

# Samsara

THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE

FALL 1994 • VOL. 6

## A Report from the Head

PROFESSOR CHARLES REYNOLDS  
DEPARTMENT HEAD

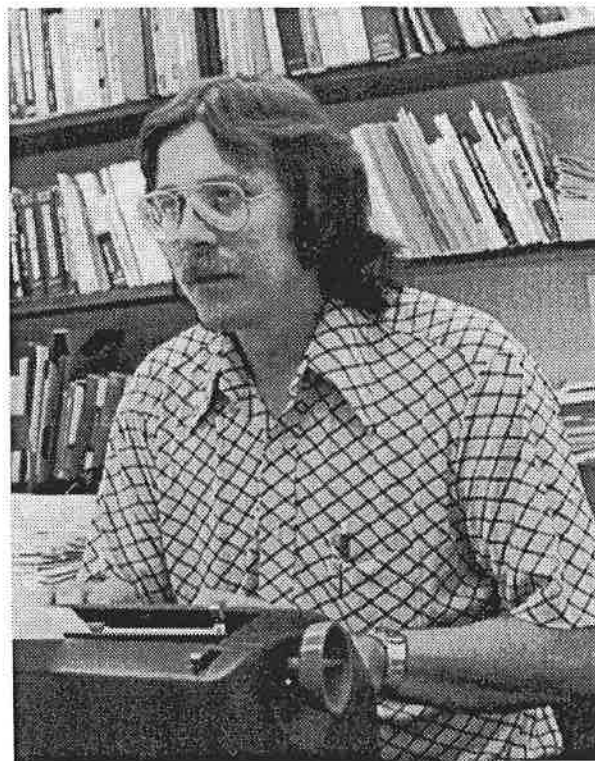
The Department continues to move forward on a number of fronts as you will see not only in this statement but also as reflected in the remainder of this issue of *Samsara*. I am especially pleased with the number of grants our faculty have obtained during the last year. David Dungan had a full year NEH-funded research leave for the 1993-94 academic year; Mark Hulsether received a \$10,000 grant from the Louisville Institute for the Study of Protestantism and American Culture, to complete his manuscript on the history of the periodical, *Christianity and Crisis*, a book which is to be published by the University of Tennessee Press; Rosalind Hackett received one grant (\$20,000) from the Pew Charitable Trusts administered through the Overseas Ministries Study Center to conduct research in West Africa and Asia and has just signed a contract to produce a book on *Religious and Political Conflict in Nigeria* for the Institute of Peace in Washington,

DC; Gerda Schmidt received a substantial travel grant from the UT Faculty Development Fund to spend this past summer doing research in Israel; Miriam Levering received an NEH summer grant for research in Japan; and John Hodges received research support from the Department, College of Arts and Sciences, and the UT Graduate School for his research project on African-American religion in the Mississippi Delta.

New funds continue to come in to support our work in Judaic Studies. We have over \$250,000 on hand to date and a remaining \$300,000 in pledges. I am working with the Dean, the Development Office, and with the Heads of the Departments of History and English to raise additional funds that

will enable us to make appointments in Judaic History and in Judaic Literature. Our goal is to raise \$250,000 for each of these departments to supplement the salary of a state-funded assistant professor position in each area.

I am also in the process of putting together a Friends of the Depart-



FROM THE ARCHIVES: INSPIRED BY UTK'S BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS, WE DECIDED TO SEE WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, HAVE TAKEN PLACE HERE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES. OUR CONCLUSIONS: BELL BOTTOMS HAVE YET TO MAKE A TRIUMPHANT RETURN AND THE HAIR IS A LITTLE SHORTER. BUT CHARLES "REBEL" REYNOLDS IS STILL HERE...

ment advisory group that will strengthen our relationships with the citizens of our state and will also assist in attracting private funds to support departmental research and other programmatic activities. The initial goal is to raise at least \$12,000 annually. As one can see, the role of a Department Head at the University of Tennessee is moving more and more in the direction of development.

It is good to have Ralph Norman, former Associate Vice Chancellor for

## Discretionary Fund

Over the past several years, friends of the Department of Religious Studies have donated over \$45,000 to the Discretionary Fund. This fund supports research, publications, and travel for faculty. It is also used to allow the Department to cooperate with other Departments in hosting visiting speakers, exhibits, and conferences when state money is not available. For those wishing to contribute to the fund, checks should be sent to the Department of Religious Studies, 501 McClung Tower, University of Tennessee, Knoxville TN 37996-0450 and made payable to the University of Tennessee. Contributions are tax-deductible.

CONTINUED PAGE 4

# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

## DAN DEFFENBAUGH

Dan is dividing his time this year between the Department of Religious Studies, where he continues to teach courses in the comparison of world religions, and *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, where he has recently taken over as Managing Editor. In his abundant spare time he works on his dissertation, *New Theological Roots for Agriculture*, under the supervision of Sallie McFague at Vanderbilt University. He has co-authored, with David Dungan, a chapter entitled "The Bible and Ecology" for the forthcoming *International Catholic Bible Commentary*.

## DAVID DUNGAN

During the past year and a half, David worked on his book for the Doubleday Series called the *Anchor Bible Reference Library* entitled, *All Known Gospels: Their Origins and Interrelationships*. It will be a historical survey of the 36 or so known Gospels, written from the earliest times down to the twentieth-century (ever hear of *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus Christ*, written in 1934?). In this work, David also plans to discuss some of the more important statements as to how the Gospels were composed (e.g., were some used as sources by subsequent Gospel authors?). This survey will also examine the attempts to establish the most reliable Gospel, including the information as to where the earliest surviving physical copy of each one can be found today. The manuscript will be completed by February, 1995, and the book should appear some time in 1996.

David also met three times—including a week long working seminar in July—with a Research Group of New Testament scholars dedicated to providing a comprehensive explanation of the composition of the biblical Gospels. The group's theory is that Luke's main source was Matthew, that Mark's main sources were Matthew and Luke, and that Matthew was written first. The group has completed its compositional analysis of Mark, they are almost finished with Luke, and will be done with Matthew in two years. Their work is being utilized by scholars currently writing commentaries on the Gospels for a projected one-volume, Roman Catholic commentary on the Bible, entitled *The International Catholic Bible Commentary*. It will be

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

# Ralph Norman Returns to the UTK Religious Studies Department Full-Time

We here at the Department are quite pleased to announce that Ralph Norman has resumed, in his words, "full-time professing" in the Department of Religious Studies and is currently spending two semesters on partial research assignment before returning to the classroom in Fall 1995. At that time he plans to offer a departmental seminar on "Arguments and Images: Interdisciplinary Conversation in *Soundings* 1985-1995."

