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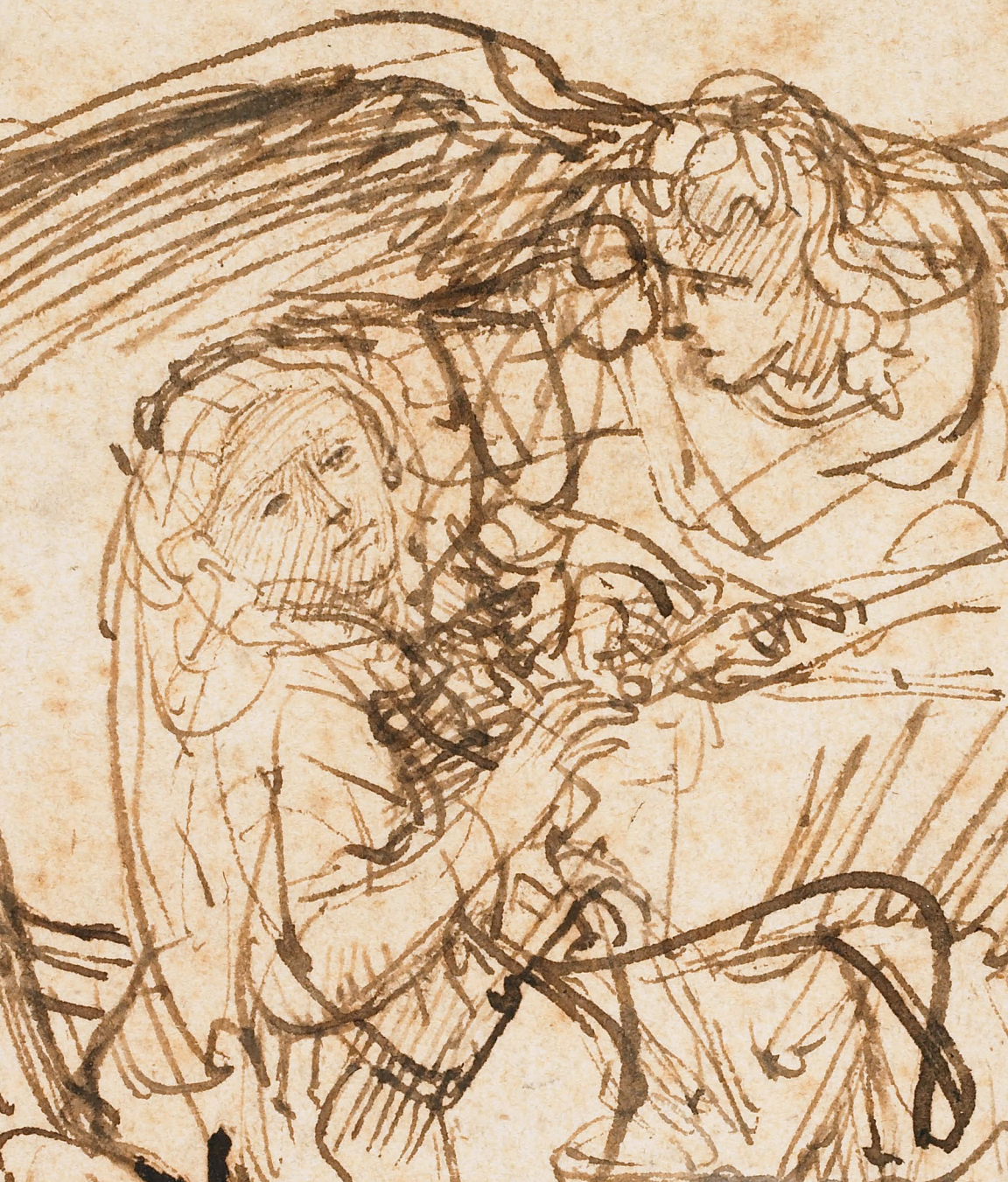

ILLUMINE: JOURNAL OF THE CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN RELIGION AND SOCIETY GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
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Editor
Catherine M. Nutting

Production Editor & Cover Design
Robbyn Gordon Lanning

Layout
Josephine Aucoin

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Rembrandt, Annunciation, detail, 1635. Image courtesy of Besançon Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology

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Centre for Studies in Religion and Society
University of Victoria
PO Box 1700, STN CSC
Victoria, BC, Canada, V8W 2Y2
Phone: (250) 721-6325
E-mail: csrs@uvic.ca

Visit the CSRS at www.csrs.uvic.ca.

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Introduction

As we investigate the interplay of religion and society, now and in history, we see contested practices; cultural bridges repurposed for religion; and meanings reassessed, transumed, deconstructed, and refitted. We observe the overlapping of one era with the concepts and connotations that linger from previous times, even while people struggle to come to terms with newly emerging mindsets. Many of the articles in the current volume of *Illumine* refer to the interplay of the sacred with the secular, including, for example, links between musical traditions and written Psalms; between poetry and storytelling; and among religious buildings and their ties to commercial and cultural neighbourhoods. Together the articles illuminate the interweavings of sacredness and secularity that flow through literature, music, visual art, architecture, and community. To borrow from one of the articles this snippet of poetry that beautifully reminds readers of the capacity for spirituality and for natural and artistic forms to linger on: "soft, above the noontide heat and burden/ of the stern present, fleet those melodies."

The issue begins with "'Winter Stories—Ghost Stories... Round The Christmas Fire': Victorian Ghost Stories and The Christmas Market" in which Caley Ehnes finds a case study in the 1852 Christmas number of Dickens's *Household Words*. The publication there of Elizabeth Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story" points to the 19th-century English desire to reassert religious traditions in contrast to increasing secularity. Victorian ghost stories such as Gaskell's are replete with cultural affirmations rooted in Early Modern Christian values. Ehnes shows that the Christmas ghost stories, though they harken back to Gothic motifs, contrast social ills with time-honoured ideals of Christian domestic practices to challenge the modern scepticism and scientific rationalism that underlie the period's burgeoning

industrialization and secularization. The ghost stories inspired readers to reinhabit redemptive religious and familial traditions that had been eroded by modernity in the forms of commercialism, technology, and the hubbub of industrialization.

Adam Hough argues for taking music seriously in "Martin Luther and Musically Expressed Theology." Hough investigates Luther's treatises, his scriptural interpretations, his sermons, and scholarship on his conversations, to conclude that Luther considered music foundational to his theological programme. Luther's use of music is more than merely a devotional aid or a congregational inspiration. Rather, he hoped that it would foster faith and prepare the German laity for reform. The optimism of his attitude toward music in the 1520s demonstrates its centrality to his evangelical theology: he sought to reform society and politics by excising temporal authority from religious systems. Music would be fundamental to liturgical and educational reform where to sing Luther's hymns was to proclaim the Word of God. To Luther, music was a gift from God and a means toward sincere spiritual inspiration, a tradition bequeathed from the prophets and apostles. Singing hymns was, in this conception, an excellent teaching method, an opportunity to investigate and proclaim the Psalms, and a preparation for the Holy Spirit, as long as a person sang "with both the spirit and the mind."

In "Embracing the Divine: Devotional Zeal and Mystical 'Humanation' in Rembrandt's Annunciation Sketch," Catherine Nutting explores how the 17th-century interest in personally experiencing God's grace can be linked to earlier mystical traditions of impassioned communion. Rembrandt van Rijn was highly skilled at sketching, and his rough drawings are as dramatic and communicative as his best paintings. Many of his sketches of Old and New Testament subjects focus on transformative moments where divine figures intercede in human affairs. Such scenes are psychologically forceful, and point to the urgent Early Modern desire to understand how God's grace operated. *Humanation* was the medieval notion of divinity and humanity becoming united in one person through the "marriage" of God and humanity, a concept that supported later beliefs in God's love for humanity and his freely offered grace, notions at play in Rembrandt's artistic Annunciation.

Angela Andersen is the author of "The Buddhist Monastery, Art and Teachings as a Factor in the Development of North Indian and

Central Asian Islamic Practice and Architecture." Andersen writes on how Buddhism and Islam influenced each other through decorative arts, philosophical treatises, didactic activities, and the architecture that evidences these religious and social practices in northern India and Central Asia beginning in the 7th Century. An examination of Sufi and Buddhist ascetic and teaching traditions reveals many important similarities. Their common interest in housing venerable images and sculptures led to the importation of valuable materials, skilled craftspeople, and precious *spolia* from India, building on the forces of development internal to Islam to further enhance the influence of Buddhism and Hinduism on Sufi architectural styles and decorative motifs. Andersen discusses case studies that highlight juxtapositions of the Islamic Sufi lodge or *khanqah* and the Buddhist monastery or *sangha* including one Silk Road lodge-monastery complex that shows Buddhism's influence on Sufi visual and architectural expression, a rare example preserved in the written record long after its material remains have been dispersed to the elements.

Our final article is by Laura Visan who, in "Romanian Churches in Toronto: Not Yet Factors of Cohesion," asks whether churches can function in building community. She unpacks her ethnographic research on the subject of the churchgoing practices of Romanian immigrants living in Toronto in order to discern the churches' efforts at community cohesion. Focusing on two Romanian churches, the Saint George Orthodox Church and the All Saints Orthodox Church, she shows that the complex roles of churches are inherently bound up with church members' personal histories and expectations. Visan argues that scholarship on how churches foster community involvement and help to develop interpersonal networks must be considered in the light of personalities, idiosyncratic obstacles, and personal narratives about identity and belonging.

The authors would like to thank our colleagues, supervisors, and professors for their kind interest, as well as our loved ones for their support and enthusiasm. We also gratefully acknowledge the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria, that oasis of engaged research and warm-hearted scholarly respect that supports this journal and thereby introduced the authors to one another and expanded both our real and virtual networks.

Catherine M. Nutting
Editor

"Winter Stories — Ghost Stories... Round the Christmas Fire": Victorian Ghost Stories and the Christmas Market

Caley Ehnes, University of Victoria

Abstract

Using the publication of Elizabeth Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story" in the 1852 Christmas number of Dickens's Household Words as a case study, this paper examines how the publication of Victorian ghost stories in Christmas numbers redefines the ghost story, transforming it from a modern text participating in contemporary debates on spiritualism into a social text participating in the broader cultural project of reaffirming the nation's (religious) traditions in the face of (secular) modernity. While the themes of Christmas ghost stories explicitly address social issues and secular, middle-class cultural values, the morals and social traditions promoted by Christmas fiction cannot exist outside of the era's contemporary conversations about the place of religion in a modern, industrial society. The ghosts and goblins of Dickens's Christmas fiction address and attempt to correct the social ills of modern society through a secularised application of Christian values and behaviours.

In his first full-length novel, *The Pickwick Papers* (1836-37), Charles Dickens introduces readers to the Christmas traditions prevalent in his youth. Our host, Mr. Wardle, informs the Pickwickian crowd, "[o]ur invariable custom [is to have everyone sit] down with us on Christmas Eve, as you see them now—servants and all; and here we wait, until the clock strikes twelve, to usher Christmas in, and beguile the time with forfeits and old stories."[1]

1 Charles Dickens, *The Pickwick Papers*. ed. David Ellis (Hertfordshire:

Wardle then proceeds to tell "the story about the goblins that carried away old Gabriel Grub" on Christmas Eve.[2] Only two short chapters in length, Dickens's tableau of Pickwickians seated around the fire sharing ghost stories on a snowy Christmas Eve encapsulates the complex relationship that exists between the Victorian ghost story, its Gothic predecessor, and the Victorian Christmas market. Published in the 1852 Christmas number of Charles Dickens's *Household Words*, Elizabeth Gaskell's ghost story, "The Old Nurse's Story," is typical of the era's seasonal narratives: it appears as part of a Christmas story-telling narrative (constructed by Dickens), and it was published for the modern Christmas market, which was dominated by gift books and seasonal publications designed for gift giving. The transformation of the older storytelling tradition into a modern product provides material evidence for the Victorian ghost story evolution from the Gothic into a 'new' genre that negotiated the cultural divide between the superstitions of the past and the rational scepticism of modernity. As my paper will suggest, the publication of Victorian ghost stories in Christmas numbers ultimately repositions the function of the ghost story by transforming it from a modern text participating in contemporary debates on spiritualism into a social text participating in the broader cultural project of reaffirming the nation's (religious) traditions in the face of (secular) modernity. While the themes of Christmas ghost stories explicitly address social issues and secular, middle-class cultural values, the morals and social traditions promoted by Christmas fiction cannot exist outside of the era's contemporary conversations about the place of religion in a modern, industrial society. The ghosts and goblins of Dickens's Christmas fiction address and attempt to correct the social ills of modern society through a secularized application of Christian values and behaviours.

Though several critics observe that Dickens's Christmas publications "forged the cultural association of ghosts and Christmas,"[3] few consider why Victorian editors and readers viewed the ghost story as the ideal genre for Christmas publications.[4] Tara Moore's recent

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Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2000), 369.

2 *Ibid*., 371.

3 Louise Henson, "Investigations and Fictions: Charles Dickens and Ghosts," in *The Victorian Supernatural*. eds. Nicola Brown, Carolyn Burdett, and Pamela Thurschwell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 44.

4 For further criticism on Dickens's Christmas publications and ghost

work on print culture and the Victorian construction of Christmas begins to address this gap. For Moore, the Christmas ghost story is a "ubiquitous" part of Victorian culture, becoming the ideal genre for the Christmas literary market because of its complicated history as part of the gift-giving culture associated with the seasonally published literary annuals. However, as E.J. Clery notes, the rise of supernatural fictions must "be understood in relation to the contemporary rise of consumerism, which has been described as the 18th-century 'consumer revolution.'"[5] This transmission of supernatural fiction through commercial venues continued well into the 19th Century as early women's magazines and eventually the literary annuals took over the popular publication of gothic short stories, the ghost story's precursor.[6] The practice of gifting literature at Christmas ultimately represents the era's interest in developing a national tradition based on a nostalgic remembering of the previous centuries' oral traditions.[7] As such the ghost stories published in periodicals such as *Household Words* often appeared as part of a frame narrative with the family gathered around the hearth to hear tales of haunted manor homes and spectral visitations. The first ghosts of Victorian Christmas, such as the ghosts of Past, Present, and Future in Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* (first published in 1843), acted as supernatural agents that entered the reality of the narrative "to bring about a Christmas utopia of reunion and spiritual redemption."[8] According to Moore, these supernatural narratives of redemption and charity mediated the increasing materialism of the holiday season—an ironic consequence of a genre born and disseminated through the machinations of contemporary

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story, see Eve M. Lynch, "Spectral Politics: The Victorian Ghost Story and the Domestic Servant," in *The Victorian Supernatural*. eds. Brown, Burdett, and Thurschwell, 67-84; Tara Moore, *Victorian Christmas in Print*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); and David Parker, *Christmas and Charles Dickens*. (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 2005).

5 E.J. Clery, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction 1762-1800*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 5.

6 For further information on the early ghost story market, see Robert D. Mayo, *The English Novel in the Magazines 1740-1815: with a Catalogue of 1375 Magazine Novels and Novelettes*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

7 See Moore, 85.

8 *Ibid*., 83.

consumer revolutions.[9] After all, the continuing popularity of the ghost story genre was a result of the expansive growth in the periodical market of mid-century Victorian Britain following the abolition of the stamp tax (one of the most restrictive taxes on knowledge), which made periodical publishing a more affordable product for readers and an enticingly profitable venture for publishers.

The ghost story's allegorical position as a genre responsible for contributing to the construction of a Victorian Christmas allows gloss over any potential link between the Victorian ghost story and the religious culture of the era. For example, Moore repeatedly refers to the implicit nation-building project of Christmas literature (including the ghost story). Thus, she simultaneously acknowledges and then dismisses Dickens's assertion that "the gospel dripped from every Christmas text he wrote," when she states that "the values appearing in his holiday novels... depicted English values rather than gospel message."[10] While this is undoubtedly true, limiting the ghost story and Christmas novel to a purely secular and social narrative ignores that fact that the English values of Dickens's Christmas stories are intimately bound up in the Christian values of the period. One only has to look at the religious poetry of the era to confirm this connection.

There are several features that link the practice and ideology of the Victorian ghost story to the religious poetry published in the era. Most obvious is the proliferation of seasonal poems and hymns produced for the Christmas market.[11] The seasonal production of devotional poetry resonates with the era's shifting understanding of time and its desire to cultivate a space for family (and devotional) reading.[12] Christmas ghost stories participate in this trend by

9 *Ibid*., 84.

10 *Ibid*., 124.

11 For further information, see *Ibid*., 121-140.

12 The practice of publishing Christmas ghost stories became part of British Christmas, using the cyclical publication format of the periodical to establish a space for the habit to form. Similarly, devotional poets aimed to bring religious thought into the familial circle by making it a part of a weekly reading practice. The periodical *Good Words*, for example, used poetry to create a devotional space for readers, reminding them of the power of language and the message of God. The most popular devotional text of the era, John Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827), linked poetry to the liturgical calendar, including "poems for all special services and procedures in the

referring to the remembered tradition of telling ghost stories around the fire in December. The ghost story often links such activities to rural and aristocratic life. Indeed, one of the features Moore isolates as belonging to the Christmas ghost story is "the idealization of the country house."[13] As we will see, the return to the country and the traditions of an older England is part of the era's nostalgia for what the industrial world imagined was an uncomplicated, more wholesome past. I am focusing on the ghost stories (re)turn to its rural roots because religious poetry from the era expresses both a similar desire to reclaim tradition and an anxiety over the effacement of traditional religious practices by the industrial world.

Dora Greenwell's 1860 periodical poem "Railway Station" (published in *Good Words*) implicitly speaks of poetry's role in mediating the modernity of the literary press through its poetic form and its references to established traditions of religious thought. The speaker asserts the presence of this spiritual nostalgia: despite the era's rapid pursuit of modernity and technology "soft, above the noontide heat and burden / Of the stern present, fleet those melodies."[14] Unlike several other poems in the periodical which retreat to nature for spiritual rejuvenation, Greenwell brings faith into the city "far remote from Nature's fair creations, / Within the busy mart and street."[15] The poem concludes with the speaker's assertion that those who stay behind, remembering the traditions of faith displaced or compromised by modernity, will be blessed. The periodical as a product of modernity, including the rise of the railway, participated in the broader cultural shift noticed in the poem. In the periodical *Good Words*, the poetry

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Prayer Book, omitting only poems on purely utilitarian and undevotional prayer Book inclusions" G.B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry: The Tractarian Mode*. (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge Univerity Press, 1981), 79. Such poetry supplemented more conventional devotional sources, encouraging family reading and reflection. Thus, both devotional poetry and the Christmas ghost story shared the era's preoccupation with creating a space for Victorian readers to gather as a family and read literature that promoted the specific religious and cultural values of the Victorian middle class. For more information about the Victorian's shifting relationship to time, see Mark Turner, "Periodical Time in the Nineteenth Century," *Media History* 8.2 (2002): 183-96.

13 *Ibid*., 89.

14 Dora Greenwell, "The Railway Station," *Good Words*. I: 438.

15 *Ibid*.

and spiritual content disrupts this trend, reintroducing "the traditions of [society's] youth" through the modern product of the periodical.[16] Arguably, a similar effect is present when we consider the periodical contexts of the Christmas ghost story. The tales published in urban periodicals such as *Household Words* mediate the modernity of the medium by encouraging (and recreating through frame narratives) the traditional, romanticized practice of oral storytelling around the hearth. Both genres, then, encouraged the reader to reclaim the pre-industrial traditions of familial reading and reflection, albeit through decidedly different formats. My paper will now turn to a close examination of the features of the Victorian ghost story and its role in reasserting traditional English, and Christian, practices amidst an increasingly sceptical and secular culture.

The Victorian Ghost Story: Spectres of Modernity

Typically published in ephemeral venues such as literary annuals, weekly periodicals, and the sensational 'penny dreadfuls' of the 19th Century, the "distinct, anti-Gothic character of the Victorian ghost story began to emerge" in the 1850s.[17] This new genre rewrote the "indulgently heroic and ostentatiously fictitious" Gothic tale of terror by transposing its ghosts and themes onto the domestic spaces of Britain.[18] This movement from the foreign to the local blurred the "boundaries between fact and fiction."[19] Victorian ghost stories seemed more factual even as authors introduced inexplicable supernatural phenomena into their texts. There are key formal elements that constitute the Victorian ghost story: the spectacle of the returning dead (or agents of the dead); a dramatic interaction between the living and the dead that unsettles or frightens the reader by removing the distancing narrative and thematic elements of earlier Gothic fiction; the story must have a clear literary quality; the story must demonstrate a clear sense of 'Englishness'; and the story must

16 *Ibid*.
17 Michael Cox and R.A. Gilbert, "Introduction," *Victorian Ghost Stories: An Oxford Anthology*. eds. Michael Cox and R.A. Gilbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), x.
18 *Ibid*.
19 *Ibid*.

be relatively short in length.[20] Located in England, relatively short in length, and containing ghostly figures that wander through the halls of a British country home interacting with its occupants, Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story" conforms to all the elements traditionally associated with the ghost story. It is a paradigmatic example of the Victorian ghost story acting as one of the foundational texts of the genre, emphasizing the generic innovations of the Victorian ghost story through its complex treatment of ghosts and the resultant episodes of terror.

The ghosts of Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story" appear as sinister characters who interact with the occupants of Furnivall manor disturbing the privileged sanctity of domestic and psychological space. The first significant interaction occurs when the nurse describes how she saw a phantom child "out-of-doors on a bitter night—crying, and beating against the window-panes, as if she wanted to be let in. She seemed to sob and wail, till Miss Rosamond could bear it no longer."[21] The attempt of the "spectre-child" to enter the home threatens to disrupt the boundaries between the external world and the domestic spaces of the home.[22] This disruption destabilizes popular theories of separate public and private spheres and the sanctity of domestic space by positioning the home as penetrable by external (and preternatural) forces. Even when the shutters are pulled tight Rosamond can still hear the cries of the spectre-child.[23] However, only Rosamond can hear the child's cries. The nurse remembers how "even in the stillness of that dead-cold weather, I had heard no sound of little battering hands upon the window-glass... no faintest touch of sound had fallen upon my ears."[24] The lack of sound disturbs both the nurse and the reader because it challenges our experiences of reality and suggests that the spectre-child can affect some kind of psychological control over Rosamond. For example, the spectre-child influences

20 *Ibid*.
21 Elizabeth Gaskell, "The Old Nurse's Story," *Household Words*. 6 (1852): 17. The page numbers refer to the Christmas issue appended to this particular volume. While the volume edition of the periodical provided continuous pagination throughout, the Christmas issue retained its original, separate, pagination.
22 *Ibid*., 17.
23 *Ibid*., 18-19.
24 *Ibid*., 17.

Rosamond's behaviour by luring her outside in the middle of the night. Rosamond explains to the nurse how "this little girl beckoned to me to go out... I could not choose but to go."[25] The spectre-child compels Rosamond to join her. Though this haunting of Rosamond seems random, the psychological haunting of Miss Furnivall is more deliberate and complex.

