

Recovering the Wisdom of Mani

A Conversation with Jason BeDuhn

Jason BeDuhn is professor of religious studies at Northern Arizona University where his teaching and research have been focused on biblical studies, religions of late antiquity, and Manichaean studies. He is the author of three books, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma, 1: Conversion and Apostasy, 373–388 C.E.* (2010), *Truth in Translation: Accuracy and Bias in English Translations of the New Testament* (2003), and *The Manichaean Body in Discipline and Ritual* (2000), which received the Best First Book Award from the American Academy of Religion in 2001.

While at the Center this spring, he has been working to recover the contents of a poorly preserved fourth-century Coptic Manichaean codex in the collection of the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin. This manuscript, commonly referred to as the "Dublin Kephalaia," and titled *The Kephalaia of the Wisdom of My Lord Mani*, was discovered in Egypt in 1929 but, until recently, has resisted scholars' efforts to read and translate it. However, using digital imaging techniques, BeDuhn and his collaborators (Iain Gardner from the University of Sydney and Paul Dille from Pennsylvania State University, with technical assistance from the Imaging Laboratory of the Bilby Research Center at Northern Arizona University) have begun to uncover the contents of one of the largest surviving documents from antiquity.



Jason BeDuhn, Northern Arizona University

Q: What is the significance, or believed to be the significance, of the Dublin Kephalaia?

A: From what we've been able to read so far, the Dublin Kephalaia has a kind of narrative quality in which Mani, the founder of the Manichaean religion, is traveling around and talking with people, who in various ways represent other social stakeholders in greater Iran, many of whom are identified with particular religious traditions. And Mani is discussing with them their expectations about religious truth, religious authority, and proving that he is the ultimate authority. He knows their tradition and he, in a sense, claims to be a better representative of their tradition than they are themselves.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR

KEEPING IT SIMPLE

"I love math because there's just one right answer."

You will note that these words are in quotes. In fact, I have never been tempted to utter or write this sentence, even though I read it all the time, mostly in stories about high school students. According to several surveys, high school students prefer math to all other subjects, and yet we continue to fall behind other countries in math (and science). Some educators have explained this by saying that we have focused our education on standardized testing at the expense of a deeper understanding. The emphasis on the right answer, they say, has corrupted the subject.

I would suggest that high school students like math not because figures are dear to them but because math at the lower levels gratifies the adolescent desire for certitude. One wonders if the recurrent calls we hear from politicians and even educators for a greater national commitment to math (and science) also register a desire to escape from the complexities of the world. If only we could reduce the world to equations and solve them, they seem to feel, our troubles would vanish. But many of the crises that plague us today were caused or aggravated by people trying to reduce a complicated situation to a single variable (profit or tactical advantage), as if that were all that mattered. Often, it is the drive to simplify that gets us into the kind of trouble that makes us long for a simpler world.

And so, I would like to suggest, we might do better to focus our attention and yes, our resources, elsewhere—on, for example, the humanities.

Many virtues have been claimed for the humanities, but one of the most important, in my view, is that they actively discourage the quest for the one right answer. What they cultivate instead is the ability to navigate an often tangled, contradictory, or unstable mass of information and come up with a defensible way of thinking about it. It's called judgment, and this is what real success in life requires.

In a recent speech, retired Supreme Court Justice David Souter responded to those who look for the one right answer to legal problems in the "original intent" of the framers of the Constitution by giving an example of the necessity of judgment. In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), the Supreme Court ruled that "separate but equal" facilities did not violate the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment, but in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the Court held that separate but equal facilities were unconstitutional. Souter explained this reversal by referring to what he called "the subtlety of constitutional facts."



The Constitution had not changed, he said, but the meaning of segregation had. In 1894, "the formal equality of an identical railroad car meant progress," but sixty years later, enforced segregation "carried only one possible meaning," the inferiority of blacks to whites. The judicial perception of meaning turns, Souter concluded, "on the experience of the judges, and on their ability to think from a point of view different from their own. Meaning comes from the capacity to see what is not in some simple, objective sense there on the printed page."

Humanists believe in the printed page, but they also believe in the subtlety of facts: the entire point of reading from a humanistic perspective is to try to construct the unseen totality from the partial or fragmentary evidence of the seen. Such a construction depends on speculation, and is in constant danger of error; but this danger is the condition of real insight, and not only in the humanities. In *Modern Science and Modern Man*, James Bryant Conant (president of Harvard, 1933–53) argued that scientists made real progress not by posing clear, answerable questions, but rather by venturing "hazy" or "fuzzy" guesses that advanced the work even when they turned out to be wrong. Scientific progress is made by imaginative leaps based on "general speculative ideas"; even

direct empirical observation—the basis, we might assume, for thinking of science as solid and reliable—is secondary because empiricism, while necessary, slows everything down. The scientist, Conant says,

is always seeking to "lower the degree of empiricism" by venturing guesses that leap ahead of the observable evidence.

At the post-adolescent level, then, even math and science resist the reduction to simplicity that is often thought to be the source of their value. At some point—the point where they become really interesting, genuinely productive—all the disciplines merge in a common investment in imagination, speculation, judgment.

In this context, what might seem from a strictly rational point of view to be weaknesses in the humanities become strengths. Humanistic disciplines are, for example, notoriously hard-pressed to say what, precisely they are. What, after all, is "History"? The study of the past? Everything that can be studied is in the past, but it's not all part of "History." What holds "Philosophy" together? And what do we study when we study "Literature"?



In the humanities, one discipline bleeds into another: you can be reading, say, *King Lear*, and come upon a passage that seems unclear—for example, the final lines, which begin: "The weight of this sad time

we must obey; Speak what you feel, not what you ought to say." Trying to grasp this simple sentence, you might be led to wonder why, in one version of the text, Edgar speaks these lines while in another they are given to Albany.

You might also reflect on *Lear*, whose story this is the moral to, on Shakespeare, or on his audience. You might ask why this horribly disturbing play is rounded off with a little motto—in rhyme, no less. You might ask yourself whether this really was the lesson of the play, or whether this speech was simply tacked on to alleviate the horror of the preceding four hours; you might ponder whether these words themselves might somehow point to a deeper and more horrible meaning than they seem to.

You might wonder about the history of sincerity, or the identity of the "we" the speaker—whoever he is—refers to. But in all cases, you would be navigating a trans-disciplinary space far removed from the reassurances of the printed page, a space where there is no right answer in sight.

It might all sound pointless to an adolescent who seeks certainty, and even to a sober adult who values facts and results. But the ability to confront a complicated situation, grasp it imaginatively, and without reducing it to simplicity frame the questions that will lead to insight is a real-world skill that cannot be overvalued, and the educational system that develops that skill needs no other justification.

It's that simple.

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Fellow Holly Brewer Organizes Effort to Reform Secondary History Curriculum

This spring Holly Brewer, the 2009–10 Walter Hines Page Fellow at the Center, found herself much in demand, not only for her scholarly expertise on early American intellectual and legal history, but also as a leading voice in discussions about reforming the history curriculum in North Carolina. While debates taking place in several states about history teaching attracted national attention, for instance over ideologically based changes adopted in Texas, in North Carolina the State Department of Public Instruction planned to cut history instruction sharply—to begin U.S. history in 1877 and world history in 1945 in high school, and to cut instruction in earlier grades as well. These cuts corresponded to a general de-emphasis on history throughout the curriculum, in response to a narrowing of the curriculum due to increasing pressure to test math and literacy.