Before leaving his position at Academic Affairs in the university's administration, Ralph received the Chancellor's Citation for Extraordinary Service to the University, at the Honors Banquet this past April. And earlier last year he was the greatly surprised subject/victim of a Roast at Centripetals, organized by Al Burstein of the cross-disciplinary University Studies Program.

Ralph has been busy with a variety of research and travel projects. He gave a plenary address to a Conference on the Politics and Processes of Scholarly Publishing at the University South Florida in March of 1994, and served on two panels. His paper, "The Schol-

arly Journal and the Intellectual Sensorium" will be published in a book on scholarly publishing, edited by Joseph Moxley and Lagretta Linker.

Along with UTK students and other UTK colleagues in German, Law, and Language and World Business, Ralph participated in the July Transatlantic Academy on Europe Today at Rheinische Friedrich Wilhelms Universitaet, Bonn. The seminar dealt with questions of economics, politics, and culture in the emerging European "nation" in the wake of German reunification, and involved visits and discussions at Aachen, Charlemagne's version of an EC capital; the present European Community Headquarters in Brussels; the absence of the wall in Berlin; and vestiges of the old European dream in Potsdam, not least the great cosmopolitan idiom of *sans souci*. In Ralph's words, "Potsdam, its palaces tempered by a wider, gentler, and more pastoral aspect (its modest Dutch quarter, its handsomely sober Russian village, its quiet streets, its whole unhurried, ungrandiose landscape of parks, lakes, old houses, and churches), was always



TO CELEBRATE CHARTER DAY, OCTOBER 12, 1994, MARKING UTK'S BICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY, THE FACULTY ATTENDED A CONVOCATION. LEFT TO RIGHT (FRONT): PROFESSORS GERDA SCHMIDT, ROSALIND GWYNNE, MIRIAM LEVERING, JIM FITZGERALD, JOHN HODGES, ROSALIND HACKETT. BACK: PROFESSORS CHARLES REYNOLDS, DAVID DUNGAN, DAVID LINGE, MARK HULSETER, STANLEY LUSBY. ABSENT ARE RALPH NORMAN AND LEE HUMPHREYS.

a sort of reminder to Berlin that there are other senses of the Center than grand avenues and massive gates, and that these other senses of the Center, taking as much in the architecture and ambition of Potsdam from France and Italy as from anything especially Prussian or Germanic, are German too, and therefore indispensable parts of the European equation."

Also in July, with Yulan Washburn, chair of Language and World Business, Ralph spent several days in Caen, France, with the UTK Normandy Scholars at the Museum of the Peace. Ralph writes: "It was at Omaha Beach and Utah Beach, where American soldiers paid the price for Chamberlain's peace, and Clemenceau's, and Woodrow Wilson's—paid as high a price as they knew how to pay for that seductive slogan we are hearing once again: The U. S. cannot be the world's policeman. One cannot help wondering on what beaches our children and grandchildren will pay the price for the present popularity of this regrettable sanctimony. But Normandy is also where you'll find the Bayeux Tapestry, and where William of Normandy ("Guillaume le conquérant") sleeps now, having come home to Calvados after civilizing the rude Anglo-Saxons across the Channel—having, for instance, ordered up Lincoln, York, and Durham cathedrals, among others, and having relieved England of the burden of trying to speak and write with nothing more or better than Anglo-Saxon for a language. If you want to show how thankful you are for Chaucer's English, and Shakespeare's, and W. E. B. DuBois', and Virginia Woolf's, and James Baldwin's, and Wallace Stevens', go to the Eglise Saint-Etienne at the Abbaye aux Hommes, and do reverence at the 'Tombeau de Gillaume le Conquérant.' However many tribal chauvinists are fussing at the moment about the Chunnel, Gillaume would never have been among them. He and old Charlemagne were, as hegemonists, wary of strict nation-state consciousness, and they both would no

doubt have enjoyed an uninterrupted train ride from Rouen to Runnymede and back again, savoring the damage this transportation might be doing to regional cuisine, local pride, and multicultural piety."

Ralph will continue to coordinate UTK's faculty linkages with Bonn and chair the campus coordinating committee for Normandy, as part of a larger charge from the Dean of Arts and Sciences to give advice and coordination in the College's international programs. In this capacity, he expects to visit Cambridge and Swansea next spring. And his memorial address, "Dear Harold: Remarks at the Memorial for Harold Hale," has been published in *Best Sermons 7*, edited by James Cox for Harper/San Francisco, and will appear in September, 1995. Other contributors include Bill Moyers and John Paul II. As Ralph has put it: "Right nice company, wedged in between a Baptist and a Roman Catholic—about where an Episcopalian brought up Methodist ought to be found, don't you think?"

Amidst this busy schedule, Ralph has continued working on his book, tentatively entitled, *The Sense of an Argument*, and he hopes also to complete essays on Keynes and the Bloomsbury canon, and "The Figure of Magnanimity" (a reflection on recent historical examples of magnanimity as a virtue and working political principle). He also plans to begin work in earnest on a longer project, a textbook approach to the study of religion in Western culture through the exploration of opera.

Of course Ralph continues to edit the interdisciplinary journal *Soundings*—a periodical now in its seventy-seventh year—along with the good company of new Managing Editor Dan Deffenbaugh and with the contributions of Board of Editors members Charles Reynolds (Chair), Lee Humphreys, and Emeritus Professor Stanley Lusby, all of the Department of Religious Studies, as well as such other UTK colleagues as Dean Larry Ratner and Professors Howard Pollio, Milton Klein, Allen Dunn, William Shurr,

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

published in 1998 in Spanish and English, and hopefully, in French, Italian, and German a year later. Currently, negotiations are taking place for Russian, Korean, and Chinese editions.

In April, David learned that approval had been granted for him, and an Austrian colleague, Professor Albert Fuchs of Linz, Austria, to begin a long-term research seminar within the auspices of the European New Testament Society, the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, for advanced study of the question of the composition of the Gospels. Their first meeting takes place in August, 1995, at the University of Prague, Czech Republic.

### ROSALIND GWYNNE

1993-1994 marked the appearance of Rosalind's article, "The Neglected Sunna: The Sunna of God," previously delivered as a paper at the 1993 meeting of the American Oriental Society and solicited for publication by the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*. This paper is the first publication to grow out of her work in progress, a monograph on the subject of argument in the Qur'an. And in April, Rosalind organized and chaired a panel at the annual meeting of the Medieval Academy of America, which was held in Knoxville. The overall theme of the meeting, as well as the UT Spring Medieval Studies Seminar, was "The University in the Middle Ages," in honor of UT's Bicentennial, a topic Rosalind had suggested several years earlier with the ulterior motive of spotlighting the Islamic role in the development of Western institutions of higher learning. The three papers on her panel dealt with the topics of Islamic medical education (Leila al-Imad, ETSU), legal education (Devin Stewart, Emory), and the Islamic elements in the foundation of the University of Naples, the first "state university" (Gordon Newby, Emory). Rosalind also arranged for Professors Newby and Stewart to be interviewed by Jacqueline Jones on her WUOT radio program, "Segue."

