
Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies



Vol. 59

Spring 2017

News of the Society

In this Newsletter

Our Newsletter includes information that will appear later in *Buddhist-Christian Studies*:

- An overview of the 2016 Annual Meeting, including board and members meetings and panels
- Streng Award Announcement
- Reports on Conferences

In this issue we also include:

- Information shared on upcoming events
- Announcement of a new journal
- Q&A on membership



**The Annual Meeting of the Society for
Buddhist-Christian Studies**

**Concurrent with American Academy of
Religions Annual Meeting**

San Antonio, TX, US
November 18-19, 2016

Sandra Costen Kunz

A pervasive background to this year's annual meeting was distress over the inaccuracy and incivility of much of the discourse surrounding the US presidential election – and the polarization fostered by such discourse. The society's mission can be seen, in part, as fostering discourse about difference and common ground more honestly, happily, and hopefully – by “supporting activities related to the comparative study of, and the practical interaction between, Buddhism and Christianity, whether by groups or individuals” and by encouraging “those who report on Buddhist-Christian dialogue and comparative study, both as historical research and contemporary practice, to employ analytical and theoretical tools and set their discussion within the framework of our larger human history” while being “as inclusive as is feasible in all such aforementioned activities.”

Our activities this year included, on Friday, our governing board meeting, a program committee meeting over lunch, a late afternoon panel, and a dinner afterwards at a nearby restaurant and, on Saturday morning, our second panel and our members meeting. The society, as a “related scholarly organization” of the American Academy of Religion, holds its annual meeting in conjunction with AAR's annual meeting, with our panels publicized within its program book.

Governing Board Meeting Highlights

Four highlights of this year's board meeting were:

- the good news about the financial and membership growth of the society over this past year, and the effectiveness of the online new membership and membership renewal system,
- the lively discussion about how to shape the new blog which the board is still committed to launching,

- the board's delight over how effectively newsletter editor Jonathan Seitz (in Taipei) and treasurer Glenn Willis (in Pennsylvania) were able to contribute to its meeting via video conferencing – and the implications of this success for the increased involvement of international advisors,
- the board's approval of University of Hawai'i Press' offer to make the journal available online to the society's members.

Governing Board Officers' Reports

After President John Makransky called the board meeting to order, the agenda was unanimously approved, and the 2015 annual meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

Newsletter editor's report ~ Jonathan Seitz asked us to consider what genres might be included and what topics might be proposed for the “Views” segment of the “News and Views” section of the journal, which the newsletter editor edits. Jonathan and journal co-editors Carol Anderson and Thomas Cattoi agreed to come up with a list of “viewpoint” topics to be publicized to the society.

Treasurer's report ~ Glenn Willis, after announcing the good news of our numerical and monetary growth, announced the sad news of his resignation due to his increased faculty responsibilities. He led us into a discussion of the treasurer's current responsibilities, which have been automated and simplified due to the website work of Alicia Brown and others. Key treasurer tasks are the checkbook and tax exemption paperwork.

Blog discussion ~ In light of the late hour in Taipei, and the board's desire to have Jonathan involved in the discussion of how to launch the blog, we entered into a wide-ranging discussion that resulted in Abraham Vélez's unanimous appointment as

editor of the blog, with the understanding that a co-editor would be appointed within two months.

After a lunch-time adjournment for the Program Committee luncheon, led by Vice-president Kristin Largen, we reconvened for the rest of the officer's reports.

Journal co-editors' report ~ Carol Anderson and Thomas Cattoi reported that, having conversed with the editorial advisory board members, they had updated the list in light of people's current availability. They emphasized the absolute necessity for article reviewers to turn in their reviews expeditiously or immediately decline the request. University of Hawai'i Press has proposed, they reported, making the journal available online to members. The board voted unanimously to accept the offer. Members who so desire can still receive a paper copy.

Book review editor's report ~ Sid Brown reported about the new books in the review pipeline. She asked Elizabeth Harris, our international advisor from the European Network for Buddhist-Christian Studies, to please make available a copy of the book containing the papers from their most recent international conference.

International advisor's report ~ In her report, Elizabeth invited the society to the European Network's upcoming conference titled "Meditation in Buddhist-Christian Encounter: A Critical Analysis" at the Benedictine Abbey of Montserrat, Spain, June 29-July 3, 2017.

Governing Board Committee Reports

Streng Book Award Committee report ~ Chairperson Abraham Vélez reported that this year's award goes to Charles Strain's *The Prophet and the Bodhisattva: Daniel Berrigan, Thich Nhat*

Hanh and the Ethics of Peace and Justice. The committee will be making its decision this year by August, so they'll need to receive nominations quickly. An email will be sent to members asking for suggestions and the book review editor consulted. Abraham, the journal co-editors, and John Sheveland will consult about ways to publicize the award.