Brewer's involvement in the issue began in 2003 when she was leading one of the Center's summer seminars for high school teachers. At that time a round of course revisions cut out U.S. history before 1789, and seminar participants, upset by the change, wrote to oppose it. Brewer stayed in touch with these teachers and checked with them a couple of years later to see how the implementation had affected their classes. "They were now starting to teach U.S. history with George Washington's presidency," she says, "and all discussion of anything beforehand had been relegated to a couple weeks in civics class in 10th grade and/or to 5th grade. So I wrote an op-ed in the newspaper and received an official response from the Department of Public Instruction which said, essentially, we couldn't change anything now, but the next time there were revisions they would remedy the problem. I knew they were making revisions this year and I was watching to see that they did. In January I checked out the proposals, thinking 'they'll have fixed it somehow.' Instead, they were changing the U.S. history course to begin in 1877, and across the curriculum they were de-emphasizing history in all grades."

Rallying support through a Facebook group, "History Did Not Begin in 1877," that attracted over 10,000 members; a Web site dedicated to the issue (www.realhistoryreform.org); as well as numerous print and broadcast media appearances, Brewer and her associates gained a great deal of support from citizens around North Carolina and across the country. The media attention that followed resulted in more than 7,000 letters in opposition to the changes and prompted the governor and state legislators to publicly



call for them to be abandoned. Eventually the department of public instruction withdrew its initial proposal and returned to the drawing board.

In early March, Brewer convened a planning session with 24 historians and educators from across the state to develop alternatives that were then submitted to the State Board of Education, the Speaker of the (N.C.) House, and to Arne Duncan, the U.S. Secretary of Education. In that proposal the group recommended comprehensive reforms to the N.C. history curriculum that included requiring two courses in U.S. history in high school, a course in world history, and a course in civics and economics separate from instruction in personal financial literacy. Further, the group recommended incorporating skills teaching with content, rather than in place of it, and increasing emphasis on history throughout grades K–12.

Online Seminars for Teachers Continue Strong Growth

The Center's live, online education seminars continue to demonstrate their strong appeal, attracting nearly 500 teachers from 35 states to register for the 15 sessions offered in the spring and summer of 2010. This compares to 233 teachers from 20 states who participated in the 10 seminars offered in the fall of 2009.

The seminars, which are led by NHC Fellows and other distinguished scholars and focus on specific historical topics, have greatly benefited from partnerships with the state departments of public instruction in North Carolina and California, the Florida Virtual School, and WGBH's American Experience. Integration between the seminars and the extensive online resources available in the Center's Toolbox Library and TeacherServe® make the seminars a unique opportunity to learn about the Center's offerings in American history and literature.

This spring the Center also reached an agreement with the Center for Regional and Continuing Education at California State University, Chico, to provide California teachers the opportunity to earn university credits for completing online seminars from the National Humanities Center. To receive credit, California teachers should apply directly at <http://rce.csuchico.edu/teachers/nhc.asp>.

This fall, offerings will include seminars on the iconography of slavery, the political climate leading up to the American Revolution, Buffalo Bill, Civil War monuments, the Harlem Renaissance, and the stock market crash of 1929, among others.

Seminar details and registration are available at <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/ows/index.htm>.



Brewer has conducted lengthy conversations with the Secretary of Education's office about the challenges here in North Carolina and throughout the country, especially in regard to emphasis on teaching "21st-Century Skills." "There is so much concern about giving students a practical education, especially the use of computers," says Brewer. "It's really influenced our Department of Public Instruction, but it has also influenced national debate about the future of education, not only in grades K through 12 but in colleges. The larger questions are concerned with what students really need to know. If you're going to emphasize some new skills that haven't been in the curriculum, what do you cut out in exchange?"

"These debates are happening on every college campus as well, particularly big, publicly supported ones, where they're changing their requirements to de-emphasize history and the humanities. The practical consequence of this is that we are producing students who know more about very specialized topics, but who know less about the world we live in, the origins of that world, and the debates that helped create it. I think understanding the past has everything to teach us about the present and the future, and that if we don't understand how we got here, it's hard for us to make decisions as citizens, as people, and choices about our own lives."

Holly Brewer is associate professor of colonial and revolutionary American history at N.C. State University. She is also state coordinator for the National Council of History Education. She has taught future teachers (and others, including MA students) for more than 15 years. Her book, *By Birth or Consent: Children, Law, and the Anglo-American Revolution in Authority* (UNC Press, 2005) won several national book awards.

2010-2011 SCHEDULE*

Thursday, October 14
The Iconography of Slavery
Maurie McClinnis, UVA

Tuesday, October 19
Was the American Revolution Avoidable?
Jack Greene, Johns Hopkins Univ.; NHC Fellow

Tuesday, October 26
How to Read a Slave Narrative
William Andrews, UNC-CH

Tuesday, November 2
Southern Women and the Civil War
Laura F. Edwards, Duke Univ.; NHC Fellow

Tuesday, November 9
Buffalo Bill, American Idol
Joy Kassin, UNC-CH; NHC Fellow



Thursday, November 11
Meaning in Marble: Civil War Monuments and American Identity
Kirk Savage, Univ. of Pittsburgh

Thursday, January 20, 2011
Enlightened by the Rockets' Red Glare: The Meaning of "The Star-Spangled Banner"
Robert A. Ferguson, Columbia Univ.; NHC Fellow

*Confirmed sessions, check Center Web site for additions.

Scholars Meet To Consider “The State and Stakes of Literary Study”

On the final day of a difficult winter, over one hundred and sixty literary scholars, many of whom had traveled thousands of miles, assembled at the National Humanities Center to assess what has frequently been described as the wintry condition of their discipline at a conference on “The State and Stakes of Literary Studies.”

So protracted had this season of discontent been that the individual elements—declining enrollments, disappearing jobs, deteriorating workplace conditions—scarcely needed to be enumerated. Instead, the conference focused on the kind of general broader reflections that had been frozen out of professional discourse for many years: How has the profession changed over the past several decades? What is the place—actual, symbolic, and appropriate—of literary study in the university today? How adequately does current teaching address the present needs of undergraduates and graduates? And how would you like to see literary study develop over the next decade? A session on “Intellectual Heroes” raised the questions of authority and veneration; another on W. H. Auden’s “September 1, 1939” discussed the ways in which literature can enter public discussion, as this poem did in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. And a final session titled “What advice would you give to younger scholars?” invited senior scholars to channel their inner Polonius.

The conference had grown out of a series of summer institutes in literary study run by the National Humanities Center since 2003. In this program, distinguished senior scholars led younger scholars in a one-week seminar focusing on a literary text. The seminars had been wide-ranging—the King James Bible, Benjamin Franklin’s *Autobiography*, Baudelaire’s *Les fleurs du mal*, Joseph Conrad’s *Under Western Eyes*, the poetry of Emily Dickinson, Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, Flaubert’s *Sentimental Education*, George Eliot’s *Middlemarch*—and intense, an immersion in the deep and complex pleasures of the close study of literature, a rebaptism in the primal waters of the literary experience. Inspired, perhaps, by the sheer visual impact of so many leading figures gathered in one place,* the conference took a decidedly positive tone.