Miss Furnivall's first interaction with the manor's ghosts occurs when she hears terrible voices screaming. However, like Rosamond's experience with her "poor little girl," no one but Miss Furnivall hears these tormenting screams.[26] Then, as the snow falls around Furnivall manor on a cold night in January, the manor's ghostly figures confront Miss Furnivall by re-enacting her rumoured complicity in her father's fatal banishment of her sister and her niece.[27] The nurse's description of "the terrible phantoms [who] moved on, regardless of old Miss Furnivall's wild entreaty" reminds the reader of the spectres projected through the phantasmagoria.[28]

As previously mentioned, the Victorian era marked the beginning of an increasingly technological and secular society. The introduction of the railway, the telegraph, the laying of the transatlantic cable, and, most importantly for our purposes, the development of new visual technologies such as the phantasmagoria all signal the era's aggressive modernization. Yet, as Terry Castle notes, embedded within these narratives of progress and technological innovation was the phantom of the spectre. In particular, Castle locates the spectre within the technology of the phantasmagoria, a late 18th- and early 19th-century visual technology "in which 'specters' were produced through the use of a magic lantern."[29] As with other visual technologies from the Victorian era (such as the diorama and the magic lantern), as the century progressed writers began to identify a "symbolic

25 *Ibid*., 16.
26 *Ibid*., 19.
27 *Ibid*., 19-20.
28 *Ibid*., 20.
29 Terry Castle, "Phantasmagoria: Spectral Technology and the Metaphorics of Modern Reverie," *Critical Inquiry*. 15 (1988): 24. The magic lantern projected images painted on transparencies onto a wall or screen. Through a controlled application of light from gas lamps, the images were made to dissolve into one another. When adapted for the phantasmagoria, the images projected by the magic lantern came to represent the spirits of the dead.

connection between phantasmagoria and the alienating power of the imagination."[30] The move to associate visual illusions with the cognitive processes of the mind occurs throughout Victorian literature from the realist fiction of Charles Dickens and George Eliot (who both use the diorama as a metaphor for the cognitive processes of memory) to the era's supernatural tales. In the Victorian ghost story, the spectacle of the phantasmagoria becomes an implicit metaphor for the "so-called ghosts of the mind" (Castle 45) haunting the genre.[31] Read within this historical context, the final scene becomes a psychological projection of Miss Furnivall's guilty conscience. Upon the scene's conclusion she exclaims, "Alas! alas! what is done in youth can never be undone in age!" and falls to the ground stricken with palsy.[32] The physical and emotional reaction experienced by Miss Furnivall suggests the story's identification with the modern theories of the spectral that were circulating throughout Britain at this time.

The fact that the nurse is narrating the events complicates this reading. The nurse's ability to see the ghosts contradicts sceptical theories of psychological projection and positions the ghosts as purely supernatural phenomena. However, this contradiction is an inherent feature of the Victorian ghost story, which "manage[d] to appeal both to the skeptic [sic] and the believer, courting rational explanations and drawing upon contemporary scientific theories only to show that these do not suffice to solve the mystery of the spectral."[33] Following this pattern, Gaskell's short story introduces the modern psychological theories of the spectral only to ultimately displace them with the supernatural. The consequence of this narrative strategy is a reinsertion of the inexplicable into a rational society. It is this complex use of the ghost figure that distinguishes Gaskell's ghost stories from the Gothic ghosts haunting novels like Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764).

In Walpole's novel, the ghost acts as the narrative's *deus ex machina* affecting the climactic conclusion of the novel even though it never directly engages with the novel's characters. Walpole's ghost exists simply to block passages in the castle, spook the servants, and fulfil

30 *Ibid*., 43.
31 *Ibid*., 45.
32 Gaskell, "The Old Nurse's Story," 32.
33 Srdjan Smajic, "The Trouble with Ghost-Seeing: Vision, Ideology, and Genre in the Victorian Ghost Story," *ELH*. 70 (2003): 1128.

the novel's prophecy in a literal manner. For example, the prophecy in *Otranto* states "[t]hat the castle and lordship of Otranto should pass from the present family whenever the real owner should be grown too large to inhabit it."[34] By the end of the novel, Alfonso's spectral form outgrows the castle walls reducing it to ruin. In contrast, Gaskell's innovation of familial ghosts is far subtler. Her ghosts do not fulfil a stated prophecy nor do they act as literal embodiments of the story's main theme; rather, they function to alter the human world through an appeal to Miss Furnivall's conscience. The story concludes with a more domestic and moral lesson rather than the exaggerated ending of Walpole's novel. Gaskell manipulates the function of the Gothic ghost in Walpole by transforming the presence of the spectre from a literal realisation of an abstract prophecy into a moral imperative related to an individual's psychology (or conscience) and located within the domestic space of a Victorian manor house.

This introduction of the ghost into the domestic spaces of Victorian England is an important feature of 19th-century Christmas fiction. It allowed the Christmas books to promote an idea of social reform, which ultimately blended contemporary Christian beliefs with the era's more secular domestic ideology. As Moore points out, in Dickens's Christmas books, the touchstone for the Christmas book genre, "a gospel of social reform replaces the biblical nativity story and Christ's gospel of spiritual salvation."[35] Yet, as Moore admits, "Christian ideology formed the foundation of character motivations and social conversations" of the era's early Christmas books.[36] So, while Miss Furnivall's narrative of repentance (i.e. the acknowledgement of her past sins) fits the social model of the Christmas story genre, it also echoes the message behind much devotional poetry, which asks readers to review their lives and actions in an effort to conform to

34 Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 17.

35 See Moore, 38; and for further information, 22-338.

36 *Ibid*., 38. By early Christmas books, Moore is referring to Christmas literature largely published prior to the 1860s. Post 1860s there was a major shift in the function of the ghost. Authors shifted from the redemptive Dickensian ghost towards ghosts that "had more fears about their own souls, and... cared little for the souls of others." *Ibid*., 97-98. As the century progressed, the Christmas book market became increasingly commercial and dedicated to the production of children's literature. For further information, see Moore, 99-119.

the ideals taught by Christ. The ghost story constructed by Gaskell thus becomes a key example of the period's preoccupation with social reform and the conflation of domestic and Christian ideologies. Her text is not an isolated example of such narratives; rather, it is paradigmatic of the literary conversations that dominated Victorian Britain. I now want to turn to the era's periodical press, which played an important role in the dissemination and cultural framing of Christmas and the Victorian ghost story.

'The Ghost of an Idea': The Haunting of the Victorian Christmas Market

In any discussion of the Victorian Christmas book and ghosts one must start with Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* (published in 1843), which changed the Victorian literary landscape.[37] Dickens prefaces *A Christmas Carol* with a simple declaration of his authorial intent. He writes, "I have endeavoured in this Ghostly little book to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me."[38] Though Dickens's novella arguably is the most famous Christmas book ever produced, it is not the first book written specifically for the Christmas market. Christmas themed texts published during the 1820s and 30s include Washington Irving's "The Christmas Dinner" (1820), Thomas K. Hervey's *Book of Christmas* (1835), and Alfred Tennyson's *Morte d'Arthur* (1834), with its "group of friends around the Christmas fire."[39] However, despite the presence of these other publications, the popularity of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* marks a watershed moment in seasonal gift book production. By December 24 1843, the sales of Dickens's first sumptuously produced and expensive Christmas book (it retailed at 5s per volume) reached 6,000 copies.[40]

37 For further reading on Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* and its importance to critical understandings of Victorian Christmas, see Parker, *Christmas and Charles Dickens*; Moore, *Victorian Christmas*; Richard Kelley, "Introduction," *A Christmas Carol.* Charles Dickens. (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, Ltd., 2003), 9-30; and Michael Slater, "Introduction," *The Christmas Books: Volume I* A *Christmas Carol/the Chimes*. Charles Dickens. (London: Penguin Books, 1985), vii-36.

38 Charles Dickens, "A Christmas Carol," *The Christmas Books*. (London: Gerald Duckworth, Ltd. with Worth Press Ltd., 2005), 3.

39 Parker, 106.

40 Robert Patten L., *Charles Dickens and his Publishers*. (Oxford: Oxford

Robert Patten points out "the more astonishing aspect of the *Carol*'s reception is the sale *after* Christmas, *after* Boxing Day, on into the summer."[41] More copies of Dickens's *Carol* had sold between January and April 1844 than "during the Christmas season of 1843."[42] By May 1844, the publishers of *A Christmas* Carol released the seventh edition of Dickens's ghostly tale of redemption.[43] The unparalleled success of Dickens's first Christmas book on the market affected the subsequent production of Victorian ghost stories, creating the conditions necessary for the Victorian ghost story to thrive and become part of the era's Christmas traditions.

After the success of *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, Dickens "made it his business to supply readers with special texts to be read at Christmas time" for the next twenty-four years.[44] Though Dickens would publish four more Christmas books, his greatest contribution to the Christmas market, after *A Christmas Carol*, was his decision to publish nine Christmas numbers for his periodical *Household Words* from 1850 to 1858. After the first Christmas number of 1850, each subsequent Christmas number cost readers three pence compared to the two pence charged for regular issues. The difference in price and the increased length (thirty-six compared to twenty-four pages) set the Christmas numbers apart from the regular numbers of *Household Words*, making them a distinct Christmas commodity.[45] Eventually periodicals such as *The Cornhill Magazine*, *St. James's Magazine*, *Belgravia*, *Temple Bar*, *Saturday Review*, *Tinsley's Argosy*, and *St. Paul's* all participated in the tradition of publishing a special Christmas number for the holiday season.[46] These publications inevitably included a "much-anticipated yuletide ghost story to chill the soul on an evening around the fire."[47] Though Dickens published Christmas issues of *Household Words* in December 1850 ("The Christmas

University Press, 1978), 146.
41 *Ibid*.
42 *Ibid*.
43 *Ibid*.
44 Parker, 222.
45 For complete bibliographic information about *Household Words,* see Anne Lohrli, "Household Words - The Periodical," *Household Words: a Weekly Journal, 1850-59*. (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1973), 3-50.
46 Lynch, "Spectral Politics," 68.
47 *Ibid*.

Number") and December 1851 (announced in a December 20 advertisement as "Showing What Christmas is to Everybody"), it is in the December 1852 Christmas number of *Household Words* that Dickens solidifies the link between the Victorian ghost story and the Christmas market in the era's periodical press.

While other editors published "a whole range of fiction for the Christmas reader,"[48] Dickens's ghost stories and Christmas numbers became "the major catalyst for the Victorian association of ghost stories and Christmas."[49] Dickens affects this connection in two ways. He contributes stories on Christmas themes (see "A Christmas Tree" in 1850) to *Household Words*, and he frames his Christmas numbers according to the holiday tradition of telling stories (including ghostly tales) around the hearth. He explicitly articulates this framing device in the Christmas number from 1852, which he titles "A Round of Stories by the Christmas Fire." Dickens opens this Christmas supplement with his contribution "The Poor Relation's Story." Out of the ten stories published in this particular number, only Dickens's introductory piece and Harriet Martineau's "The Deaf Playmate's Story" reference the framework of the Christmas number. Dickens uses the poor relation's narrative voice to set the scene, describing how he feels "very reluctant to take precedence of so many respected members of the family, by beginning the round of stories they were to relate as they sat in a goodly circle by the Christmas Fire."[50] Despite his hesitation, the poor relation does tell his story (one of poverty and familial greed) beginning an evening of storytelling that will include Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story."

As previously noted, the publication of Gaskell's ghost story in the Christmas numbers of *Household Words* participates in the larger cultural movement linking the ghost story with Christmas literature. Most critics attribute this connection to the commercial

48 John Sutherland, "Christmas Books", *The Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction*. (Essex: Longman Group UK Limited, 1988), 26. Gaskell, for example, published her didactic short story "Christmas Storms and Sunshine" in the 1848 Christmas number of the short-lived *Howitt's Journal*, a social reform publication known for publishing non-escapist fiction.
49 Dennis Denisoff, "Introduction," *The Broadview Anthology of Victorian Short Stories*. (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press Ltd., 2004), 21.
50 Charles Dickens, "The Poor Relation's Story," *Household Words*. 6 (1852-53): 1.

forces working on the literary market. Quite simply, people were more willing to spend money on entertainment during the holidays. Thus, editors like Dickens "solicited ghost stories for [their] seasonal issues" to provide the audience with the frivolous entertainment they desired.[51] The intense popularity of the publications "encouraged the spread of the practice until it became a festive tradition."[52] The periodical press (re)established the tradition of reading ghost stories at Christmas transposing its oral roots from a rural past into the urban world of periodical publications and increased literacy. It is this connection between the modern ghost story and the older oral traditions of the Christmas season that suggests some of the broader critical implications of associating the Victorian ghost story with Christmas.

Though it is beyond the scope of this paper to trace the oral history of the ghost story, one can posit why the tradition became a part of the urban periodical press.[53] If the Victorian ghost story can be read as engaging with modernity by challenging its scepticism and the validity of its scientific rationalism (as Smajic suggests),[54] then the association made by Dickens between the oral tradition of telling stories around the Christmas fire and the Victorian ghost story can be seen as a reassertion of traditional values and practices. Parker argues that "[i]n writing it as he did, and publishing it when he did Dickens was not just joining in the annual merrymaking."[55] Rather, he was "insisting upon the centrality of Christmas in national life, reminding the nation of established traditions and of values the festival affirmed and suggesting values it might yet affirm."[56] These traditions, which we can implicitly link to the movement in devotional literature that aimed to prompt stable and recurring moments of devotional reading and reflection, were necessary to affirm in the face of modernity. In her biography on Gaskell, for example, Jenny Uglow describes how "events like the Great Exhibition [of 1851] made [Gaskell] feel as

51 Denisoff, 21.
52 *Ibid*.
53 For further discussion regarding the difficulty of tracing oral traditions, see Moore, 82.
54 Smajic, "Trouble with Ghost Seeing," 1108-109.
55 Parker, 158.
56 *Ibid*.

if science and progress were sweeping away the era of her youth."[57] Gaskell's short stories implicitly represent her nostalgic attempt to hold onto the traditions of storytelling that she inherited from her youth and practiced privately well into the 1850s.[58] The publication of her short stories in Dickens's Christmas publications emphasizes this aspect of her writing; however, because Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story" is a foundational example of the Victorian ghost story, most critics ignore the interpretive implications of Gaskell's participation in the Christmas market. For instance, Carol Martin argues that Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story" is evidence of the author's "profound discontent with the condition of women in patriarchal society."[59] The patriarchal social order comes to stifle the potential good of Miss Furnivall ultimately destroying her.[60] While this is a valid reading of the story, reinserting "The Old Nurse's Story" into its original publication context, the 1852 Christmas number of *Household Words*, reveals how Gaskell's story participates in the broader cultural project of reclaiming tradition in the face of a secular and commercial modernity.

While collected editions of Gaskell's short fiction generally acknowledge the story's original publication context, usually in the textual notes on the story, none question how the Christmas context of Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story" alters its cultural function. Read as an example of the genre, Gaskell's story demonstrates a cultural shift from the superstitious past of the Gothic literature to the sceptical modernity of the Victorian ghost story. Within the narrative structure of the story, Gaskell links her story to the older oral tradition of telling ghost stories to an audience. The framework of Dickens's *Household Words* amplifies and recontextualises this structure explicitly linking Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story" to the tradition of telling ghost stories around the Christmas fire. Through its association with Christmas, the story becomes a symbol of the past traditions that are lost in the face of modernity and progress. Dickens's insistence on publishing literature specifically designed for the Christmas market

57 Jenny Uglow, *Elizabeth Gaskell: A Habit of Stories*. (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1993), 279.
58 See Carol Martin, "Gaskell's Ghosts: Truths in Disguise," *Studies in the Novel*. 21 (1989): 30.
59 Martin, "Gaskell's Ghosts," 33.
60 *Ibid*.

suggests that he firmly believed that these seasonal traditions were necessary elements of British culture that needed to be preserved and immortalised through literature. The ghost story is the ideal genre for this project. It navigates the tensions between the past and the present, and its subject matter implicitly reminds readers of seasonal traditions. Clery describes how in the late 18th Century the scene of the village or family, servants and all, gathered around the fire presented reader's with a "scene of natural community,… [where] the circle of superstition, generally rural, is valorized to contrast with the artificial pastimes of the disenchanted city." Something similar occurs in Dickens's *Household Words*. The framing of the short stories as part of the oral traditions of yore suggests that the periodical is reacting to the increasingly secular and commercial practices of Victorian Christmas.

Dickens's decision to publish Victorian ghost stories within the context of the oral traditions that were originally aligned with superstitious rural culture reintroduces spirituality into an increasingly secular world. This occurs even as Gaskell's short story engages with modern theories of psychology, spiritualism, and the existence of ghosts. Clery describes how "[r]ationally speaking, the ghosts and goblins [of Gothic fiction] are not *true*, but when they appear in the literary artefacts of past ages, they are *true to history*, accurate representations of an obsolete system of beliefs: a stance we might call *exemplary* historicism." The foreign and temporally distant locales of Gothic novels allowed readers to engage with and believe in the superstitious beliefs of past even as their modern scepticism led them to disavow the nation's superstitious (and Catholic) past. However, the Victorian ghost story collapses the binary between the superstitious past and sceptical modernity by importing irrational impossibilities into the modern and domestic landscapes of Britain. As Smajic points out "[t]he fictional ghost-seer is typically caught in a disconcerting double bind between instinctive faith in the evidence of one's own sight and the troubling knowledge the vision is often deceptive and unreliable." The Victorians inhabited a similar double bind torn between their faith in modernity and the superstitions and religious faith they inherited. The Victorian ghost story complicates these tensions between the ghostly past of the Gothic and the realism of modernity by exposing the potential unreliability of modern theories in the face of the supernatural. The appearance of the ghost

story in Christmas publications exaggerates this turning back to the supernatural in the face of modernity, ultimately demonstrating how the ghost story participates in a reaffirmation of Victorian traditions and superstitions within an increasingly secular society.

In Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers,* Wardle attempts to dismiss the short story of Gabriel Grub as nothing more than local superstition. His mother, however, interrupts him by asking: "Is there anybody hardy enough to disbelieve it? Suppose! Haven't you heard ever since you were a child, that he *was* carried away by the goblins, and don't you know he was?" Wardle's mother becomes a symbol of the superstitious past. She believes in the ghosts and goblins that populate the stories she associates with the Christmas season. This past haunts the Victorian ghost story. The genre attempts to navigate the growing divide between the superstitious past and the scepticism of modernity. It becomes a rhetorical tool for authors to reassert the established traditions of Britain back into the increasingly secular society of Victorian England. Most critics ignore the broader implications of the association between the Christmas ghost story, explaining this phenomena as simply a coincidental product of Dickens's genius and his ability to manipulate the literary market. Gaskell's "The Old Nurse's Story" anticipates this critical turn: the nurse acknowledges that her audience does not "care so much" for the beginning of her story "as for what [they] think is to come." Yet, it is the Victorian ghost story's evolution from its Gothic origins that exposes how the ghost story imports past (literary) traditions into modernity through its complex negotiation of cultural and commercial expectations.

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Martin Luther and Musically Expressed Theology

Adam Hough, University of Phoenix

Abstract

This paper seeks a reappraisal of Martin Luther's complex understanding of theology's place in the social and political reformation of 16th–century Germany. Here I seek to reintroduce an element of that theology that has been largely absent from mainstream scholarship: music. Building on Robin Leaver's influential 2007 work, Luther's Liturgical Music, wherein he argues that Luther's liturgical song–writing ought to be understood theologically, I will demonstrate how the reformer sought to use a musically expressed theology to build a foundation of faith among the German laity– a prerequisite, he believed, to a successful reformation of Christian religion and society. Luther's answer to the failures of the early evangelical Reformation was an educational programme centred on teaching a theology of the Psalms through music.

> "*And this which has been begun during my lifetime will be completed after my death. St. John Huss prophesied of me when he wrote from his prison in Bohemia, "They will roast a goose now (for 'Huss' means 'a goose'), but after a hundred years they will hear a swan sing, and him they will endure.*"
> –Martin Luther, 1530[1]

1 *Luther's Works*. American Edition, Vol. 34, eds. Jaroslav Pelican and Helmut T. Lehmann, Fortress Press: Philadelphia, 1966. {*Luther's Works* to be hereafter referred to as *LW*, followed by volume item and page number. In this case, the citation would read *LW* 34:104}.

> "*I know and bear true witness that the holy man of God, Luther, the Prophet and Apostle to the German nation, had a great love for music in plainsong and polyphony. Many precious hours have I sung with him, and have often seen how the dear man became so merry and joyful in spirit from singing, that he could hardly become tired and weary of singing and speaking so splendidly about music.*"
> –Johann Walter, c. 1533[2]

Historians and scholars of the Reformation are generally in agreement that Martin Luther was favourably disposed towards music. Countless examples can be found to evidence the great comfort and solace he found in the art. "It is the function of music," he writes, "to arouse the sad, sluggish and dull spirit."[3] In his poem dedicated to "Frau Musica" he opens,

> Of all the joys upon this earth
> None has for men a greater worth
> Than what I give with my ringing
> And with voices sweetly singing[4]

Where academic consensus waivers, though, is in Luther's attitudes towards music with respect to reformation. The prevailing historiographical tradition pays little respect to music as anything more than a devotional aid. Within this tradition, we typically find music treated together with Luther's liturgical reforms. Even here, however, the liturgical function of music is viewed as somewhat superficial and undefined. In both the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* (1996)[5] and the *Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*

2 Walter's reflections on Luther were included in Praetorius' 1612 *Leiturgodia Sionia Latina*. The above quotation is believed to have been originally written by Walter in the early 1530s. For greater detail see Robin Leaver's analysis, "Johann Walter on Luther" in *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications*. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 333.
3 *LW* 10:43.
4 *LW* 53:319.
5 See Bartlett R. Butler, "Hymns," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*. ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand. (Oxford University Press, 1996, 2005).

(2003),[6] Luther's hymnody is treated as no more than a devotional product of his theology. In many treatments, the theological meaning and significance of Luther's music is overshadowed, if not entirely overlooked. In these works, the social–cultural impact of Luther's music, particularly his interest in congregational singing, greatly outweighs more theologically minded interpretations. Given the immense influence of Robert Scribner and Peter Burke on Reformation historiography over the past forty years, this is not altogether surprising. As they demonstrated, the ability to mobilize a variety of media in service to the evangelical cause was undoubtedly central to the quick spread of Protestant thought and culture in the first half of the 16th Century.[7] Along with illustrative woodcuts and vernacular *Flugschriften*, music has as often as not found itself more at home in the cultural history of the Reformation. With respect to Luther's music as a *tool* of the Reformation, therefore, there has been much to say about Luther and music.

Criticisms of Luther's reformation efforts are in no short supply. Many have argued that there was actually very little originality in Luther's reforms, and he is often charged with being a 'cut–and–paste' reformer.[8] Bartlett Butler, for example, writes in the *Oxford Encyclopedia* that, "Luther was unconcerned with innovation or originality," adding, "On the contrary, his work was extraordinarily conservative, borrowing from the past and adapting it to the present"[9] Joyce Irwin suggests further that as far as advancing the liturgical

6 This dismissal of music can be seen, for example, in *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*. ed. Donald. K. McKim. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), 12–15. The Cambridge Companion has been reviewed by both Leaver and Timothy J. Wengert. Both have criticised its unevenness and oversimplification, especially with regard to its entries' attention to Luther's music. Leaver, 2007, 1–2; Timothy J. Wengert, "Review Essay: The Cambridge Luther, an Unreliable Companion," *Lutheran Quarterly*. Vol. 19 (2005): 79–84.

7 R. W. Scribner, *For The Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), xxv–xxix; see also Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*. 3rd edition. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009).

8 See Leaver's "Musical Hermeneutics in Luther's Liturgical Reforms" for a critical historiography of Luther's reform efforts, as well as Leaver's refutation of them. Leaver, 173–190.