Membership Committee report ~ The report began with proposed bylaws changes to reconfigure the committee's leadership and membership. A motion to change the term of membership committee members from three to four years passed unanimously, subject to approval by the members meeting. Hsiao Lan Hu was unanimously elected as a member of the committee, also pending approval by the membership. It was noted that all new memberships and renewals must now be processed online. Checks are no longer an option.

Social Media and Website Committee report ~ Judith Simmer-Brown, chairperson, passed out our Squarespace website's analytics, which showed good traffic and increased membership. The work of Alicia Brown and the committee has made many society tasks more integrated and simple to manage. Committee member Ayo Yetunde handles email and monitors Facebook once a week. The newsletter is produced through Mailchimp, which manages our membership email list. Stripe manages our online payments. The committee and board are exploring what tasks Alicia will do going forward and what would be going-rate compensation for those tasks. The board voted unanimously to send out an emailed membership renewal notice a month and a week prior to each member's anniversary of membership and to cancel the member's paper copy of the journal if they don't renew on time. The board unanimously voted to change the pending amendment to the bylaws about the Social Media and Website

Committee so that members of the committee would serve four-year terms.

Governing Board Final Business

After discussing the purposes and precedents for Friday evening society gatherings, (e.g. field trips and dinners at restaurants), the board took no action to create an official policy, leaving the planning to continue on a yearly ad hoc basis and clarifying that arranging these gatherings is not part of the vice-president's duties as chairperson of the Program Committee. We adjourned at 2:52 PM.

Friday Evening Panel and Dinner

Friday evening's panel, titled "Is Spirituality Intrinsically Communal? Spirituality and Revolutionary Love," was moderated by Alice Keefe (University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point) past president of the society. Daijaku Judith Kinst, who teaches at the Institute of Buddhist Studies within the Graduate Theological Union, presented examples of ways Dogen addressed the focal question of the panel. In Dogen's Soto Zen, spiritual realization is a communal process in the widest sense possible, because it includes all being. Charlotte Radler (Loyola Marymount University) drew on the work of Margaret Farley and Meister Eckhardt in her paper to give examples of ways autonomy is grounded in relationality, and vice versa, in spiritual growth. Kristin Largen (Gettysburg Seminary) responded to the focal question by drawing on Linda Mercadante's research on people who claim to be "spiritual but not religious." Mercadante's work gives examples of ways some people who self-describe in this manner are involved in communal spiritual practice. Largen questioned whether such

gatherings have the staying power to practice "revolutionary love." After the session, many society members enjoyed dinner together at the nearby Guadalajara Grill on the River Walk.

Saturday Morning Panel and Members Meeting

Saturday morning's session, titled "Honoring Jim Fredericks, Pioneer in Buddhist-Christian Studies," was, to those new to the society, a delightful introduction to some of the inter-religious conversations and friendships that were behind the founding of the SBCS – and to some of the themes that have characterized the society's conversations ever since. To those who have long attended the SBCS sessions, it was a warmhearted review of the work of a member who's been an important contributor to Buddhist-Christian friendship, solidarity and theological dialogue for many decades.

Kristin Largen read the paper contributed by Francis X. Clooney (Harvard). He traced the Catholic theological grounding for Frederick's comparative work that "theologizes in community and for community," and thus can, for example, "while praising much" of Paul Knitter's *Without Buddha I Could Not be Christian*, make a "courteously disgruntled" response to some aspects of the book's Christology. Clooney reviewed the "decades-long consistency of Jim Frederick's meditations on friendship as a Catholic value and entrée into a Catholic way of understanding pluralism." He closed with the question: "Why are you not a Buddhist-Christian?" Hugh Nicholson (Loyola Chicago) argued that Fredericks' emphasis on the dialogical component of comparative theology is indeed a better way of contrasting comparative theology with comparative religion than the too-frequent distinction between "normative comparative theology" and "descriptive comparative religion." Karen Enriquez (Loyola

Marymount) looked at Fredericks' argument for interreligious friendship as a virtue and as a Christian practice of hospitality that forms new ways of doing theology in the midst of religious plurality, such as comparative theology. Ruben Habito (Southern Methodist) traced the beginnings of Frederick's involvement in Buddhist-Christian dialogue and comparative theology, starting with the influence of Kitagawa, his mentor at University of Chicago who led him to read Kyoto school philosopher Tanabe, especially his critique of Nishida's tendencies towards a totalistic view. In his dissertation, Habito explained, Fredericks pointed out parallelisms with Rahner's critique of Heidegger's philosophy of Being.

Fredericks responded to the questions the panelists posed with his usual wit, wisdom and warmth, re-emphasizing the big-picture, planetary advantages that he sees in expending more scholarly energy in comparative theology than in theology of religions. He explained why he is still in many ways a Rahnerian, and is still not a "Buddhist-Christian," and reported on the five-day meeting in Rome on the theme "Suffering, Liberation, and Fraternity" to which Pope Francis invited US Catholic and Buddhist religious and social action leaders to converse about ways they could collaborate concretely in friendship, dialogue and fraternity to address specific, local social problems.

