

Faculty Book Notices

Mohammad Faghfoory edited a book in collaboration with Golam Dastagir entitled *Sufism and Social Integration* (ABC International-Kazi Publications, 2015). Composed of 22 articles, this is the first book that deals with the role Sufism played in the creation of cohesion and integration in Islamic society, as well as the contemporary significance and relevance of Sufism. Faghfoory also translated, annotated, and introduced *Life After Death: Resurrection, Judgment and the Final Destiny of the Soul* (ABC International-Kazi Publications, 2015).

Alf Hildebeitel published a book in May titled, *Non-Violence in the Mahabharata: Shiva's Summa on Rishidharma and the Gleaners of Kurukshetra* (Routledge, 2016).

Xiaofei Kang co-edited a book (with Jinhua Jia and Ping Yao), *Gendering Chinese Religion: Subject, Identity, and Body* (State University of New York Press, 2014). The book marks the emergence of a subfield on women, gender and religion in China studies. The total of nine articles in the book make a compelling argument on how Chinese women have deployed specific religious ideas and ritual to empower themselves and how gendered perceptions and representations of Chinese religious power have been indispensable in the historical and contemporary construction of social and political power.

Alumni Weekend 2016 - Save the Date

Register now for GW's Alumni Weekend 2016: October 27-30. Every year during Alumni Weekend, campus comes alive as thousands of alumni, friends and families return to GW. During the four days of activities all Colonials and their families are invited to choose from 60+ events ranging from reunion celebrations (classes that end in 6s and 1s) and academic gatherings to networking receptions and tours of campus. For more information and to register, visit alumni.gwu.edu/alumniweekend. #GAW16



Join a GW Industry-Based Alumni Network

Industry Networks Launch - NYC
 Tuesday, September 13 | 6:30 - 8:30pm
 Princeton Club, 15 W 43rd St, New York City
 Register: go.gwu.edu/industrynetworkslaunchnyc

The Office of Alumni Relations is launching a new program for alumni to connect with each other through virtual and in-person networking opportunities. The eight new industry networks are not bound by geographic region, current workplace or degree and provide another way for alumni of all schools to engage with other alumni around professional interests that they are passionate about. Visit go.gwu.edu/industrynetworks to learn more. #NetworkGW

Eyal Aviv's Travel to China

Last December, thanks to a generous grant from the Confucius Institute, I traveled to China for a week of meetings with colleagues and research for a paper I am working on. I visited Longhua temple, one of Shanghai's most important Buddhist temples, where I met with one of the leading monks for an insightful conversation about Buddhist philosophy and the state of Buddhism in China. I spend the following day with my colleague Tang Mingjun from Fudan University. Next, I spent the next few days in Nanjing, hosted by my colleague from Nanjing University, Professor Fu Xinyi. Professor Fu arranged for me to visit the Jinling Sūtra Publishing House, a UNESCO heritage site that was an important institute for the movement I am writing my book about. This was the highlight of my trip. Entering the institute was like stepping back a century or more into imperial China. From a polluted, industrial city with high-rises and traffic, I entered a traditional courtyard with a Chinese garden and beautiful architecture. Professor Fu and some of his students came with me for an organized tour. We began with a room full of old equipment and traditional woodblocks of Buddhist sūtras and paintings of Buddhist deities. We then moved through the different departments of the institute, each dedicated to a stage in the process of working with the woodblocks. We entered a room where three people worked on carving the woodblocks. It was a meticulous work of art with a level of concentration that is rare to see in our fast-paced world. We then proceeded to the department of those who carefully look for errors, then those who arrange the papers, followed by those who stock the woodblock pages and finally those who weave the covers. In the end, Professor Fu surprised me with a set of printed text. Before we departed we had a nice chat with one of the managers in the institute. In the afternoon, I gave a talk in their department of philosophy to over one hundred people. The talk generated good discussion. After such hectic days, it was a wonderful treat to be back in Shanghai and enjoy an afternoon with a friend in the traditional old Shanghai Teahouse. The trip was very successful. By the end of April, I had already given a talk that was largely based on the material I gathered in China.