On October 5, Professor Newby, who is Chair of the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Languages and Literature at Emory University, returned to UT to deliver a public lecture entitled, "Prophets, Messiahs, and Community: Jewish-Muslim Conflicts Over Text and Territory in the Eighth Century," sponsored by the

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Medieval Studies Committee, the Asian Studies Committee, and the Department of Religious Studies. Professor Newby amply demonstrated his rare ability to handle both Arabic and Jewish texts, and the lecture was extremely well attended.

In the fall of 1993, Rosalind was appointed to chair a committee that would review and possibly revise the Religious Studies major at UT. The committee consisted of faculty members Fitzgerald, Hodges, Levering, Linge, and Schmidt. The committee studied the findings of the Department's previous curriculum retreat held in May 1993, the majors at peer institutions, and the teaching interests of current Department faculty. A new major was approved.

In March of 1994, Rosalind had the honor of serving on the external review committee for the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at her alma mater, the University of Washington. From Seattle, she flew to Washington, D.C., where, for the second year in a row, she advised a UT student delegation to the National Model Arab League (and continues to act as advisor to the Muslim Student Association as well as the Indonesian Student Organization). The 1994 delegation consisted of thirteen students, up from five the previous year, and another advisor was added, Robert Gwynne, representing the Department of Speech Communication. The students did all their own fundraising from numerous UT Departments and Colleges. This past year they also had the special challenge of representing Iraq. To that end, students and advisors were given a briefing by the Iraqi chargé d'affaires (a charming man who has since been deported from the U.S.) in a once-grand Iraqi embassy building now in a sad state of decline. One of the student delegates had attended a meeting of the actual Arab League in Cairo and was thus able to advise the delegation on color and authenticity. This same student has already begun to assemble a delegation for the 1995 model League.

In the spring of 1994, Rosalind offered, for the first time, a new course, RS 333: "Islam in the Modern World." This is not a "topics" course but a permanent course that begins with the eighteenth-century C.E. and goes right up to the present. Student projects last spring dealt

and Al Burstein. As editor, Ralph's duties are often divided between reviewing from twenty to twenty-five manuscript submissions a month and, in his words, "trying to keep the Powers That Be from finding out how much sheer fun this is; in our Puritan culture, this is an admission of the gravest of sins, worse than cross-dressing or dipping into your capital."

On a final note, and despite all best efforts and good intentions, Ralph earned only the Sportsmanship Trophy (i.e., 4th place doubles) at last year's Tennessee State Croquet Tournament in Franklin. And he has changed the tentative subtitle of his projected text,

*Croquet and God's Word*, from "You Can Have It All: Wickets the Lord's Way" to "Enduring All Things: What Christian Stoicism Teaches Us About Three-Ball Deadness." However, on this past October 21-23, along with his partner Charles "Chick" East of Rockwood, Tennessee, Ralph placed third in doubles at the Tennessee Croquet Tournament in Memphis. In spite of this improved performance, he is now considering yet a third subtitle: "A Chastened Christian Realism: What To Do When It Becomes Apparent (Contra Wesley) That You Are Not Going On To Perfection."

## A REPORT FROM THE HEAD (CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

Academic Affairs, back in our Department on a full-time basis. Both Gerda Schmidt and Mark Hulsether are making strong contributions to our program as recent tenure-track appointments in Judaic Religion and Religions of the Americas respectively. And any Department looking for tenure-track appointments in Method and Theory in the Study of Religion or in Theology and Ecology should look carefully at Russell McCutcheon or Dan Deffenbaugh, respectively. Both these instructors have been outstanding teachers in the classroom and exceptionally good colleagues.

We continue to have an exciting group of majors and our courses remain fully subscribed. We turn away hundreds of students each year who are unable to get seats in our classes. Because of these numerous successes, it is not surprising that we are receiving strong support from Dean Larry Ratner of the College of Arts and Sciences and from the campus administration generally.

Our external fund-raising has also been successful because of the confidence donors have in the quality of our faculty and our program. The strength of our faculty is reflected in the numerous offices held in professional societies at the national and international level: Miriam Levering continues as

President of the Society for the Study of Chinese Religions; Rosalind Hackett is the current president of the North American Association for the Study of Religion and Treasurer of the African Association for the Study of Religions, both affiliates of the International Association for the History of Religions; Charles Reynolds is President of the Council of Societies for the History of Religion; David Dungan is Executive Secretary of the International Association for Gospel Studies; Ralph Norman is a member of the Board of Directors of the Society for Values in Higher Education and edits *Soundings*, an interdisciplinary journal for the humanities which is jointly sponsored by the University of Tennessee and SVHE; Lee Humphreys is just ending his three-year term as Editor of the new publication, *Spotlight on Teaching*, from the American Academy of Religion and Russell McCutcheon serves as Co-Editor of the journal, *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*. And, finally, too many of our faculty to mention are on various editorial boards for scholarly periodicals in the study of religion.

My own research is currently focused on a theory of justice. I am finding the work of John Rawls, Martha Nussbaum, Jürgen Habermas, Brian Barry, and Michael Walzer especially helpful for this project.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



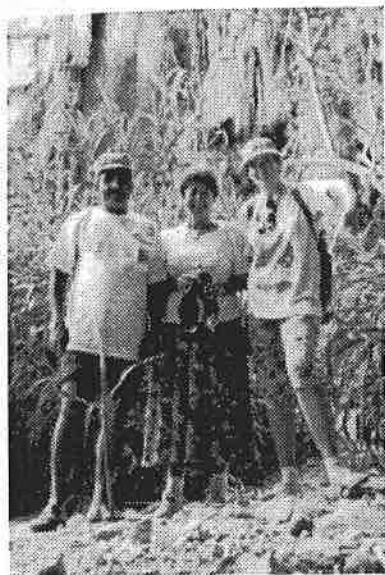
# Judaic Studies Program at UTK Completes Exciting First Year

The newly founded Judaic Studies Program at UTK has been received with great interest and appreciation, reports Judaic Scholar of Religion, Gilya Gerda Schmidt, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies.

The activities of the past year have included the inauguration of a Judaic Studies Lecture Series. Two scholars from the wider field of Jewish academics are invited for on-campus lectures per

term. The opening lecture was presented by Professor Steven T. Katz, Cornell University, who spoke on "The Holocaust and Comparative History." Two additional lectures, in the Spring term, dealt with the topic of Jewish art. Professor Bezalel Narkiss, Center for Jewish Art at Hebrew University, Jerusalem, spoke on "Jewish Identity through Art," and Dr. Jo Milgrom, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, combined art and textual analysis with her lecture on "The Binding of Isaac." This year's first speaker was Professor Alexander Orbach, University of Pittsburgh, who spoke on "The Jewish Cultures of Nineteenth Century Russian Jewry."