What is our basic mission? Why should society value what we do? What is distinctive about literary studies, which so often seems to be borrowing from other disciplines? “Introducing people to great literature” became the basis for a kind of counternarrative about the discipline of literary study.

This tone declared itself almost immediately in the form of simple truths straightforwardly asserted. Responding to the suggestion that literary scholars had not been successful in telling people what they do, Catherine Gallagher said, “Why don’t we just say that we introduce people to great literature?” This question, dropped into the discussion, continued to ripple through the discussion, not as a question but as an answer. What is our basic mission? Why should society value what we do? What is distinctive about literary studies, which so often seems to be borrowing from other disciplines? “Introducing people to great literature” became, over the course of the next day and a half, the basis for a kind of counternarrative about the discipline of literary study, a story based on different premises than the decline-and-fall story that had dominated literary study for most of the past generation.

This emergent counternarrative grounded itself not in nostalgia but in reaffirmation and reclamation. Kate Flint stressed the invigorating possibilities of “the big topic,” while Marjorie Garber recalled the transdisciplinary boldness and gigantic scale of the scholarship she encountered on entering the profession, when books such as Northrop Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism* and Erich Auerbach’s *Mimesis* established a standard for scholarship that has not been surpassed. But it was not only scale that people wished to recover. At one time, some speakers noted, scholars could presume a general acceptance of the proposition that literature—“great literature,” a once-controversial category that here went unchallenged—could provide singularly enriching intellectual and emotional experiences. How had scholars lost track of this?

One explanation was implied by several speakers, but stated directly by Sean Keilen of the College of William and Mary, who began by expressing frustration with the “hermeneutics of suspicion” that had long reigned as the paradigm for literary study. In this dispensation, the text was regarded from a certain distance as an object of knowledge to be interrogated rather than as an object of what Keilen called a “hermeneutics of charity” that proceeded under the general sign of love rather than knowledge. This motion

* Speakers included faculty and participants in the Summer Institutes in Literary Study. Faculty included Richard Brodhead, Sharon Cameron, Jonathan Culler, Frances Ferguson, Kate Flint, Catherine Gallagher, Marjorie Garber, Seth Lerer, Deidre Lynch, Toril Moi, Patricia Spacks, and Michael Wood.





Geoffrey Harpham introduces Patricia Spacks, Marjorie Garber, and Kate Flint.



Catherine Gallagher converses with Srinivas Aravamudan.

was seconded by Toril Moi, who spoke against positivism and professionalization, which, she said, had produced a systematic overvaluation of publication and research. By the time Deidre Lynch related how her study of Victorian reading practices had awakened her to an entirely different, more affective and even erotic orientation to literature than our own, the mood had crystallized in the phrase “love studies.” “We suffer,” she declared, “from an attachment to detachment.” Rising to declare her attachment to attachment, Garber pointed out that love, so far from being incompatible with suspicion, was its constant companion (see *Othello*). Freud’s great subject, after all, was love: to embrace one, Garber argued, is to embrace, however ambivalently, the other.

This renewed appreciation for a more holistic understanding of the literary experience provided a context in which mentions of teaching practice were given a par-

ticularly respectful hearing. Teaching has been a sore spot in the profession for some time, with the increased use of adjuncts (to the point where over half of all college and university courses are staffed by part-timers), the disenchantment of undergraduates even with the courses offered by the full-timers, and a general puzzlement over what we ought to be doing with our teaching and how it ought to be evaluated. In the session specifically devoted to teaching, Jeff Dolven of Princeton described a couple of exercises he had his classes do, such as writing a sonnet by Fulke Greville in the style of Walter Raleigh. His goal in this assignment, he said, was to encourage the identification of reading and writing. Asking students to “write like Gertrude Stein”—on purpose—was, he said, intended as part of a program to encourage students to read “covetously.” Imitation was, that is, intended not as a sincere form of flattery, but as a more intimate way of approaching literature, as it were, from the inside rather than the outside. And this was connected to a larger argument voiced by several people to the effect that “critique” and “unmasking” should now themselves be subject to critique and unmasking, for they had eclipsed or actively suppressed other more productive approaches. We have, one participant said, become overly invested in “knowingness and sophistication,” in interpretation and argumentation, and have failed to grasp or appreciate the most elementary facts about literature and the literary experience.

A panel on “Intellectual Heroes” created opportunities for a different kind of reflection devoted not to students but to figures of intellectual authority. Sharon Cameron

proposed three categories in which heroism of this kind might be established: range of thought (for which her candidate was the poet-critic Alan Grossman), depth of thought (the Harvard philosopher Stanley Cavell), and willingness to transgress the limits of one’s own understanding (the British critic-poet William Empson, who wrote appreciatively on Buddhism). What all of these had in common, she said, was a principle of infinity, the fact that there was “no end point to their thinking.” Catherine Gallagher began her contribution by noting that, like all Victorianists, she was distrustful of the very notion of a hero, having had to learn and to profess the numerous hero-worshippers of the nineteenth century, including Thomas Carlyle, who once wrote, “The history of the world is but the biography of great men.” What we should strive for, she argued, was a disambiguated and depersonalized appreciation of work rather than a veneration of persons. Despite this pronounced herophobia, Gallagher ventured seven criteria for heroism, and actually nominated two contemporaries, D. A. Miller and Elaine Scarry. It remained for Kathleen Harrington of the Air Force Academy to put “intellectual heroes” into their proper context by noting that the very concept was, as it were, already militarized, and institutionalized in the jargon of the military as “sustained superior performance.” She nominated several people who had proven their worth in various forms of “combat,” including teachers, and those who, like Stephen Hawking or Tony Judt, had struggled with crippling disease.

If the “turn” that seemed to be embraced by the conference were to be reduced to its essence, it would be a turn or a return to

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RECENT BOOKS BY FELLOWS

Books produced during fellowship years are listed here; for subsequent publications please check the Noted section on page 10.

BAKER, LEE D. (Fellow, 2003–04). *Anthropology and the Racial Politics of Culture*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010.

BYFIELD, JUDITH A. (Hurford Family Fellow, 2007–08), ed. *Gendering the African Diaspora: Women, Culture, and Historical Change in the Caribbean and Nigerian Hinterland*. Edited by Judith A. Byfield, LaRay Denzer, and Anthea Morrison. Blacks in the Diaspora. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

COHEN, ESTHER (Lilly Fellow in Religion and the Humanities, 2003–04). *The Modulated Scream: Pain in Late Medieval Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

COLE, CATHERINE M. (Hurford Family Fellow, 2006–07). *Performing South Africa's Truth Commission: Stages of Transition*. African Expressive Cultures. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

COLLIER-THOMAS, BETTYE (Rockefeller Fellow, 2001–02). *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice: African American Women and Religion*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.

