHWH, and thus lost their land. Scholars have challenged Noth's hypothesis and even the existence of such a history. The present study accepts Noth's theory of the DH as a coherent corpus of writing with a consistent message but hypothesizes a different conclusion. In the view of this study, the DH depicts an imperial military covenant consisting of the universal authority of a single god, the assertion of power by means of a war of extermination, and the imperative to obey YHWH and the *nᵉḇîʾîm* or risk the punishment of death or exile. The study hypothesizes that the people's rulers disobeyed this covenant rather than the law code.

A survey of the scholarship and the inscriptions of the second-millennium B.C.E. Levant finds no local historical precedent for such a covenant. A similar survey of the inscriptions and history of the Hittite Empire reveals an ideology that lacks a single god and a policy of extermination. A survey of the historical scholarship and the royal inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, however, leads to a hypothesis that the ideology of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, especially the annexation law of Tiglath-Pileser III, could form the historical precedent for the covenant of the DH. A second survey of Levantine inscriptions, this time of the first millennium B.C.E., reveals a pattern of assimilation of Assyrian ideology by the conquered states. Finally, the study compares the evidence of the Neo-Assyrian inscriptions to the imperial military covenant of the DH.

Adviser: Jo Ann Hackett

Mara Willard [Ph.D.]

"Recasting the Old Questions": Theological Reliance and Renunciation in the Political Thought of Hannah Arendt

This dissertation examines the role of religious ideas in the work of Hannah Arendt (1906–1975), a German-Jewish refugee and leading twentieth-century political theorist. It shows that Arendt's relationship to religious thought and language is not only a thoroughgoing critique of Christian-Platonism for its complicity with political violence—the standard reading of her work—but also a selective extraction and reworking of biblical and theological sources for rendering her own constructive political theory.

Arendt's return to biblical and religious sources as a means of unsettling the Greek metaphysical tradition is informed by other modern German intellectual efforts, both philosophical and theological. Heidegger and Jaspers in particular taught her to appropriate language and insights from religious sources, while delineating her political thought from traditional theology. Her exploitation of

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Christian and Jewish texts proves a crucial means by which she expresses her political anthropology.

Arendt challenges the anti-worldly and anti-political biases that she finds in Christian-Platonism by assigning new meaning and significance to religious terms and concepts. In giving her account of the worldly life of action, she imbues theological language with the distinctively worldly significance that she considers appropriate to public life. Arendt also appeals to creation myths as a means by which to present conditions of possibility for political life. She finds the means to articulate human plurality through the second Genesis creation story, and cites Augustine's *City of God* to claim the human capacity for free, creative action. Through this employment of religious resources to theorize and illustrate the life of action, she displaces the Christian-Platonic legacy of which she is so critical and establishes an alternate religious imaginary for democratic life.

Because Arendt's uses of religious texts, language, and ideas neither claim the status of revelation nor make metaphysical speculations, they are not "theological" in the narrow sense in which she understands the term. However, an ambiguous theology can be found in both Arendt's depictions of the human condition of plurality and capacity for action as either divinely given or as "free gifts from nowhere, secularly speaking," as well as her assertions that the proper response to such gifts is gratitude.

Adviser: Ronald F. Thiemann

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