Immediately following this session, President John Makransky called us to order at 12:35 PM for the members meeting, welcoming new members. He reported the society's financial and membership growth this year, linking it to the work of the Social Media and Website Committee. Noting the convenience of the new online membership enrollment, and the low rates for students and retirees, he urged nonmembers to join.

John reviewed the four bylaws changes the board had approved, pending their ratification by the membership:

- 1) giving international advisors full membership on the governing board,
- 2) changing the composition, leadership and members' length of term of the Membership Committee,
- 3) discontinuing the Graduate Student Award Committee and adding the Social Media and Website Committee,
- 4) making the Social Media Committee a standing committee of the board, meaning that its chairperson is a voting board member.

Ruben Habito moved and Kristin Largen seconded the first change. Alice Keefe moved and Jon-Paul Sydnor seconded the second change. Ruben Habito moved, and Kristin seconded the third change, and Alice moved and Thomas Cattoi seconded the fourth change. All four passed unanimously. John Makransky reported that the board had approved Elizabeth Harris from the European Network for Buddhist-Christian Studies and Paul Swanson from the Japan Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies as international advisors.

John reported that the board had nominated John Sheveland as treasurer and Sandra Kunz for another term as secretary. The membership approved both unanimously. Vice-president and Program Committee Chairperson Kristin Largen reviewed the topics for next year's sessions that were suggested at the committee's lunch meeting and gathered new suggestions.

The Streng Book Award was presented by Abraham Vélez to Charles Strain (DePaul University) who spoke briefly about his long-time reflection on the vocations of Daniel Berrigan and Thich Nhat Hahn and on the implications of their vocations for socially transformative praxis in the academy and other institutions. A brief but lively discussion followed. Immediately afterwards, the meeting was adjourned at 12:28 PM.



European Academy of Religion 2017

Ex Nihilo Zero Conference

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The great success of the launch of the European Academy of Religion was in large part due to the presence, commitment, and support of participants, founders, and mentors. I myself and all the members of Fscire are very grateful to all of you for your presence in Bologna.

First of all, we want to thank the European Parliament and EU Commissioner Moedas, President Prodi and our past Minister Giannini, the Ambassadors and the Envoys of Governments who honored the meeting with their presence, as well as the representatives of Unesco, Osce, and Wef, as well as Rector Ubertini and his colleagues, all of whom offered their endorsement and ideas. We also want to thank all of you for the added intellectual energy you brought to our initiative, which is now your initiative as well.

On the basis of formal and informal talks that we had, the purposes of our Academy can be summarized in six points. The European Academy of Religion aims:

- to offer an exchange platform to Academies and scientific Societies, Research Centers and

Institutions, University Labs and Clusters, and qualified Journals, Scientific Publishers and Media;

- to act as an inclusive network of networks open to all disciplines in the European and Mena Countries as well as in the Balkans, Caucasus, and Russia, in order to support their exchange and cooperation;
- to provide an open space to those who work in the production and/or dissemination of knowledge in and of the religious field;
- to give voice to religious anthropology, archeology, arts, conflicts, cults, doctrines, exegesis, experiences, history, institutions, laws, philology, philosophy, psychology, theologies, texts, and all the disciplines with an academic status in the universities or research centers, with their own distinctive and specific epistemological traditions;
- to be an instrument to make visible the academic institutions and centers of a very large and diverse set of disciplines to the public opinion and decision makers through a public, open-access web platform and an annual convention;
- to adopt an inclusive approach and encourage disciplinary and interdisciplinary research in the perspective of open research, cultural diplomacy, dialogue among thinkers, peaceful relationships among cultural systems, and intellectual international cooperation.

In practical terms, we ask all of you to make the annual Convention of the Academy a real event: you and the institutions with which you are affiliated can contribute to the Convention and make it the place of regular scientific exchanges among those who are involved in diverse research in the religious field.

— This could happen in many ways, for example placing some parts of the regular events of the institutions to which you are affiliated within the framework of the Academy's convention, conceived as an instrument of dissemination; planning new activities and suggesting panels or sessions for the convention; launching discussion topics that might federate more subjects in consortia, which are the bedrock of EU programs.

We also ask for your help in drafting a list of disciplines that should have an explicit presence in the Convention program and in naming great scholars who can make their research known to a larger audience via a plenary lecture or in the longstanding format of the disputatio.

After consulting the panel moderators (Silvio Ferrari and Susanna Mancini, Hans Peter Grosshans and Vincenzo Pacillo, Patrick Houlihan and Clelia Piperno) and considering the suggestions from the Conference working group, we decided to schedule the Academy Conventions in the first semester of the year, so that they do not overlap with the AAR and SBL events that are held in the fall.