CRAUN, EDWIN D. (Jessie Ball duPont Fellow, 2002–03). *Ethics and Power in Medieval English Reformist Writing*. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 76. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

DUBOIS, LAURENT (Duke Endowment Fellow, 2008–09). *Soccer Empire: The World Cup and the Future of France*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.

DUPLESSIS, RACHEL BLAU (Center Fellow, 2008–09). *Pitch: Drafts 77–95*. London: Salt Publishing, 2010.

GERT, BERNARD (Frank H. Kenan Fellow, 2001–02). *Hobbes: Prince of Peace*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010.

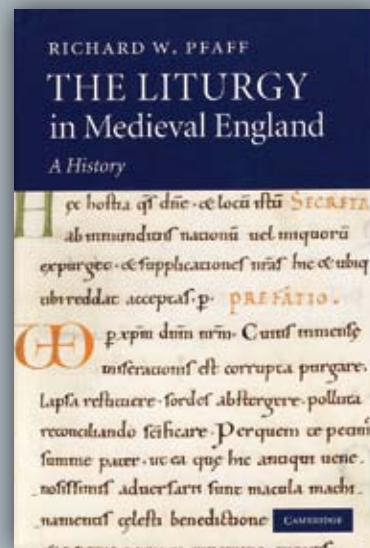
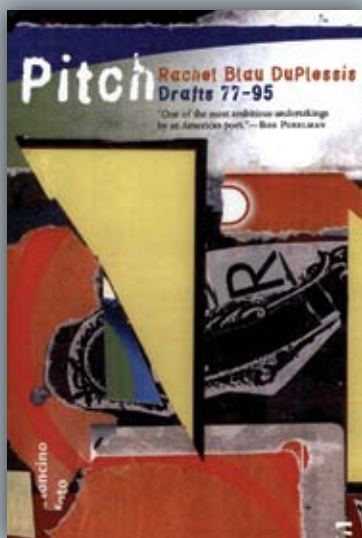
GREENE, JACK P. (Josephus Daniels Fellow*, 2009–10), ed. *Exclusionary Empire: English Liberty Overseas, 1600–1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

JAY, MARTIN (Birkelund Fellow, 2005–06). *The Virtues of Mendacity: On Lying in Politics*. Richard Lectures, 2008. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010.

MAFFLY-KIPP, LAURIE F. (Andrew W. Mellon Fellow, 1993–94). *Setting Down the Sacred Past: African-American Race Histories*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.

NORD, PHILIP G. (Gould Foundation Fellow, 2008–09). *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

OAKLEY, FRANCIS (Fellow, 1990–91). *Empty Bottles of Gentilism: Kingship and the Divine in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (to 1050)*. The Emergence of Western Political Thought in the Latin Middle Ages, 1. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.

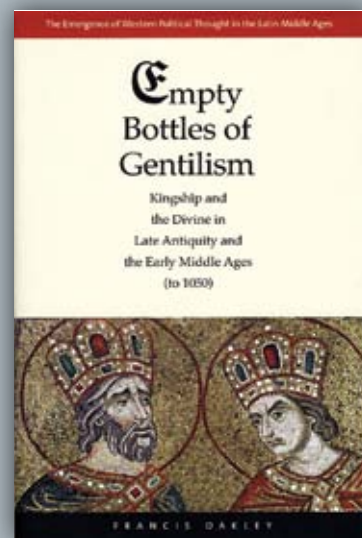


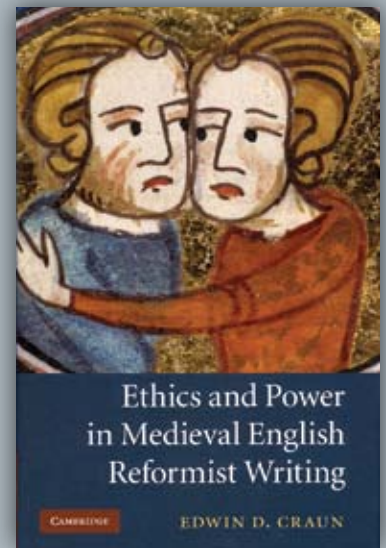
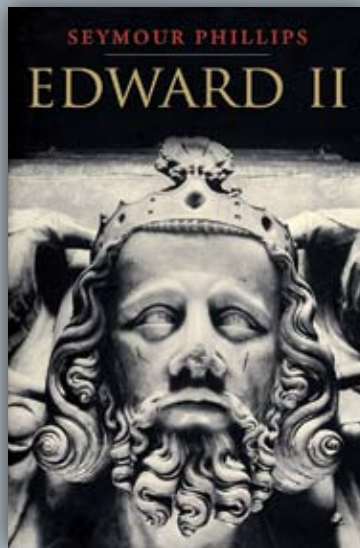
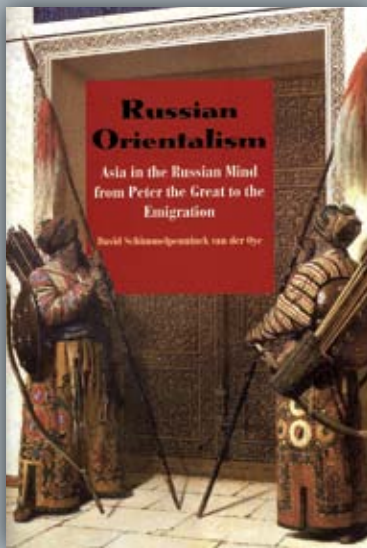
OLSON, S. DOUGLAS (Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation Fellow, 2008–09), ed. and trans. *The Learned Banqueters, VI, Books 12–13.594b*, by Athenaeus. Edited and translated by S. Douglas Olson. The Loeb Classical Library, 327. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.

PATRIARCA, SILVANA (National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, 2005–06). *Italian Vices: Nation and Character from the Risorgimento to the Republic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

_____. *Italianità: La Costruzione del Carattere Nazionale*. Storia e Società. Rome: GLF editori Laterza, 2010.

PAYNE, ELIZABETH (Delta Delta Delta Fellow, 2008–09). *Mississippi Women: Their Histories, Their Lives*. Vol. 2. Edited by Elizabeth Anne Payne, Martha H. Swain, Marjorie Julian Spruill. Bibliography by Brenda M. Eagles. Southern





Women: Their Lives and Times. Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2010.

PERDUE, THEDA (Archie K. Davis Fellow, 2003–04). *Race and the Atlanta Cotton States Exposition of 1895*. Georgia Southern University Jack N. and Addie E. Averitt Lecture Series, No. 16. Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2010.

PFAFF, RICHARD W. (Andrew W. Mellon Fellow, 1996–97). *The Liturgy in Medieval England: A History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

PHILLIPS, SEYMOUR (RJR Nabisco Fellow, 1987–88). *Edward II*. Yale English Monarchs. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.

SCHIMMELPENNINCK VAN DER OYE, DAVID (Josephus Daniels Fellow*, 2002–03). *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter*

the Great to the Emigration. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.

SOLTERER, HELEN (GlaxoSmithKline Fellow, 2002–03). *Medieval Roles for Modern Times: Theater and the Battle for the French Republic*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010.