9 Butler, "Hymns" *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation.*

function of music was concerned, Luther was no more than a prelude to Thomas Müntzer.[10] In his 2005 work, *Worship Wars in Early Lutheranism: Choir, Congregation and Three Centuries of Conflict*, Josef Herl makes the argument that Luther was uninterested in dramatically reforming the function and meaning of religious music. In support of this argument, Herl uses early Lutheran liturgical orders and visitation reports to deconstruct commonly held perceptions that ascribe any revolutionary quality to musical reform in the Lutheran church service.[11]

One argument common to many of these critical examinations of music in Luther's reformation focuses on the proportionality of musical references in the Reformer's voluminous writings. Compared to his scriptural interpretation or his treatises concerning secular authority, which each themselves can easily span several volumes, the entirety of his writings on music would not likely fill even one. Regarding music as but a percentage of the whole is problematic though. Music, for Luther, was not simply a by–product of his ostensibly more theologically substantial reforms. His attitude towards music in the early 1520's serves in fact as an example *par excellence* of what he was trying to accomplish with his overall theological and, by extension, political and social reformation. He was setting out to excise all pretences to temporal authority from the governance of the spiritual kingdom. This exercise, however, was a corollary of a more fundamentally important concern for Luther. Not only was

10 Joyce Irwin, *Neither Voice nor Heart Alone: German Lutheran Theology of Music in the Age of the Baroque*. (New York: Lang, 1993), 1–7.

11 Herl's overall argument is that the traditionally accepted narrative that there was a dramatic shift to a vernacular, congregation–dominated musical liturgy in 16th-century Lutheran churches is unsubstantiated. He argues that in fact the chorus retained its musical–liturgical responsibilities long after Luther died. He argues further that scholars have overestimated Luther's enthusiasm for congregational singing, and that Luther was actually much more conservative with respect to musical reforms. He analyzes a number of 16th- and 17th-century liturgical orders to demonstrate that supposedly few churches were quick to adopt either the vernacular liturgy or the practice of congregational singing. Using visitation records from about 1527–8 to the middle of the 17th-Century, he traces a number of trends in Lutheran churches. Of theses, the most important for our purpose is that visitors seemed particularly interested in the quality of congregational singing in the parishes they visited, and that this singing was often judged to be of a poor quality.

Luther trying to develop a comprehensive evangelical theology– an essential character of which is spirit–law dialectic– but he was also developing a concurrent philosophy related to the meaning and forms of theological expression.

His experimentation with musically expressed theology was therefore informed by the same concerns that drove Luther to develop his ideas about the Two Kingdoms and to articulate his Christian hermeneutics in light of an often hostile political–religious context. Theologically, he had the tricky task of transferring Christian authority from the Church to the Gospel, a task made trickier still by the fact that the exercise would be in vain should the facilitation of that transference ever become dependent on human authority to sustain it. In other words, the Word of God would become meaningless if, through secular influences, it took on the character of Law. So, while works like *On Temporal Authority* and *Avoiding the Doctrines of Men* do not explicitly promote the idea of musically expressed theology, these works, in criticizing the inherently legal, and therefore secular, nature of man–made doctrines and decrees, were important antecedents to Luther's development of a musically expressed theology. Where music is not explicitly referenced, the desire for a reappraisal of Christian authority, and perhaps more importantly the expression thereof, is nonetheless ubiquitous. The role Luther developed for music was born from his desire to create educational and liturgical reforms consonant with his evangelical theology, without, of course, compromising the fundamentally spiritual message through subordination to human laws or doctrines. We therefore ought to view Luther's references to the role and nature of music as an ongoing organic development within Luther's broader theology, neither external to it nor simply a watered–down reflection of it.

A second criticism of those who claim music was not an integral part of Luther's reformation follows from the charge that these historians have engaged in selective citation, thereby presenting a skewed interpretation of this relationship. Josef Herl, for example, cites Luther on a number of occasions apparently complaining about music, and he is not entirely wrong to do so. In fact, in the introduction to his 2007 book *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications*, Robin Leaver collects no less than eight significant

passages that show Luther to be critical of music,[12] and still more could be added to that list.[13] As Leaver is quick to point out, however, Luther is not critical of music, but rather of the way music had been and continued to be used in the Christian service. In one instance Luther writes, "Therefore let the works go, no matter how great they may be, prayers, chants, yammering, and yapping; for it is certain that nobody will ever get to God through all these things."[14] In this case, Luther is railing against the notion that singing hymns and songs is interpreted as a good work, and therefore pleasing to God. In another passage, this time from the *Formula Missae*, Luther warns, "But we must take care – as I have elsewhere explained –[15] lest the people sing only with their lips, like sounding pipes or harps [I Cor. 14:7]."[16] As with the previous example, this passage demonstrates that Luther did not want the singing of religious songs to be a chore. He did not want parishioners singing his songs as if they were simply going through the prescribed motions.

Despite his appreciation of the art, Luther's suspicion of music is perfectly understandable in the context of his Augustinian background and education. In his *Confessions*, St. Augustine himself struggled

12 Leaver, 6–8.

13 In the preface to George Rhau's *Symphoniae iucundae*, Luther expresses his frustration that music continues to be used impiously: "Take special care to shun perverted minds who prostitute this lovely gift of nature and art [music] with their erotic rantings; and be quite assured that none but the devil goads them on to defy their very nature which would and should praise God its maker with this gift, so that these bastards purloin the gift of God, the enemy of nature and of this lovely art." *LW* 53:324. See also notes 14 and 15 below.

14 *LW* 51:47.

15 Here Luther is referencing *Concerning the Order of Public Worship*, wherein he writes, "Let everything be done so that the Word may have free course instead of the prattling and rattling that has been the rule up to now. We can spare everything but the Word." *LW* 53:14. Concerning music, this early work (written at the beginning of 1523) is important because it ascribes an equal importance to singing and the reading of scripture within the church service. Both practices, Luther argues, are meaningless unless they are understood to be unconditional, undeserved gifts from God, rather than as a means of pleasing Him. "First, God's Word has been silenced, and only reading and singing remain in the churches. This is the worst abuse." *Ibid*., 11.

16 *Ibid*., 38.

with the question of music's place in Christian worship.[17] As with Luther, Augustine recognized the affective potential of music, though he remained suspicious of man's ability to appreciate the difference between music as a form of worship and as a form of indulgence. Nonetheless, Luther, optimistic as he was in the early twenties, was increasingly convinced that music was a gift from God.[18] Though he would not develop this notion theologically until sometime later, we see this idea already in his preface to the 1524 Walter Hymnal, wherein he exhorts Christians to compose Christian songs "if God has given him like or greater gifts".[19] We will return to this notion of music's divine origin in short order, but what ought to be noted at present is that although Luther recognized and was indeed concerned about the possibility that his hymns could be used impiously, the rewards to be had from pairing theology with music far outweighed the dangers.

Regardless of whether one recited scripture right from the Gospel or sang Luther's hymns aloud, they were still proclaiming the same Word of God.[20] How and why songs were sung within the liturgy, therefore, was of great interest to Luther. So, while Luther recognized the possibility that song alone could not make a Christian of a heathen; we should in no way allow these specific criticisms of song's use to undermine our understanding of his enthusiasm for and appreciation of the medium.

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17 Augustine writes, "Notwithstanding, when I call to mind the tears I shed at the songs of Your Church, at the outset of my recovered faith, and how even now I am moved not by the singing but by what is sung, when they are sung with a clear and skillfully modulated voice, I then acknowledge the great utility of this custom. Thus vacillate I between dangerous pleasure and tried soundness; being inclined rather (though I pronounce no irrevocable opinion upon the subject) to approve of the use of singing in the church, that so by the delights of the ear the weaker minds may be stimulated to a devotional frame. Yet when it happens to me to be more moved by the singing than by what is sung, I confess myself to have sinned criminally, and then I would rather not have heard the singing." Augustine, *Confessions*. 10:33 no. 50.

18 In his lectures on Isaiah 16:62, Luther writes "Musica donum dei est"– *music is a gift from God*. *WA* (Weimar Ausgabe [Luther's collected works in German]) TR no.3815.

19 *LW* 53:316.

20 See Luther's 1521 *A Brief Instruction on What to Look for and Expect in the Gospel.* LW 35:117–124.

Music next to Theology

In perhaps Lutheranism's most formative year, 1530 and the diet of Augsburg, Luther found himself in Cobourg castle in Saxony. Because he was still under the threat of the ban, Luther was prevented from being present at the Augsburg deliberations. He was, however, still able to work, and in fact his time at Cobourg was one of his most productive. Among the projects Luther set out for himself during this period was a comprehensive treatise on music. Along with his promised treatise on the doctrine of justification, this treatise was never actually written; unlike the promised work on justification though, Luther did at least work out an outline of what this treatise would look like. Robin Leaver translates the outline as follows:

> I love music.
> Its censure by fanatics does not please me
> For
> 1. [Music] is a gift of God and not of man
> 2. For it creates joyful hearts
> 3. For it drives away the devil
> 4. For it creates innocent delights, destroying wrath, unchastity, and other excesses.
> I place music next to theology.
> This is well known from the example of
> David and all the prophets, who all
> produced poetry and songs.
> 5. For [music] reigns in times of peace.
> It will be difficult to keep this delightful skill after us.
> The Dukes of Bavaria are to be praised in this, that they honour music.
> Among our Saxon [Dukes] weapons and cannons are esteemed.[21]

The first point to take from this is that Luther considered music a gift from God, which meant it therefore had divine origins. In 1528, in his sermon on Isaiah 5:11, Luther writes, "Musica donum dei est"–

21 English translation in Leaver, 86; German translation in *WA* 30 (II) :695; original Latin/Greek version in *WA* 30(II): 696.

music is a gift from God.[22] This idea though, was actually not in and of itself new. The anonymous author of the medieval treatise on the *quadrivium*, the *Scholia enchiriadis*, wrote sometime in the 9th or 10th Century that:

> These four disciplines [arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy] *are not of human devising, but are investigations, such as they are, of divine works*; and they lead noble minds, by wonderful arguments, to a better understanding of the work of creation.[23] [emphasis added]

Where Luther parted from this idea is in the relative importance of each discipline. Music, for Luther, far surpassed its counterparts within the *quadrivium*. While all four could be considered divine gifts, only one– music– had been used by the prophets and apostles to spread the Word of God. By way of proof, Luther writes,

> The devil, the creator of saddening cares and disquieting worries, takes flight at the sound of music almost as he takes flight at the word of theology. This is the reason why the prophets did not make use of any art except music.[24]

The idea that music was a divine gift and not a human invention is developed further in Luther's lectures on Genesis. Lecturing on Genesis 2:24, Luther comments,

> If Adam had continued in his innocence, the children that were born would have married. Then, after leaving the table and dwelling place of their parents, they would have had their own trees under which they would have lived separately from their parents. At times they would have come to their father Adam and sing a hymn and praise God, and then they would

22 *LW* 16:62, *WA* TR no. 3815.
23 Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin, eds., *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*. (New York: Schirmer, 1984), 39; ed. Martin Gerbert, *Scriptores ecclesiastici de musica sacra potissimum*. (St. Blaise: Typis San–Blasianis, 1784; and Hildesheim: Olms, 1963), 1:193. Cited in Leaver, 373, note 5.
24 Letter to Ludwig Senfl, October 1530. *LW* 49:428.

have returned to their own homes.[25]

Among the descendants of Abel, singing remained a pure form of worship to God. The descendants of Cain, wishing to imitate their cousins' worship of God, created musical instruments. Though the Cainites' worship was misguided, the effort to mimic their cousins' worship demonstrated a heartfelt desire to return to the true church. Accordingly, Luther writes, "Nevertheless, I believe that there were some among [the children of Cain] who went over to the true church and adopted Adam's faith."[26] This tells us that not only was song a pure form of worship that could be traced back to before the Fall, but elements of human creativity, in this case musical accompaniment, could actually be integrated into the worship of the true church. As with music itself, so too was the discipline of music–making considered a divine gift. This conclusion is supported by Dietrich Bartel, who writes, "Luther was not willing to abstract the art from the material. Both music and its associated discipline were God–given gifts."[27] What these reclaimed Cainites brought with them was not the music itself, but their fervent desire to find a way to embrace and celebrate the Holy Spirit. By virtue of this desire, the music they brought with them to the church, both the instruments and the concept of musically accompanied song, took on a spiritual quality. "The tongue," explained Luther, "as a tongue, doesn't contribute to faith, and yet it serves faith when the heart is illuminated."[28]

Another concept central to Luther's musical theology was the idea that music was 'next to theology'. What does this mean? In the preface to the *Symphoniae iucundae*, Luther writes, "Ich gebe nach der Theologia der Music den nähesten Locum und höchste Ehre," translated as, "next to the Word of God, music deserves the

25 *LW* 1:138. Genesis 2:24 reads, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."
26 *LW* 1:137–138; See Leaver on the relationship between biblical song and music, Leaver, 66–70.
27 Bartel here cites a number of hymnal prefaces Luther wrote wherein he exhorts readers to compose their own Christian hymns if God has given them the talent. The first he cites is the Walter, or Wittenberg Hymnal, and the second is the preface to George Rhau's *Symphoniae iucundae*: *LW* 53: 316, 321; in Dietrich Bartel, *Musica Poetica: Musical–Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music*. (University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 3–4.
28 *LW* 54:71 TR no. 439.

highest praise."[29] Is music a close second to theology, or is it of equal importance in Luther's valuation? Consider the following passage from a letter written by Luther to Ludwig Senfl in 1530:

> Indeed I plainly judge, and do not hesitate to affirm, that except for theology there is no art that could be put on the same level *with* music, since except for theology [music] alone produces what otherwise only theology can do, namely, a calm and joyful disposition.

So far, this seems to affirm the conclusion that music and theology are on the same level. Both pursuits have a similar spiritual effect, if not also function. The passage continues, however:

> Manifest proof [of this is the fact] that the devil, the creator of saddening cares and disquieting worries, takes flight at the sound of music *almost* as he takes flight at the word of theology. This is the reason why the prophets did not make use of any art except music; when setting forth their theology they did it not as geometry, not as arithmetic, not as astronomy, but as music, so that they held theology and music most tightly connected, and proclaimed truth through Psalms and songs.[30] (emphasis added)

What we can take from the presence of the word 'almost' is that Luther maintained the distinction between music and theology, but was nonetheless insistent that they were both fundamental to understanding and teaching the Gospel. Music was the medium par excellence of this instruction. Not only was music able to proclaim the Word of God in a form consistent with spiritual, rather than legal

29 In German, see *WA* 50:370. For the standard English translation, see *LW* 53:323: "Experience confirms, namely, that next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise...the Holy Ghost himself honours [music] as an instrument for his proper work when in his Holy Scriptures he asserts that through [music] his gifts were instilled in the prophets, namely, the inclination to all virtues, as can be seen in Elisha [II Kings 3:15]. On the other hand, she serves to cast out Satan, the instigator of all sins, as is shown in Saul, the king of Israel [I Sam. 16:23]."
30 *LW* 49:428

norms, but it was also able to inspire the emotional profundity and sincerity required to both understand and appreciate the meaning of the Gospel, of Christ, and of God's gift to humanity. Luther writes,

> We want the beautiful art of music to be properly used to serve her dear Creator and his Christians. He is thereby praised and honoured and we are made better and stronger in faith when his holy Word is impressed on our hearts by sweet music.[31]

'Theology' represented the effort to divine the Word of God through the study of scripture; however, "True theology," explained Luther, "is practical, and its foundation is Christ, whose death is appropriated to us through faith."[32] To this he adds, "There is only one article and one rule of theology, and this is true faith or trust in Christ."[33] Luther ascribed to his hymns two functions. For one, Luther's hymns attempted to capture, explain, and proclaim the meaning of the Psalms. Like theology, these hymns interrogated scripture to understand the fundamental truths of the Christian faith. Whereas Christian theology, properly speaking, encompassed the entirety of scripture, including both Old and New Testaments, Luther's hymns generally focussed on a specific selection, namely the Psalms.[34] With respect to the versification of Psalms, song could have the same spiritual role as theology, without confusing the distinctiveness of each. I use the phrase musically expressed theology to describe the functional overlap between music and theology. Luther's hymns were both proselytic and exegetical. Here, the acts of understanding and proclaiming scripture unite with music's powerful affective quality. This overlap then leads to the second purpose of Luther's hymns: to move a person to an emotional state conducive to truly appreciating the

31 *LW* 53:328
32 *LW* 54:22 TR no. 153
33 *LW* 54:157 TR no. 1583
34 While the majority of Luther's hymns were derived from the Psalms, Luther also wrote two hymns on the Ten Commandments, one on the Trinity, and one on the Christian Creed. As will be argued in the following chapter, the subject material of Luther's Small Catechism had already earlier been expressed in his hymns. In fact, in the way they were taught, they were essentially already in a catechetical form. Probably the best recent analysis of Luther's musical catechesis belongs to Leaver in Part II of *Luther's Liturgical Music*– "Musical Catechesis," 106–169.

Gospel; or, in other words, to receive the Holy Spirit. Understanding the Gospel was, after all, a two–dimensional process. Recall that one had to sing "with both the spirit and the mind."[35] Unlocking the gift of the Word required both an intellectual and emotional investment.

Musicologist Dietrich Bartel was among the first to appreciate the theological importance of music for Luther. He refers to Luther's understanding of music as a "theocentric philosophy of music."[36] Music, writes Bartel, was "theology's handmaid...tasked with the role of praising God and edifying humanity."[37] To this he also adds a didactic quality, whereby Luther used music to teach theology. Referring to Luther's many comments on the metaphysical properties of music, Bartel recognizes that Luther believed music could make the invisible visible, in this case, that music could be recognized as a manifestation of God's benevolent nature. All this though, and Bartel still refers to music as theology's handmaid? What is theology, if not an effort to get to know God? Bartel's interpretation seems to presuppose that theology is a strictly intellectual enterprise. But, as Luther consistently points out, and as even Bartel recognizes, song and music interrogated and made known not only the textual presence of God on earth, but also the metaphysical presence. Consider Luther's interpretation of the sacraments. His entry on baptism in the small catechism reads:

> *What is Baptism?*
> Answer: Baptism is not merely water, but it is water used according to God's command and connected with God's Word.
> ...
> *How can water produce such effects?*
> Answer: It is not the water that produces these effects, but the Word of God connected with the water, and our faith which relies on the Word of God connected with the water. For without the Word of God the water is merely water and no Baptism.[38]

35 See note 37 below.
36 Bartel, 3.
37 *Ibid*., 6–9.
38 *BC*, 348–9.

Likewise on the sacrament of the altar, Luther writes:

> *How can bodily eating and drinking produce such great effects?* (forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation)
> Answer: The eating and drinking do not in themselves produce them, but the words "for you" and "for the forgiveness of sin." These words, when accompanied by the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief thing in the sacrament, and he who believes these words has what they say and declare: the forgiveness of sins.[39]

In both these rituals, the action itself is nothing. It is only when the significance of the action is understood with respect to the Gospel that the action takes on a metaphysical, spiritual quality. Luther explains, "Baptism is no more than water, but the water has been surrounded by the Word."[40] The only way to obtain an understanding of the Word is through Faith; Faith of course being only attainable as a gift from God. In the *Exhortation,* Luther writes of the sacrament of baptism, "The Word...merits more regard than the whole sacrament with all that it is and can do, for the Word is the chief thing."[41] As with the sacraments, so with scripture. Scripture contained the words of God, but only when it was infused with the Holy Spirit did it become the *Word* of God– the truth conveyed by the words, made clear by faith. How did one engender this union of Spirit and word? One sang the

39 *Ibid*., 351–2.
40 *LW* 54:55 TR no. 365. One should note as well that the Word of God affects the baptismal water only in the context of the sacrament of baptism. The sacrament is truly spiritual only when the act of baptism is attended by faith in the Word and faith in the Word's ability to instil in the water a spiritual quality. The act, the water, Faith, and the Word all have to be present for the sacrament to have meaning. This is why Luther rejected the idea that water itself could be blessed independent of the sacrament. Understanding the spiritual quality of baptismal water as a gift from God was one thing; believing that one could instil the word of God in otherwise regular water and make it something more than natural was sorcery. *LW* 54:244 TR 3610.
41 *The Book of Concord: Confessions of Evangelical Lutheran Church*. eds. Robert Kolb and Timothy J, Wengert; trans. Charles Arand...[et al.]. (Augsburg Fortress: Minneapolis, 2000), 82. {Book of Concord hereafter referred to as *BC*}.

Gospel. As noted above, music itself was a gift from God, as Christ had been– different only in proportion rather than character. Not only was song an inherently divine medium in the sense that it conveyed a message, but it acted also as a conduit to the Holy Spirit.

A brief examination of Luther's hymns

It is clear that Luther intended that his songs would take on a theological function. What form of Christian theology did Luther attempt to propagate in these songs though? To treat each of his songs in turn is beyond the scope of this discussion. What I offer instead is a concise summary and analysis of his hymns. I should clarify that I use the term 'hymn' here in its broader sense to mean a song of praise or worship, regardless of whether it was to be sung by choir or congregation, or some combination thereof.

In Ulrich Leupold's introduction to Luther's hymns, in the translated collection of *Luther's Works*, he divides the Reformer's songs into a number of liturgical and topical categories. First, there are those that have a clear role to play in the regular liturgical round. "Now Let Us Pray to the Holy Ghost" is clearly intended to be sung as the *introit*, just as "In One True God We All Believe" is obviously Luther's rendition of the Creed. The place of these songs is not novel. In most cases Luther's songs here were vernacular versifications of existing Latin songs. As we have seen though, what changed was that the songs could be understood now by all. I do not mean they could be understood simply by virtue of the fact that they were sung in German rather than Latin, though this is important. Instead, I argue that singing the songs themselves helped parishioners access the meaning of the lyrics in a way that previously had been impossible. Singing was supposed to facilitate an emotional investment that deciphered the textual message.

Within Luther's liturgical orders, it was not always explicitly stated which song was to be sung on which occasion, though often Luther makes recommendations. During the administration of the Host, for example, Luther suggests that the hymn "Let God Be Blest" could be sung, or perhaps John Huss' "Jesus Christ, Our God and Saviour."[42] According to regional preferences, liturgical orders could vary on

42 *LW* 53:81–2.

which of Luther's songs best captured the needs of each liturgical rite. As indicated earlier, quite often songs would be sung at intervals within the order where Luther does not actually call for singing, most notably immediately before and after the sermon. This gave adventuresome ministers the opportunity for greater versatility when it came to meeting the changing needs of the congregation. What is clear though is that within each liturgical order, a set of core songs are set aside for regular use in the service.

Likewise, many of Luther's other songs also came to be associated with specific Christian rites and traditions outside the Sunday service. Take Luther's deeply personal early hymn, "From Deep Trouble I Cry to Thee", which quickly became a popular standard in Lutheran funeral services. It begins with a desperate plea to God for aid, and then describes how the petitioner finds comfort and hope in God and his Word. The third stanza demonstrates especially well why this song was likely such a great source of solace:

> Hope therefore in my God will I,
> On my deserts not founding;
> Upon him shall my heart rely,
> All on his goodness grounding.
> What his true Word doth promise me,
> My comfort shall and refuge be;
> That will I always wait for.[43]

Rather than relying on platitudes to comfort the grief stricken, this song consciously reminds listeners of the theological tenets of Lutheranism that make the passage from life to death such an important and necessary occurrence. The preceding stanza, which deals specifically with the doctrine of justification, seems out of place until we remember the centrality of justification throughout Lutheran theology. It begins, "With thee counts nothing but thy grace/ To cover all our failing." If one understood the doctrine of justification, then one would not be plagued with doubts over whether or not their loved one had satisfied their quota of good works in their lifetime. The comfort here comes not solely from the communal act of worship, but from the theological message imbedded in the worship. The

43 *Ibid*., 223–4.

more gentle funeral hymn, "In Peace and Joy I Now Depart" seems to employ platitude rather than this kind of outright theology; however even here comfort necessitates understanding the sacrifice of Christ and the meaning of the Gospel. The soul of the departed is welcomed into heaven "Through thy precious wholesome word."[44]

Like those songs which fell into use at funerals and weddings, so too did Luther write many other hymns with particular Christian celebrations and feasts in mind. Again, most of these hymns were patterned on existing Latin chants. It should be noted though that the theology Luther taught in these hymns was not necessarily evangelical theology, but quite often more general Christian theology. For Christmas, Luther's songs tend to concern themselves with the Virgin birth and the Trinitarian nature of the Christ–child. The Easter hymn, "Death Held Our Lord in Prison", not only explains the resurrection, but the significance and reasons for the Easter feast.[45] While the generality of this theological teaching may have contributed to the charge that there was very little originality in Luther's reforms, we should not be quick to assume that 16th–century Europeans possessed religious understanding in any great depth. Illiteracy at this time was nearly universal in all but the aristocratic or otherwise educated urban middle class. Church services were still predominantly delivered in Latin, and formal religious education was still in many places decades or centuries away. Understanding of this basic theology then may in fact have been new to many parishioners, who hitherto had not understood the mysteries of Christianity, although we have no way of knowing for sure.