In 2018, the conference could be held in March, starting on Sunday and ending on Thursday. Institutions willing to host it are invited to send their proposals (about a page in length) to eu_are2017@fscire.it.

We also agreed to propose a "Zero Conference," which will be hosted in 2017 in Bologna, from Sunday June 18 to Wednesday June 21.

The call for papers is now open. Depending on the funds available, we are willing to offer free participation to early-career scholars and PhD students.

The "Zero Conference" program will also include several outstanding speakers and will set aside appropriate time for the General Assembly, which will adopt the definitive version of the Statute: a very simple one, which can be based on the principle that the membership fees should be very

— low and that incomes will be entirely invested in order to increase the number of students participating in the annual convention.

We are open to exchange views and proposals with you. Please feel free to write to eu_are2017@fscire.it.

Sincerely,
Alberto Melloni

European Academy of Religion "Ex Nihilo"
Conference 2017

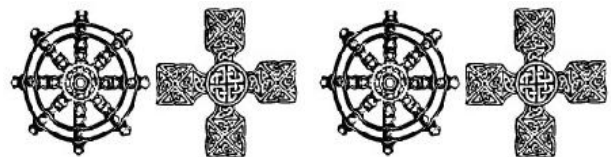
Hosted by Fscire Fondazione per le scienze religiose

Via San Vitale 114

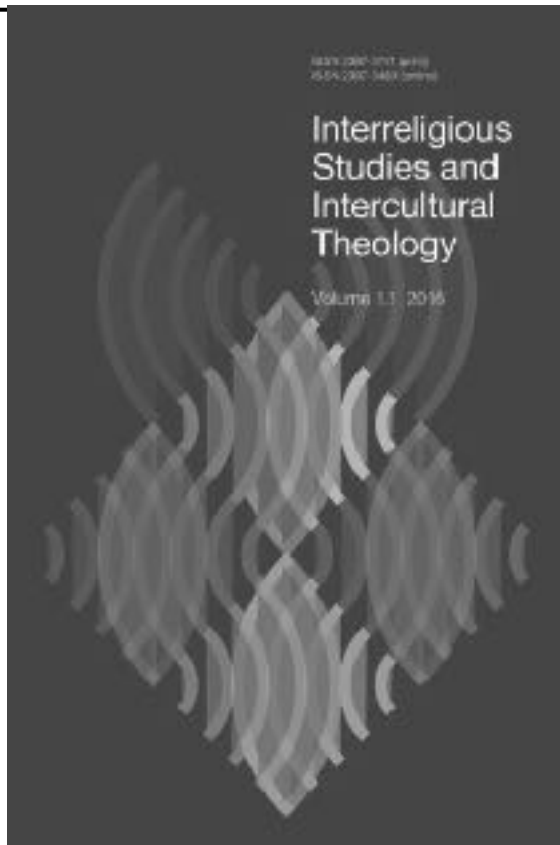
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Inaugural issue of a new journal just published



Editors

Nelly van Doorn-Harder, Wake Forest University, United States & VU University Amsterdam, Netherlands

Douglas Pratt, University of Waikato, New Zealand & University of Bern, Switzerland

Description

Interreligious Studies and Intercultural Theology (ISIT) is a peer-reviewed journal providing a forum for scholars to share ideas and research on a wide range of topics to do with interreligious questions and issues impacting contemporary pluralist society, and to foster a deeper understanding of theoretical and practical matters concerning interreligious relations. The journal aims at stimulating and promoting the various relevant conversations taking place in different parts of the world.

ISIT is committed to an interdisciplinary approach that includes, but is not limited to, interreligious studies, religious studies, (cultural) anthropology,

theology, intercultural and comparative theology, Islamic studies, Buddhist studies, Hindu studies, secularism studies, and the engagement between secularism and religions; philosophy, Jewish studies, sociology, political science, gender studies, and various specific dialogue or interreligious encounter fields. It is also concerned with the encounter between religious traditions and worldviews.

ISIT welcomes all contributions that promote a deep and critical understanding of the systematic and practical issues concerning interreligious relations. It allows discussion of the various questions that arise in the modern situation of a pluralist culture and provides a forum for academic discussion and comparative study of religious beliefs and philosophies of life, of the different moralities involved, and the possibilities of agreement as well as the causes of disagreement. The journal publishes articles by adherents of various religious traditions.

ISIT is published in print and online, with an initial print frequency of 2 issues per volume. The online edition contains supplemental content not appearing in the print version, including interviews, book excerpts, blogs, and profiles of key thinkers in the field.

ISIT is associated closely with the (European) Society for Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies. This society, with an international membership, organizes conferences biennially, and members will automatically become subscribers to this journal. Readers who are interested in joining the Society may email the managing editor at the following address: hljansen@gmx.co.uk

Publication and Frequency

Two issues per volume year beginning May 2017 (May and Nov.)