THORAU, CHRISTIAN (William J. Bouswma Fellow, 2008–09), ed. *Rückspiegel: Zeitgenössisches Komponieren im Dialog mit älterer Musik*. Edited by Christian Thorau, Julia Clout, and Marion Saxer. Frankfurter Studien: Veröffentlichungen des Hindemith-Institutes Frankfurt/Main, Bd. 13. Mainz: Schott, 2010.

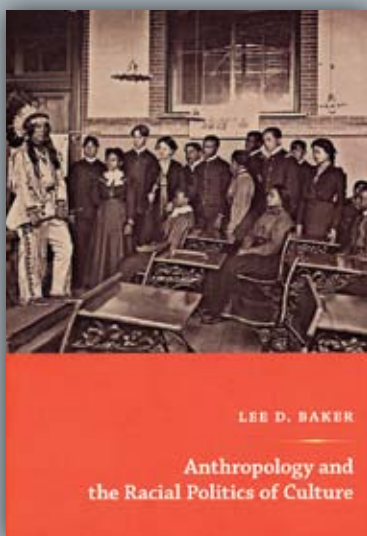
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*Supported by an endowment fund established by the Research Triangle Foundation





.....
DAINA BERRY (Fellow 2007-08, 2008-09) has joined the faculty of the history department at the University of Texas at Austin. She was previously associate professor of history at Michigan State University.

.....
 In his new book, *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People* (Hill and Wang, 2010), **TIMOTHY H. BREEN** (Fellow 1983-84, 1995-96) revisits the American Revolution and explores its origins as a grassroots movement, a "successful insurgency against imperial authority."

.....
ALAN BRINKLEY (Trustee, Fellow 1988-89) has published a widely praised biography *The Publisher: Henry Luce and His American Century* (Knopf, 2010).

.....
CHRISTOPHER S. CELENZA (Fellow 2003-04) has been named the 21st director of the American Academy in Rome. He succeeds **CARMELA V. FRANKLIN** (Fellow 1990-91) who steps down this summer after a five-year tenure to return to Columbia University.

.....
DEBORAH COHEN (Fellow 2001-02) will be transferring from Brown University to Northwestern University where she will be Peter B. Ritzma Professor of the Humanities.

.....
VINCENT COMERFORD (Fellow 1987-88) has been made emeritus professor of modern history by the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. The occasion of his retirement in January 2010 was marked with the publication of a *festschrift*

titled *Ireland's Polemical Past: Views of Irish History in Honour of R.V. Comerford*, edited by Terence Dooley (University College Dublin Press, 2010).

.....
GAURAV DESAI (Fellow 2001-2002, 2009-10) has published a volume in the Modern Language Association's Options for Teaching Series entitled *Teaching the African Novel* (MLA, 2009).

.....
The People and Their Peace by **LAURA EDWARDS** (Fellow 2007-08) has received the American Historical Association's 2009 Littleton-Griswold Prize for legal history.

.....
FRANCES FERGUSON (Trustee, Fellow 2003-04), **JAN GOLDSTEIN** (Fellow 2006-07), and **CARLA HESSE** (Fellow 2000-2001) have been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

.....
WILLIAM V. HARRIS (Fellow 1998-99) has recently had his book *Dreams and Experience in Classical Antiquity* published by Harvard University Press.

.....
K. THEODORE HOPPEN (Fellow 1985-86) has been elected an honorary member of the Royal Irish Academy. This follows his election in 2001 as a Fellow of the British Academy. In 2008 his edition of *The Papers of the Dublin Philosophical Society, 1683-1709* (2 vols.) was published by the Irish Manuscripts Commission; and he was one of the editors of the nine-volume *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge University Press) in 2009.

.....
DAVID LEVERING LEWIS (Fellow 1983-84) was awarded the 2009 National Humanities Medal along with seven other leaders in the humanities, including historians Robert A. Caro, Annette Gordon, and William H. McNeill; speechwriter and lawyer Theodore Sorensen; former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art Philippe de Montebello; philanthropist Albert H. Small; and Nobel laureate and author Elie Wiesel.

.....
DEBORAH LYONS (Fellow 1997-98) is newly tenured at Miami University in Ohio.

.....
LOUISE MCREYNOLDS (Fellow 1995-96, 1999-2000), **PAULA MICHAELS** (Fellow 2008-09), **WINNIFRED SULLIVAN** (Fellow 2006-07), and **GORDON TESKEY** (Fellow 1990-91) have each received Guggenheim fellowships for 2010.

.....
EDWARD MUIR (Fellow 1992-93) has received a 2009 Distinguished Achievement Award from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The award honors scholars who have made significant contributions to humanistic inquiry.

.....
 Philosopher **MARK RICHARD** (Fellow 1987-88) has taken a position at Harvard University, beginning in July 2010. Richard was previously Lenore Stern Professor in the Humanities and Social Sciences at Tufts University, where he has been a member of the faculty since 1984.

some of the most traditional strengths of literature not as an object of study but as a vehicle for illumination, including self-illumination. This turn entailed a heightened appreciation of pleasure, intellectual delight, and, necessarily, a new appreciation of teaching as a way of awakening a student's inner resources. The project of "introducing," like the unapologetically hierarchical category of "great literature," took on a higher profile than it had in recent years, while the activities of research and publication took a pummeling. This turn was not, however, confined to the classroom. In one striking presentation, Ross Forman, who took his PhD at Stanford but now teaches in Singapore, argued that we should inculcate in our graduate students an appreciation for careers outside the U.S., teaching in universities in which the primary object could be understood as one of cultural, political, and linguistic translation. The humanities, he suggested, have not played as large a role as the STEM disciplines in the rapid growth of American-style research-oriented higher education abroad, but the kind of reflective processes sponsored by the humanities might have a transformative effect in other cultures, and literary scholars trained in this country are admirably positioned to make the most of an exciting opportunity.

Thus the first turn. But a second turn—not a return but a genuine turning—was also approached in the presentation by Duke University President Richard Brodhead, who noted, in a meditation on "the place of literary studies," that at a time when the entire superstructure that had once supported graduate training in

literary studies—NDEA fellowships, Danforth fellowships, support from corporations and foundations—had simply vanished, faculty in literary studies had not been conspicuous for their willingness to imagine a place for their discipline in the new forms of the university just now coming into view, and had in fact maintained a proud but misguided isolation not only from larger public concerns but even from other areas of the university, including those that were developing rapidly. The

university of the future would, he said, increasingly be problem-based rather than discipline-based, it would be international, and it would be digital. Given what he described as "attenuated" public support for graduate education in general and literary studies in particular, Brodhead said, it was simply imperative that literary studies should take an active role in making a place for itself in those areas of the university that were growing rather than shrinking. And, he continued, it should do so with a certain confidence because, after all, literature is all about problems, it is all about cultural knowledge and a sympathetic understanding of other people, and it is all about virtuality or quasi-real worlds. In other words, rather than defending its traditional territory and prerogatives, literary study could (and, he suggested, should) boldly claim to be central to those aspects of the university around which new and

excited energy is gathering. The strong implication of Brodhead's sympathetic rebuke was that literary studies had assets whose vast utility it had only imperfectly grasped.