Here we see that many of Luther's songs had a clear role to play in the ritual culture of Christianity. There were songs designed for the holidays, and then there were the songs designed for everyday use in the liturgy. External to these liturgical songs, we also have a third category: Luther's musical catechism. If we divide Luther's small catechism into its six principal parts, we see that Luther prepared a simple and eloquent versification of each:

Small Catechism (1529)
Part 1: The Ten Commandments

44 *Ibid*., 248.
45 *LW* 53:256–7

Part 2: The Creed
Part 3: The Lord's Prayer
Part 4: Baptism
Part 5: Confession and Absolution
Part 6: Sacrament of the Altar

Luther's Hymns
(1524) "These are the Holy Ten Commandments"[46]
(1524) "In One True God We All Believe"
(1539) "Our Father in the Heaven Who Art"
(1541) "To Jordan When Our Lord Had Gone"
(1523) "From Deep Trouble I Cry To Thee"[47]
(1524) "Jesus Christ, Our God and Saviour"

Excepting his hymns on baptism and the Lord's Prayer, we see that Luther was clearly invested in the development of an intelligible catechism for the young and uneducated early in his career as a reformer. While there was certainly some functional overlap in the previously mentioned songs, as with "From Deep Trouble", they clearly had an educational function. These songs essentially provide the core of Luther's small catechism. The problem with classifying these songs as 'educational', however, is that it implies that his other songs were not, which is certainly not the case. Again, as these songs here correspond to the articles of Luther's small catechism, we can label them 'catechistic'; this, however, perhaps misrepresents Luther's traditional understanding and usage of the word 'catechism'. As Luther defines it,

46 While in this hymn Luther allows a stanza for each commandment, along with an introductory and concluding stanza, he also wrote a much shorter five stanza hymn on the Decalogue, "Man, Wouldst Thou live All Blissfully." Ibid., 281.

47 In Leupold's organization of the hymns in their topical and liturgical parts, he makes no mention of confession and absolution or its musical counterpart in his catechism sub–section. In the original edition of the Small Catechism, Luther did not clearly articulate confession and absolution as one of the sacraments, though he would later. My pairing of "From Deep Trouble I Cry to Thee" with this sacrament is based on Robin Leaver's analysis of the hymn. Paraphrasing Luther, he writes, "The Commandments must be allowed to condemn the sinner, and the confessor should pronounce God's promise of forgiveness and declare God's Word from Scripture. (…) All this is paralleled in Luther's *Aus tiefer Not.*" Leaver, 151.

"Catechism means the instruction in which the heathens who want to be Christians are taught and guided in what they should believe, know, do, and leave undone, according to the Christian faith."[48] The three most important elements of this education should be the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Our Father. "These three," he writes, "plainly and briefly contain everything that a Christian needs to know."[49] Luther understood catechism as a basic understanding of the core tenets of Christianity. With respect to its instruction, he cautioned that learning the catechism must not be a passive activity. Pupils ought to not only understand these articles, but also be able to explain and articulate these beliefs to others. Children had to be prepared thusly so that one day they could instruct their own children properly. Luther stresses, however, that it was not enough for students to simply learn the words by rote. It was the meaning that mattered. Where Luther writes that the basic catechism contains everything a Christian needs to know, acquisition of that knowledge presupposes spiritual understanding. In this context, we have to consider his catechism hymns as a part of Luther's musically expressed theological education, and not the whole.

It is to this purpose that we now turn to the fourth category of Luther's hymns. Leupold titles his final category of Luther's songs as 'The Gospel of the Reformation'. A number of these songs seem to have been written by Luther as a response to current events of great import. The first of these, for example, "A New Song Shall Be Begun", is a lengthy narrative of the martyrdom of two reformed Augustinian monks in Holland. Rather than lamenting their deaths, Luther celebrates their conviction and heralds their deaths as Christian victories. "Oh! they sang sweet, and they sang sour;/ Oh! they tried every double'/ The boys they stood firm as a tower".[50] Shortly after

48 53:64

49 *Ibid*., 65 Given this emphasis on the Decalogue, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, it seems unusual that Luther waited so long to write his hymn on the Lord's prayer. It could be the case, as Leaver argues, that because there were already quite a few musical renditions of the Prayer in the vernacular as early as the 1520's, Luther did not feel pressured to write his own. (Leaver , 128–34). In the case of "Were God Not With Us At This Time" though, Luther wrote his own versification of Psalm 120 knowing full well that Spalatin had produced a vernacular version of the hymn only months before. See *LW* 53: 245–6.

50 *LW* 53:214–6.

he writes this song, Luther writes a second hymn following the same theme, that God's hand could once again be seen in unfolding events. In this song, "Dear Christians, Let Us Now Rejoice," Luther reflects on the circumstances of his own conversion. As with "From Deep Trouble I Cry To Thee", this is a deeply personal hymn. Luther writes, "Forlorn and lost in death lay I,/ A captive to the Devil."[51] Ultimately though, the song tells how God sent Christ to relieve Luther of his burdens so that he might spread God's kingdom. It seems appropriate then to categorize these songs as Gospel– the "good news" of the Reformation. The third song in this set, "Ah God, from Heaven Look Down" likewise evidences a great deal of Luther's confidence in the evangelical movement. This song, in fact, is a clear attack on Catholicism. He writes, "They teach a cunning false and fine;" and later "And let us dwell in thee, secure/ From error's infiltration./ The godless rout is all around/ Where these rude wanton ones are found/ Against thy folk exalted."[52]

The final two songs here though, "Our God He Is a Castle Strong" and "Lord Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word" betray Luther's early confidence. The former, written probably around 1527/8,[53] seems to suggest that the evangelicals' victory will no longer be on earth, as he had earlier forecasted, but will be in the afterlife. "If they take our life,/ Wealth, name, child and wife–/ Let everything go:/ They have no profit so;/ The kingdom ours remaineth."[54] Similarly, "Lord Keep Us Steadfast" is a petition to God for help in staving off Christendom's enemies, the Pope and the 'Turk'. As Leupold suggests, this song was likely a reaction to a series of Ottoman victories over the Empire in both the Balkans and the Mediterranean. The song ends, "Stand by us breathing our last breath,/ Lead us to life straight out of death."[55]

At first glance, these five hymns do not seem to fit comfortably into any of the previous categories. In fact, given their content and tone, one might be reasonably tempted to approach them not as Gospel, but as evangelical *polemic*. The texts of these songs, for example, reveal the 'otherness' of Catholicism with respect to Christianity. Whether

51 *Ibid*., 219.
52 *Ibid*., 227–8.
53 See Leupold's introduction to the song for more on its dating. *Ibid*., 283–4.
54 *Ibid*., 284–5.
55 *Ibid*., 305.

they describe Lutheran victories over persecution and false doctrine, or else call for militant resolve and determination against seemingly overwhelming adversity, these particular songs seem to reinforce Lutheran conviction and identity as *antithetical* to their Catholic counterpart.

While it is important to acknowledge the polemical character of these hymns, we must not ignore the explicitly theological nature of even these songs. At the heart of each we find the doctrine of justification and its promise of salvation through faith. All five present this central tenet in the context of great trial and tribulation. As Luther taught, understanding of the Word required a form of spiritual awakening, which typically came about as a reaction to a profoundly emotional and spiritual experience. In his case, Luther was brought closer to God through a series of near–death experiences. In pairing the affective poignancy of music with the trials that faced the Lutheran community, Luther thought to reproduce that catalytic experience in those who sang these hymns. The message in each case is simple but powerful: in times of trouble, put your faith in Christ and the Word of God and everything will be fine. In this sense, these songs can justifiably be understood as an expression and extension of the Gospel.

In all, Luther wrote over forty songs. By 1524 he had already written two thirds of these, and by 1529 three quarters. Before Luther ever put pen to paper to write his catechisms, Lutheran theology was already being taught to the young and to the uneducated, illiterate peasants through song. In the church service, Luther's hymns uncovered the mystery behind the liturgical expressions of Christian worship. In times of communal celebration, his hymns exhorted celebrants to recognize the hand of God in all things good and holy. In times of mourning, there were songs that comforted the heartsick with the reminder that it was a benevolent God to whom their loved ones departed. In a schoolboy's education, readings from scripture were prefaced, summarized, and analyzed through song. In the Sunday service for the laity, the theological lesson of the day's sermon was likewise intended to be framed and made intelligible through the accompaniment and singing of hymns. Finally, in the public sphere as elsewhere, Luther's 'Gospel' hymns were a constant reminder to keep the doctrine of justification close at all times like a shield or armour. No matter what transpired on earth, faith in God was the surest defence.

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Embracing the Divine: Devotional Zeal and Mystical "Humanation" in Rembrandt's Annunciation Sketch

Catherine M. Nutting, University of Victoria

Abstract

Rembrandt's 17th–century sketches of radical religious transformation illuminate the inner workings of spiritual conviction and reveal the religious tone of Rembrandt's society. But they also privilege psychology over narrative, and use emotionally charged gestures to elucidate human responses to divine presence. In particular, Rembrandt develops the symbol of the divine touch, which I argue parallels the 17th–century Dutch absorption in debates about the workings of God's grace. The symbolic physical closeness that characterises Rembrandt's Old and New Testament subjects is grounded in the Reformation emphasis on personally knowing a magnanimous God, which is in turn rooted in concepts of the mystical marriage between God and "saved humanity," themes that underlie Rembrandt's unusual Annunciation sketch.

Rembrandt van Rijn's sketch, the Annunciation, ca. 1635, is steeped in the 17th–century notion of God's active role in human salvation and in the Reformation emphasis on personally knowing God.[1] The sketch's visual motifs of spiritual

1 Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), Annunciation, 1635, 14.4x12.4cm, brown ink and white gouache, Besançon Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology, inv. D.2618. Also see Otto Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt: First Complete Edition in Six Volumes*, Vol. I. (London: Phaidon, 1973), Fig. 116. Because space does not permit me to show all the images

closeness and of divine touch stand in contrast with earlier theological and artistic imagery of humanity separated by the wall of the senses from a God who sat in distant judgment. Rembrandt's recurring interest in sketching a metaphorical divine/human embrace betrays the symbolic gesture's ancestry in the medieval mystical tradition that influenced 17th–century religion, a tradition of impassioned love for God that is typified in this poetic Early Modern example:

> "Ah! Chosen Love I long for thee…
> But when Thou shalt command,
> Then shall I be released from self!"
> "Oh love most loveable …
> All the while I waited for thee,
> I held thee in My arms."[2]

Rembrandt's portrayal of the Annunciation and other divine/human embraces mirrors 17th–century concerns about the concept of grace, and its roots in the mystical emphasis on individual connections with God: for Early Modern viewers, grace rendered God ever–present while the mystical tradition normalized physical responses to religious experiences.[3] My interest in this correlation between concepts of Reformation grace and mystical union privileges Rembrandt's

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I discuss, I have footnoted textual sources for the sketches. There is debate about the authenticity of Rembrandt's art, and research into his *oeuvre* has resulted in many reattributions. However, the head of the Rembrandt Research Project, a research consortium (1968–2011) tasked with studying Rembrandt's art, cautions that distinguishing between Rembrandt's and his students' work may be anachronistic by Early Modern standards. Ernst van de Wetering, "The Question of Authenticity: an Anachronism?" in ed. G. Cavalli–Bjorkman, *Rembrandt and His Pupils. Papers Given at a Symposium in the Nationalmuseum Stockholm, 1992*. (Stockholm, 1993), 9–13; Ernst van de Wetering, ed. *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings: Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project*. Vols 1-5 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1982).

2 Mechtild of Magdeburg, (c. 1207–c. 1285) in George Scheper, *The Spiritual Marriage: The Exegetical History and Literary Impact of the Song of Songs on the Middle Ages*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 975.

3 "The experience of an inner cross of humility and obedience foreshadowed Reformation *sola gratia* insights. (…) By internalizing and individualizing all relations with God, the mystics became precursors to Luther's personalized approach…" Werner O. Packull, *Mysticism and the Early South German–Austrian Anabaptist Movement*. (Kitchener, Ont.: Herald Press, 1977), 25.

sketches over his paintings. I identify sketches that illustrate the conflation of narrative time with symbolic meaning, and discuss how these drawings explore spiritual transformation and the Reformation concept of God's active role in humanity's salvation. Specifically, Rembrandt's Annunciation sketch reveals the Reformation concept of justification by grace and the vestiges of its medieval mystical roots.

The emotionally impactful style of Rembrandt's religious sketches derives from such artistic and cultural influences as Netherlandish realism, Reformation art and theology, and the Catholic Italian and Flemish painting canons.[4] Rembrandt had a lifelong fascination with a broad range of artistic subjects and styles, and filled many sketchbooks with copies and alterations of the work of his contemporaries and predecessors.[5] His close observation of the world around him made the emotional realism of his art exemplary, and while Rembrandt's art is never purely descriptive, the Netherlandish tradition of naturalism influenced his attention to commonplace readable gestures.[6] His artistic practices dovetailed with the spiritual intensity of 17th–century Europe that also colours his art. Rembrandt's time was one of deep, personal religious devotion, where Biblical awareness and

4 The artists with whom Rembrandt apprenticed were Italianate "history" painters: Jacob van Swanenburgh of Leiden, Jan Pynas of Amsterdam, and the influential Amsterdam painter of classical and Biblical subjects, Pieter Lastman. Clifford S. Ackley, *Rembrandt's Journey, Painter Draftsman, Etcher*. (Boston: MFA Publications, 2003), 12; William H. Halewood, *Six Subjects of Reformation Art: A Preface to Rembrandt*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 85; For the influence of Flemish artist Peter Paul Rubens on Rembrandt see Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt's Universe. His Art, His Life, His World*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 2006), 35, 123, 150.

5 Rembrandt had one of the largest collections of prints in 17th–century Netherlands. This included work by Bruegel, Michelangelo, Raphael, Rubens, and Titian, among many others. Bob Haak, *Rembrandt, His Life, Work and Times*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969), 277–278; Halewood, 115.

6 Rembrandt's "storytelling" succeeds because of his accurate depiction of psychological and physical conditions. Ackley, 11, 35; Rembrandt's emphasis on the communicative value of realistic gesture was appreciated in his own day, and characterised his teaching practice. He had students read a Biblical passage and then act it out in order to understand how the subjects would have moved. Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der nederlantsche konstchilders en schilderessen*. (Amsterdam, 1718–1721) Vol. 1, 269 and Vol. 2, 162; Seymour Slive, "Realism and Symbolism in Seventeenth–Century Dutch Painting," *Daedalus*, 91, (1962), 469–500.

practice were closely linked with one's family and neighbourhood. Most people prayed often, read religious texts together as a family, attended worship, heard theological debates at public gatherings, and relied heavily on Biblical stories as models of behaviour.[7] The flavour of this religiously–steeped community informed Rembrandt's artistic study of Old and New Testament subjects.

While the Annunciation sketch is clearly theologically and artistically significant, Art Historians have been unable to articulate its place in the canon of Rembrandt's religious images.[8] In part, this is because it is a sketch rather than a painting, and because Rembrandt's religious affiliation is uncertain. The Reformation had placed religious minorities at terrible risk, but by the time Rembrandt was born, Dutch society could be characterised as multi–denominational. The Netherlands was officially Calvinist in Rembrandt's time, but in practice diversity flourished.[9] Rembrandt's mother was Catholic but his father joined the Reformed Church. Rembrandt married into a tightly knit Mennonite family but lived in Amsterdam neighbourhoods distinguished by religious plurality. His Mennonite, Jewish, and Catholic friends worshipped openly there, and he received important commissions from members of the Jewish and various Christian communities.[10] While it is difficult to identify Rembrandt's religious

7 Paul Zumthor, *Daily Life in Rembrandt's Holland*. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1959), 79.

8 John I Durham, *The Biblical Rembrandt. Human Painter in a Landscape of Faith*. (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2004); Christopher White, *Rembrandt*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984); Willem Visser't Hooft, *Rembrandt and the Gospel*. (London: Som Press, 1957), 150.

9 Volker Manuth, "Denomination and Iconography: the Choice of Subject Matter in the Biblical Paintings of the Rembrandt Circle," *Simiolus*, Vol. 22, No. 4, (1993–94), 235–52; Bernard M.G. Reardon, *Religious Thought in the Reformation*. (Harlow: Longman, 1995); Leiden, where Rembrandt grew up, was particularly noted for its religious tolerance. Anthony Goodman and Angus MacKay, *The Impact of Humanism on Western Europe*. (London: Longman, 1990), 151.

10 Rembrandt, Moses with the Tablets of the Law, in Steven Nadler, *Rembrandt's Jews*. (London and Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003), plate 1; Franz Landsberger, *Rembrandt, the Jews, and the Bible*. trans. Felix Gerson. (Philadelphia: the Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946), 9. Rembrandt, The Mennonite Preacher Cornelis Anslo and His Wife in Arthur Wheelock, *Rembrandt's Late Religious Portraits*. (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2005), Fig. 10.

affiliation, we know that he was closely connected through marriage and work to Mennonites, whose theology was founded on pacifism and personal faith.[11] It is not possible to draw a clear connection between a faith community and Rembrandt's artistic choices about subject and style. What is apparent is that Rembrandt was a keen observer of human nature and of the members of the overlapping communities that he inhabited, and that when his art was theologically inspired, it drew its vibrancy from his religious and social milieus.

In the mid–1630s when Rembrandt sketched the Annunciation, he was engaged in a prestigious commission for the Stadtholder Prince, a series of paintings on the life of Christ.[12] Although an Annunciation would have been an appropriate addition to the Life of Christ series, Rembrandt's Annunciation sketch is not a preparatory drawing for the series. It would have been atypical of his way of working. Between 750 and 1000 drawings are attributed to Rembrandt, and many of them have no pictorial antecedents.[13] Much art historical scholarship has been directed toward Rembrandt's paintings, but whereas his

11 Walter Liedtke defines the Mennonite Hendrik Uylenburgh, Saskia's uncle, with whom she and Rembrandt lived for a year, as the most influential person in Amsterdam. W. Liedtke**,** C. Logan, N. M. Orenstein, and S. S. Dickey, *Rembrandt / Not Rembrandt, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Vol. II. (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1995), 155. A 17th–century Italian art historian and biographer claimed that Rembrandt was Mennonite, although this is debated in recent scholarship. Filippo Baldinucci, "Life of Rembrandt," from *Cominciamento e Progresso dell'arte d'intagliare in rame colle vita de' piu eccellenti maestri della stessa professione*. 1686, in ed. Charles Ford, *Lives of Rembrandt*. (London: Pallas Athene, 2007), 40; Seymour Slive, "Filippo Baldinucci," *Rembrandt and His Critics*. (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1988 and 1953), 104–115. According to Stephanie Dickey, in Rembrandt's treatment of Mennonite martyrdom, he was "thinking like" a Mennonite. "Mennonite Martyrdom in Amsterdam and the Art of Rembrandt and His Contemporaries," *Proceedings of the American Association of Netherlandic Studies*, Vol. 9, (1996), 98;

12 Christian Tumpel and Astrid Tumpel. "Rembrandt's Commission from Prince Frederick Hendrick," *Rembrandt: Images and Metaphors*. trans. A. Bader and I. Bader. London: Haus Publishing, 2006, 92–103. The sketch also corresponds to Rembrandt's growing interest in the female subject. In 1635 Rembrandt was newly married, and there is a marked increase in the number of his drawings of women, in which he explores themes of domesticity, passion, introspection, and familial relationships.

13 Schwartz, 13; Egbert Haverkamp–Begemann, "Rembrandt," *Encyclopedia of World Art*. (London and Toronto: McGraw–Hill Book Co.) Vol. XI, 917.

paintings were often shaped by conditions of patronage, his sketches, on the other hand, were often meant entirely for himself, and therefore provide us with a glimpse into the artist's inner world.[14] Indeed, his sketches can be considered analogous to a personal diary, providing insight into his entire *oeuvre*. Rembrandt's sketches are more honest and direct than his paintings, less cluttered in their conception, and more naked in their emotion.

Rembrandt's focus on non–preparatory drawing was legendary, as was his ability to represent human feeling in poignantly succinct forms. Rembrandt's sketches of the 1630s–1650s reveal an intense study of artistic method and human psychology, functioning like pictorial shorthand. They do not so much *narrate* Biblical stories, as *refer* to them, with the focus on human emotion and experience. Rembrandt repeatedly returned to subjects from the Old and New Testaments, seemingly exploring thematic and stylistic variation, and studying how to communicate the spiritual subtleties of the human condition. His sketches reveal subjects' spiritual experiences through visual oppositions of light/dark, high/low, and gentleness/strength, for example.[15] Subtle variation in subjects' physical movement evokes the emotional tenor of an event, while lines and tones *suggest* rather than *describe* form. Rembrandt's Annunciation is very much in keeping with his practice of exploring the human elements associated with key religious themes. Like other sketches, it shows the artist's ability to portray tension and to visually mirror the emotional states that reverberate among characters in his narratives.

Rembrandt's facility with sketching made it ideal for expressing the acute inner struggles of Biblical subjects. The practice of personalizing one's understanding of the Bible was akin to Rembrandt's intense

14 Seymour Slive, "Religious Subjects," *Rembrandt Drawings*. (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2009), 195–219; Holm Bevers, Peter Schatborn, and Barbara Welzel, *Rembrandt: the Master and his Workshop, (Vol. II, Drawings and Etchings)*. (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991); Seymour Slive, *Drawings of Rembrandt*. (New York: Dover, 1965); Marijn Schapelhouman, *Rembrandt and the Art of Drawing*. (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, and Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2006), 18, 61.

15 This may relate to the rhetorical tradition of juxtaposing opposites. David R. Smith, "Towards a Protestant Aesthetics: Rembrandt's 1655 Sacrifice of Isaac," *Art History*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (Sept. 1985), 290–302; Joseph Koerner, "Rembrandt and the Epiphany of the Face," *Source: Notes in the History of Art*, Vol. 12, (1986), 5–32.

sketched responses to the Bible. Sketching in pen, ink, and wash required being close to the paper; a process more like reading than is the more removed, meticulous easel painting. Like the practice of closely reading and contemplating religious texts, sketching encouraged a personal, emotionally charged focus on intuitively meaningful details. The immediacy of the sketching process allowed Rembrandt to subtly layer transitional moments with sacred and secular meanings, and to conflate not only narrative time, but also symbols, identities, and meanings. In sketches that emphasize closeness and touch, Rembrandt's subjects evoke the heightened emotional intensity surrounding trauma, transition, and God's active grace.