Islamic Studies Program Update

The third year of the MA program was a great success, seeing six students graduate. Their theses: **Ahmed Hassan**: "The Coherence of al-Ghazālī : Synthesizing his Works on Uṣūl al-fiqh and Politics"; **Mohamed Mohamed**: "ISIS: The Rise and Fall of a Self-Declared Caliphate"; **Fatemeh Nasrollahi**: "Towards a Transcendent Architecture: Isfahan and its Architectural Legacy"; **Seyedehparisa Sajjadi**: "Nizami's Perspective on the Relationship between Poetry and Truth"; **Timothy Schum**: "Perspectives on Physical Beauty in the Thoughts of Ibn Arabi and Jalal al-Din Rumi"; **Seher Shah**: "Islamic Calligraphy in Lahore after Partition." Our graduate students received admission offers to PhD programs from such top universities as Princeton, Emory, Harvard Divinity School, the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Virginia.

Peace Studies Program Update

Irene Oh has just completed her seventh year directing the popular Peace Studies Program. We currently have approximately 30 majors and minors, with the majority of the students hailing from the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, and a third from the Elliot School of International Affairs. Taught by highly regarded faculty, **Alexandra Carroll** and **Shatha Al-Mutawa**, our Introduction to Peace Studies course remains in high demand. This year we are graduating seven majors in peace studies, and eight minors. Our peace studies social media intern, **Megan Hurley**, has done an outstanding job updating both our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/GWUPeace>) and Twitter feeds (<https://twitter.com/gwupeace>). Be sure to "like" and "tweet" the Peace Studies Program for regular updates!

Faculty Updates

Eyal Aviv was on sabbatical during the fall of 2015. Before his sabbatical, during the summer of 2015, Aviv co-taught a course with Joseph Trullinger from the Department of Philosophy about selfhood and personal identity to inmates in the Jessup Correctional Institution. During his sabbatical he finished working on a draft of his latest book, published a book review in the *Journal of Religion and Chinese Society* and presented for two panels at the American Academy of Religion annual meeting. In addition, he traveled to China and met with colleagues in Shanghai and Nanjing. While in China he gave a talk on "Buddhist Ethics and Transhumanism" at the Nanjing University's Department of Philosophy. In late April, Aviv gave a presentation at a conference in Princeton about "Buddhism in Modern China." Back in the classroom, in the spring of 2015 Aviv taught a new seminar on Buddhist meditation and contemplative practices. He is currently working on revisions of his book project, finalizing an article that will be published in the *Journal of Global Buddhism* and working on a new article about the doctrine of Non-Conceptual Awareness in Yogācāra Buddhism.

Paul Duff currently has two articles in press and continues to work on his book, *To Dwell as Sojourners: The Hellenization of Earliest Christianity*, which he hopes to complete in the coming year.

Robert Eisen finished his latest book, *Religious Zionism, Jewish Law, and the Morality of War*, and hopes to have it published within the coming year. The book deals with how Orthodox rabbis in the state of Israel constructed a body of law dealing with war after the state was created in 1948. Jews did not have political power for 2,000 years prior to the founding of Israel, and therefore Jewish law had very little to say about war when Israel came into being and was immediately plunged into war. The rabbis in Israel thus had to use great creativity and ingenuity to come up with laws about war. Eisen explores how they managed to do so. Eisen is also hard at work on a new book, tentatively titled, *The Jews—A Success Story: How a Tiny, Persecuted People Became Role Models of Success and What Others Can Learn from Them*. It will explore why Jews have done so well in the Western world in the past 200 years in any number of spheres, including the political, economic, intellectual and artistic spheres. Ultimately, as the title suggests, the book is interested in using the Jewish experience to come up with lessons about success from which everyone can learn.

Mohammad Faghfoory co-edited (with Golam Dastagir) *Sufism and Social Integration: Connecting Hearts, Crossing Boundaries* (ABC International-Kazi Publications, 2015), and translated and annotated *Life After Death: Resurrection, Judgment and the Final Destiny of the Soul* (ABC International-Kazi Publications, 2015). He also organized a one-day conference that brought Sunni and Shi'ite scholars together in conversation with students and community members.