Community presentations by Professor Schmidt were made to the Campus Ministers, the Knoxville Jewish Federation, the Federation's Professional Women's Group, the Jewish Faculty group, Heska Amuna Synagogue's Adult Education Program, the Fountain City Presbyterian Church, the Oak Ridge Jewish Community, Temple Beth-El, and to students in the classes of colleagues.



OUTING TO NATURE RESERVE EIN GEDI. FROM LEFT, STUDENT FROM RAMALLAH, GERDA SCHMIDT, AND NEW ISRAELI IMMIGRANT FROM ROUMANIA.

Currently, a Holocaust Conference is being planned at The University of Tennessee in Knoxville, under the auspices of the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, with support from other sponsoring agencies. The three-day event entitled, "The Holocaust 1949-1995: Fifty Years Later—What Have We Learned?" will take place October 22-24, 1995.

Students at UTK are taking Judaic

Studies courses for a variety of reasons—to fulfill requirements for either the RS major or to fulfill distribution requirements, out of interest, and to learn more about a tradition they belong to in some way. Approximately 150 students completed last year's courses, "Comparative World Religions" and "Judaism." This year we are offering "Introduction to Judaism," "Contemporary Jewish Thinkers," "Voices of the Holocaust," and "Comparative World Religions."

Pledges for the position of the Judaic Scholar of Religion have exceeded \$500,000, of which \$250,000 have already been contributed. We are currently working with other faculty in an effort to generate more Judaic Studies courses. This spring, the English Department is bringing in author Richard Elman as a visiting scholar. A cooperative exchange program with Hebrew University is being explored. And we are pleased to announce that Dean Larry Ratner of the College of Arts & Sciences and the faculties in the Departments of History and English have approved additional appointments in their Departments, in Jewish History and Jewish Literature, respectively.

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

with everything from Islam in the former Soviet Union countries of Kazakhstan and Tajikistan to Islam as an American religion.

### ROSALIND HACKETT

Rosalind Hackett is currently completing her manuscript on *Art and Religion in Africa* (London, Pinter Publishers). She has found it to be an ambitious and daunting task, but not without enjoyment as it has taken her to several libraries and museums in this country, Europe, and Africa. It has also given her an opportunity to interact with colleagues in art history, performance studies, and anthropology. She spent part of her research leave last spring at the Universities of Florida, Iowa, Northwestern, as well as the National Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian on this very project. She received a grant from the Program for the Advanced Study of Art and Life in Africa at the University of Iowa to put together illustrations for her book from their collection. Rosalind has just finished assembling, in connection with this area of her research, a special issue of the *Journal of Religion in Africa* on "Art." She has also recently agreed to publish a book on religious and political conflict in Nigeria for 1996 for the Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C. She is currently working with a Mexican colleague on the panels on Religion and Gender for the upcoming congress of the International Association for the History of Religions in Mexico City in 1995. She continues to enjoy lecturing on religion in Africa for the Foreign Service Training Institute in Washington, D.C., as well as to local groups on the ever controversial issue of sects and cults. Rosalind has delivered public lectures this year at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Tulane University, the University of Calabar, Nigeria, and a conference paper at a regional meeting of the IAHR held this September in Brno, Czech Republic. Her publications this year have appeared as chapters in two books and as an article in an international journal.

Rosalind also spent two months as part of her research leave this summer in Ghana and Nigeria. She was collecting data on the growth of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement in Africa and the activities of African evangelists in Asia as part of her project funded by the Over-

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

seas Ministries Study Center Research Enablement Program which is itself funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts. While she was returning to old stomping grounds, a lot had happened in the three years since she had last been there. She was struck not just by the remarkable growth of the pentecostal and charismatic revival in these parts, but also by the increasing place religious representations of evil have in popular culture. Times are hard for many Africans and "sacred canopies" abound with varied interpretations and solutions. She intends to write a piece on the very negative attitudes displayed by the newer Christian movements toward their own cultural heritage.

Nigeria was in a state of political and economic turmoil this summer, offering challenges and excitement to even old Nigeria hands such as Rosalind. The frenzy surrounding the World Cup both fuelled and alleviated the situation. At one point during her stay in Nigeria, she succumbed to a prophecy from a Nigerian prophet which proved to be more accurate than she could have anticipated, but she continues to resist efforts by her numerous church leader friends to get her to found a spiritual movement. She remains committed to trying to help African colleagues and students in the various universities and colleges pursue their studies in religion, for which there is still a great deal of enthusiasm despite the pressures to survive and eke out a living.

### **TOM HEFFERNAN (ADJUNCT)**

Tom spent some weeks in England and Germany this summer studying medieval Latin and English manuscripts. For some years Tom has been writing a catalogue of vernacular sermons composed between 1100-1400 C.E.—a project that will enlarge our knowledge of the peasantry. Since the medieval peasant was universally illiterate, the vernacular sermon is one of the few entrees into the mentality of the peasant. The preacher often instructed the congregation in rules of behavior. Through a study of the sermon, we can discern issues of importance for these rural agrarian populations.

During his work in the Cambridge University Library, Tom found what appears to be an unknown fragment of a

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

## Ulpan Akiva: A Bridge Over Stormy Waters and a Model for Multiculturalism

REFLECTIONS ON A SUMMER INTENSIVE LANGUAGE PROGRAM IN ISRAEL BY GERDA SCHMIDT

*"Among us you will find in each and every corner, people occupied in experiments of all types, be it in the field of agriculture, fertilization, coping with climatic conditions, or be it in the field of social conditions."* —Berl Katznelson

People from all walks of life and many countries in the world gathered for lunch around the long tables in the dining room of the Green Beach Hotel in Ramat Poleg, Israel. At one table a new immigrant from the US was joined by a Christian woman pharmacist from Switzerland, a Christian professor from the US, a young woman from Togo, and a young Christian couple from Norway. The only expression beyond "Shalom" that they all shared was "*b'te avon*" (*bon appétit*).

Forty-four years ago, an Israeli grade school teacher, Shulamit Katznelson, decided to open an intensive study program for Hebrew in Israel. In 1951, the new state of Israel was only two years old, and Shulamit recognized the potential problem of a multicultural nation without a common bond. After all, not everyone living in the Land of Israel was Jewish, and even Israeli Jews came from widely diverging cultural backgrounds. In her mind, the language of the land, Hebrew, was to be that bond. Shulamit called her adult education "baby" Ulpan Akiva, after the noted Jewish sage Akiva who began to study at the age of forty, with the encouragement of his wife. From the beginning, Shulamit included all Israelis into her program. Chaim Gurie, Israel's national poet, wrote, "Schulamit is an Israeli who unites in her mind all contradictions, and who is both a rightist and a leftist, a hawk and a dove, religious and secularist, honors tradition and rejects conventionalities. She has great belief in the power of understanding, generosity, mutual respect and a merciful heart to bring people closer to each other in this

difficult country."