ISSN 2397-3471 (Print)

ISSN 2397-348X (Online)

You can view more information and subscribe on the journal home page:

<https://journals.equinoxpub.com/index.php/ISIT/index>



2nd International Conference on the Evolution of Religion

Dear Members of the Buddhist-Christian Studies Society,

Some of your members might be interested in this conference. Feel free to pass on the link to the conference home page to colleagues who might be interested.

Sincerely, Jay

Jay R. Feierman, M.D.
jay.feierman84@gmail.com

Co-organizer, The 2nd International Conference on the Evolution of Religion
 November 12-15, 2017, Tamaya Hyatt Regency Resort, Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico
 Go to theevolutionofreligionii.org

(Sent via *The Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies*)



European Network of Buddhist-Christian Studies

Registrations are still being accepted for the 2017 conference of the European Network of Buddhist-Christian Studies to be held at Montserrat, near Barcelona, from 29 June to 3rd July on the theme 'Meditation in Buddhist-Christian Encounter: A Critical Analysis'. Speakers include: Karl Baier,

Elise De Vido, Ursula Baatz, John Makransky, Robert Sharf, Elizabete Taivane and Elizabeth Harris. Registrations can be completed at:

www.buddhist-christian-studies.org



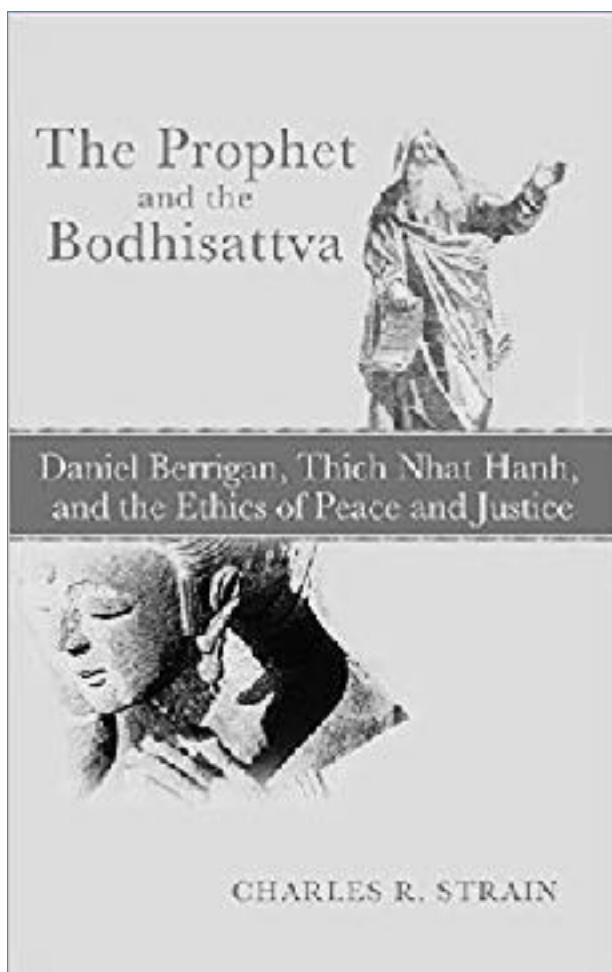
**Buddhist and Christians in Dialogue:
 From Missionaries' Writings to the Present**

Fu-Jen University, in association with Dharm Drum Institute of Liberal Arts, Providence

University, Sophia University in Italy, the Center of Interreligious Dialogue, and the Focolare Movement, hosted a conference on Buddhist Christian dialogue, April 24-29. Participants came from Fu-Jen, Purdue, Sophia University, Chiang Mai Sangha College, Wonkwang University, and a mix of other Buddhist and Christian associations. [The conference website is here.](#) [The English site is here.](#) A full report will appear later.



2016 Streng Award



Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies
Frederick J. Streng Award 2016

2016 Streng Award Winner:

The Prophet and the Bodhisattva

Charles R. Strain, *The Prophet and the Bodhisattva: Daniel Berrigan, Thich Nhat Hanh, and the Ethics of Peace and Justice* (Wipf and Stock, Eugene, Oregon, 2014)

Charles R. Strain is Professor of Religious Studies at DePaul University, and has published a variety of monographs and articles on practical theology and engaged spirituality. In this theoretically rich account of two approaches to peace and justice, Strain combines a very personal concern for how to effectively transform our institutions, and thereby our planet, with a thorough investigation into the profound nature of some of our most pressing problems with a nuanced evaluation of specific Christian and Buddhist resources available for the tasks. Much more than a story about two men and their powerful ideas, Strain's book is a moral cry out for good work that employs modern exemplars of two (actually very) compatible traditions as templates for forging new models for dynamic social change via the praxis of "just peacemaking." This phrase is Strain's solution, a sort of "middle way" approach, which he describes as follows: "[R]ather than pitting pacifism and just war theory over and against one another, [just peacemaking] seeks a common ground in actual practices of peace building." (188-89) His book is an impassioned plea for workable paradigms to address, in particular, the problems of empire (especially American) and of environmental crisis. Strain sees these two issues as grounded in what he calls an overarching matrix. He demonstrates how useful – indeed how essential – the wisdom embodied in the life of these two men is for healing our planet and moving toward more just communities.