B. N. Hebbar presented and chaired a panel at a conference on the Indian Buddhist monk Bodhidharma in New Delhi in November. He became a charter member of the World Fellowship of Buddhist Culture and Bodhidharma and was given the post of International Coordinator for this organization. He also became a member of the Board of Directors of the International Buddhist Association of America. In addition, Hebbar became a member of the White House Vesak 2016 Ad Hoc Committee in an effort to get Vesak (Buddha's Birthday) celebrated in the White House. To that end, he gave a presentation at the Royal Thai Embassy, resulting in a joint petition that was signed by all the Asian ambassadors requesting President Obama to recognize Vesak. The President wrote a formal letter to the U.S. Asian Buddhist communities recognizing Vesak.

Alf Hildebeitel was on sabbatical leave for the 2015-16 academic year. He is currently working on a book titled *Vishnu on Freud's Couch: The 1922-37 Correspondence between Sigmund Freud and India's First Psychoanalyst Girindrasekhar Bose*.

Xiaofei Kang co-edited a book (with Jinhua Jia and Ping Yao), *Gendering Chinese Religion: Subject, Identity, and Body* (State University of New York Press, 2014). She presented papers at the annual meetings of AHA (American Historical Association) and AAR (American Academy of Religion) and at the Fairbank Center of Harvard University. She also served as the research director of GW's Confucius Institute.

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Faculty Updates

Derek Malone-France was on sabbatical leave for the 2015-16 academic year. He continued his work with the NASA Astrobiology Program, developing symposia and debate and speech tournaments regarding the religious, philosophical, and social implications of the search for extraterrestrial life. Malone-France gave several lectures on this theme, including: "Astrobiology and the Idea of an Ecological Civilization," at the combined meeting of the 10th International "Whitehead Conference" and the 9th International "Forum on Ecological Civilization," in June 2015; "Astrobiology as Harbinger, or Why the Future is Transdisciplinary," at the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts, Georgia Institute of Technology, in April 2016; and "Thinking with the Presocratic Atomists: Nature, Life, Evolution, and Human Existence," at the annual meeting of the Metaphysical Society of America in March. Derek also published an article titled "'Democracy, Anxiety, and Freedom,'" in the journal *Political Theology* in January 2016.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr attended several conferences this past year on the recently published *Study Quran* (HarperCollins, 2015) in different universities including Harvard University, and gave interviews on the subject in both America and abroad. He delivered four major lectures on metaphysics to the conference on "Reviving the Islamic Spirit" in Toronto. He is now preparing the text for publication as a book. He also contributed to the *Handbook of Islamic Education* that has been printed in London. Several of his books have appeared during this year in translation in Chinese, Russian, Turkish, Persian, Kurdish, Indonesian, etc., many with new introductions by him. His article on "Islam and Catholicism" has been published by the Vatican. He was also chief advisor for the conference on "Intellectuality and Spirituality in the Islamic Tradition- A Prelude to the Perennial Philosophy" held at GW in which he gave the keynote lectures.

Irene Oh, with her colleague from Mt. Holyoke, Sohail Hashmi, directed a successful three-week NEH Summer Institute on American Muslims at the GW Mt. Vernon Campus in July 2015. The Summer Institute brought together 22 professors and 3 graduate students to study the history, culture and politics of Muslims in the United States under renowned experts in the field. In the fall, Oh taught Introduction to World Religions and the Peace Studies Capstone, and in the spring offered a course in Ethics and the World Religions. She published an article on the topic of education and labor in *Asian American Christian Ethics*, eds. Grace Kao and Ilsup Ahn (Baylor University Press, September 2015). At the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting in November 2015, Oh presented a response for a session on "The Ethics of Social Difference, Global Interdependence, and Forced Migration." Her article, "Theoretical Constructions of Muslim Motherhood," in *Muslim Mothering: Global Histories, Theories, and Practices*, eds. Aziza Pappano and Dana Olwan, is currently in production with Demeter Press. Oh just completed her seventh year of directing the popular Peace Studies Program.