One theme that runs through many of Rembrandt's sketches is the depiction of a physical embrace between a human and a divine figure. The popularity of this motif in Rembrandt's drawings can be linked to the passion of medieval mystics' religious experience that continued to set a tone of spiritual fervour in Rembrandt's Netherlands.[16] Reformation concepts of grace and the Word had strong ties with mystical theology: the 17th–century emphasis on one's *personally* experiencing a benevolent God is rooted in the medieval mystical notion of a reunion of estranged humanity with loving divinity, a theme that reappears in Rembrandt's sketches. At the centre of the lively religious debate that characterized Rembrandt's society was the question of how God's grace functioned. More than a hundred years before Rembrandt painted, Luther had redefined the concept of "God's justice" to emphasize that people did not have to be perfect, cooperative, or even interested in their own salvation, because grace operated solely as *God's* will.[17] For Luther and Calvin people could not

16 "There may be a sense in which the piety of Europe on the eve of the Reformation was, in Reinhard Bendix's general description of historical process, the 'style of life of a distinct status group' (women) that eventually became the 'dominant orientation' of Christianity." Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption. Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion*. New York: Zone Books, 1992, 78; and see footnotes below.
17 Medieval church dogma had required three elements for salvation: God's healing grace; cooperation with grace by complying with church authority; and priestly absolution of sins. Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform, 1250–1550, An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 210; Stephen Pfurtner argues that the Luther versus Catholic debate about grace was caused by

initiate or affect reconciliation with God.[18] Humankind was tragically inadequate, trapped in an existence of pain and ignorance that could only be relieved through God's grace, which would be freely and unilaterally given. In Calvin's words, nothing other than God's grace could close the "distance between the spiritual glory of the Speech of God and the abominable filth of our flesh."[19] For Early Modern Anabaptists, grace existed in humans, salvation required human cooperation, and humans possessed free choice, but salvation still depended upon God and was *sola gratia Dei*.[20] The widespread debate about God's mysterious role in human salvation informs Rembrandt's sketches of religious transformation.

The early Reformation theology that came to influence Rembrandt's 17th–century Netherlands favoured a direct personal connection with God. This had clear precursors in medieval themes of love and closeness, and in the inner–worldly emotionalism of the medieval religious experience.[21] The Early Modern emphasis on bridging the human/divine gap is indebted to the highly emotional mysticism that influenced Luther: the search for meaningful spirituality sought to

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a change in consciousness but even more importantly by the resulting linguistic change, particularly regarding "*certainty* of grace." Catholics thought it presumptuous to assume that God would save one in the absence of appropriate behaviour, serious intention, and an appreciation for God's mysterious power. Lutherans argued that the Catholic rejection of the *certainty* of grace pointed to an abrogation of faith in God's Word. *Luther and Aquinas on Salvation*. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964), 123.

18 According to Luther, "We work nothing, we render nothing unto God, but only we receive and suffer another to work in us, that is to say, God." Luther in Halewood, 7.

19 Calvin in Halewood, 10; Léon Wencelius, "Réalité Rembrantienne et Grace Générale Calvinienne, " *Calvin et Rembrandt*. (Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles Lettres", 1937), 65–73.

20 Packull, 178.

21 For example, early Anabaptist theology retained the mystical motif of the immanence of God. "In the original dissent of the South German Anabaptists from institutionalized Catholicism and confessionalized Protestantism we find the echoes of the mystical appeal to the immanence of God." (…) "Early South German Anabaptism inherited much of its theological inspiration from an earlier medieval, more specifically popularized mystical tradition." Packull, 34, 176; R. Emmet McLaughlin, "Luther, Spiritualism and the Spirit," in eds. Steven Ozment, Marc R. Forster, Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Piety and Family in Early Modern Europe*. (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005), 28–49.

replace what reformers saw as corrupt church authority with a *personal* relationship with God, fostered through individual experience of Him and His Word. The doctrine of justification by grace can be traced through Luther, Calvin, the radical reformers, and Erasmus, to mysticism, St. Augustine, and St. Paul.[22] By the 15th Century, the religious experience of much of the laity was mystical, intuitive, and emotionally fervent, a form of piety that had survived from the 12th– and 13th–century nuns, beguines, and laity of the Low Countries.[23] As a monk Luther had taken mystical writers seriously and created from the monastic "living faith" his belief in a Living God who people would know through his Word. Luther's affinity for the writing of St. Augustine ensured that medieval mysticism would remain a major influence of the Reformation.[24] Luther sympathized with Augustine's treatment of theology as a path of love. Augustine identified love with *pondus*, or gravity, and claimed that people orbit around either self–love or love of God. Fundamental to this theory was the notion of the void between the two types of love; only God could make the leap between the old orbit and the new, through His grace alone. A central concept of the theology of German mystic Eckhardt that greatly impressed Luther was the *unio mystica* that would unite the divine with the human soul.[25] Also, in 1516 and 1518, bracketing his

22 "Although the theologies of the reformers are many–sided and operate on different levels, they do reveal their shared tendencies (…) The most important of these shared tenets could be said to be: the justification by God's grace (*sola gratia*) through man's faith (*sola fide*) as revealed in the Gospel as the Word of God (*sola scriptura*)." Peter Blickle, "Social Protest and Reformation Theology," in Peter Blickle, H. Rublack, and W. Schulze, *Religion, Politics and Social Protest*. (London: George Allan and Unwin Publishers Ltd., 1984), 12. "St. Augustine, considering that man's trust in his own powers was a danger to true piety, (was) inclined, just as St. Paul, to favour grace. (…) Free will and grace work together, but grace is the leader of the venture and not merely associated with it." Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio*, 44, in Peter I. Kaufman, *Augustinian Piety and Catholic Reform*. (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1982), 136.

23 Bynum, 77.

24 Heiko A. Oberman, "The Meaning of Mysticism from Meister Eckhart to Martin Luther," *The Reformation: Roots and Ramifications.* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1994), 88.

25 Oberman, "The Meaning of Mysticism," 85; "Salvation was a bringing back together of all diversity into unity through the *unio mystica*." Packull, 21, 23; McLaughlin, 29, 31, 49.

distribution of the Wittenberg Theses, Luther republished *German Theology*, the writing of an anonymous 14th–century mystic who promoted a quietist personal experience of and individual union with God. Anabaptists and other radical Reformers widely paraphrased and republished this work, rendering the doctrine ubiquitous.[26] The mystical tradition that drew on the writings of the Apostle Paul and was communicated through Luther and radical Reformers into the Early Modern Amsterdam of Rembrandt highlighted the incarnation of a living God whose grace melded fallen humanity into its Godhead. The passionate introversion of religious women's mystical marriage to God was integrated into the "dominant orientation" of Reformation theology, and through it, reverberated into the 17th–century.[27] In Rembrandt's time, theologians were concerned with the question of how the divine and the human realms intersected, an issue that points to the type of mystical human/divine connection that Rembrandt treats in his Annunciation sketch.

The 17th–century artistic trend, among Protestant and Catholic artists, of portraying Christ's *humanity*, echoes the medieval mystical concept of the *humanation* of God at the Incarnation. Rembrandt's Annunciation sketch alludes to the paradoxical union of the most exalted with the most humble that occurs through the Incarnation, where the crossing of the gap between these levels is symbolized as a divine embrace. The mystic Angela of Foligno first used the term *humanation* as "the soul in this present life knows (…) the lesser in the greater and the greater in the lesser, for it discovers … *humanated* God, that is, divinity and humanity united and conjoined in one person."[28] God's becoming human required the fundamental resolution of opposites through the uniting of the spiritual with the material. Drawing on contemporary understandings of physiology

26 Muntzer, Karlstadt, Haetzer, Denck, Franck, Castellio, and Wiegel relied on it. Steven E. Ozment, *Mysticism and Dissent: Religious Ideology and Social Protest in the Sixteenth Century*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 15–16; Packull, 24.

27 Bynum, 78.

28 Angela of Foligno in Bynum, 90; "The general medieval ethos was strongly impressed with the immediacy of the supernatural, and the widespread religious mood sought fulfilment in direct contact and union with God. Mystical union thus, ontologically perceived, implied the deifying transformation of man." Packull, 21–22.

and natural philosophy, theological writing from the 12th through the 14th Centuries investigated the integration of body and soul.[29] The notion of the duality of intellect/body, reason/emotion, and male/female was less a fully–fledged impenetrable dichotomy than a concern with bridging the distance between the material and the spiritual. Medieval mystical writers who equated "female" with "material" naturally thought of human contact with the divine in nuptial terms. In commentaries that survive from the 4th Century, Christ's Incarnation was equated with the marriage of the human soul to God.[30] In this way, the Incarnation foreshadowed the union of Christ and church, and the promised marriage of every human soul with Christ. In Augustine's words,

> "Like a bridegroom, Christ came forth from his chamber, and with a presage of His nuptials He reached the marriage couch… and mounting it, consummated His marriage… and thereby forever joined the woman to Himself."[31]

This metaphor of spousal union was paramount to the mystical tradition, and it influenced art, poetry, prayer, and religious practices. Mystics' descriptions of their spiritual experiences blur the distinction between the spiritual and the physical, and point to a highly personal encounter with God. In the 12th Century Hildegard of Bingen wrote of the human/divine marriage, and had her nuns dress in bridal gowns to receive Communion.[32] Associated with this conjugal bliss was women's bodily experiencing of God's presence. Women wrote of tasting God, kissing Him, and entering His heart. Mechtild of Magdeburg reported to members of her order, "Then the Lord God spoke to me: 'Grant that I may cool the glow of My Godhead, the

29 Medieval writers associated the body with the feminine through Aristotelian conception theory: the mother provided the matter of the fetus and the father the spirit. Because Christ had no human father, his matter came only from Mary, making her the reliquary of the divine spirit. Bynum, 100, 148–149.

30 Jerome (c. 347–419) in Carla Gottlieb, *The Window in Art*. (New York: Abaris Books, 1981), 84.

31 Augustine (354–430) in Robert Baldwin, "Marriage as a Sacramental Reflection of Christ's Passion: The Mirror in Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Wedding," *Oud Holland*, 98.2, (1984), 59.

32 Bynum, 134.

desire of My humanity and the delight of My Holy spirit in thee.'" In another vision she cried, "Ah! Love! Fling me down under Thee, Gladly would I be vanquished."[33] Indeed, physicality itself was redeemed and valued by the *humanated* God, making the Incarnation central to the redemption of the whole person.[34] When Reformers, asserting dogma about faith and grace, promoted building personal relationships with God, they echoed the medieval mystical notion of a God who would cross the distance between the human and divine realms.

The meeting of the physical and spiritual worlds over the distance that separated them was reflected in theological writing and in art as a wall that, paradoxically while it *divided*, simultaneously *bound together* those on either side. This wall motif was part of a tradition going back to the Old Testament Song of Solomon, verse 2:9, "Behold, He standeth behind our wall, He looketh forth at the windows, shewing Himself through the lattice."[35] The material world was the wall that separated humankind from God, yet the senses were the window through which one could see God and He could touch us. The symbolism of the wall that could be pierced *by the grace of God* survived into the medieval era, for example in the 13th–century Sermon on the Canticles by the Cistercian Abbot John of Ford:

> "To behold the majesty of God, the wisdom of God, the goodness of God, they had not need of relying on many steps or immersing themselves in the complications of disputed points. They had simply to return the gaze of their beloved, standing behind our wall, and gazing on us through the window of our senses. Only the thickness of one wall, only one step, separated them from the ineffable contemplation of the eternal light which is in heaven."[36]

33 Mechtild of Magdeburg in Scheper, 983.

34 Julian of Norwich wrote of humanity's sensuality not just loved and saved, but actually *given being* by a "human God" through the Incarnation. Bynum, 149.

35 Robert Baldwin, "A Window from the Song of Songs in Conjugal Portraits by Fra Filippo Lippi and Bartholomaus Zeitblom," *Source: Notes in the History of Art*, Vol. 5(2), (1986), 7.

36 Bible Moralisée, Illustration to Song of Songs 2:9, in Robert Baldwin, "Gates Pure and Shining and Serene," in eds. Konrad Eisenbichler and Philip Sohm, *The Language of Gesture in the Renaissance*, (*Renaissance and Reformation)*, Vol. X, No.1, (1986), 31.

God's ability to bridge the human/divine gap was given form in early images of Christ reaching through a wall to his earthly bride. In a 12th–century frontispiece Christ the spouse, labelled *Sponsus*, embraces his *Sponsa*, symbolizing Mary and the Church, but reaches through the wall of the physical world to his other bride, the human soul, labelled "Saved Humanity".[37] The symbolism of Christ's Incarnation as the marriage of the divine and the human remained prevalent in Northern European art and theology from the 1400s through the 1600s. A 15th–century Dutch woodblock illustrating this theme in the *Canticum Canticorum* appears beside the text, "The Bridegroom requests, 'Open to me, my sister, for my head is full of dew.' And the Bride responds, 'I opened the bolt of my door to my beloved. I have put off my garments.'"[38] In the 15th and16th Centuries, concepts of the mystical marriage and the wall that it crossed influenced both Annunciation paintings and formal portraits of betrothed couples, who commissioned paintings of themselves mutually gazing across architectural barriers.[39] Rembrandt responded to these theological and artistic traditions when he sketched the divine touch that overcame obstacles to instigate momentous transformations.

Rembrandt's Annunciation and other sketches demonstrate his unique use of the motif of the embrace, and the efficacy of his distance/closeness metaphor as a visual cue to concomitant inner conditions.[40] The symbolic value of physical closeness in Rembrandt's sketches has the effect of focussing attention on subjects' inner emotional states. Subjects' touching and embracing coincide with spiritual or psychological causation or connection such as the spiritual transformation commensurate with touch in his Christ Baptized in the Jordan and Satan Showing Christ the Kingdom.[41] In

37 Honorius Manuscript, frontispiece. *Sponsus* and *Sponsa*, in Baldwin, "Gates Pure," 34.

38 Dutch School, *Canticum Canticorum*, 1460–70, in Gottlieb, 277. Compare with Petrus Christus, Annunciation c. 1445, Met, N.Y.

39 In wedding portraits this trope symbolized the spiritual meeting of ever–faithful souls, and the containment of passion within divinely sanctioned marriage. Baldwin, "A Window," 12; Fra Filippo Lippi, Portrait of a Man and a Woman at a Casement, 1445, and Bartholomaus Zeitblom, Marriage Portrait, 1505, in Baldwin, "Gates Pure," 29.

40 Classical artists may have avoided painting embraces because they are difficult to depict two–dimensionally. Smith, 297.

41 Rembrandt, Christ Baptized in the Jordan, in Owen S. Rachleff,

Rembrandt's Abraham Dismissing Hagar sketch, Abraham uses one hand to counsel his beloved Hagar while the other hand expresses his reluctance to break his tie with his son Ishmael.[42] Emotion is portrayed as communal in Tobias Healing His Father's Blindness, where the main characters cluster closely around the blind father, drawing the viewer in to the emotional tension centring around the transformative moment of the son's hands on his father's eyes.[43] Whereas Rembrandt's painted Lucretia portrays her alone and confident, his sketch of her focuses intensely on the futile anguish of her final moments, cradled in the arms of her husband and her father.[44] Again, physical and emotional connection pervades Rembrandt's Lamentation sketch, where Christ and Mary's faces share a single line: Mary's nose delimits Christ's profile; Christ's nose outlines Mary's chin; and they seem to have one communal body.[45]

Rembrandt's Biblical sketches illustrate divine intercession in human affairs by fusing human psychology with divine/human proximity. Angels represent God in Rembrandt's sketches, and they touch humans as a metaphor for God's healing, teaching, guiding, and salvational power. They fly, they walk, and they talk.[46] But to mark God's active intercession in human life, Rembrandt's angels make physical contact.[47] This angelic touch often accompanies God's transmission of information that will radically alter people's lives.

Rembrandt's Life of Christ. (New York: Abradale Press, 1966), 36; and Rembrandt, Satan Showing Christ the Kingdom, in Rachleff, 39.

42 Rembrandt, Abraham Dismissing Hagar, in Benesch, Fig. 656.

43 Rembrandt, Tobias Healing His Father's Blindness, in Julius S. Held, *Rembrandt and the Book of Tobit*. Northampton, Mass: Gehenna Press, 1964, Fig.26.

44 Rembrandt, Lucretia, paintings, in A. Bredius, *The Paintings of Rembrandt.* (Vienna: Phaidon, 1937), Figs. 484, 485; Rembrandt, Lucretia, drawing in Benesch, Fig. 136.

45 Rembrandt, Lamentation, in Benesch, Fig. 117.

46 See these very engaging examples. Rembrandt, Manoah's Offering, in Benesch, Fig. 210; Rembrandt, The Angel Departs from Manoah and His Wife, in Benesch, Fig. 209; Rembrandt, Tobias and 'Azarius' Walking, in Held, Fig. 10; Rembrandt, Abraham and the Angel, in Benesch, Fig. 158.

47 Rembrandt, The Angel Appearing to Hagar, and Ishmael in the Wilderness, in Bevers, Fig. 32; Rembrandt, The Angel Appearing to Elijah in the Desert, in Benesch, Fig. 1182; Rembrandt, The Angel and Saint Peter, in Benesch, Fig. 735; Rembrandt, The Angel Appears to Manoah, in Benesch, Fig. 94.

The Early Modern understanding of humankind's close personal relationship with God and His healing grace illuminates Rembrandt's imagery of the divine embrace. A recurring theme in Rembrandt's religious sketches is the relief of human anguish through divine mercy. In such sketches intense spiritual transformations appear as moments of confusion and despair, in which God, as angel, actually grabs people and holds them close. The firmness on the part of the angels echoes the 17th–century belief in God's salvific will and power. The motif of the embrace is paramount in Rembrandt's exploration of the paradox of the all–powerful God rescuing the powerless human. Sketches of Christ on the Mt. of Olives present Christ's desperate emotional and spiritual struggle and the magnitude of divine salvation, represented by an angelic embrace.[48] In the Agony in the Garden sketch, an angel kneels on the earth, staring into Christ's face with his arms around Christ's shoulders, poised to cajole or wrestle him out of his suffering.[49] In Rembrandt's etching of Abraham's Sacrifice, the strength of Abraham's grip on the knife has its counterpoint in the firmness of the angel whose arms surround Abraham, rendering visible the strength of God's salvation.[50]

Rembrandt's sketches conflate layers of meaning, superimposing the *passage* of time upon the *effects* of time. In doing this they reveal their debt to the Reformation theology that understood God's grace to be concurrent with the *message* of this grace. For Reformers, grace was inherent in God's nature, and the existence of God's grace in His Word created a simultaneous healing effect on the faithful. This simultaneity is represented in some of Rembrandt's most powerful sketches. One of the Magi Kneeling Before the Virgin and Child

48 Rembrandt, Christ on the Mt. of Olives, in Benesch, Figs. 122, 151, 180.
49 Rembrandt, Agony in the Garden, in Kenneth Clark, *An Introduction to Rembrandt*. (London: John Murray, 1978), 140. One painting that suggests this theme is Jacob Wrestling with an Angel. It relates the Biblical story in which, after a long night of intense physical struggle, Jacob is blessed, and walks away, now lame, saying, "I have seen God face to face." Estelle M. Hurll, *Rembrandt*. (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1899), 5; Rembrandt, Jacob Wrestling with an Angel, painting, in Halewood, Fig. 61.
50 Rembrandt, Abraham's Sacrifice of Isacc, etching, in Halewood, Fig. 62; Rembrandt, Abraham's Sacrifice, in Benesch, Fig. 105; Shelley Karen Perlove, *Impressions of Faith, Rembrandt's Biblical Etchings*. (Dearborn: University of Michigan–Dearborn, 1989), 17, 66.

depicts Jesus's birth as concurrent with his service to humanity.[51] Here the elderly kneeling magus who symbolizes humanity is separated from the divine by a dark swath across the floor. But Jesus is being passed across this dividing line immediately upon his birth, evidence of which still appears as blood in Mary's lap. Simultaneity, like transformation, is also at the heart of Rembrandt's Healing of the Paralyzed Man, in which the invalid is already beginning to move his leg while he is being blessed and healed.[52] The complex story of Adam and Eve involves the concurrence of temptation with guilt, togetherness with separation, paradise with rejection, and of the fall from natural grace with the need for Christ's birth. In Rembrandt's sketch of this subject, temptation casts its dark shadow of punishment off Eve's body onto Adam's face even as Adam barely begins to reach toward the forbidden fruit.[53] Rembrandt's juxtaposing of such discordant visual and emotional elements suited the Early Modern interest in the paradoxical nature of Christianity, fundamental to which was the mystery of the Incarnation of God in Christ.

Major 17th–century religious and artistic concerns converge in Rembrandt's Annunciation sketch: this extraordinary image conflates the Annunciation with the Incarnation; Reformation grace with the mystical marriage; and the divine promise of salvation with the human emotions engendered by that pledge. The Annunciation marked the close intertwining of God and humankind that provides the core of Christian doctrines of salvation. The Incarnation bridged the gap between God and humanity by bringing forth a being who embodied both. The Incarnation/Annunciation moment that took place between Mary and the divine ushered in the relationships between Mary and Christ, the Church and Christ, and God and saved humanity. Steeped in the tradition of mystical passion, the Reformation emphasis on a direct personal relationship with God dovetailed in Rembrandt's Annunciation sketch with his emotionally vibrant sketching style. In his Annunciation, visual antitheses highlight the simultaneous transformation of Mary and of all the Christian faithful, while impassioned gestures personalize the marriage of the spiritual with

51 Rembrandt, One of the Magi Kneeling Before the Virgin and Child, in Benesch, Fig. 135; Mieke Bal, *Reading Rembrandt: Beyond the Word–Image Opposition*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 207, 212.
52 Rembrandt, Healing of the Paralyzed Man, in Benesch, Fig. 130.
53 Rembrandt, Adam and Eve, in Benesch, Fig. 194.

the human that occurred through the Incarnation.

The passionate embrace, the divine/human contact, and the psychologically poignant expressions and gestures make Rembrandt's Annunciation so moving. Early Modern portrayals of the Annunciation typically included such readable cues as the Bible, the dove, the cat, and Mary's lilies of purity, markers that Rembrandt has included.[54] However, like their predecessors in the mystical marriage, such contemporary images of the Annunciation also emphasized the void that separated the divine and human realms. In 15th- and 16th–century art, the spiritual and psychological distance at the Annunciation was often symbolized either by a doorway or by visually divisive pillars.[55] These signs of distance separating Mary from her messenger can be contrasted with the inventive motif of closeness and contact in Rembrandt's 17th–century sketch. Where earlier images of the Annunciation had kept the divine and the human visually separated, Rembrandt's sketch illustrates the imminence of salvation by accentuating humanity's proximity to the divine: a direct personal relationship with God is symbolized in a passionate embrace evocative of the divine/human resolution that characterized the mystical marriage.

In Rembrandt's *Annunciation*, a zealous angel leaps across the void and holds humanity in His arms, reconciling the divine/human gap and demonstrating the transformative power of God's grace and his active connection with humankind. The meaning and effect of God's grace are simultaneously realized while the message of salvation is being communicated, and God is being rendered human. The male angel swoops down, framing the scene with his massive wings, leans over Mary, and grasps her by the arm. He stares pointedly into her face, his hand seeming to simultaneously clasp her forearm, hold her

54 Don Denny, *The Annunciation from the Right from Early Christian Times to the Sixteenth Century*. (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977), 128; Leaf from a Sienese Gradual, Annunciation in Letter V, c. 1470; and Lorenzo Lotto, The Annunciation, c. 1527, Museum of Villa Colloredo Mels, Recanti, in Gottlieb, 127, 324.