The book offers extensive and beautiful details of the lives of Daniel Berrigan (1921-2016) and Thich Nhat Hanh (1926-), two of the past century's greatest activists for peace and justice, one Christian and one Buddhist, both monks. They came to know one another during the Vietnam War. In Strain's words: "The crucible of war tempered the characters of both... and gave definitive shape to each man's life as a moral agent." (2) They coauthored the 1975 book, *The Raft is Not the Shore: Conversations toward A Buddhist-Christian Awareness*, and since have each authored dozens of influential volumes. Strain begins the with stories about Daniel Berrigan: from his childhood on a farm during the Depression, walking behind father and plow, thinking, "The whole world must be like this... pregnant with new life"; becoming a Jesuit priest in 1952; burning draft cards in 1968 and going to prison (one of the Catonsville Nine); cofounding the Plowshares Movement with his brother Philip in 1980 to protest nuclear weaponry, and much more. Similarly for Thich Nhat Hanh: becoming a young monk in Vietnam; leaving his country because his peace activism endangered his life; establishing the Order of Interbeing for both monastic and lay Buddhists in 1966; being nominated for the Nobel Peace prize by Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1967 (no prize given that year); cofounding the Plum Village meditation community in France in 1980 (with branches in New York, California, and Mississippi), and much more. Both men have been prolific authors and speakers, proponents of interfaith dialog and action, peace activists par excellence and wonderful poets.

A prodigious commitment to theory undergirds the book's presentations. Strain's beautiful citing of biblical theologian Walter Brueggeman's work on "prophetic imagination," with its emphasis on the subversive and transformative power of *grieving one another's suffering*, and an equal emphasis on the healing power of holding *visions of hope* for

the future, is a steady and skillfully employed theme throughout. So also his attention to philosopher Paul Ricoeur's theories of *metaphorical thinking*, which serve as a forceful lens for focusing on the language of Christian scripture, the imagination of alternative futures and the marvelous poems both of Berrigan and Nhat Hanh.

Philosopher Martha Nussbaum's "capability theory" of justice supports Strain's complex discussion of compassion and justice on local, national and global levels, including presentations of both classical Buddhist and Christian views and a broad spectrum of contemporary theories. Rabbi Abraham Heschel's profound work on the Hebrew prophets also deservedly receives keen attention, and Strain further engages richly with two contemporary critics of "empire building," Andrew Bacevich and John Dominic Crossan. Bacevich is a self-described "conservative Catholic," a retired Army Colonel, and a professor of international relations and history who has written multiple books critical of the excesses of U.S. imperial reach. Crossan is a popular author of books on the historical Jesus and Christianity, whose *God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now* and other works support well Strain's arguments for a subversive, non-violent Christian vision.

No one vision dominates this book. Strain acknowledges as a spiritual practitioner his own deep indebtedness to the Buddhist bodhisattva ideal, while simultaneously honoring his Christian roots. With reference to the imperial and environmental crises that plague our world and constitute the backbone of urgency in the book, his balanced question is to "ask what kinds of virtue the prophet and the bodhisattva nurture for those of us confined in the belly of the beast." (170) His pluralism remains firm: "[T]he underlying assumption of this book... is that no single moral vision and praxis, however classic, is adequate to

the complexities and ambiguities I will address.” (171)

To conclude, here are a few quotes that summarize well Strain’s aim for this important book:

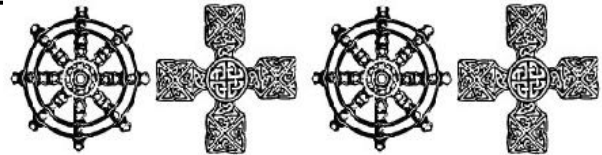
“This book puts to test two assumptions, first that the ‘prophet’ and the ‘bodhisattva’ are two distinct forms of religious and ethical practice, and, second, that these are complementary forms of practice that need each other.” (8)

“...[C]an we incorporate the prophetic critique of the idolatry of the nation state in Berrigan’s ethics of resistance and Thich Nhat Hanh’s injunction not to cling to any ideology into these profoundly moral appraisals of America’s role in the world?” (11)

“I ask what sort of praxis might flow from reflections on the prophet and the bodhisattva for those who are involved, as I am, as professionals working within highly developed institutions.” (13)

The book’s Conclusion, “Crossing Boundaries and Living on the Edge,” is an extended exploration of this last quote. In it, Strain offers something of a response to what he described as Daniel Berrigan’s pregnant silence when Strain explained to him, some years ago, that he saw his own academic vocation as operating to help transform the system from within. Compromise or not, his final apology for practicing institutional subversion within an institution would seem a very honest account of what is, realistically, the best that many of us can do. Strain claims neither to be a prophet nor a bodhisattva, but only to be inspired by both. He writes, “This book *is* about my practice.” (10) Reading it opens our eyes to our own practice(s), and to the richness we have the potential to embody.