Kelly Pemberton was on sabbatical leave for the 2015-16 academic year. During the spring semester of her leave, she taught a new course for the honors program, Gender Activism in the Muslim World, at the Mount Vernon campus as part of a Faculty Fellows Initiative Fellowship. She also continued to write chapters for her book, titled *Gender, Piety, and the Sacred in Islam*, and conducted research in France and Germany for a multi-country study, tentatively titled "Islam and Gender Activism: A Global Perspective." In July 2016 Professor Pemberton, along with Professor Jenny Takhar (CELSA-University of Paris IV Sorbonne), delivered a paper titled "User-Gendered Content? Evaluating the Rhetoric of Online Fertility Marketing Discourses," in Paris, France at ESCP-Europe's 13th annual "Conference on Gender, Marketing and Consumer Behavior." Late last year, she wrote a blog for *The Huffington Post*, titled "Why Moderate Muslims Can't Stop Islamic Extremism," which can be accessed directly on her *Huffington Post* webpage (<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kelly-pemberton/>), or through the link on her newly redesigned website, <http://www.kellypemberton.com>.

Jon Wood taught a new, mid-level course, Christianity, in the fall of 2015. Beyond his teaching duties, Wood also enjoyed some early fruits of the painstaking work of scholarly research. He joined Professor Bruce Gordon of Yale University for a special panel at the October gathering of the Sixteenth Century Society in Vancouver, Canada. His latest article will appear in the forthcoming publication *Zwingliana*, the flagship annual journal of Swiss Renaissance/Reformation studies. He will present another paper with colleagues from the University of Zurich this August at a conference in Bruges, Belgium. A GW Columbian College grant (CCFF) will help support research beginning this summer and into the coming academic year. Wood is concentrating on the career of Heinrich Bullinger, who presided over the Zurich clergy between 1531 and his death in 1574. A successful summer should go far toward completing a full draft manuscript of Wood's book project for December of this year.

Abbie Ziffren Memorial Lecture, Spring 2016

Rosenwald Film Screening and Conversation With Director Avia Kempner

For the Ziffren Lecture this year, we chose to screen a remarkable film, *Rosenwald*. The film is the latest production of the renowned D.C.-based filmmaker, Aviva Kempner, and it explores the extraordinary life of Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932). Rosenwald was the son of an immigrant Jewish peddler, and he rose from his humble origins to become the top executive at Sears and Roebuck. He was also an extraordinary philanthropist. Rosenwald dedicated his wealth and prestige to help build over 5,000 schools for African-Americans in the South and establish the Rosenwald Fund for the support of African American artists and intellectuals—all of this decades before the civil rights movement. The list of prominent alumni includes the ancestors of Oprah Winfrey, Spike Lee, Tony Award-winning playwright George Wolfe and Julian Bond. Kempner's film explores the powerful legacy left by the Rosenwald schools. Kempner was on hand for the event. She introduced the film and answered questions afterward from the audience.

The film was relevant to the field of religion because Rosenwald was inspired to do what he did in part because of conversations he had with his rabbi and because of the Jewish ideal of *tzedakah* (charity). The film also tied in beautifully with **Abbie Ziffren's** legacy, the person after whom the event was named. Abbie was a professor in the Religion Department in the 1980s and 1990s, and she was a committed Jew as well as someone devoted to progressive social causes, such as those Rosenwald stood up for. We were also able to schedule the event to take place at the end of January during Martin Luther King Week at GW, which helped widen our audience.

The film was incredibly inspirational. It demonstrated what one person with a good heart and religious ideals could do for others. In an age in which religion is often a source of strife, the message of the film was very timely in showing that religion can also be a force for the good.



Student Jesse Gurney Presents at Peace Studies Conference

Members of the Mosaic, Notre Dame's 2016 Peace Studies Conference, brought undergraduate and graduate peace studies students from around the nation to engage in dialogue about how individuals and communities can join together to address today's global peacebuilding issues. Through these engagements, I was able to meet students who advocated that the Chilean education system should increase the amount of material covering its indigenous Mapuche population, argued that USAID's monetary programs neglected cultural norms in Palestine to the extent that they promoted violence in the region and increased our understanding of how Bangladeshi farmers were countering rising sea-levels while addressing their almost-certain future of climate refugees. I was fortunate enough to join these student researchers and present a paper as part of a breakout panel on "Cultural Expressions of Violence Against Women." My research began by asking if universities commit structural violence against survivors when survivors attempt to prosecute their alleged perpetrators through the campus adjudication system. Its final conclusions call for changes in how universities handle reported cases of sexual violence by arguing for the necessity of a campus adjudication process as an alternative to the criminal court system while finding alleged illegalities in how the process is regulated. The presentation of this subject opened dialogue for students to discuss the campus adjudications, and through these discussions we were able to draw further hypotheses on how the campus adjudication process could be improved to foster a safer environment for student survivors.