55 Fra Angelico, Cortona Annunciation, c. 1433, Museo del Prado, Madrid; and Fra Filippo Lippi, Annunciation, c. 1435/1440, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.; Petrus Christus, attrib. (Flemish School), Annunciation, Met, New York.

shoulder, and cup her hair. Mary drops her book and turns toward the viewer with a look that combines layers of human emotion: innocence; passion; and foreboding, the dark lines on Mary's lap foreshadowing her future roles as the throne of Christ and the altar of the Eucharist. The tension of this complex layering of causes and repercussions is heightened through the visual antithesis of the powerful male angel leaning vertically over the seated earthly female. Tellingly, her lily of purity and virginity has already dropped onto the floor: the divine/human gap has been bridged concurrently with the transmission of God's message. God in his grace and power has crossed the distance to begin the process of *humanation*, through the human/divine embrace.

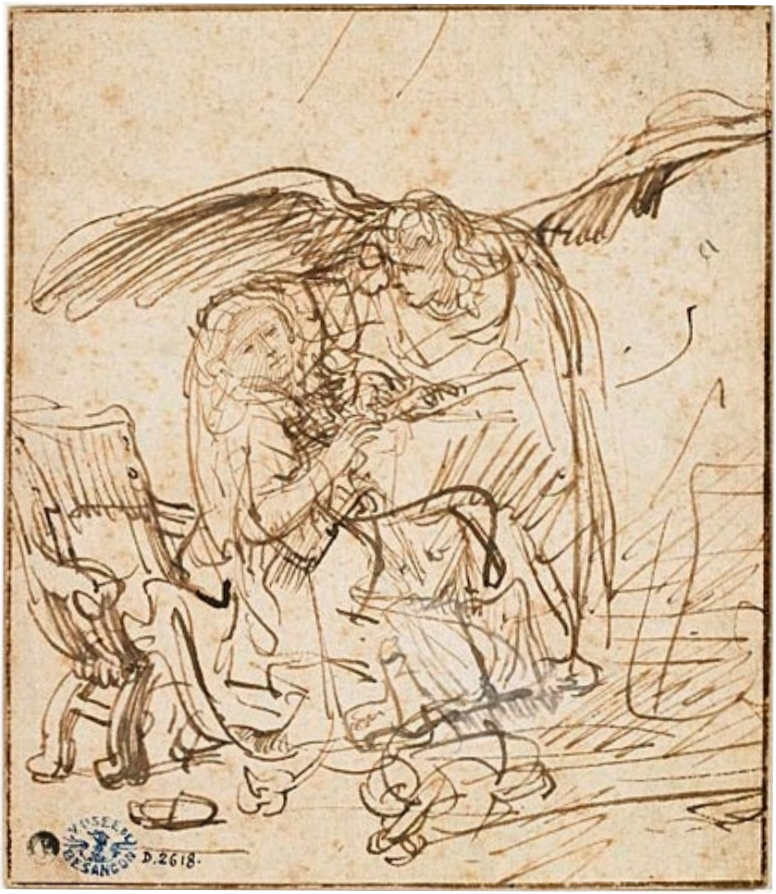

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, Annunciation, 1635, Besançon Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology, inv. D. 2618.

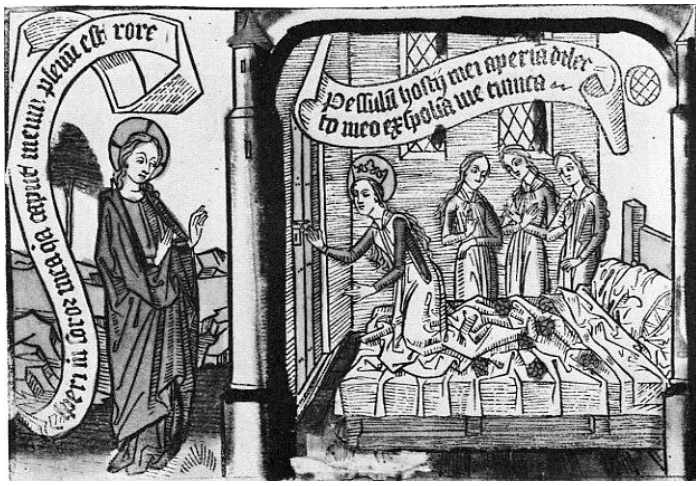

Fig. 6. Dutch School, *Canticum Canticorum*, (c.1460-70)
Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich.

Fig. 7. Petrus Christus, attrib. (Flemish School)
The Friedsam Annunciation, detail, (c.1440-50), Met, N.Y.

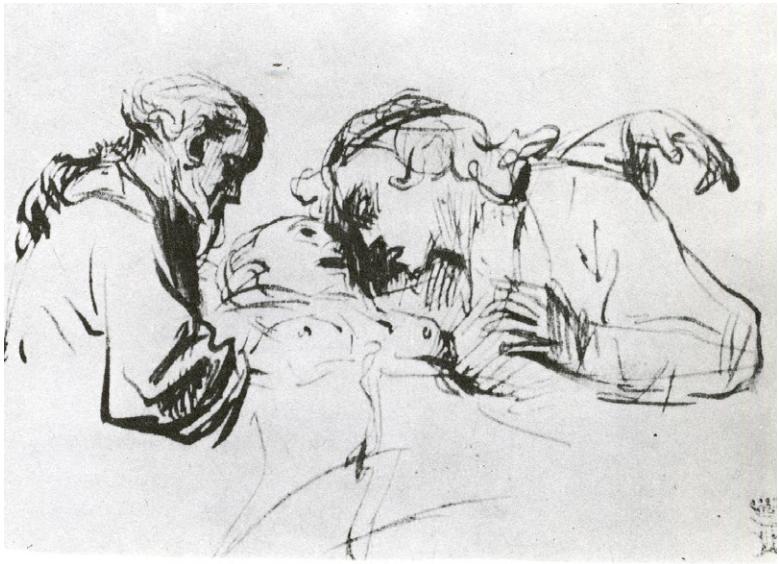

Fig. 15. Rembrandt, Lucretia, sketch.

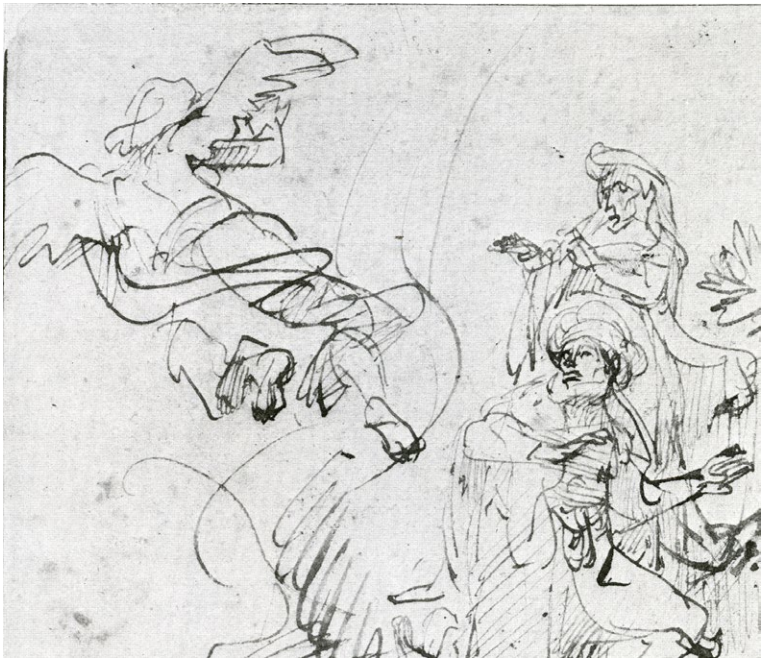

Fig. 17. Rembrandt, Manoah's Offering.

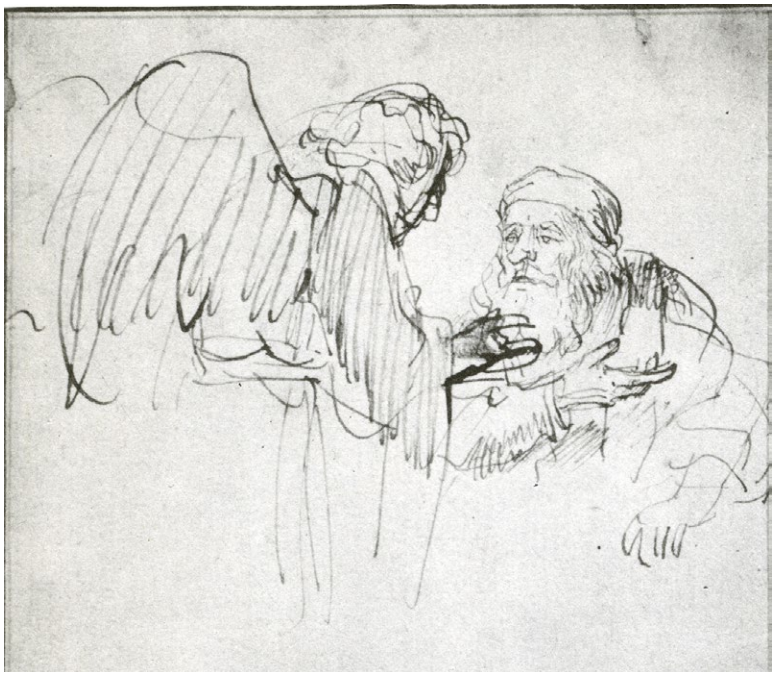

Fig. 20. Rembrandt, Abraham and the Angel.

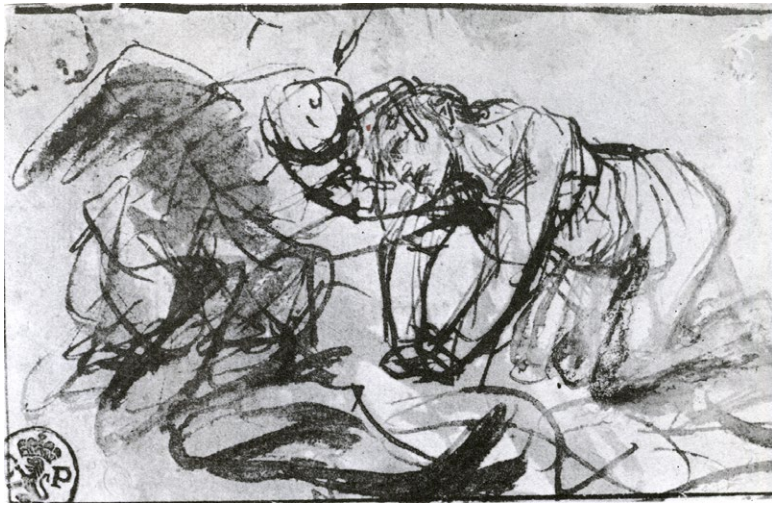

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Fig. 36. Fra Filippo Lippi, Annunciation. c. 1435, National Gallery, Washington.

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The Buddhist Monastery, Art and Teachings as a Factor in the Development of North Indian and Central Asian Islamic Practice and Architecture

Angela Andersen, The Ohio State University

Abstract

The teachings and practices of Buddhism resonated with many nascent Islamic Sufi orders in the northern Indian and Central Asian contexts, starting with the arrival of Islam to the region in the 7th Century, gaining momentum with the expansions of the Ghaznvid and Ghurid Empires in the 12th Century, and continuing into our own times through philosophies and local customs. The contrasting reputations of the two traditions, with Buddhism often viewed as a peaceful journey towards enlightenment and Islam as a faith bent on military conquest, have restricted historical investigations of Buddhism and Islam's relationship with one another and have often removed these practices from time and place. This dialogue can be made more fruitful by entering through the specific examples offered by the architecture of the Buddhist monastery structure or sangha and the Islamic Sufi lodge or khanqah between the 12th and 15th Centuries.

> A disciple asked the man, "who persuaded you, being a king's son, to abandon this fleeting world and to take up that which endures forever?" He answered: "I sat in the hall of my palace with courtiers around me. Looking out of the window I observed a beggar at the entrance of the palace, with a piece of dry bread in his hand… he ate it and went to sleep, satisfied." The prince asked, "How is it that I am not satisfied with what I see and hear? What ought I to do in this world that I may obtain contentment as this beggar does?" When evening came, he put off his splendid garments and put on hair clothing. He left the royal palace and took to a wandering life like the beggar did.[1]

1 This passage, edited, is derived from the tale in T. Duka, "The Influence of Buddhism on Islam," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, (1904): 132–133.

This excerpt recounts an episode from the life of Ibrahim ibn Edhem (d. c. 776), a Muslim ascetic, Sufi, and, according to legend, a former prince of the city of Balkh, Afghanistan. The striking parallels with the tradition of Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha who forsook his privileged life as Prince Siddhartha Gautama to follow a new path, are illustrative of the ways that Buddhism and the Sufi orders of Islam resonate with one another in northern India and Central Asia. The contrasting reputations of the two traditions, with Buddhism often viewed as a peaceful journey towards enlightenment and Islam as a faith bent on military conquest, have, in some cases, restricted historical investigations of such resonances. This investigation is further complicated by the Hindu practices that also shaped the thoughts and traditions of the region, playing a strong role, and even acting in a bridging capacity, between the end of Buddhist institutions and the beginnings of Muslim ones. I have attempted here to assemble and discuss case studies that focus specifically on juxtapositions of the Buddhist monastery structure or *sangha* and the Islamic Sufi lodge or *khanqah* as a means of entering this dialogue through architecture.

The monastic organisation is one of the main formal channels of transmitting Buddhist teachings. Buddhist monasticism maintained a presence in northern India until the 13th Century, when chronicles and archaeological evidence suggest that it all but disappeared. The historical narrative is interpreted by some as a demonstration of Islamic interests in demolishing the monastic system and in forcing Buddhist practitioners to choose between flight or conversion. While Islamic practices entered India as early as the 7th Century, it was the arrival of the Turkish Islamic Ghaznavid Dynasty (977–1186), followed by their more aggressive vassals the Ghurid Dynasty (c. 1148–1215) that solidified Islamic leadership in northern India.[2] The monastic complexes of northern Indian Buddhism, such as the great university and monastery of Nalanda, in India's northern Bihar state, were repositories of teachings in the form of texts, didactic sculptural programmes and learned scholar monks, themselves a resource that drew students from as far as China. At the time the Ghurid general Muhammad Bakhtiyar invaded Nalanda in the latter part of the 12th

2 The Ghurids launched repeated campaigns in India, and attacked Gaznavid cities as well. Ghurid general Bahram Shah was given the title "Cihan Suz," "World Incendiary," c. 1150 for his destructive tendencies.

Century, the Islamic world was very familiar with the concept of Buddhism and of Indic culture and learning on a wider scale. The burning of the Nalanda library during the conquest, recorded in the *Tabakat–i Nasiri,* can perhaps be regarded as an act of ignorance by soldiers seeking the spoils of conquest.[3] Yet, such accounts of desecrations of the Buddhist didactic infrastructure and the dramatic attempts of fleeing monks to rescue scrolls have made it difficult for scholars to look upon Islamic encounters with Buddhism in any light but that of conquest and pillage. Textual scholars have examined Islamic–Buddhist confluences effectively through didactic tales and fables and their analyses.[4] This material points to the broader question of Buddhist resonances with and impact upon Islamic society, thought, and religious practice. Formal doctrines, laws and rules of religious communities as they are recorded and passed on do not always reflect the ways in which syncretic and emulatory developments reach people in practice. The architectural organisation of Buddhist monasticism opens up this question of resonance to a number of comparative possibilities and resources, including travel accounts, archaeological reports and visual analyses; by selecting spaces and settings where Buddhists and Muslims were in direct contact with each other in northern India and Central Asia between the 11th and 15th Centuries, I have assumed exchange, and even emulation.[5]

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3 See Maulana Minhaj–ud–din Abu–'Umar–i 'Usman, *Tabakat–i Nasiri*. trans. H.G. Raverty. (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1970).

4 The *Panchatantra*, didactic animal fables of the early 4th Century, emerged with additional tales as the famous Arabic language *Kalila wa Dimna* stories. The *Jataka* tales of Buddhism are distinguishable with slight alterations in a number of Arabic and Persian texts, and several narratives from the *Arabian Nights* have striking similarities to Buddhist stories. See S.M. Stern and Sophie Walzer, *Three Unknown Buddhist Stories in an Arabic Version*. (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1971); Alexander Berzin, "Response to Majid Tehranian," *Islam and Inter–faith Relations: The Gerald Weisfeld Lectures 2006*. eds. Lloyd Ridgeon and Perry Schmidt–Leukel. (London: SCM Press, 2007), 256–261; and Duka, "The Influence of Buddhism on Islam," 125–141.

5 The arrival of the Sufi *shaikhs* antedates the decline of Buddhist monasticism, leaving the intermediary of Hindu traditions variously as a potential means of transmitting concepts or as a screen between Indian Sufism and Buddhism. Annemarie Schimmel wrote in *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* that "Under the influence of the theory of "Unity of Being" some

The Chishtiya Order of Sufis

Sufism, often explained as a mystical form of Islam, gained popularity amongst the masses with its emphasis on a personal connection to the divine through contemplation and prayer. While some Sufis have followed an ascetic path and *dervish* practices of wandering and begging,[6] other orders are inclined towards urban settings, trades or scholarship.[7] Organised Sufi orders emerged from Central Asia in the 10th and 11th Centuries, centred around the teacher–student relationship that also characterizes Buddhist teaching pedagogy. The central architectural unit of Sufism is the *khanqah* or Sufi lodge, where practitioners gather, prepare food for themselves or the surrounding community, meet with their spiritual guide, a *shaikh* or *hoja/kawaja,* and ultimately form their community. The *khanqah* has often been established at the home of the *shaikh*, and came to be associated, as is the case in India, with the *dargah* or tomb of a saintly figure.

The Chishtiya order has had a great and long lasting impact in northern India.[8] The founder, Khwadja Abu Ishak Shami ("of Syria"), travelled to Central Asia in the latter part of the 9th Century, drawn by the centres for Sufi teaching in the region. He settled in Chisht, an Afghan town between Herat and Ghazna, where he trained his successor before returning to Syria.[9] The tradition was carried into

mystics might see points of correspondence between Sufi thought and the Vedanta system of Hindu philosophy." (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 357.

6 The Persian word dervish (also darvish) comes from the root word "dar" or door and means to wander / one who wanders from "door to door." This is reminiscent of the Buddhist *bhikku* who wanders in search of alms.

7 Proponents of Sufism believe its traditions to go back to the time of the Prophet. See John Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

8 The Shattariya, Qadiriya, Naqshbandiya, Suhrawardiya and Qalandari Orders, along with the smaller Lalshahbazia, Musa–suhagia, Rasulshahi, Madari and Malang lineages are also part of the South Asian Sufi landscape.

9 See Saiyid Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India Vol. I: Early Sufism and its History in India to 1600 AD*. (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1978). See also K.A. Nizami, "Chishtiyya," *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*. eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth et. al. (Brill Online: Brill, 2008). This article notes that there is no reliable history for the Chishtiya prior to the establishment of the order in India.

India in the early 13th Century by Khwadja Mu'in ad–Din, who settled in the city of Ajmer on the borders of the Ghurid Empire; his followers congregated around him, seeking his guidance. His *darghah* was surrounded by the *khanqah* of the Chishti order, which took the name of his town of Chisht, acknowledging their Afghan roots.[10]

The Chishtiya eschewed donations or endowments that implied government connections, so *khanqah*s used *futuh*, unsolicited donations, to operate soup kitchens where they prepared meals for Sufis and the poor or ill as part of their teachings about social responsibility. An early 14th–century traveller stated that, "in Delhi and its surroundings are *khanqah*s and hospices numbering two thousand."[11] Even if understood as a hyperbolic estimation, this suggests a vast number of *khanqah* establishments integrating Islamic Sufism into Indian society in an accessible and beneficial form, in a role once filled in part by Buddhist institutions.

The Sufi *khanqah* and its associated community were regulated and purposeful, with a strict set of rules derived from the *Qur'an*.[12] The Buddhist monasteries of India were also governed by a similar set of canonical rules that developed from those recited at the First Buddhist Council. Known as the *Vinaya*, this framework was passed orally and developed into different sets of rules for various schools of Buddhism.[13] Both systems emphasise conduct, the use of time, and moral responsibilities. Shaikh Shihab al–Din Suhrawardi drew up these fundamental principles for *khanqah*s:

> (1) The people of the *khanqah*s should establish cordial relations with all men (khalq).

10 Akbar constructed a mosque at the *dargah* in 1570 and the Mughal Shah Jihan constructed a large congregational mosque at the site in 1628–37.

11 Recorded by Shihab al–Din al–'Umari in *Masalik al–Absdr fi Mamalik al–Amsdr*. trans. O. Spies quoted in Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, "Some Aspects of Khanqah Life in Medieval India," *Studia Islamica* (1958), 53.

12 Verses XXIV, 36–37.

13 The *Vinaya*s have often been a source of debate and disagreement. See http://www.sacred–texts.com/bud/sbe13/index.htm for the nineteenth–century, T. W. Rhys Davids and Hermann Oldenberg translations of the *Vinaya* texts from Pâli and their variations. Included in the rules of conduct are instructions for seeking alms; proper comportment between men and women; and issues of mindfulness in accepting alms, preaching Dhamma and relations with other monks.

(2) They should concern themselves with God, through prayers, meditation, etc.
(3) They should abandon all efforts at earning a livelihood and should resign themselves to the will of God.
(4) They should strive for the purification of their inner life.
(5) They should abstain from things that produce evil effects.
(6) They should learn the value of time.
(7) They should completely shake off indolence and lethargy.[14]

The conversations between the Chishtiya *shaikh* Nizam ad–Din Awliya and his followers in the early 14th Century are recorded in the *Fawa'id al–Fu'ad*, *Morals for the Heart*. [15] This text reveals the nature of their *khanqah*. The central hall, known as a *jama'at khana*, was the focus of communal life in a manner that parallels the congregational centrality of the Buddhist monastic hall, the *Upatthana–sala*.[16] In both the Buddhist and Sufi settings, small rooms lined the outer walls of this hall and a central courtyard that accessed the hall was entered via a gatehouse with a gate room. Food preparation and distribution took place in an open kitchen near the *khanqah*'s gatehouse. The *shaikh* lived in a wooden room atop the roof of the hall, and a great banyan tree shaded the courtyard and some of the rooms. This combination of meeting and learning spaces, the cells of lodgers, and even the centrality of a tree is in keeping with architectural findings and textual descriptions of Indian Buddhist monasteries.[17]

One of the challenges of comparing the early Indian *khanqa*s with Buddhist monastic architecture is the lack of surviving structures. Both the Buddhist and the Islamic lodges were built in ephemeral materials that were replaced over time and are difficult to identify in archaeological excavations. There is also a scarcity of recorded details about their appearance, materials and floor plans. It thus becomes, as

14 'Awarif al–Ma'arif (Urdu translation) (Lucknow, 1926), 123 quoted in Nizami, 55.
15 Shaykh Nizam ad–din Awliya, as recorded by Amir Hasan Sijzi, Bruce B. Lawrence, trans. *Fawa'id al–Fu'ad* (*Morals for the Heart*). (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), 30–31.
16 See Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India*. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1962), 92.
17 See, for example, the accounts and descriptions of the 7th–century Chinese monk and traveller Xuanzang.

shown above, a comparison of brief textual descriptions of architecture versus a direct structure–to–structure juxtaposition. Although it might be logical to expect that the incoming Muslims might adopt and adapt pre–existing Buddhist establishments, as nascent Islamic societies so often did with local architecture, this does not seem to be the case in northern India. For example, Sukumar Dutt's examination of *lenas*, Buddhist cave monasteries, makes no observations about post–Buddhist occupation.[18] Sufis travelled to congregate around a respected teacher, which centralised the branches of the various orders in areas that were not necessarily near suitable monasteries and their spolia.[19]

The centrality and importance of the *shaikh* to Sufi communities led to the practice of locating *khanqah*s and *dargah*s of former *shaikh*s and other saintly exemplars in close proximity. The dervishes and their visitors could venerate the tombs, which were thought to bring blessings, *baraka*, upon followers. The founder of the Indian Chistiya's *dargah* was erected in his *khanqah* in Ajmer. His tomb, rebuilt many times, is typical of Islamic funerary architecture in its cuboid form. Like a Buddhist *stupa*, it is domed and contains relics of the deceased, with intercessory properties that are venerated through visits and pilgrimages. Continuing tradition, the tomb is circumambulated, and flowers and other ephemeral offerings are left by believers. The tombstone, in a practice that is remarkably like that of washing and dressing a Buddha image for veneration, is cleaned and clothed in a *chadar*, a cloth of costly fabric.[20] There are practices and habitual markers of belief that are no longer distinguishable as distinctly "Buddhist" or "Muslim" for their very pervasiveness, and Sufi

18 Dutt. See Chapter 5, "Lenas, The Cave Monasteries of Western India," 138–161.

19 The Muslim practice of constructing mosques, such as the Quwwat al–Islam Mosque (1206–1210) of Delhi from the *spolia* of Jain and Hindu temples is often discussed in terms of dominance over local culture. If the defeat of the Buddhists is accepted as a primary goal, then we must inquire further as to why we do not encounter structures with Buddhist building components in India intended to display a similar message.