Since 1986, when the directress and the institution received the prestigious Israel Prize for Life Achievement in Education, Ulpan Akiva has become a household word not only in Israel but around the world. On that occasion, President Haim Herzog noted, "Ulpan Akiva is like a bridge over stormy waters. It spans across the muddy currents of enmity and strife, hatred and nationalistic extremism, barriers and prejudices, cultural gaps and differing values, false perceptions, mistrust and intolerance. This place is a common meeting ground for human beings. It provides for openness, for mutual respect and understanding, and for the breaking down of barriers between people from different cultural backgrounds, nationalities and religions. It is a breeding group for mutual understanding and respect instead of estrangement and antipathy. In this place, hope and faith for peace between us and our neighbors are being planted. From here, a road is being paved toward a better future. With this, friendship and neighborliness will prevail throughout our land."

Shulamit Katznelson's exhaustive efforts in creating a climate where the different populations and cultures of Israel could get to know each other and the world at large could explore Israel is being recognized at home and abroad. For the past three years, Shulamit has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by members of the Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, Irish and Danish governments and the U.S. Congress. In July of this year, she was awarded the Naamat Prize for Lifetime Achievement.

Initially without a place of their own, today Ulpan Akiva occupies a spacious campus with dormitory-style accommodations, a kibbutz-type dining room with three kosher meals, a swimming pool and classrooms at the

beach in Ramat Poley, just outside of Netanya. One morning, while we sit on the veranda of the Green Beach Hotel for Bible study, Shulamit waves her arms over the lush campus expanse and explains, "I never wanted a place of my own. I don't like to own things. For years we moved from place to place, never knowing where the money would come from, or if we would exist tomorrow." Yet the acquisition of the campus property has provided a solid basis for future broadening of all of the Ulpan's multi-faced programs, and has reaffirmed and strengthened the Ulpan's unique and independent standing as a symbol of what can and should be accomplished in Israel-Diaspora relations and in Jewish-Arab-Druze relationships within Israel.

Intensive Hebrew language training facilities (*ulpanim*) exist in Israel and around the world, but none have reached the quality of Ulpan Akiva. Supported, though not run, by the Ministry of Education, the ulpan prides itself in its diversity of participants. Basically, the student population consists of new immigrants, non-Jewish and Jewish Israelis, tourists from all walks of life, nationalities and religions, and Arabs from the Territories. All share the desire or need to learn Hebrew.

On the first day, the new students are welcomed by the ulpan's staff. The first group experience occurs in an introductory session. The teachers lead the entire group in a song without words. After the pace picks up, Shulamit enters. Many people applaud her, as she makes her way to the front. A matronly senior citizen who walks with a swinging gate, she claps her hands to the music, encouraging all in the room to join in. One of the teachers takes her by the arm and they dance before the group, drawing others into the circle. Suddenly, with a motion of her hand, she cuts the music and calls out, "Norwegia." Two young people stand up, she beckons them forward. Veteran students, they belong to a Christian group dedicated to bringing Jews home. Next comes "Russia." Many

people of all ages rise. They are the former Refuseniks, part of the latest wave of ingathering, new immigrants from the former Soviet Union, who are hoping for a better life in a free Israel. With each national group, Shulamit plays her game of discovery. When she sees an interesting face, she beckons the person to the front.

Sustained human contact occurs on different levels. The most basic is in the classroom. After an initial placement test, students are assigned to grades—*aleph*, *aleph* plus, *bet*, *bet* plus, and the rarer *gimmel* and *dalet*. In classes of between ten and twenty students, everyone tests the waters of mutual understanding. Tourists from Switzerland, the US, and France, there for one to three months over the summer, mingle with new immigrants from Russia, Armenia, England, South Africa, the US, France and Germany, who generally attend the full six months course of study, as well as with Arab students from the Territories, teachers and social service agency employees. There is no common bond beyond the study of Hebrew—religiously, culturally, economically, and agewise, the group is as disparate as can be. A non-Jewish teacher of Hebrew in Russia comes face to face with a Russian Jew who is a new immigrant, a German Jew from former East Germany meets a German Christian as well as a recent new immigrant from Germany. An immigrant from Great Britain meets other immigrants from South Africa and America, and a Swiss Jew exchanges greetings with a Swiss Christian. An Israeli Christian Arab from Haifa meets a Palestinian Muslim from Ramallah.

The burden of truly breaking the ice falls to the classroom teachers. Their qualifications include being linguist, social worker, psychologist, historian, and social secretary. In Hebrew, the teacher asks each student's name and place of origin.

"My name is Rachel," my teacher says. "I am Israeli, and I love people." She encourages others to repeat the previous information and to add their own. Learning has begun.

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

very early religious meditation in verse. The seven hundred year old fragment, written on vellum, is severely damaged and darkened by dampness and is therefore difficult to read. Tom hopes, however, to have the fragment transcribed by the end of the year.

Tom also had the opportunity of visiting the library of the great Benedictine Monastery at Melk in Austria. Melk was one of the leading Benedictine monasteries during the Middle Ages. It has a fabulously rich library, and among its jewels Tom was able to see a ninth-century C.E. copy of Bede's *De Temporibus*.

A number of Tom's essays appeared in print this year. One that he finds especially interesting is a study of the transformation of the political traitor Simon de Montfort (1208-1265) into a saint. The transformation was accomplished by an aristocratic anti-Royalist faction which shrewdly exploited the sympathies of important church leaders. Also, Tom has written a number of essays on the martyrs of the Carthaginian Church of the third-century C.E. and is now ready to begin his book-length study of this group. He will make a presentation of this material at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago in January of 1995.

### JOHN HODGES

John spent part of the past summer conducting interviews with African-American ministers and members of various churches regarding his on-going study of religion among blacks in the Mississippi Delta. The study in part will attempt to determine the relationship between a group's economic and educational level and the integrity of their religious faith. John also serves on the Advisory Committee of Achievers Committed to Excellence (ACE), a group of highly motivated African-American undergraduates. He is also a member of the university's Freshman Review Committee and serves on the board of the University of Tennessee Press.

### MARK HULSETH

In his second year at Tennessee, Mark Hulseth remains busy developing new courses on Religion in U.S. History, American Studies, and Comparative Religion.

Mark's research agenda took a major step forward with a contract from the

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

University of Tennessee Press for his first book, tentatively entitled *The Transformation of Protestant Social Thought: Christianity and Crisis Magazine, 1941-1993*. He also won a Summer Research Stipend from the Louisville Institute for the Study of Protestantism and American Culture. This national award funded archival work in C&C's papers at Union Seminary in New York and research for a new chapter in his book on C&C's final years.