Jesse Gurney

David and Sherry Berz Lecture, Spring 2016

Conference on Relationship Between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims

Our annual endowed David and Sherry Berz Lecture was more than a lecture this year. The Berzes agreed to support a full-day conference on the theme of “Sunnis and Shi’ites in Historical Perspective: Differences and Commonalities.” As anyone reading the newspaper knows, the troubled relationship between Sunnis and Shi’ites is a major issue in international politics these days, and therefore we not only wanted an event devoted to this theme, we wanted one that would explore the theme in a more comprehensive manner than a single lecture would allow.

Another motivation for having an event focused on Sunni-Shi’ite relations was that our MA program in Islamic Studies is unique in teaching Islam from both the Sunni and Shi’ite perspectives. Almost all other graduate programs in Islam in the United States concentrate only on the Sunni perspective. The conference was therefore an opportunity for us to highlight the very special nature of our program.

The conference consisted of morning and afternoon sessions. The morning session was devoted to Sunni and Shi’ite views on the fundamental sources of Islamic belief and practice: the Qur’an and Sunna (oral traditions about Mohammad and his companions). Presentations were given by Mahmoud Ayoub of the Hatford Seminary and Jonathan Brown of Georgetown University. The afternoon session focused on the two of the most important issues in Sunni and Shi’ite theology: God’s unity and the nature of prophecy. Presentations on this topic were given by Omer Awass of the American Islam College and Mohsen Kadivar of Duke. Our own **Mohammad Faghfoory** and **Seyyed Hossein Nasr** also participated in a number of the sessions.

The conference was a great success. The sessions were well-attended. The audience was also highly varied. It included GW students and academics, as well distinguished individuals from outside the university, such as diplomats from the embassies in here Washington.



From left to right:
Sayyid Kashmiri
 (Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Head of the Department of Religion Affairs for the Shi'ite organization IMAM)
Joseph Montville
 (distinguished consultant on religion and conflict resolution based in the D.C. area)
Robert Eisen
 (Professor and Chair of GW Religion Department)

*The David and Sherry Berz Endowed Lecture is made possible by a gift from **David Berz**, BA '70, JD '73, and **Sherry Berz**, BA '72, MA '73.*



Class Notes

Evonne Kruger (Jonas), BA '71, just retired after 20 years at Stockton University of New Jersey where she taught business, Jewish studies and business and sustainability. She is the president of Reform Congregation "Keneseth Israel" in Elkins Park, Pa., which is a 170-year-old congregation.

Carol McClenon, BA '76, is currently the local leader for two communities of Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Baltimore. Sisters of the Good Shepherd is attached to Good Shepherd Services, a residential treatment center for adolescents with serious emotional and behavioral challenges.

Laura Weil, BA '78, is a school social worker living in Arlington, Va. She is active in Temple Rodef Shalom and Interfaith social action efforts to promote justice and peace.

Joseph Lumbard, BA '93, MA '95, collaborated to translate and edit *The Study Quran*, which was overseen by **Seyyed Hossein Nasr** and published in 2015 by Harper Collins.

Rachel Talbert, BA '94, MA '98, is the vice president of curriculum and programs at The Close Up Foundation and will begin doctoral studies in education this fall.

William "Basil" Tsimpris, BA '98, is a staff attorney for the Supreme Court of Virginia. Basil and his wife, Jen, have a 4-year-old son, John Landon, and welcomed a daughter, Anne Kathryn, in October 2015.

Jennifer Passey (Anderson), BA '99, MA '11, has worked in various advocacy and communication roles in the D.C. metro area and overseas since receiving her master's in political management. Most recently, she worked at the American International School in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Michelle Northrop, BA '00, completed her master's of social work from Virginia Commonwealth University in May 2015. She is now working full time at the VA Medical Center in Richmond, Va., where she focuses on helping homeless veterans recapture their lives, a sense of community and purpose.