David Gardiner, Colorado College



1st World Encounter Teresian Mysticism and Interreligious Dialogue: Theravāda Buddhism and Teresian Mysticism

Meditation and Pathways to Peace

International Centre of Teresian and Sanjuanist Studies (CITeS), University of Mysticism

The Centre of Buddhist Studies of the University of Hong Kong

Avila, Spain, 27-30 July 2017

On-site or On-line

In times of spiritual crisis and division among peoples, interreligious dialogue is an urgent need. Because of this, the International Centre of Teresian and Sanjuanist Studies (CITeS), “University of Mysticism”, is pleased to announce its intention to conduct a series of encounters that will place the Teresian mysticism in dialogue with other religious traditions.

The first of these events is an encounter between Carmelites and Buddhists of the Theravāda school, the oldest among the living traditions of Buddhism, organized in collaboration with the Centre of Buddhist Studies of The University of Hong Kong. By cordially inviting our brothers and sisters of the Theravāda tradition, we would like to deepen the understanding of our respective faith and practice. There is no wish to deny the differences between the two traditions, or trying to reduce them to a common denominator. Rather, under the principles of equality, deep respect and desire for cooperation, we would like instead to offer the possibility of a genuine and fruitful dialogue and explore options to address the current spiritual crisis. The theme proposed for this encounter is meditation and contemplation.

Among other activities, the encounter will feature presentations, roundtables, prayer and meditation

workshops, chanting, all in an atmosphere of conviviality and fraternity.

PROGRAM

THURSDAY, JULY 29

- 17.00 Opening of the conference
 17.30 The importance of interreligious dialogue and goals for the encounter:
- From Carmelite perspective / Dr. Francisco Javier Sancho Fermín, Director and professor, CITEs “University of Mysticism”
 - From the Buddhist perspective / Venerable Sik Hin Hung, Director, Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong (HKU)
- 18.30 The Order of the Discalced Carmelites / Fr. Saverio Canistrà, General of the Discalced Carmelite Order
- 19.30 The Theravāda Buddhist tradition / Dr. Asanga Tilakaratne, Professor of Pāli and Buddhist Studies, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

FRIDAY, JULY 28

- 08.30 Ceremony ~ chanting
 10.00 Virtue and the teresian path of prayer / Dr. Maximiliano Herráiz, Professor CITEs “University of Mysticism”, Specialist and publisher of the books of Teresa of Jesus and John of the Cross
 11.00 The role of sīla (virtue) in the path to liberation / Venerable Dr. Phra Suthithammanuwat, Professor in Buddhist Studies. Dean of the Faculty of Buddhism, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Ayutthaya Thailand
 12.10 ~ 13.10 Panel discussion
 17.00 Vocal and mental prayer and religiosity in the Carmelite tradition / Sister María José Pérez, Discalced Carmelite Nun, from the Puzol Monastery (Valencia)
 18.00 Prayer, worship and ritual in the Theravāda tradition / Venerable Dr. Khammai Dhammasami, DPhil (Oxford), Trustee & Research Fellow, Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies, University of Oxford, Professor, ITBMU, Yangon (Myanmar)
 19.00 Panel discussion

20.00 Prayer-meditation workshop: Teresian prayer of recollection / CITEs community “University of Mysticism”

SATURDAY, JULY 29

- 08.30 Ceremony ~ chanting
 10.00 Discursive meditation and the prayer of active recollection / Dr. Rómulo Cuartas, Subdirector and professor, CITEs “University of Mysticism”
 11.00 Preliminaries of concentration meditation / Dr. G.A. Somaratne, Assistant Professor, Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong (HKU)
 12.10 ~ 13.10 Panel discussion
 17.00 Presentation of the awarded papers in the II International Award Teresa of Jesus and interreligious dialogue
 20.00 Prayer- meditation workshop: Buddhist meditation / guided by Venerable Dr. Bhikkhuni Dhammadinna (Italy), Professor at the Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Art (Taiwan), Buddhist Studies Department. Āgama Research Group Director.