Mark presented four scholarly papers at the American Academy of Religion, American Studies Association, Southeast Commission for the Study of Religion, and a national conference celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the American Studies Program at the University of Minnesota (Mark's alma mater). He also gave several local presentations, wrote five scholarly reviews, and published an article entitled, "Jesus and Madonna: North American Liberation Theologies and Secular Popular Music" in *Black Sacred Music: a Journal of Theomusicology*.

In the current school year, Mark is offering a new course entitled, "Religion in Red, White, and Black" that explores cultural relationships among Euro-Americans, African Americans, and Native Americans as they have changed throughout U.S. history. He is also developing an introduction to world religions on the topic of "Comparing and Interpreting Religious Autobiographies." After completing the final revisions for his book, Mark's next project will examine Cornel West's contribution to religious studies and interdisciplinary cultural studies.

### MIRIAM LEVERING

Between August of 1993 and June of 1994, Miriam participated as one member of a four-person leadership team in a series of four workshops on pedagogy for young professors of Religious Studies. The workshop series was offered by the American Academy of Religion and funded by the Lilly Endowment. She spent two weeks and two long weekends discussing teaching philosophies and practicing in the development and testing of teaching techniques with fellow staffers Tom Peterson, Susan Henking, Bob Sessions, Linda Barnes and fifteen outstanding young teachers from the U.S.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

## Visiting Professor from Britain Talks on Women and Destiny

On Tuesday November 15, Dr. Kim Knott, Senior Lecturer from the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds, England, gave a lecture entitled: "Did I Fall or Was I Pushed: Contemporary Women's Reflections on Destiny and Freewill." The lecture was co-sponsored by Anthropology, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Sociology, University Studies, Women's Studies and the Asian Studies Committee. The lecture was based on her current work in progress on women and destiny where she reflects on contemporary expressions by women of their ideas about personal choice, fate, fortune, providence, karma and kismet.

Here is an extract from the summary of her talk: "In the feminist period from the 1970s to today, women have been enjoined to take control of their bodies, to be assertive, to demand their rights as women and to be autonomous. Their history as passive and oppressed victims has been publicly disclosed and condemned. But the popular discourse of personal destiny continues to operate, in women's magazines and fiction, on TV and in the subculture of astrology, fortune-telling,

and New Age spirituality. And traditional religions continue to present their teachings on the complex relationship of freewill and predestination.

How do women make sense of the interpretative possibilities available to them? To investigate this I am working with several different groups of women in Britain: young South Asian women, Jewish women in the middle years of life, older Christian women, New Age and neo-Pagan women, and women who have embraced a secular worldview. Through interviews and discussions, I draw out their thoughts, and to these I add an analysis of selected women's texts, including fiction and autobiography, philosophical writing, magazines and journals, and their use of creative media."

Dr. Knott is currently the secretary of the British Association for the Study of Religions. She is the author of *My Sweet Lord: the Hare Krishna Movement* (Aquarian Press, 1986) and *Hinduism in Leeds: A Study of Religious Practice in the Indian Hindu Community and in Hindu-Related Groups* (University of Leeds, 1986). She has published numerous articles on gender in the study of religion, and Asian religions.

## Former Student Addresses Commencement

Dr. James Washington, currently Robert T. Handy Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University, New York, was the Commencement speaker on December 19, 1993. As one of the first graduates of the UT Department of Religious Studies, Dr. James Washington spoke of his presence at the ceremony as a real "homecoming" and as a "profound irony" in more ways than one. He described how he had vowed not to live in the South after being betrayed in the Vietnam War protests that took place in Knoxville in 1970. Today he is one of the leading African-American scholars of religion in this country. His

publications include *Frustrated Fellowship: the Black Baptist Quest for Social Power* (Mercer 1986) and an edited volume, *A Testament of Hope: the Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Harper and Row, 1986).

Describing himself as a "professional learner," Dr. Washington shared with the graduating students some of the immense class and race barriers he had to cross in his life. He recounted how as a young high school student, hungry for knowledge, he had been refused entry to the city library in Knoxville, even after the official end of segregation. His own family could not

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE



# The Double Major in Context

JASON CHUMLEY, RELIGIOUS STUDIES MAJOR

It is no secret that Departments of Religious Studies around the nation have been experiencing pressures over the last decade—some have even closed altogether, shuffling tenured professors into alternative departments which seem related to their specializations and releasing others to weather the storm in more friendly environments. For those Departments not directly affected by such drastic pressures, there has at least been an increasing introspection, an attempt to discover what unique role, if any, they play in universities so that they will be better able to defend themselves if the fate which has befallen their contemporaries turns out to be the beginning of a more widespread trend. At the University of Tennessee one thing that has come to light under such reflection is a high percentage of double majors in the Department, nearly one out of every two Religious Studies majors claims another field of study. While it is not exactly clear what such a trend means for the Department, it is possible to view the high number of double majors as a victory for Religious Studies. In many instances the double majors I interviewed felt that Religious Studies complemented another major that was more or less incomplete. This is true for Diana Whaley who combines Religious Studies with Nursing, and says, "I am interested in a more holistic medicine. In hospitals you see people from every background, my Religious Studies training grants me an understanding of the individual that may help me care for them in a more complete manner." In this way the study of religions is affirmed because it is seen to provide an added insight into other disciplines, or to explore issues in depth that are only introduced elsewhere. This may account for the high number of minors as well, in proportion to the number of double and single majors currently in the Department.

Nearly one half of the students with double majors combine Religious Studies with Anthropology—fields long held to be congruent. But many others have waxed creative with their combinations, joining the study of religion with such varied subjects as English, Physics, Art, even Dance. Combinations which may seem unusual are typically inspired by a student's unique perception of the subject. Elena Mee, who studies both religion and art, says that she feels they "conceptualize the world in a similar way." My own combination of Critical Theory and Religious Studies is similar in that it stems from a belief that the study of religion is often subject to the same type of theoretical trends used in the study of literature, e.g., Marxist, feminist, structuralist, etc., and that the study of religion is therefore enhanced by an understanding of these methods of "conceptualization."

But is all this really beneficial to Religious Studies Departments? While the proliferation of double majors and minors seems to suggest that there is a great interest in the study of religion, it does not necessarily support those who maintain that Religious Studies is an autonomous discipline. Such a trend, if it is indeed a trend, may be interpreted as meaning that the study of religion is relevant inasmuch as it applies to, and complements, other areas of study. Perhaps this speaks to the manner in which religion itself is perceived. If one views religion as an autonomous, essential, and unique facet of human existence, one may have a great deal at stake in maintaining a discipline which treats the study of religion in this manner—it is doubtful that scattering Religious Studies professors across a variety of other disciplines would facilitate such an approach to religion. However, on the other hand, if one understands religion as just one among a variety of human experiences, making attempts to ground such ex-

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

and Canada who belong to Eastern International Region of the AAR. As part of a "collective" that formed in the workshop group, she is working on a special issue of the AAR's *Spotlight on Teaching* on pedagogy related to religion and lesbian and gay concerns.