Blair Rodriguez (Moreland), BA '03, works as a freelance communications specialist, mostly doing public relations for midsize technology companies. She currently lives outside of Detroit, Mich., with her two young children.

Ernest Corbin, BA '04, graduated from Cambridge College in Cambridge, Mass., with a master's degree in mental health counseling in January 2016. Mr. Corbin is currently working as a psychotherapist at Community Health Resources in Enfield, Conn.

Blake Horridge, BS '05, will be presenting at the American Academy of Religion's national meetings in November. Mr. Horridge's paper will focus on utilizing problem-based learning pedagogies in college courses dealing with the interaction of science and religion.

Sarah Gillespie, BA '06, is an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister. She recently completed a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) residency in Rochester, NY. Ms. Gillespie's ministry next takes her to Waterville, Maine, for a full-time healthcare chaplain position at a skilled nursing facility.

Rachael Starcher (Whitley), BA '08, obtained a master's in religion from Vanderbilt University in 2011. Recently, she completed her second year of medical school at Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine with an expected graduation in 2018.

Class Notes continued

Donald Steele, BA '08, is entering his fourth year as senior pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church of Summit, N.J., and beginning his term as president of the Summit Interfaith Council.

Ian Sullivan, BA '08, completed his PhD in philosophy with the University of Hawaii this past spring. This fall he will be starting a new position as lecturer of philosophy in Kennesaw State University's Department of History and Philosophy.

Elyssa Scharaga, BA '09, completed her PhD in clinical psychology with a health emphasis and neuropsychology minor. She will complete her neuropsychology fellowship at the Connecticut Veteran Affairs Healthcare System in 2018.

Meghan Sweet, BA '09, is attending graduate school at Dharma Realm Buddhist University in northern California, pursuing a master's in Buddhist classics.

Julie DeMareo, BA '10, left her position as the assistant campus minister at Archbishop Carroll High School in June 2016 after three years to pursue a master's at Boston College's School of Theology and Ministry, which she will be starting fall 2016.

Rishi Sood, BA '10, is currently a third-year radiology resident at GW Hospital.

Sarah Casewit, BA '11, started her own travel company called Naya Traveler ("naya" is Sanskrit for wisdom), which designs immersive journeys to some of the world's culturally rich destinations like Kashmir, Burma and Ethiopia.

Matthew DeGioia, BA '13, is currently pursuing his master's of divinity at Reformed Theological Seminary, while working during the day as a disability benefits paralegal. He hopes to transition to full-time pastoral ministry upon graduating from seminary.

Fatemeh Hosseinpour, BA '13, recently completed her master's in law; international and commercial dispute resolution in London, and is currently completing her Master of Science in Oil and Gas Trade Management. Ms. Hosseinpour will be moving to Toronto in September to start her career as a family mediator.

Alexandra Kassirer, BA '13, is a senior counterterrorism analyst for threat intelligence firm, Flashpoint. Ms. Kassirer detects and analyzes threats and communications from terrorists, largely by monitoring their Deep and Dark Web environments. She is also an NBC terrorism analyst.

Keila Franks, BA '14, currently serves as the training coordinator and client advocate at the Tennessee Justice Center. This fall, an essay that Keila wrote in Eyal Aviv's Buddhist Ethics class will be published in the *Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa*.

Ben O'Callaghan, BA '14, is a rising third-year law student at Duke clerking in Atlanta for the summer at King & Spalding LLP. He researches and writes about the First Amendment and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

Jay Pandya, BA '15, is a medical student at GW focusing his research and work on international health care systems in low-resource settings. Jay credits his success so far to the Peace Studies Program which helped him formulate critical problem solving skills.

Power & Pathos: Bronze Sculpture of the Hellenistic World
Exhibition at the National Gallery of Art,
Washington, D.C. Musings by Jon Wood

Some may say that art does not require a museum. Be that as it may, a walk through the National Gallery does tend to invigorate life lived well beyond its walls.

The venerable hall recently featured an exhibition of Hellenistic bronzes—apt, in light of brazen Hermes' regular prominence within the gallery's grand entrance. Works covered the terrain of Hellenism across Europe, Africa, and Asia through the period of the 300s BCE to the early centuries CE.