20 These veneratory practices are described by R. Nath in "Indian Facet of Sufism," *Islamic Architecture and Culture in India*. (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation,1982), 29–40. Nath draws parallels with Hindu traditions rather than Buddhist practices.

teachings emphasize ideas that resonate with Buddhist concepts.[21]

The Ghaznavids

The Ghaznavids ruled their Turkic dynasty from Ghazna, a city not far from Chisht in Afghanistan. Formed by the military on the borders of the Iranian world, the Ghaznavid Empire strove to legitimate itself by constructing a society rich in the arts, but was forced to pay its standing army in a combination of state funds and spoils.[22] This necessitated frequent Ghaznavid raids, and the eventual conquest of northern India,[23] resulting in a period of direct contact between Buddhism and Islam.

The Ghaznavid palace at the capital, as well as the summer palace of Lashkar–i Bazar, were richly decorated. Little remains of Ghazna's 10th– to 12th–century constructions save a pair of towers, c. 1150, and the tomb of the ruler Mahmud (d. 1030). The first two excavation campaigns at Ghazna took place under the direction of the Italian Archaeological Mission in 1957 and 1958. The dig location they labelled "the Palace" was a 100–metre oblong platform with the remains of mud brick and rubble walls covered in terracotta panels and polychrome plasterwork.[24] D. Schlumberger argued that the

21 David Scott draws comparisons between "enlightenment" in Buddhism and *itlaq* in Sufism in "Buddhism and Islam: Past to Present Encounters and Interfaith Lessons," *Numen*. Vol. 42 (May 1995), 147. *Fana* or "annihilation," is the move into the omnipresence of the divine that all Sufis strive for; this is ultimately an abandonment of the self that has been compared to the Buddhist concept of nirvana. *Wahdat al–wujud* or "unity of being" is a related concept that also connotes a merging of the self with the divine. The aniconic tradition of venerating the *Buddhapada*, the footprint of the Buddha, is mirrored in the veneration of the *Qadam Rasul*, the footprint of the Prophet Muhammad; there is a proliferation of such shrines in South Asia. See Perween Hasan, "The Footprint of the Prophet," *Muqarnas*. Vol. 10. (1993), 335–343.

22 Sebüktegin's son Mahmud supposedly relied on booty for four–fifths of the army's wages. Markus Hattstein and Peter Delius, eds. *Islam: Art and Architecture*. (Germany: Tandem Verlag, 2007), 330.

23 See Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids: Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern Iran 994–1040*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1963).

24 See Umberto Scerrato, "Summary Report on the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan: The First Two Excavations at Ghazni, 1957–1958," *East and West*. 10 (1959), 23–55.

palace's architectural marble paralleled Central Asian Buddhist donor portraits in the arrangement and dress of the figures.[25] The marble carvings of the palace also included vine scrolls, epigraphic registers, narrative scenes such as a horse and rider, and zoomorphic imagery including elephants and lions. French archaeologist A. Godard believed that the use of marble was introduced from India,[26] but his counterparts in the Italian Archaeological Mission felt that the Muslim Abbasid Empire's (750–1258) use of architectural marble was an equally viable and more local influence, coupled with the presence of a marble quarry near Ghazna.[27] This dialogue highlights an important issue that must be considered when looking at the history of Islamic art and culture in Central Asian locales. At the time of the Ghaznavid construction projects, Buddhist concepts and motifs were not being introduced, but rather *re*–introduced. While an influx of Buddhist and Hindu *spolia* and even craftspeople were arriving in Afghanistan in the 11th and 12th Centuries CE, similar ideas and forms had been part of the local artistic environment since the earliest Buddhist expansions of the 6th and 5th Centuries BCE.

The congregational mosque of Ghazna was legendarily splendid; it was likely built, at least in part, with Indian labour as well Indian *spolia* and materials. The *Kitab–i Yamini*, the memoirs of Mahmud of Ghazna, describes the materials for what must have been a very impressive building, including those brought from India:

> And they brought trees from Hind and Sind, and used these trees in the said works, for strongly constructing all belonging thereto … And they brought from distant places mighty stones (marble) square and hexagonal, all shining (and polished) … and they worked it exquisitely, with various hues and colours, like the plains of the garden of spring full of enamelled (flowers) so that the eye became dim and the intellect confused in contemplating it. [28]

25 D. Schlumberger, "Le Palais Ghaznavide de Lashkari Bazar," *Syria*. XXIX (1952), 251–270.

26 A. Godard, *L'Art Ghaznevid*: 291, cited in Alessio Bombaci, "Summary Report on the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan: Introduction to the Excavation at Ghazni," *East and West*. Vol. 10 (1959), 8.

27 Bombaci, "Summary Report," 8.

28 Al–Utbi, *Kitab–i Yamini The Memoirs of Mahmud of Ghazni*. trans. James

The description of the construction of the mosque explains how spoils taken from India were used to decorate the architecture. It is apparent that gold and statuary were employed, as "they crushed the body–like idols and corporeal images, and fastened them into the doors and walls… So great was the splendour, gilding, decoration and colouring of this mosque that everyone who saw it took the finger of wonder into his mouth."[29] It is interesting to note that they were used in such a manner at the mosque, flattened lest they be mistaken for idols, but none–the–less recognisable to the chronicler. This distinction between venerated objects and decorative spolial figures symbolising victory was nominally achieved by the Ghaznavids who were "fastening them into the doors and walls" of the mosque.

Buddhist tradition and practice is based around teachings and *sutra* texts. The larger monastic foundations developed universities, attracting students from around the Buddhist world to study at a central location. Islam also emphasizes texts and formal education, and in the early 1000s, a new, purpose–built educational establishment known as the *medrese* was established and supported by the Seljuks of Persia, a competitor state of the Ghaznavids.[30] Students lived and studied in rectangular buildings with a simple floor plan of outer walls lined with cells surrounding an inner courtyard. Baghdad, Nishapur, Amul, Mosul, Damascus, Jazirat Ibn `Umar, Marv and Basra each had such an early *medrese.*[31] The Ghaznavid cities of Herat, Balkh

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Reynolds. (London: W.H. Allen, 1958), 464.

29 *Ibid*., 465. It is not clear whether the sculptural figures were Hindu or Buddhist. Siva images have been found at specifically Buddhist archaeological sites such as Nalanda. See John Marshall, ed., *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, 1923–24.* (Calcutta: Central Government of India, 1926), 74. The Italian Archaeological Mission published an image of a maimed Visnu figure from their excavations at Ghazna in Scerrato, "Summary Report." Thank you to Professor Susan Huntington for identifying the iconography of the sculpture and for her support for the research that formed the basis of this article, which was conducted during my studies in her graduate seminar on Buddhist monasteries at The Ohio State University.

30 Nizam al–Mulk, Seljukid Sultan Malik Shah's vizier, authored the *Siyasat–nama* between 1086 and 1091 as a "sultan's handbook" which outlines the creation of educational institutions. Nizam al–Mulk, *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings*. trans. Hubert Drake. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978): xiv.

31 A.K.S. Lambton, "The Internal Structure of the Saljuk Empire," *The*

and Ghazna, in close contact with early forms of Buddhism and the contemporary teaching centres of northern India, were also early *medrese* sites. While there were internal factors in the Islamic lands that may have been the impetus for the evolution of *medrese*s, it is interesting to consider the ways in which an institution like Nalanda may have inspired these projects.[32]

The formal resemblances between Buddhist and Islamic architectural structures may derive from Ghaznavid imports of both materials and workers from India. Qadi Ibn az–Zubayr, working in the service of the Fatimid Caliph in Egypt, wrote of his ambassadorial mission to the Ghaznavid court in the late 10th or early 11th Century, stating "When I approached the town where the Sultan was, I encountered a vast body of his troops … [there] were Indian troops whose number, I was told, was 30,000."[33] Alongside the military figures came trained craftspeople, such as masons and carvers. The rulers of these states expressed their admiration for India's rich architectural traditions. Mahmud of Ghazna is said to have praised "the stability and splendour" of the northern Indian city of Mathura's buildings in correspondence with one of his governors.[34] When Islamic powers began to establish themselves in India, they preferred to use skilled locals rather than bringing builders from Ghazna. Near Eastern architectural details reveal clues that indicate the presence of Buddhist construction crews. The Buddhist *chakra* symbol of the wheel and the *triratna* trident were identified on a mosque in Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid state to which the Ghaznavids once paid allegiance; the *kumbha* or *kalasha* water pot form is still seen today on Persianate

Cambridge History of Iran. Vol. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 216.

32 Warwick Ball, an archaeologist specialising in Afghanistan, has noted the resemblance between the 12th–century *medrese* at Danistana, Afghanistan, and the "pre–Islamic Buddhist stupa complexes" (vihara). Warwick Ball, "Afghanistan, Art and Architecture," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, *THREE*. eds. Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas et. al. (Brill Online: Brill, 2009).

33 Translated in C.E. Bosworth, "An Embassy to Mahmud of Ghazna Recorded in Qadi Ibn az–Zubayr's *Kitab adh–dhakha'ir wa't–tuhaf*," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. Vol. 85, (1965), 405.

34 Andreas Volwahsen, *Living Architecture: Islamic Indian*. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1970), 40.

and Indian Islamic dome finials.[35]

Kamul of Turfan

In 1419, Shah Rukh, the Timurid ruler of Muslim Central Asia, sent an ambassadorial expedition to the Chinese court. Envoy Ghaiassuddin Nakkash, "The Painter," was instructed to keep notes on all they encountered. He recounted that they proceeded to "Turfan where the people were mostly Buddhists, and had a great temple with a figure of Sakya Muni."[36] After a few more days' march, the party "reached the town of Atasufi," then "Kamul, where they found a magnificent mosque and convent of Dervishes [Sufis] in juxtaposition with a fine Buddhist temple."[37] Another translation records that "Amir Fakhar al–Din had built a high, very costly and ornamented mosque, but near it the polytheists had constructed a large and a small temple with wonderful pictures."[38] The envoy remarks that the temple gate had a pair of guardian figures that looked like "two demons preparing to fly at one another." With these brief but tantalising observations, the party set off again, proceeding through the Great Desert. It is essentially a statement that a mosque and Sufi lodge sat side–by–side with Buddhist temples and a surrounding monastery.[39] Paired together in early 15th–century Kamul, a frontier town on one of the main Silk Road routes between western Asia and China at the edge of the Great Desert, the two communities would have had interaction based on proximity. Perhaps there was a more intentional exchange

35 Unfortunately, I was not able to locate the specific Abbasid mosque in Baghdad to verify this imagery. See Havell, *Indian Architecture*. Vol. 99, fig. 23, for the reference. In both the Afghan and Indian contexts, the sources are scarce, and the damage of time and war is extensive.

36 An alternate translation reads: "They found that in that country most of the inhabitants were polytheists, and had large idol–houses, in the halls whereof they kept a tall idol." Henry Yule, trans., ed. "The Embassy Sent by Shah Rukh to the Court of China," *Cathay and the Way Thither*. Volume I. (Taipei: Ch'eng–Wen Publishing Company, 1966), 272, fn. 1.

37 In Turkish, the prefix "Ata" is an honourific, meaning "father" or "ancestor." The name of this site may refer to a "Father Sufi." For the text, see Yule, 272–273.

38 *Ibid*., 273, fn. 1.

39 It is logical to assume that this was a Sufi establishment, based on the role of Sufis as the main transmitters of Islam to outlying regions. For more on the spread of Sufism, see Trimingham.

of ideas as well.

Kamul's *khanqah*–monastery pairing is no longer extant, and to trace the buildings through the archaeological record is challenging. German archaeologists staked a major claim on the western Chinese frontier on behalf of the Berlin Ethnological Museum in the early 20th Century. Explorer and archaeologist Albert von Le Coq wrote an account of the expeditions and their findings in *Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan,* noting that his team took out "103 cases weighing from 100 to 160 kilogrammes" of paintings, manuscripts and sculptures during the 1904–1905 expedition in the Kamul region.[40] Roughly 300 more such cases of varying weights were carried to Berlin in subsequent years and placed on display until the Berlin Ethnological Museum and its collection was destroyed in a Second World War bombing raid in 1944.

Neither the mosque nor the temples noted in the 15th–century account survived in recognisable forms by the time of the 20th–century expeditions. Von Le Coq mentions an 18th–century mosque in Kamul, but nothing as remarkable as the fascinating architectural juxtaposition of Buddhism and Sufism noted by the Timurid envoy. Von Le Coq ultimately gave up on excavations near Kamul, as the soft sandstone made for impenetrable digging. The buildings only survive in a few brief lines of the envoy's account from the 15th Century.

Conclusion

Islam and Buddhism intersected with each other in northern India and Central Asia through philosophy, text and teachings, practice, and architectural and decorative forms. Buddhist–Muslim interactions were sometimes direct, beginning as early as the 7th Century and lasting until the 12th, and indirect, through surviving visual arts and local traditions. Historical factors such as war, empire building and the establishment of educational infrastructure have simultaneously been the impetus for interaction and driven the two traditions to counter purposes. The question of Buddhist resonances with and impact upon Islam examined through an architectural perspective necessarily encompasses chronicles, archaeological findings, and architectural descriptions in texts. This combination of approaches

40 Albert von Le Coq, *Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan*. trans. Anna Barwell. (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1929), 25.

emphasizes the lacunae in all areas of evidence, but also shows the way towards further exploration of the topic.

Ephemeral spaces can only be imagined when we regard them from a distance of one thousand, or, in the case of the Buddhist examples, two thousand years – smaller *dargha*s and *sangha*s made from organic materials rarely remain as part of the architectural record, meaning they are also often not part of the scholarly record. There was very little direct contact between settled Islamic society and Buddhist monastic complexes. The site in Kamul, about which we know so little, is a rare exception. The intermediary traditions of Hinduism and Manichaeism have a bridging effect but bring up a new set of questions and research concerns. Many sites, including Nalanda, and the cities of Baghdad, Ghazna, and Chisht were destroyed, leaving scattered remains. The archaeological work that has been conducted has not been fully published, leaving this material inaccessible.

Ultimately, the success of any kind of inter–faith or inter–philosophical study rests on the creative problem solving abilities of the researchers, and it is a rare person who might master the nuances of both Islam and Buddhism. For this reason, it is imperative that we seek out collaborative relationships with our colleagues to combine our knowledge for a better and more complete understanding of historical events and their impact. Buddhism and Buddhist monasticism was surely a factor in the development of organized Sufism in northern India and Central Asia. To state this does not detract from the internal development of Islamic culture or ignore the destructive nature of many Buddhist–Muslim encounters in the 11th and 12th Centuries. It does, however, imply that particular visual and philosophical elements of Buddhism continued in an Islamicised form following the end of some of the great Buddhist monasteries.

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Romanian Churches in Toronto: Not Yet Factors of Cohesion

Laura Visan, York University

Abstract

Theorists of social capital have emphasized the catalyzing role that churches may play by strengthening community involvement and facilitating the development of personal networks. Churches that serve immigrant communities are viewed as pillars of stability, able to alleviate the cultural shock that many newcomers experience upon settling into their countries of adoption. However, this normative ideal is not always matched by reality. Building on thirty ethnographic interviews that I conducted with Romanian immigrants in Toronto, I aim to demonstrate that churches are not infallible in their cohesive efforts. They cannot compensate for the absence of interpersonal trust – a caveat inherited from the pre–1989 totalitarian era, and thus can hardly contribute to the consolidation of intra–community ties.

This article discusses the role of churches in social capital formation, with a focus on two of the most important Romanian churches in Toronto: the Saint George Orthodox Church and the All Saints Orthodox Church. Building on thirty ethnographic interviews conducted in 2010 and 2011 with Romanian immigrants in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), I will show that my respondents' attitude towards the church is predominantly critical. The majority of them consider that the church does not yet function as a factor capable of strengthening interpersonal ties and mutual trust among Romanian immigrants. I begin with a discussion of my methodology and a literature review

on the catalyzing role that churches may play by strengthening community involvement and facilitating the development of personal networks. My article then shifts from a normative perspective to a more contextualised approach, anchored in the everyday experiences of the Romanian ethnic group. After briefly revisiting the pre–1989 context of the communist era, when the heads of the Orthodox Church often endorsed the Nicolae Ceausescu regime, I will turn to the responses collected from Romanian immigrants in Toronto. The experience of living in a social climate dominated by suspicion and the absence of interpersonal trust clearly reflects in my respondents' attitude towards churches. However, the critical discourse that most interviewees have towards the Romanian churches in Toronto should not be exclusively relegated to the inheritance of the communist era. I will present the expectations, hopes and unfulfilled expectations that my respondents shared regarding the activity of churches. I argue that the cohesive role of these institutions does not manifest irrespective of circumstances; instead, my study emphasizes the importance of contextualised analyses and the observation of the particularities of each ethnic community.

Research Methodology

I undertook thirty ethnographic open–ended interviews with Romanian immigrants in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area who had immigrated to Canada after the 1989 anti–communist revolution in Romania. This methodology "requires listening carefully enough to hear the meanings, interpretations, and understandings that give shape to the worlds of the interviewees."[1] To the highest extent possible, both genders were represented in balanced numbers. During Nicolae Ceausescu's political regime, the few individuals who were able to escape from the country in spite of the closed borders had a different motivation for leaving the country than the successive waves of Romanians who arrived in Canada beginning with the early 1990s. In the first stages of my research, the sample of respondents was gathered through my contacts among Romanian immigrants in Toronto and the GTA. Later, I applied a snowball technique, asking participants if they knew of any non–acquainted potential participants.

1 Herbert J. and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing – The Art of Hearing Data*. (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995), 7.

The Role of Church in the Formation of Social Capital Stocks: A Theoretical Review

The role that churches may play in fostering and developing social capital resources has been insufficiently researched.[2] This may come as a surprising fact, considering the contribution of faith communities to the consolidation of civic culture in the United States. However, understanding the role of churches is important, because, as Robert Putnam maintains, these institutions "provide an important incubator for civic skills, civic norms, community interests and civic recruitment"[3] and an environment where churchgoers have the opportunity to practice skills such as public speaking and conflict management, while strengthening their capital of interpersonal trust. Putnam establishes a positive correlation between regular church attendance and various secular forms of community involvement, from school service attendance, to visiting friends and active membership in political clubs and farm organizations.[4] Interest in civic participation may exist in the absence of regular churchgoing but voluntarily joining a congregation "necessarily involves accepting a set of norms – including the norm of contributing to the building of human and social capital and of being willing to participate in civic affairs."[5] Many authors establish a positive correlation between regular churchgoing and secular forms of community involvement, including political participation. The positive role of churches in encouraging active community involvement also manifests in the sphere of political participation. Paul J. Weithman emphasizes the role of churches in constructing "realized citizenship," churchgoers' awareness of their

2 Corwin Smidt, ed., "Introduction," *Religion and Social Capital*. (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2003), 2.
3 Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 66–67.
4 *Ibid*. See also Robert Wuthnow, *Christianity and Civil Society: The Contemporary Debate*. (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity International Press, 1996), 87, for the positive influence of regular churchgoing on participation in community related activities and donating even for secular causes.
5 Ram A. Cnaan, Stephanie C. Boddie and Gaynor I. Yancey, "Religious Bowling Alone, But Serving Together; The Congregational Norm of Community Involvement," in *Religion and Social Capital*. ed. Corwin Smidt. (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press), 2003, 20.

rights and obligations, and willingness to assert them.[6] Building on earlier scholarship, Weithman maintains that regular attendance at religious services usually translates into an increased interest in public matters, including voting.[7] Pieter Bevelander and Ravi Pendakur also make this connection between regular religious attendance, and participation in elections;[8] as does Jack Jedwab, who also contends that members of religious organizations are more likely to contact a politician or attend a demonstration. Thus, Canadians "who belong and participate in religious organizations are more likely to agree that people in government can be trusted (41%) than those who have never belonged (31%)."[9]

The services that churches provide to disenfranchised citizens is particularly important in the context of neoliberalism, as is the role that churches may play in facilitating the settlement of immigrants in their host countries and preserving their ties with their homelands. Often, the role of a church in a community transcends the religious service. Ram A. Cnaan, Stephanie C. Boddie and Gaynor I. Yancey maintain that the activities of religious congregations in the United States "add to the quality of life in the community," from choirs and performances organized for the members of the congregation, to religious classes and help provided to homeless people.[10] Churches in the United States outpace the workplace sector and the Rotary Club in providing the disenfranchised segments of the population with transferable civic skills.[11] Charles Hirschman also emphasizes the significant role churches play in providing social and economic assistance for persons in need.[12] In Canada, the advent of neoliberalism

6 Paul Weithman, *Religion and the Obligations of Citizenship*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 37.
7 Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 322–324; Weithman, 41.
8 Pieter Bevelander and Ravi Pendakur, "Social Capital and Voting Participation of Immigrants and Minorities in Canada," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. Vol. 32:8 (2009), 1407.
9 Jack Jedwab, "Religion and Social Capital in Canada," *Diversity / Diversité*. Vol. 6.1. (2008), 33.
10 Cnaan, Boddie and Yancey, 21.
11 *Ibid*., 18–19.
12 Charles Hirschman, "The Role of Religion in the Origin and Adaptation of Immigrant Groups in the United States," *International Migration Review*.

and the increasing metropolitan social polarization between a thin layer of high skilled and generously rewarded professionals and a widening segment of underprivileged citizens confined to modestly paying jobs has consolidated the position of churches as providers of social services. Susan D. Phillips identifies some forty–one programs and social activities available at congregations throughout Ontario, including counseling programs for children, elderly persons, underprivileged citizens, as well as programs centered on community empowerment and development."[13]

Churches and immigrant communities

According to the Canadian General Survey, a study conducted in 2003 on approximately 25000 respondents, immigrants attend religious services more often than native Canadians. Abdolmohammad Kazemipur considers that this is accountable to the difference in religious cultures that newcomers may have encountered in their homelands, and to Canadian secularism.[14] However, John Biles and Humera Ibrahim observe that "very few research or policy initiatives examine the connection between religion and immigration in Canada" or the role of churches in the formation of social capital resources among newcomers and consider this a serious shortcoming in the multicultural model promoted by Canada.[15] This topic should be granted more attention inasmuch as, upon arriving in a new country, numerous immigrants group themselves in socio–religious organizations that tend to "replicate as nearly as possible an old ethnic

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Vol. 38/3 (2004): 1207.