In November of 1993, Miriam travelled to Japan to work with scholars at Komazawa University in Tokyo on translations of the stories and sermons of Chinese women Zen masters of the Sung dynasty (eleventh and twelfth centuries C.E.). This fall she has completed an essay on links between Buddhist sutra stories and Zen storytelling about enlightened women for a Fortress Press volume on women and goddess traditions. She has also finished an essay for a volume called *Creating the World of Zen*, a book of scholarly studies on the spread of Sung dynasty Ch'an Buddhism throughout East Asia. She has been working on her book on the important Ch'an teacher Ta-hui Tsung-kao and the development of koan practice in Zen Buddhism, and continues to make progress on her manuscript on the Sung women Zen masters.

Miriam's work with the development of a major art exhibition on Childhood in Chinese Art and Culture at the Cincinnati Art Museum has continued this year. The exhibition is scheduled for 1996. The team of scholars, including Miriam, who are to write the catalogue are presenting a panel on "Representations of Children and Childhood in Chinese Art" at the annual meeting of the Association of Asian Studies in March, 1995.

Miriam continues as President of the Society for the Study of Chinese Religions, whose executive committee functions as the executive committee of the Chinese Religions Group of the AAR and which also meets in conjunction with the Association of Asian Studies. This group publishes the *Journal of Chinese Religions* and sponsors a number of panels each year on a wide variety of topics in Chinese Religions.

## RUSSELL MCCUTCHEON

Russell has had a busy year teaching, researching, and editing. He continues to teach as an instructor in the department, teaching introductory courses in world religions as well as an upper level course on the methods and theories used in the

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

study of mythology and rituals. He is also awaiting the scheduling of his dissertation defense at the University of Toronto's Center for the Study of Religion. His dissertation is a critical analysis of the discursive functions and political implications of the *sui generis* claim as it is used in the modern study of religion.

In an effort to develop his interest in cross-disciplinary research, Russell has accepted the invitation to become a member of the team-taught University Studies spring course on narrative. The course presents students with a variety of methodologies for reading, interpreting, and possibly critiquing narrative. Russell's contribution will include an examination of various socio-functional approaches to myths as but one way of analyzing the manner in which narratives of origins can support and/or challenge socio-political systems.

Based on his experiences with various textbooks in the world religions course, Russell recently wrote a critical, comprehensive survey of current textbooks. He found that the dominant type of textbook in use in most departments is largely based on nineteenth-century and phenomenologically-based assumptions regarding the need for sympathetic, intuitive research in the study of "other people's" religions. The article was the basis for one of the Department's substantive sessions in November and Russell hopes to have it published in the near future.

Apart from his teaching and writing assorted review essays, Russell continues to edit the international journal *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, now entering its seventh year. In 1995 MTSR will publish a special issue, organized by the guest editor Gary Lease (University of California, Santa Cruz), on the current issues facing the institutional study of religion. The articles in this issue draw on the experiences of a variety of scholars throughout North America, each reflecting on the possible causes for the successes or failures of their individual programs. Clearly, with some recently announced Department retrenchments, this is a most important issue. Also, MTSR will soon issue a call for papers organized with the cooperation of Michael Levine (University of Western Australia) on topics that address the relations be-

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

periences in the unique reality of "the sacred" precarious at best, then aligning the study of religion with other specialized studies such as history, anthropology, and sociology, is not an uncomfortable proposition.

In the end, however, perhaps the increase in double majors makes more of a commentary on the culture at large than about Religious Studies specifically. It may be possible to situate the increase of double majors in the fact that contemporary students, for a number of reasons, desire to leave their options open. More than one student I spoke with said that they chose a double major because they were "interested in more than one thing and they did not want to be tied down." Because it is increasingly more difficult to be placed in the work force with only an undergraduate degree, students feel less pressure to decide immediately on a definite focus, they feel they can use their undergraduate experience to explore several areas of study and then make the choices when it comes to graduate school. Finally, of course, economics cannot be ignored. In a contemporary setting in which a college degree separates the "haves" from the "have nots" only in as much as it endows its bearer with a marketable skill, there is a trend to enter more pragmatic fields. In these situations the study of religion is understood as incidental to one's more practical studies. Admittedly, this theory goes further to explain the dearth of majors and the vast amount of minors in many fields of inquiry than the fact that the majors we do find tend to double up in creative ways. Nonetheless, although it is certain that Diana will be working with her nursing degree, the benefits of her Religious Studies training will be useful, if more intangible.

Whatever the reasons, or the implications, double majors seem to be a popular option. It is possible that such interdisciplinary studies will increase the quality both of Religious Studies classes and the classes of the many other Departments our double majors call home; after all, everyone can benefit from a broad variety of perspectives.

## The New Major in Religious Studies

### WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Although it has taken time and effort, the Department has agreed on a creative, redesigned major in Religious Studies. With the addition of new faculty members and new areas of scholarly expertise, it was clear that the requirements of the major were in need of revision. Apart from redistributing current and new course offerings, the new major is organized around a series of new categories that reflect some of the theoretical and even political concerns that have recently occupied the attention of scholars of religion. For example, similar criticisms to those originally directed toward the one-time popular category of 'primitive religion' are now addressing the inadequacies of such designations as 'primal religion,' 'basic religion,' and 'traditional religion.' As is the case in some other programs, such designations have now been dropped and the Department's courses are organized in terms of geographic, rather than religious, designations, e.g., Religions and Cultures of South Asia, Religions and Cultures of the Americas, and Religions and Cultures of Africa. Such designations have the benefit of emphasizing for students the importance of the historical and cultural contexts in which religions are practiced. Generally speaking, this reorganization of the major has provided the faculty with the opportunity to reconsider the role played by methods of research not only in individual courses but in the curriculum as a whole. Rosalind Gwynne, who chaired the committee, as well as Jim Fitzgerald, John Hodges, Miriam Levering, David Linge, and Gerda Schmidt, the members of the committee, all deserve our thanks for their work on this issue.

### HOW TO CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT:

THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
501 MCCLUNG TOWER  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37996-0450  
TELEPHONE (615) 974-2466  
FAX (615) 974-0965

## Student News

**Ellen Roberds** is a great example of "Have Degree in Religious Studies Will Travel"! After a year in Northern Ireland, she sent us a card this summer from Rozavlea, a small village in northern Romania where she had been working on a YMCA camp. She reports that in this rural area, people, both young and old, still show attachment to their ancient customs and religious traditions, including pilgrimages to local monasteries. She writes of the way her soccer skills helped command her more respect from the local men.

**Nancy Fraley** is currently enrolled at Harvard Divinity School, where she is taking a class with Diana Eck. She is also studying Tibetan, which she declares to be easier than Sanskrit!