Any self-respecting Hellenistic city would have glittered with its bronze. The artistic range from assertive power to surprising subtlety inspires observers still today. Images of rulers, orators, philosophers, artisans, warriors, athletes and even certain rustics, along with divinities, together populated the Hellenistic meeting place of ideals and sheer aesthetic. Willy-nilly, the ancient athlete found to have cheated also contributed by way of a punitive levy of bronze statuary. Would that all the heroes and the cheaters, too—from Olympians to cultural elites—were nowadays so involved in the shared space of our communities! Hellenistic bronzework was largely secular in subject matter, and yet it strikes me that it shares with every religion of the world the principle that the greatest self exists beyond the appetites of self alone.

Nor do monuments of any generation stand in timeless isolation. Explanatory texts placed throughout the exhibition reminded visitors of that fact. It turns out that ancient city councils kept rather good records of just how ephemeral these artworks were. Corrosion built up; painstakingly crafted stone eyes or bone teeth fell out of hollow heads; hands and limbs came loose at their attachment points; often, entire statues simply deteriorated and were replaced with newer works. A couple decades could suffice. Its luster of permanence notwithstanding, Hellenistic bronzework never was built to span the ages. Perhaps it would be stultifying for any time and place to allow its past to overcrowd its present...or, conversely, to sever that organic, ongoing relationship between the times.

Decommissioned statues were slated for recycling—the works of great Lysippos not excepted. Torsos, heads and sundry limbs were sold for scrap and loaded onto ships. The National Gallery exhibit would have been slim indeed without precisely such a legacy. Who knows how many ancient sailors accidentally quenched the re-melting of their cargo by dint of stormy seas. I would not trivialize their tragedies. In a similar way, I would not in the least bit exculpate the past for appalling acts that have, for all that, contributed to the institutions of the world whose corridors we tread today. Viewing the works of Hellenistic bronze, one recalls that pathos—of the ill-fated sailors along with all who have lived and do live—persists within the hollows of the art itself.

Special Thanks

The Department of Religion would like to gratefully acknowledge the following generous donors who made a gift to the school from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016.

Paul B. Duff+

Griffin E. Gasink, BA '08

Rachel L. Hollander, BA '07

Carma H. Khatib, BA '16

Ralph Z. Levy**

Randi O. Levy**

Ross Z. Levy, BA '16

Christina A. Ravelo, BA '13

Victor X. Rodriguez, MS '79

Anthony E. Sulva, BA '14

Elizabeth Yeide*

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~ *Student*

Thank you for your support!



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2016 GRADUATES!

Religion Majors

Audrey Anna Elliott
 Ross Levy

Religion Minors

Sawyer French

MA in Islamic Studies

Raihan Ahmad (2015)
 Ahmed Hassan
 Mohamed Mohamed
 Fatemeh Nasrollahi
 Seyedehparisa Sajjadi
 Timothy Schum
 Seher Shah

Peace Studies Majors

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 Zahn Jackson-Garrett
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Peace Studies Minors

Sarah Afromowitz
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**2016 Yeide Prize Winner
 Audrey Anna Elliott**

My plans after graduation include: teaching nutrition education at a YMCA camp in Boston this summer through gardening and then departing for Mexico City in late August. In Mexico I will be working at the Casa de los Amigos, a Quaker house that hosts and assists homeless individuals looking to settle in the city (usually migrating in from other parts of Latin America), and temporary guests in need of medical care or simply visiting the city. I will be working in hospitality and community outreach with them until next May when my current plan is to return to D.C. to begin work as an elementary school teacher.

Theta Alpha Kappa

Congratulations to our
 2016 Inductees!

*Ahmed Hassan
 Fatemeh Nasrollahi
 Sunny Patel
 Seyedehparisa Sajjadi
 Timothy Schum
 Matthew Sferrazza
 Seher Shah*



Department of Religion Contributions

Gifts to the Department of Religion allow us to provide support for faculty and student research and academic travel, graduate student fellowships, and student enrichment activities, including guest speakers, visiting faculty, and symposia. Each gift, no matter how large or small, makes a positive impact on our educational mission and furthers our standing as one of the nation's top liberal arts colleges at one of the world's preeminent universities.

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Donations for the Yeide Fund should be designated “Religion Department-Yeide Fund” in the memo line

Thank you for your support!

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