The message of these two turns was clear: literary studies could do well at this moment by reinvesting in the enduring power of literature to transform self-understanding, to deepen and enrich the quality of our attention to the world, and to place us into what Seth Lerer described as "communities of conversation."

In a telling comment, Kate Flint said that she regretted that in her early career she had been so impressed by theoretical advances made within her field that she had not attended closely or sympathetically to the voices of those who were skeptical about some of the directions literary studies were taking. Their skepticism, she now saw, might have opened up different possibilities that might have produced a more appreciative and supportive response both inside and outside the academy. If "The State and Stakes of Literary Study" produces any effect, it may be that the helpful voice now comes not from antagonists or competitors for scarce resources, but from among the most committed and gifted practitioners, people whose voices we cannot ignore because they are our own. The invitation to imagine a global scene for our activities, to make friends, to reconceptualize our traditional activities in contemporary terms should, in any event, represent a welcome and even inspiring thought on what was, after all, the first day of spring.

For more on the conference, visit nationalhumanitiescenter.org



Richard Brodhead

New Trustees Welcomed at Spring Meeting

The Center's two newest trustees joined other members at the board's spring meeting, April 14–15, 2010.

Gerald Early, Merle King Professor of Modern Letters at Washington University in St. Louis, and Evelyn M. Hammonds, Dean of Harvard College at Harvard University, were each elected to a three-year term at the fall 2009 meeting in October. Early was a Fellow at the Center in 2001–02.



Gerald Early, Merle King Professor of Modern Letters, Washington University



Evelyn M. Hammonds, Dean of Harvard College, Harvard University

IN MEMORIAM



LILIAN R. FURST (Fellow 1988–89), who was a leading specialist in the relationship between literature and medicine, died September 11, 2009. She was 78. Furst was the Marcel Bataillon Professor Emerita of Comparative Literature at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Her scholarly work included more than 23 books on Realism, Romanticism, and Naturalism; on the reader of European narrative; on disordered eating and women healers; on the creative and rhetorical dimensions of the art of narrative; on psychology and psychoanalysis; and on surviving the Holocaust.

After her family's flight from Austria in 1938, Furst was raised in Manchester, England, and later received a bachelor's degree with honors in modern languages from Manchester University. She received her PhD from Cambridge University and for 11 years taught at Queen's University of Belfast, Northern Ireland. She held many visiting positions and named professorships, including at Dartmouth College, Stanford University, the University of Texas at Dallas, Harvard University, and the College of William and Mary, before coming to North Carolina in 1986. She retired in 2005.

TORSTEN HUSÉN (Fellow 1978–79), died in Stockholm on July 2, 2009. He was 93. Husén was an international leader in the field of education and was a driving force in educational reforms that took place in numerous countries around the world in the 1960s and 1970s.

After building a system of psychological tests and interviews for military selection and specialization purposes, he became involved in research on various other topics. His methodological studies on test reliability and validity were followed by psychological research on twins, the psychology of spelling, and the relationships between ability, social background, occupation, length of schooling, and school performance. With these studies and other work, he made a substantial contribution to democratization of education and revision of selection procedures, first in Sweden and then in other European countries.

Husén received his PhD from Lund University in 1944. He began teaching at Stockholm University in 1947 as professor of education and educational psychology. In 1971 the Swedish Parliament created a special chair of international education for Husén at Stockholm University, where he was made emeritus professor in 1982.

RICHARD LEVIN (Fellow 1987–88) died on October 30, 2009. He was 87. A scholar of English Renaissance drama and the history of criticism, Levin was noted among colleagues for the clarity, wit, and thoroughness of his scholarship, and his critiques of Shakespearean criticism made his analyses invaluable to other literary scholars. Among his many contributions to the field were *The Multiple Plot in English Renaissance Drama* (1971), *New Readings vs. Old Plays: Recent Trends in the Reinterpretation of English Renaissance Drama* (1979), and *Looking for an Argument: Critical Encounters with the New Approaches to the Criticism of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (2003), which he worked on while at the Center. Trained at the University of Chicago, where he began his career, Levin moved to the State University of New York at Stony Brook in 1957 and remained there for the rest of his career.

During his career, Levin's work received numerous honors. He served on the board of trustees of the Shakespeare Association of America, the advisory committee of *PMLA*, and advisory boards of the World Center of Shakespeare Studies and the Shakespeare Globe Center. He received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the American Council of Learned Societies, as well as from the National Humanities Center.

MIHAJLO MIHAJLOV (Fellow 1980–81), a prominent dissident in the former Yugoslavia who was jailed for seven years during the cold war era, died in Belgrade on March 7, 2010. He was 76. Mihajlov was a professor of Russian literature at the University of Zagreb campus at Zadar, now in Croatia, in the early 1960s, before he was sentenced to prison in 1966 for "damaging the reputation of a foreign state" after publishing an essay on camps for dissidents in the Soviet Union. In 1975 he was sentenced to prison again for "disseminating hostile propaganda" about Tito's government in essays and articles published in the Yugoslav and Western press. He came to be considered, after Milovan Djilas, as Yugoslavia's leading dissident for his stand against totalitarianism. The Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov nominated Mr. Mihajlov for the Nobel Peace Prize, and his work was cited by Alexander Solzhenitsyn in *The Gulag Archipelago*.

Mihajlov was released early in 1978 and allowed to leave the country, after which he lived in the United States and taught Russian literature and philosophy at Yale University, The Ohio State University, and the University of Virginia, as well as in Western Europe. He also worked as an analyst at Radio Free Europe and held a fellowship at the Elliot School of International Affairs at George Washington University before returning to Serbia in 2001. Mihajlov wrote a number of books, including *Moscow Summer* (1965), *Russian Themes* (1968), *Underground Notes* (1977), *Planetary Consciousness* (1982), *Djilas versus Marx* (1990), and *The Homeland Is Freedom* (1994). While in prison, Mihajlov smuggled out writings in letters to his family which became the book *Unscientific Thoughts* (1979).

MERRILL PETERSON (Fellow 1980–81), an American historian whose prolific writings included significant contributions to the scholarship surrounding Thomas Jefferson, died September 29, 2009, in Charlottesville, VA. He was 88. Peterson was professor of history and former chair of the History Department as well as dean of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia.

The author or editor of 37 books, Peterson explored what he described as the question of "what American thought and experience could contribute to an understanding of American democracy and its future." He gained widespread recognition with his first book *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind* which was awarded the Bancroft Prize from Columbia University and the Gold Medal of the Jefferson Memorial Association in 1960. Other notable works include *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation* (1970), *The Great Triumvirate: Webster, Clay, and Calhoun* (1988), and *Lincoln in American Memory* (1994), which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 1995.

After receiving his PhD from Harvard, Peterson taught at Brandeis University and Princeton University before coming to the University of

Virginia in 1962 as the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Professor of History. In 1997, at the age of 76, Peterson joined the Peace Corps as its second-oldest volunteer and served in Armenia, where he helped to develop a university curriculum. He later wrote a book about the U.S. response to the slaughter of Armenians by Ottoman Turks early in the twentieth century.

AUBREY L. WILLIAMS, JR. (Fellow 1986–87) died October 19, 2009. He was 87. Williams was a specialist in eighteenth-century English literature. He retired from the University of Florida in 1986.