**Elizabeth Fraley** has been working in Knoxville this term but will be starting a graduate program in January at either Calgary, Claremont, or Harvard.

**Kristen Austin** spent the summer in Russia discussing ecological concerns with an international group of students. She is currently working as a naturalist on Mount LeConte in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

**Amy Langston** has returned from a year as a cook at a Dude Ranch in Arizona and touring various tourist sites and has resumed her Masters degree at Harvard Divinity School.

**Teresa Hornsby** is in her second year of Masters studies at Harvard Divinity School and plans to complete the degree in the spring of 1995. She is looking forward to working on a Ph.D. in comparative religions and the study of the New Testament.

**Fred Brabson** is working on his Master of Divinity degree at Claremont School of Theology in California.

**Miranda Bridges** and Departmental prodigal son **Ian Blackburn** are now in the local journalistic trenches of *Metro Pulse*, a three-year-old biweekly news, arts and entertainment paper.

## BUT WAIT! There's more...

And finally, from the "Yes, Virginia, there is an application for our knowledge" category, we bring you the case of the scholar of religion quoted in the November issue of *Shape* magazine. Or, as Miriam Levering has been heard to say around the Department lately, "Who's the last person you'd expect to see in *Shape* magazine?" In a feature on the state of the longtime "beauty blackout" in Communist China, Miriam helps readers to understand that for over forty years the dominant interpretation in China has been that cosmetics are understood as "signs of upper-class corruption." However, in a vein not all that different from Naomi Wolf's thesis in her bestseller, *The Beauty Myth*, Miriam is quick to point out that now that bourgeois culture is slowly reasserting itself in China—a case in point is the increased sale and use of cosmetics by women—sexism is all the more evident, notably in the current government's explicit preference for the educating and hiring of men. The moral of this story? That scholars of religion do indeed have something relevant to say.

## WELCOME TO OUR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS AND WORK STUDY STUDENTS

This year the Department has benefitted from the expertise and creativity of three graduate assistants who, working with Professors Fitzgerald, Dungan, Reynolds, Hackett, and Deffenbaugh, are helping to ease the work-load in some of our large enrollment classes. Brad Smith, a graduate student in UTK's Medical Ethics program, Chris Hargrove, a former Philosophy graduate student, and Alec Riedl, one of our former double majors (Anthropology and Religious Studies) have all learned first-hand about the joys of grading papers on the weekends!

Also, in the past year we have had three very helpful work-study students associated with the Department. Sarah Harper, Eddy Falls, and Tamecca Celestine have all learned just what a great place Religious Studies can be.

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

tween religious commitment, on the one hand, and the methods and theories employed for studying and teaching within an academic context, on the other.

### GERDA SCHMIDT

During this past academic year, Gerda has been very busy leading the Judaic Studies Program, organizing a number of interesting on-campus speakers, and participating in a variety of community activities. Nonetheless she found time to give a number of papers on her research in Modern Jewish History and Thought. To the Association for Jewish Studies she spoke on the Fifth Zionist Congress in 1901; she delivered a paper on Jewish art to the regional American Academy of Religion; on the concept of "devekut" (cleaving to God) to the 29th International Medieval Congress, and on Martin Buber and Romanticism to an International Congress in Italy on the Romantic Dialectic. In October of this year, she gave a slide presentation on the peace process in the Middle East at the grassroots level to the Midwest Jewish Studies Association.

Gerda has a number of research projects in various stages of completion including a book in press entitled *Martin Buber's Formative Years: From German Culture to Jewish Renewal, 1897-1909*. She is also continuing work on translating, editing, and expanding Erika Thurner's German book, *Nationalsozialismus und Zigeuner in Oesterreich*. The manuscript is currently being edited. And she also translated from German into English a collection of ninety-five of Yehuda Halevi's religious poems, which have been contributed to a book on Franz Rosenzweig. As well, articles on *devekut*, Buber, and Romanticism are being finalized for publication. Gerda is also editing a volume of conference proceedings from a previous conference on World Religions held in Alabama. Her review of Professor Steven Katz's book, *Post-Holocaust Dialogues: Critical Studies in Modern Jewish Thought*, will appear in next issue of *The Jewish Quarterly Review*.

Gerda's current research deals with spirituality and art in early Zionism, including a volume of Martin Buber's Zionist texts not hitherto translated or published in English. Also, she is currently scheduled to deliver a number of papers throughout 1995.



The Department of Religious Studies  
501 McClung Tower, The University of Tennessee  
Knoxville, TN 37996-0450  
tel. (615) 974-2466

#### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

afford to buy him books. He talked of his decision to return to the "uterus of the African-American community"—the black church. He further insisted upon the power of knowledge and his own realization that reality is not defined by any locality or valley. He mourned the decline of the "passion for knowledge" and credited what he had learned in the UT Religious Studies Department regarding the need to "wage war against the idols of superstition and inhumanity." Citing Francis Bacon, he spoke of an ontology of learning which must embrace "the sacredness of otherness" and look to the betterment of humankind.

Following his provocative and moving address, Dr. Washington and his wife, Patricia, also a Knoxville native, were entertained by Departmental faculty at a dinner in their honor. The reminiscences flew thick and fast and younger faculty wondered how they could ever match the after-dinner stories of those historic seventies!

## A Generous Thank You Goes To...

Debbie Myers and Joan Riedl must be acknowledged for their important role in ensuring that we here in Religious Studies function properly. From running the office to booking our meetings, ensuring we meet our deadlines and submit our book orders when necessary, their efforts contribute to making the Department a fine place to be. Debbie's help is essential for those who wish to steer a straight path through the bureaucratic complexities of life in a university and Joan goes above and beyond the call of duty by kindly proofreading much of our indi-

vidual research, going so far as to gently inform us (oops!) to not split our infinitives (oops again! Sorry Joan).

## About This Newsletter...

The writing, design, and production of this newsletter is a cooperative Departmental effort coordinated by Russell McCutcheon. Special thanks to Ian Blackburn for his time, efforts, and creativity in designing and producing it.

The Samsara logo was designed by Greg Spinner, a graduate in Religious Studies (1987), and is intended to reflect the multiplicity of religious traditions taught in our Department.



FROM THE ARCHIVES:  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
FACULTY, 1975-1976

FRONT ROW, L TO R:  
PROFESSORS DAVID  
LINGE, RALPH ROSS,  
CHARLES REYNOLDS,  
LEE HUMPHREYS,  
RIGGINS EARL, AND  
RALPH NORMAN.

BACK ROW, L TO R:  
PROFESSORS DON  
STEVENS, JAY KIM,  
BOB LEE, ZENRU  
SHIRAKAWA, AND  
STANLEY LUSBY.

ON LEAVE (IN ROME):  
DAVID DUNGAN