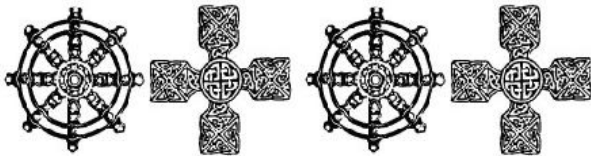
SUNDAY, JULY 30

- 08.30 Ceremony ~ chanting
 10.00 Mystical prayer and its degrees / Dr. Francisco Javier Sancho Fermín, Director and professor, CITEs “University of Mysticism”
 11.00 The Jhānas in the path to liberation / Dr. Rupert Gettin, Director and Professor, Centre for Buddhist Studies-University of Bristol, President of the Pali Text Society
 12.10 ~ 13.10 Panel discussion
 17.00 Awards ceremony: II International Award Teresa of Jesus and interreligious dialogue
 18.30 Closing paper: Buddhism and Christianity: cooperation for peace
 19.30 Conclusion of the conference

REGISTRATION

Please complete the registration form - http://www.buddhism.hku.hk/documents/Spain_reg_form.pdf and send the completed form together with the payment prove to: CITEs -

Apartado 139 - 05080 Ávila – España, or e-mail: info@mistica.es



Online Interfaith Course

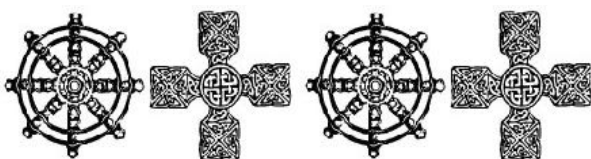
John Makransky shares the following about an on-line Interfaith Course he is developing:

Interfaith Perspectives on Engaged Compassion

The world needs healing. We are excited to announce a **new online course** for those interested in exploring the intersection of contemplative practice and social change work.

The course will be led by faculty from diverse religious traditions, including: **Paul Knitter**, Christianity; **Rabbi Sheila Weinberg**, Judaism; **Homayra Ziad**, Islam; **John Makransky**, Buddhism; **Jamal Rahman**, Sufism; **Wendy Farley**, Christianity; **Anant Rambachan**, Hinduism; **Julia Forsythe**, Quakerism; and **Melanie Harris**, Christianity.

We hope you will join us! [More information and registration.](#)



Membership



If you haven't renewed for 2017, please do so now. Membership includes our newsletters, our journal, and other benefits. [You can renew via our website.](#)

Some of you have asked about how membership works. Here is a brief Question & Answer

What are current dues?

Dues range from \$10 for students to \$25 for Adjunct Professors, Independent Scholars, and \$45 for Associate and Full Professors.

What are the terms of membership?

You may join or renew at any point during the calendar year, although it is more convenient to join at the start. Membership is for the current year (2017), but regardless of when you join you receive the same benefits for that year.

What is included in annual membership?

Membership includes an annual print copy of *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, inclusion on our email list (two e-newsletters), and voting rights in member meetings.

How does membership contribute to broader Buddhist-Christian cooperation?

Our dues support a variety of recent efforts. We have worked to make the journal more easily available, have added to our webpage (for instance, it includes the last 12+ years of newsletters), and continue to work on ways to connect.

Website, Facebook, Blog

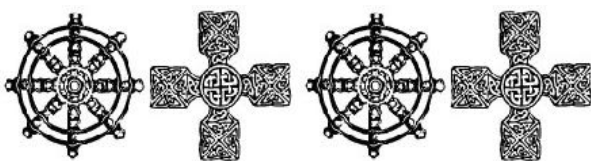
Our website is:

<http://www.society-buddhist-christian-studies.org/>

Check out our Facebook page and give it a like:

<https://www.facebook.com/BuddhistChristianStudies/>

Our blog goes up this year. The two main moderators are J. Abraham Velez de Cea or Karen Enriquez and



To Nominate a book for the Streng Prize

The book must have been published within the last five years. Nominations can be made by any person other than the author(s) or editor(s), using the [downloadable nomination form](#) or the [online form](#).

The completed form may be sent electronically to J. Abraham Véléz de Cea

(abraham.velez@eku.edu), who will respond to all nominations.

Self-nominations are not permitted. Publishers of books must be willing to supply review copies to members of the committee for evaluation in order for the book to be considered.



CONTRIBUTE A REPORT TO THE NEWSLETTER

The *Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies Newsletter* is published twice annually: in the spring and the fall. Please contact the Editor to share information with our readers. The deadline for the fall issue is September 1.

In addition to reports on our annual meeting (concurrent with the American Academy of Religion) and calls for the Frederick Streng Book Award for Excellence in Buddhist-Christian Studies and for the Graduate Student Essay Prize, the *Newsletter* also publishes information on conferences, retreats, lectures, and other events. We welcome obituaries or reports on major figures in the field of Buddhist-Christian Studies.

We are always grateful for information, news, or other submissions that members and others can share with the Society. Submissions may be edited for clarity and length. Send items to newsletter editor Jonathan Seitz jaseitz@gmail.com.

**SOCIETY FOR BUDDHIST-
CHRISTIAN STUDIES
NEWSLETTER**

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