Before completing his education, Williams was a pilot in the Army Air Corps during World War II. He then graduated from Louisiana State University, where he studied with Cleanth Brooks and became acquainted with Robert Penn Warren and Katherine Anne Porter. He earned his PhD in English in 1952 from Yale University, where he later began his teaching career before taking a position at the University of Florida in 1958. The author of several books, including volumes on Pope and Congreve, Williams was instrumental in building a collection of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century books at the university, partly through his own donation of rare volumes.

A fierce advocate for graduate students and a strong believer in classroom engagement between scholars and students, he counted among his many honors a research travel fellowship in his name started by his students to advance the study of eighteenth-century English literature.

CARL WOODRING (Fellow 1987–88), a scholar of English literature of the Romantic period, died September 12, 2009, in Austin, TX. He was 90. Woodring's award-winning books include *Politics in the Poetry of Coleridge* (1961), *Wordsworth* (1965), *Politics in English Romantic Poetry* (1970), *Nature into Art: Cultural Transformations in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (1989), and *Literature: An Endangered Profession* (1999), in which he traced the history of literary studies in American universities and offered an impassioned plea to recover its values and pleasures. He edited the two volumes of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Table Talk* for the Bollingen Collected Coleridge in 1990 and coedited *The Columbia History of British Poetry* (1990).

Woodring earned his BA and MA at Rice University, before serving in the Navy in World War II. After leaving the Navy, Woodring received his PhD from Harvard. He began his academic career at the University of Wisconsin in 1948, and taught there until he joined the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University in 1961. He became the George Edward Woodberry Professor of Literature at Columbia in 1976, and retained the chair as professor of literature emeritus when he retired in 1988. During a distinguished career, he was recognized with a number of honors including the Bowdoin Prize at Harvard (1947), a Ford Foundation grant for 1955–56, and a Guggenheim Fellowship for 1958–59. His 1970 book on Wordsworth received the Phi Beta Kappa award. In 1986 he received Rice University's Distinguished Alumni award.

Philip L. Quinn Fellowship in Philosophy to Be Established at the National Humanities Center

Philip L. Quinn (1940–2004) worked in philosophy of science and philosophy of religion. He taught at Brown University, where he held the William Herbert Perry Fraunce Professorship, and at the University of Notre Dame, where he was the John A. O'Brien Professor of Philosophy. He served as president of the Central Division of the American Philosophical Association, and was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.



Philip Quinn served on the final selection committee of the National Humanities Center in 1984 and subsequently assisted the Center as a preliminary reviewer of applications for many years. He was one of the dedicated scholars whose judgment ensured the quality of the Center's Fellows, and though he himself never came to the Center as a Fellow, he valued it as a crucial American institution for the nurture and improvement of scholarship in the liberal arts.

After Professor Quinn's death in 2004, his Notre Dame colleague in philosophy, Paul

Weithman, and another close friend, Mary Lou Solomon, were named co-executors of his estate. Paul Weithman had been a Fellow of the National Humanities Center in 2000–2001, and he was aware of Philip Quinn's long-standing connection and interest. He inquired whether a suitable memorial might be established at the Center, and in the end the two co-executors decided to endow the Philip L. Quinn Fellowship to be awarded annually in philosophy, preferably supporting young women in the early stages (pre-tenure) of their scholarly careers. The endowment will be established with \$800,000 from the Quinn estate matched by \$700,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The first Quinn Fellowship will be awarded to a member of the class of 2011–12 at the Center.

It is especially gratifying that a distinguished and much-loved member of the academic world admired the National Humanities Center and that his co-executors have chosen to memorialize him here. It speaks to the place that the Center holds in the hearts and minds of American scholars, and it is fitting that Philip Quinn's intellectual and ethical commitments in the profession be transmitted thus to future generations of philosophers.

Planned Giving and the National Humanities Center

Planning a gift can be simple, and most options offer direct financial benefits to donors and their heirs. Many donors find significant financial planning and tax advantages in making a planned gift whether through a specific bequest amount, estate percentage, or with assets accumulated in retirement plans such as TIAA-CREF or Individual Retirement Accounts.

The staff of the National Humanities Center is happy to assist you with any questions about planned giving. If you would like to learn more about planning a legacy gift, or would like to notify us of arrangements you have already made, please contact Carol Vorhaus in the Development Office by phone (919) 549-0661 ext. 101 or e-mail cvorhaus@nationalhumanitiescenter.org.

So he wins them over, or defeats them in debate, or in some other way is gathering his own sort of clout by encountering these other traditions in a way that is laying claim to them, and saying that their division into different religious traditions is wrong and they should be brought together into a single, universal truth. And what makes that significant is the fact that we don't have any other sources like this, for this particular period of history in West Asia. Iran was kind of a chokepoint through which traditions from Central Asia and East Asia and South Asia met with those from West Asia and Europe and Africa. And, unfortunately, nothing literary survives from Iran before the Islamic conquest in the seventh century.

Q: The manuscript was discovered in 1929, but is only now being translated. What has been the challenge with translating this particular manuscript?

A: Well, before we can translate it, we have to read it. This text has been sitting around for eighty years untouched, and there are a number of complex reasons for that, but the most basic is it's in very bad shape. It's very fragmentary. These books—there was a set of books that were found at the same site—had been buried in a dirt floor of a house built on a floodplain. So even though Egypt has a very dry climate, moisture got in, insects got in; the books were eaten around the edges, or were disintegrated around the edges, and the individual pages were stuck together with salt and sand.

They passed through several hands before they got onto the antiquities market where people were trying to divide them, so they would have more books to sell, or peeling off the bad pages so it looked like it was a better manuscript. Then various people in the 1930s worked on them to separate the pages, and sometimes the results were very successful and other times were very destructive.

Once the pages were apart, you could see that the ink had faded and the papyrus had darkened so that it's almost like looking at a blank piece of papyrus. The Dublin Kephalaia is unusually darkened; we're not sure why, what chemistry was involved, but it's very hard to read. So

it's been sitting for eighty years. Recently, I got together with a couple of other people in the field and said why don't we go ahead and tackle this. And we had been talking about various modern technologies that could be applied and how that might help to do what other people hadn't been able to.

Q: What specific technologies are you using?