13 Susan Phillips, "Voluntary Sector Government Relationships in Transition: Learning from International Experience for the Canadian Context," in *The Non–profit Sectors in Interesting Times: Case Studies in a Changing Sector*. eds. Kathy Brock and Keith Banting. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2002, 17–70; cited in Jedwab, 28.

14 Abdolmohammad Kazemipur, "Social Capital Profiles: Immigrants and the Native–born in Canada," *Prairie Metropolis Centre Working Paper Series WP02–08*. (2008), 13, (http://pcerii.metropolis.net)

15 John Biles and Humera Ibrahim, "Religion and Public Policy, Immigration, Citizenship, and Multiculturalism – Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" in *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada*. eds. Paul Bramadat and D. Seljak. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 157.

religious community in a new setting."[16]

Faced with the challenging experience of immigration, many newcomers cluster around the church, and tend to manifest an enhanced sense of self awareness.[17] Seeking the inner strength to cope with the cultural shock of moving to a different country, immigrants seek the support of churches. In the process of identity searching and formation that lies at the core of the immigration experience, people need a factor of stability, and religious beliefs "provide an anchor as immigrants must adapt and change many other aspects of their lives and habits."[18] These institutions represent "nucle(i) of conformity, stability and social order in communities that would otherwise be volatile,"[19] as religion has the capacity to enhance the sense of belonging on both a personal and a group–level.[20]

In order to gain a better understanding of the mediating role that churches play between immigrants and their countries of origin, it is useful to examine the social and historical context of homelands, in this case, the relation that immigrants had with churches in their native countries. In the case of Romanian immigrants, the experience of living under the totalitarian regime of Nicolae Ceausescu should be carefully examined. As will be discussed below, several respondents explicitly correlated their reluctance about the activity of the Romanian churches in Toronto to the pre–1989 discourse of the Romanian Orthodox Church which, in their view, did not take a firm stance against Nicolae Ceausescu's abuses. Understanding the past represents thus a necessary step when looking at the relation that Romanian immigrants have developed with their churches in Toronto.

The Romanian Orthodox Church before and after 1989

In what follows, I will briefly revisit the social and political climate

16 *Ibid*.
17 Steven Vertovec, *Religion in Migration, Diasporas and Transnationalism*. Vancouver Centre of Excellence. Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis. Working Paper Series. No. 02–07, 2002, 11.
18 Hirschman, 1212.
19 Cnaan, Boddie and Yancey, 20.
20 Vincentia Joseph, "The Religious and Spiritual Aspects of Clinical Practice. A Neglected Dimension of Social Work," *Social Thought*. Vol. 13.1. (1987), 17; cited in Cnaan, Boddie, and Yancey, 25.

of pre–1989 Romania, in order to clarify why churches could not exert their role of civic skills incubators.[21] Nicolae Ceausescu was the Secretary General of the Romanian Communist Party and the president of Romania from 1965 until he was overthrown following the December Revolution in 1989. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan aptly characterize the Ceausescu regime as sultanistic, in that the president regarded Romania as his personal property.[22] The social climate of the era was dominated by a widespread feeling of suspicion, taking into consideration that even one's family members or close acquaintances could act as informers to the Securitate, the feared secret police, in exchange for material benefits or for a job promotion. As Eric Uslaner notes, "if people are wary of strangers they will limit their social activities to close friends whom they do see as trustworthy."[23]

The Nicolae Ceausescu regime had a dual attitude towards religious institutions; the president had "occasional dialogues" with the heads of the Romanian Orthodox Church but also continued to promote an atheistic, anti–religious discourse. [24] An irreversible consequence of this anti–religious campaign was the demolition of several churches to which many Bucharesters were profoundly attached; one of these churches was the Vacaresti Monastery, built in 1716, the largest 18th–century monastery in the South–East of Europe. It was demolished in 1984, in order to make room for a Palace of Justice that was never constructed. The Patriarch Teoctist, the head of the Romanian Orthodox Church between 1986 and 2009, was a controversial figure, due to his ties with Ceausescu's communist regime. He did not take a stand against the demolition of centuries–old churches, nor did he protest against the massacre in Timisoara on December 19th 1989, when dozens of people who protested against Nicolae Ceausescu were killed by the military. Instead, the Patriarch sent a telegram to

21 Putnam, 66–67.
22 Juan José Linz and Alfred C. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post–Communist Europe*. (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 347.
23 Eric Uslaner, "Trust and Civic Engagement in East and West," in *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy*. eds. Gabriel Badescu and Eric Uslaner. (London: Routledge, 2003), 81.
24 Trond Gilberg, "Religion and Nationalism in Romania," in *Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*. ed. Sabrina P. Ramet. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 183.

Nicolae Ceausescu, in order to congratulate him for his reelection as the leader of the Romanian Communist Party at the November 1989 congress.[25]

However, not only the church hierarchs engaged in acts of collaboration with the communist authorities; priests also "used to make incredibly overt allusions to the regime of terror we were living under in the last period. I eventually found out that they worked for the Securitate and were simply putting the people to a test," a Bucharester remembers.[26] Several persons in my ethnographic sample also criticized the Romanian Orthodox Church for its position towards the communist regime: "the Romanian church is subservient to the political power, whatever power this is. During communism, they never made an official protest statement against the regime. There were several priests who protested, but they were soon excommunicated, and the Mitropoly endorsed the regime." (A.V.). "It was more comfortable for them [the heads of the Church] to keep quiet and to reap the benefits…" (M.C.).

After 1989, the Romanian Orthodox Church continued to occupy a prominent position in public life, offering "support and legitimization to any government as long as blessings and privileges continued to come from the state."[27] Cristian Romocea considers that the demand of the Romanian Orthodox Church to be recognized as a national church was problematic, the same as its unwillingness to admit its collaboration with the Nicolae Ceausescu regime.

To the critics in the civic society add numerous media articles exposing cases of corruption among the hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church or "the shameless and ambiguous tariffs, most often not fiscalized and not visibly displayed, which are required by some priests for serving in the religious celebrations."[28] The media also

25 Lavinia Stan and Lucian Turcescu refer to Teoctist as "the Unrepentant Penitent" in *Religion and Politics in Post–Communist Romania*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 66.
26 Martor. 2003. *Revista de antropologie a Muzeului Taranului Roman (The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review)*. Vol. 7, 2002. (http://memoria.ro/index.php).
27 Cristian Romocea, "Church–State Relations in Post–1989 Romania," *Journal of Church and State*. Vol. 53 (2), (2011): 246.
28 Marius Vasileanu, "De ce scade increderea in Biserica?" ("Why is the General Trust in Church Decreasing?") *Hotnews.ro*, 2011. (http://www.hotnews.ro/).

voiced the disapproval of numerous Romanians towards the intended construction of a giant People's Cathedral in Bucharest in a time of prolonged economic crisis. Notwithstanding the critics mentioned, the Romanian Orthodox Church has a positive public perception. According to a 2003 poll issued by the Gallup Institute Romania for the Soros Foundation, the church ranks first among the most reliable institutions; thus, 88% of the interviewees have much or very much trust in the church.[29] The level of trust decreased from 88% in 2003 to 73% in 2011 but the latter percentage still places the Church on the first position in a ranking of most reliable public institutions in Romanians' trust.[30] It may be hypothesized that Romanians, while aware of the questionable facets in the activity of this institution, are willing to regard it in a rather tolerant fashion, given that the Church represents the space where faith may be exercised. Or, as a well–known Romanian saying that goes "do what the priest says, not what the priest does." However, this positive attitude towards the Church has not led to a consolidation of interpersonal trust; according to Eric Uslaner and Gabriel Badescu, Romania has a lower stock of trust than all other East European transition states.[31]

Romanian churches in Toronto, from a normative ideal to everyday reality

*T*he following is an analysis of the answers provided by the thirty Romanian–Canadians from Toronto, on their attitudes towards the Romanian Churches they visit. The theoretical perspectives reviewed in the first part of my article present churches as spaces of cohesion, able to strengthen the social capital resources of a particular community; however, my respondents had different experiences to share, complaining about the incapacity of churches to strengthen the

29 The Gallup Organization, "Barometrul de opinie publica". *Fundatia pentru o societate deschisa – Romania, 2003*. ("The Public Opinion Barometer." The Foundation for an Open Society, Romania) http://www.gallup.ro/.

30 Vasileanu (http://www.hotnews.ro/).

31 Eric Uslaner and Gabriel Badescu, "Honesty, Trust, and Legal Norms in the Transition to Democracy: Why Bo Rothstein Is Better Able to Explain Sweden than Romania," in *Creating Social Trust in Post–Socialist Transition*. eds. Janos Kornai, Susan Rose–Ackerman, and Bo Rothstein. (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 32–39.

intra–community ties at the level of the Romanian ethnic group. Five out of thirty respondents still regard the church through a positive lens, as a space where they can pray and, as in the words of one, "feel connected with God". To these persons, the church has an affective significance, as it evokes the years spent in Romania. Nevertheless, more than three quarters of respondents criticized the activity of Romanian churches in Toronto; their reasons for dissatisfaction will be discussed in detail below.

Only five out of thirty respondents would have expected the Romanian Orthodox Church to adopt an overtly critical attitude against Nicolae Ceausescu's communist regime, and are yet unable to 'reconcile' with the Church for this reason. Interestingly though, even if the connection between the heads of the Church and the communist authorities was explicitly mentioned by a small number of interviewees, the absence of cohesion, stemming from the generalized suspicion that characterized interpersonal relations during the totalitarian decades, is visible in most responses I collected. More than three quarters of interviewees mentioned the incapacity of the church to act as a catalyst for Romanian immigrants.

Four out of thirty respondents referred exclusively to the moral support that the Romanian churches provided them in the difficult process of settlement. V.C. arrived in Canada in 1996; at that time, the Saint George Orthodox Church was the only place where she could meet other Romanians, and this was where she created her group of friends and her network of acquaintances. C.M. mentioned the emotional comfort she found at the church, which made her integration in Canada less difficult. "It was good to meet other Romanians there, to listen to their stories and understand that they had a difficult start, too. It helped me a lot." C.M. is the only respondent who, in gratitude for the moral support she found in the church, would be willing to do volunteer work if, in the future, she could identify an activity related to arts. For G.P.:

> (The church) creates stability… when you have a church, you no longer feel lost… it is like home, the priest is wearing the same clothes as home… you see babushkas wearing headscarves, same as home. At the church you baptize your children. Our daughter was born and baptized here, and we are godparents for other children… other people got wed here.

> Some years ago, you could hear people "I am going to have my wedding in Romania," now it is no longer the case. Even if they have the wedding in Mexico, the religious ceremony is at the Romanian church. There is also a Romanian cemetery, the priest from All Saints has bought a piece of land in Stouffville. When you bury your dear ones somewhere close, there is your land… you no longer need to go home."

I also asked the Romanian–Canadians about the role that a church serving an immigrant community should play. I sought to ascertain whether the Romanian churches in Toronto fulfill my respondents' expectations. C.B. believes that a church should act as a factor of cohesion for the members of an ethnic community and to help them establish bonds based on mutual trust. He considers, however, the Italian and Polish churches to be closer to this ideal image than the Romanian churches in Toronto. To R.T., the church should represent "the light from home" and should organize more events aimed to strengthen the ties between churchgoers. Living in a predominantly Portuguese neighborhood, he often witnessed the events organized by Portuguese churches, and would like to see the Romanian churches following this model. C.L. views the church as a "catalyst that should bring people together and promote cultural values."

However, twenty–five out of thirty interviewees have more pragmatic expectations from the Romanian churches, emphasizing the socializing role of these institutions and the networking opportunities that may be pursued here. A respondent remembered her surprise when somebody recommended her to go to the church in order to develop her real estate business. "I wouldn't have thought of something like this, as far as I knew you'd go to the church for a different purpose, but it looked like a common practice. Yes, the church is more of a community centre…" (O.M). The respondents suggested that the Romanian Church should be more active in assisting newcomers with information about employment and accommodation, and that it should help them improve their language skills and expand their network of connections. This echoes Charles Hirschman's idea that churches represent "one of the most important sources of support for the practical problems faced by immigrants."[32]

32 Hirschman, 1212.

S.M. considers that the Romanian churches should provide some kind of support for overcoming the homesickness that a newcomer experiences, and more important, some practical advice on day–to–day matters:

> An immigrant gets through more phases, and I think the beginning is the most painful. The immigrant heads towards the church to search for help. The church should try to provide more counseling to the immigrant, because at some point you feel that the society is hostile to you, doesn't help you… you need somebody to talk to, not necessarily the priest but somebody from the church. Then, some counseling about the labour market would be helpful, on how to search for jobs… and some counseling about the Canadian society, what is an OSAP, how to deal with real estate, how to buy insurance. The state gives you welfare, it's OK, but you need more than that.

F.V. also considers that the Church should provide hands–on counseling to immigrants: "anybody coming from the other end of the world has thousands of questions. You are seeking somebody who went through the same experience, and if you don't have friends, the church is the first place to go." C.T. suggests that a "buddy system" implemented by the Romanian churches, with older immigrants assisting newcomers, would facilitate the settlement process. She considers that some informative pamphlets containing basic information for newcomers should be available at the church. Another respondent agrees that the church should do more in supporting newcomers, but considers that donors are more accountable for this phenomenon rather than the church, which is just a channel for the funds obtained from donations. Building on their personal experiences, the respondents stated that the church should play a more active role in facilitating the settlement of newcomers.

None of my interviewees received any kind of material support from the Romanian churches in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area, or heard of such cases. M.T., for instance, remembered that upon arriving in Canada, his father felt the need to get in contact with the Romanian community, but his endeavour was not successful. "Interestingly, he got help from the Jewish community, which gave him some stuff for the house." M.H. and her former husband did

not receive any support from the Romanian Church, but from the Hungarian one. "I am half Hungarian. When we arrived in Canada, the Hungarian Church gave us some furniture and found us a place to live. It was a great help, all in all. We had known a Hungarian lady and she put us in touch with the church." C.B. has neither received help from the church, nor has he heard of such case. Instead, he mentioned a Baptist Church in Kitchener: "it is a very strong community, they help each other a lot, even help each other to come to Canada. They hold tight together, not like the Orthodox." V.C. did not even expect any kind of material support from the Church. "I knew they could not provide it". However, even if the interviewee only received spiritual solace from the Church, she used any opportunity to offer her support to other churchgoers or to the institution itself: "we had a blind lady who needed surgery. Her son was abroad in Europe, studying, and she needed help. Together with two other ladies, I helped her: she needed somebody to stay with her after surgery. Then we took her back home from the hospital and we cooked for her."

Out of the thirty persons in my research sample, only V.C. and S.P. contribute their time to the church. At the same time, they conscientiously attend the religious service of the George Orthodox Church and the All Saints Church, respectively. V.C. is actively involved in the Sfantu Gheorghe Romanian church in Toronto, from organizing various parties for Romanians, Christmas or Easter celebrations, to cleaning the premises whenever necessary.

> I volunteer a lot, both at the church and together with my friends… At the church (St. George Orthodox Church, my note) I do many things, from cleaning the washrooms to organizing New Years' Eve and other parties, the Autumn Ball, the Spring Ball…when my daughters were younger and lived with me, we tried to organize disco evenings for young people. It was surprising to have something like that in a church, some were suspicious, how can you have a disco at the church, but we had some very successful attempts.

S.P. is a member of the parochial council of the All Saints Church in Toronto. He is actively involved in organizing the Romanian school and the Romanian cultural centre that function at this church. Together with his wife and other two persons, the respondent teaches

lessons to the children who attend the Romanian school each Sunday, and help them organize small shows for Easter and Christmas. He also undertakes various administrative activities, from bureaucratic tasks to selling candles for the religious service.

> At the church I am involved in administration, and the Romanian school and the Romanian cultural centre. I am a member of the parochial council, and I teach at the Romanian Sunday school. My wife, I and two other persons, four enthusiasts, make presentations to the children…every Sunday we take turns. Twice a year, on Easter and Christmas, we organize a small show. The administration work is very demanding as well, because we are very few people taking care of everything, from paperwork to selling candles.

It is worth mentioning, however, that even these two respondents who are devout churchgoers consider that some aspects in the activities of the Romanian churches need improvement. V.C. mentions that "we could do more to provide some help for the people in need, and I would like the church to make more efforts toward educating the young generation in the spirit of religion, understood not as a barrier but as a landmark for life." S.P. considers that the church "should unite Romanians, it should be a factor of trust"; instead, he noticed that the churchgoers are divided in 'two gangs", depending on the church they frequent: "they accuse each other of being communists and Securitate agents. Many of them are still anchored in the past era; particularly those who came to Canada before the 1989 Revolution are very suspicious". S.P. also refers to an "administrative fear" associated to the risk of becoming subordinated to the Romanian patriarchy. Priests may be relocated to other places, thus losing the privilege of serving in much coveted locations, such as Canada or the United States. The respondent believes that such tensions among churchgoers accurately reflect the fragmentation and lack of cohesiveness that character the Romanian community of immigrants in Toronto and the GTA. In this sense, he remembers that the church he attends, All Saints, was unable to realize its wish to co–operate with St. George church to organize the yearly celebration of Romanians in Toronto. "We offered to help them with ideas, to contribute with funds, but they kept us aside."

Even the interviewees who attend the church sporadically have

their own reasons for dissatisfaction. It may be argued that their perspectives lack substance, considering the infrequency of their visits to the Romanian churches. However, these persons used to attend the church on a more regular basis, but some aspects in the activity of churches discouraged them from doing so. At the same time, their opinions provide useful insights on the activity of these institutions and, most important, emphasize the potential for positive change in the services provided by churches. S.M. wishes that the Romanian churches were more active in attracting volunteers. She remembers how difficult it was for her teenage son to be accepted as a volunteer in the renovation of the St. George Orthodox Church in Toronto. C.L. might accept to contribute his time to the Romanian churches if these institutions could gain his trust. "I never felt close enough to the community that I perceive as representing the church here," he admits. N.D. finds that the priest is sometimes too persistent: "he [the priest] should not say 'forget about golf, come to the church.' I am not a golf player but nevertheless, the priest shouldn't say that... he should let the people come to the church when they feel the need, if they want to do so, not bring them in with the harpoon." However, N.A. noticed some improvement in this concern: "in the past, the priests' focus was to bring people to the church, and for this they gave you a lot of negativist reasons, in which all the sentences began with 'thou shall not,' and what happened if you didn't come… Now, they seem to be more understanding, to look at the positive side of things to make people come to the church."

C.L. considers that, instead of strengthening the bonding ties among Romanian immigrants, churches are far too interested in advertising their activities through various diasporic media outlets. According to C.B. and E.P., churches should grant more attention to younger generations: "every time I went, 90% of the people were 50 and over." Three respondents are dissatisfied with what they call a "money–oriented" attitude of the church. R.T., who has a limited trust in the Romanian churches from Toronto, is disappointed by the fact that the material interests of the church often come to prevail, while the activities meant to bring Romanian immigrants together are relegated to a secondary plan. This is the main reason that prevents him from contributing time to the church. Similarly, D.V. is uncomfortable with the intensive fundraising efforts of the Romanian churches: "they were making too much propaganda on this, they were

pushing forward their need for money... you were facing a wall when going to the church: the money." C.T. recalls her attempt to organize a fundraising event to the benefit of a person from Romania who needed an expensive surgery. The Romanian Church refused to assist her in any way; furthermore, it refused to reduce the $500 rental fee for the ballroom in the basement, where the respondent would have wanted to organize the event.

Conclusion

My research has examined the cohesive potential of Romanian churches in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area, building upon thirty ethnographic interviews with Romanian immigrants residing in this area. I have contrasted my respondents' encounters with the church with the theories discussed in the first section of my article. Theorists have insisted upon the catalyzing mission of churches that serve ethnic communities; however, for more than three quarters of my respondents, this mission fails to materialize. This is mainly due to a feeling of suspicion inherited from the communist era, which divides churchgoers, depending on the church they frequent. The interviewees would also like the Romanian churches to be more actively engaged in assisting newcomers or in attracting young people towards the church. Five out of thirty respondents recalled that the heads of the Romanian Orthodox Church failed to take a firm stand against the abuses of the Nicolae Ceausescu regime, or even endorsed them.

Although the responses I collected were predominantly critical towards the activity of Romanian churches, several respondents were grateful to these institutions for the moral support provided. "You no longer feel lost when you have a church", a respondent mentioned, remembering his difficult years as a newcomer in Canada. Other interviewees emphasized that churches should play a catalyst role, by strengthening bonding ties among Romanian immigrants and promoting Romanian cultural values.

The interviews I conducted revealed other differences between the catalyzing role that, in theory, churches play and the day–to–day reality of newcomers. As Pieter Bevelander and Ravi Pendakur, and Jack Jedwab contend, churchgoing usually correlates with volunteering, philanthropy and the higher vote presence in elections; however, this

does not apply to the Romanian–Canadians I interviewed.[33] Charles Hirschman emphasizes the significant role churches play in providing social and economic assistance for persons in need.[34] As mentioned above, my respondents considered that the Romanian churches in Toronto should provide more consistent support for newcomers or for other categories of people who may need it.

Through contextualized research, I sought to understand how immigrants' living practices negotiate the normative ideals of the scholarly literature. The responses I received from the Romanian Canadians included in my research sample demonstrate that churches should not be deemed infallible in their catalyzing mission; in the case of Romanian immigrants from Toronto, churches cannot compensate for the absence of interpersonal trust. It is important to mention, however, that I only interviewed first generation immigrants; it remains to be seen whether second generation Romanian immigrants, who did not have the experience of living in the suspicion–dominated climate of the Ceausescu era, will develop a more trustful relationship with the churches, and if these institutions will be more capable of strengthening the bonding ties among churchgoers.

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33 Bevelander and Pendakur, 1407; Jedwab, 33.
34 Hirschman, 1207.

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Notes On Contributors

Angela Andersen is completing her PhD at the Ohio State University and was a CSRS Visiting Graduate Fellow in 2011 and Visiting Research Fellow in 2012. Her research focuses on the inter– and intra–cultural interactions that take place through architecture, specifically in the Islamic World.

Caley Ehnes is a PhD candidate in the Department of English at the University of Victoria. Her dissertation, "Writing with 'one hand for the booksellers': Victorian Poetry and the Illustrated Literary Periodical," argues that poetry is not only essential to our understanding of the periodical press, but also that the periodical is integral to our understanding of Victorian poetics. Ehnes is the senior research assistant for the Database of Victorian Periodical Poetry on the Victorian Poetry Network, and has published in *Victorian Periodicals Review*.

Adam Hough is a PhD Candidate in the University of Arizona's Division for Late Medieval and Reformation Studies. He has a BA Honours in History from Trent University (Peterborough, ON), an MA in History from the University of Victoria (Victoria, BC), where he held a Winnifred Lonsdale Graduate Fellowship with the CSRS.

Catherine M. Nutting is a PhD Candidate in Art History and Visual Studies at the University of Victoria, having completed a BA (Political Science) from the University of Toronto and an MA (History in Art) from the University of Victoria. She lectures in Art History and the Humanities, and on Pedagogy, and has published in, for example, *Studies in the Literary Imagination* and *Dutch Crossings*. Besides serving on the departmental Graduate Students' Council and other bodies, her interests include interdisciplinarity, intermediality, and inclusive global–minded research and teaching.

Laura Visan recently completed her PhD in Communication and Culture at York University, Toronto. She is interested in the formation of social capital resources at the level of immigrant communities, and in the role that churches and diasporic media may play in strengthening the cohesion of ethnic groups.

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