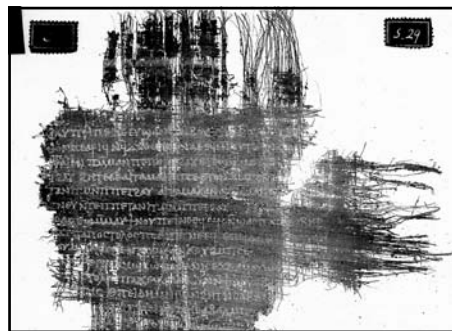
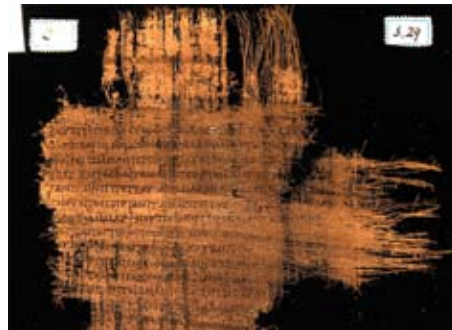
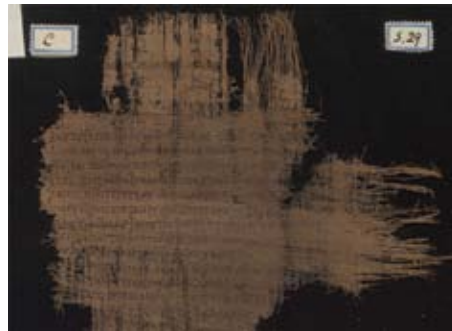
A: The first thing we're doing is simply having new digital photographs taken by the Chester Beatty Library and, with a program like Photoshop, we're doing a series of manipulations of the image. We're doing a few standard manipulations, which means that we take a whole set of images and do the same process to all of them. And then, with each individual image, we can manually adjust it to treat it for its own peculiar problems.

We are working with a technical team that does digital imaging production work to make the text more readable. It's worked out to be a very good process, because they might not think of some of the things that we might desire and we can't possibly think of what's actually possible.

Q: So what have you discovered from working on this papyrus so far?

A: We've discovered that some of the techniques that have worked on other ancient texts don't work so well on ours. For example, multispectral imaging, which involves photographing with different color filters, including ultraviolet and infrared, and then layering those images on top of each other. These techniques were tried on our codex a few years ago by a team from Brigham Young University and the results weren't at all what was expected; nothing was coming out. It could be that the ink, which in a text of this age would be expected to be a very simple carbon ink, is instead a very early example of an ink that became more popular in medieval times called iron gall, and, because of the iron content, it won't react well to infrared photography.

In terms of content, we are finding very specific details about religions that we had no reason to think were very well known in the West at that time, such as Buddhism and Jainism. But because our text is a translation of something originally composed in Iran, it reflects the greater exposure to



Above top to bottom: Manuscript image enhancements 1) actual appearance, 2) normalized, 3) red channel gray scale, 4) red channel inverted. Images courtesy of the Chester Beatty Library. Image processing by Daniel Boone.

Indian religion in Iranian culture at the time, and this is the world in which Mani acted. Previously, we had little that told us how much religious pluralism and interchange was going on in Iran in the third and fourth centuries.

Q: Unlike the Buddha, or Muhammad, or Jesus, Mani wrote down his teachings. To a contemporary person, that would seem to provide an advantage over traditions that relied on oral transmission of their beliefs. Is there something about the textual tradition, or despite the textual tradition, that contributed to the decline and eventual extinction of Manichaeism?

A: That's a very good question, and one of the favorite topics among scholars who work on Manichaeism. Certainly you put your finger on one of the factors that could have been involved, because the Manichaeans were so focused on text and literacy—and we now have very concrete evidence that they were expecting all levels of membership in the Manichaean community to learn how to read and write. But this was a very high standard to maintain in the ancient world, where only 2 or 3 percent of the population were literate. That could have been a factor in it not being as successful in terms of numbers of adherents, even though it was so widespread geographically.

It also always seemed to be on the losing edge of state power. Other religious groups managed to link up with state power in a way that the Manichaeans almost never did. So they were always persecuted while others had state support and were able to flourish and get lots of patronage. There are other ways in which Manichaeism would have been considered socially deviant—its emphasis on celibacy, for instance, and on relatively equal treatment of women in what were largely very patriarchal societies. These would have been considered anti-“family values,” and things like this were pointed to by their enemies as dangerous and deviant. So we have this irony of a religion that invested so much in the power of the written word

to preserve its teachings, and here we are bent over just scraps of this once great body of literature, almost all destroyed by its enemies.

Q: At what stage is the overall recovery project?

A: It's still relatively early, and we still have maybe three to four more years to go. We're trying to move very rapidly, to make the text available for everyone working in this field. This is a very tight timetable for a text of this size. This is one of the biggest codices surviving from antiquity. It once had about 500 pages, which is bigger than a Bible manuscript, and whole Bibles are very rare from antiquity. Now, one of those painful things that actually makes our work a little quicker—although we wish it were otherwise—is that about 150 pages of it are missing. We're still working on the initial sets of images that we've been processing digitally. This summer we're going to go back to Dublin and do the multispectral photography we've been preparing for, and then we'll be able to compare those images to our digitally enhanced images and compare all of those to what we can see when looking at the actual pages of the codex in person.

Q: Has your time at the Center been helpful?

A: Yes, it's provided a quiet time to work character by character on my part of the transcription. But also, as I work through the text, there are various historical and geographic references that, even though I try to discipline myself and just try to read the text of the page, I also want to know: where is it going? what is the story? who are the characters involved? who is Mani meeting? where are they? There are personal names and place names appearing in the text, and I want to track them down. And I have never been at a place that can give me the most obscure reference works and publications as quickly as the National Humanities Center. So, within a of couple days, I have these extremely rare references.

As a matter of fact, a couple of weeks ago I had to find a book, and WorldCat,

which is supposed to be a catalogue of books all over the world, recorded only one known copy in the world. And I said, “Well, I may as well try.” So I submitted a request, and three or four days later the one copy that there was any record of was here, waiting for me at the Center, and I was able to check something in it. That combination of concentrated work time, plus all of these references that I can pull in at very short notice, has allowed me to help formulate the bigger picture that the text is telling us.

I'm heading out tomorrow morning to UCLA to give a talk based entirely on the work I've done here, on a passage that turns out to be the earliest record of an episode from the Shahnameh, considered to be the national epic of Iran. Until now, our earliest sources on it were from the ninth and tenth centuries, and here we have a fourth-century Coptic text from Egypt, of all things, which has an episode that later turns up in the Shahnameh. And this pushes back by about 500 years our proof that this narrative existed. That's an important breakthrough, not just for Manichaean studies or even religious studies but for the history of world literature and culture.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

› 2010–11 Fellows

› Richard Will on the
Performance and
Interpretation of
Mozart

› Nobel Laureate
Wole Soyinka
Visits the Center





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Summer Events 2010



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Jessie Ball duPont Summer Seminars for Liberal Arts College Faculty

National Humanities Center
June 6–25

The Self: Knowledge, Memory, and Imagination

John M. Doris, associate professor of philosophy, Washington University in St. Louis

Worried Sick, Worried Well

Nancy Tomes, professor and chair of history, State University of New York at Stony Brook

.....

Summer Institutes in Literary Studies

National Humanities Center
July 4–9

Reading Thomas Hardy's Jude the Obscure

Kate Flint, chair and professor of English, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Five by Five: The Short Story as Art and Artifact

Louis Menand, Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor of English and American Literature and Language, Harvard University

.....

SIAS Summer Institutes

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
August 16–27

Comparative Perspectives on Federalism and Separation of Powers: Lessons from—and for—National, Supranational, and Global Governance

Daniel Halberstam, The University of Michigan Law School

Christoph Möllers, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany

Action Theory in Philosophy and the Social Sciences

Hans Joas, Max-Weber-Kolleg, Universität Erfurt, Germany

Robert Pippin, University of Chicago