

**Announcing a**  
**CONFERENCE AND RESEARCH WORKSHOP**  
**LOST IN TRANSLATION?**  
**COMPARING LOCAL AND GLOBAL**  
**INTERPRETATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

**February 26-27, 2009**

**Howard. H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy**  
THE UNIVERSITY *of* TENNESSEE

Over the last decade, religion has assumed far greater significance on the world stage. Since the US signed into law the International Religious Freedom Act in 1998, the issue of religious freedom has received new focus worldwide.

Yet the discourse on religious freedom is still overly dominated by English-speaking legal and political experts. This workshop aims, therefore, to discuss the divergent cultural, linguistic and political interpretations of the concept of religious freedom, in both historical and contemporary contexts. Areas to be treated will range from India, Nepal, China, Israel, France, Denmark, the United States, Morocco, Eritrea, Nigeria, to the Arab world.

Speakers include internationally renowned humanities and legal scholars, such as Dr T. Jeremy Gunn, Esq. (Director, Program on Freedom of Religion and Belief, ACLU), Professor William Sweet (St Thomas University, Fredericton, Canada), and Professor Tim Jensen (University of Southern Denmark). Other visiting speakers include: Dr. Greg Grieve (UNC at Greensboro) and Dr. Robert Yelle (University of Memphis).

UT faculty with expertise on these issues will serve as discussants.

Sessions open to members of the public are Thursday, February 26 from 5 – 7 pm and Friday, February 27 from 9 am – 1 pm. Program details available at <http://web.utk.edu/~religion>

The program is funded by the Humanities Initiative, the College of Law, the Department of Religious Studies, the Department of Philosophy, and the Baker Center

For further information, contact Dr. Rosalind I. J. Hackett [rhackett@utk.edu](mailto:rhackett@utk.edu) (865) 974-2466

# LOST IN TRANSLATION? COMPARING LOCAL AND GLOBAL INTERPRETATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

## PROGRAM FOR CONFERENCE AND RESEARCH WORKSHOP

Thursday, February 26 - Friday, February 27, 2009

Howard. H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy, The University of Tennessee

### Thursday, February 26

- 5 pm **Welcoming remarks**  
Alan Lowe, Director, Baker Center
- 5:15 pm **Introductory remarks**  
Rosalind I. J. Hackett (Religious Studies, UT), conference/workshop coordinator
- 5:30-7 pm **Keynote address**  
Dr T. Jeremy Gunn, Esq. (Director, Program on Freedom of Religion and Belief, ACLU)  
Moderator: Professor Otis H. Stephens, Jr. (Alumni Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science and Resident Scholar of Constitutional Law, UT)  
Responses by Robert Blitt (Law, UT) & Tricia Hepner (Anthropology, UT)  
*Open discussion*

### Friday, February 27

- 9 am **Keynote address**  
Professor William Sweet (Philosophy and Religious Studies, St Thomas University Fredericton, Canada)  
Moderator: Rachelle Scott  
Responses by David Reidy (Philosophy, UT) and Robert Yelle (History, University of Memphis)  
*Open discussion*
- 10:30 *Coffee*
- 11 **Short presentations by visiting speakers**  
Moderator: Professor Thomas Heffernan (The Kenneth Curry Professor in the Humanities, Depts. of English and Religious Studies, UT)  
Prof. Greg Grieve (Religious Studies, UNC at Greensboro)  
Prof. Tim Jensen (Study of Religions, University of Southern Denmark)
- 11:30 **Short presentations followed by discussion**  
Moderator: Dr. Trish Hepner (Anthropology)
- |                 |                  |                 |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Rosalind Gwynne | Miriam Levering  | Robert Goodding |
| Rebecca Klenk   | Brian Pennington | EJ Coffman      |
| Mark Hulsether  | Rivka Ribak      | Randal Hepner   |
- 1 *Lunch* (for speakers and guests)
- 2 **Discussion and working groups**  
Discussion leader: Rosalind I. J. Hackett
- 3:30 *Tea*
- 4 **Concluding session and future plans**

**SPEAKER BIOS for RELIGIOUS FREEDOM CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP**  
**February 26-27, 2009**

**VISITING SPEAKERS**

**T. Jeremy Gunn** is the Director of the ACLU's Program on Freedom of Religion and Belief and the Senior Fellow for Religion and Human Rights at the Center for the Study of Law and Religion at Emory University School of Law. He is a member of the Advisory Council on Freedom of Religion and Belief of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). He received his Ph.D. in the Study of Religion from Harvard University, a J.D., *magna cum laude*, from Boston University, and an A.M. in Humanities from the University of Chicago. He was an attorney at the law firm Covington & Burling, after which he held several positions in the U.S. government, including at the U.S. Department of State (Office of International Religious Freedom) and as the Executive Director and General Counsel of a federal agency of the U.S. government that declassified records related to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. He was a Senior Fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace in 1998-99. In 2008, he was a Visiting Professor at the law faculty of the Université de Paris II, and has previously taught at other universities in the United States, France, Germany, Tunisia, and Canada. His Harvard doctoral dissertation on the historical origins of the Establishment Clause of the Constitution was published as *A Standard for Repair: The Establishment Clause, Equality, and Natural Rights* (New York: Garland Press, 1992). Among his other publications are: "Religious Liberty (Modern Period)," in the *Encyclopedia of Christianity* vol. 4 (2005):605-617; "Religious Freedom and *Laïcité*: A Comparison of the United States and France," *Brigham Young University Law Review* (Summer 2004):419-501; *La nouvelle question religieuse: Régulation ou ingérence de l'État? (The New Religious Question : State Regulation or State Interference?)* (ed. with Pauline Côté) (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2006); *Din Özgürlüğü ve Laicite Abd ve Fransa Mukayesesi* (Ankara, Turkey: Liberal Dusunce, 2006); *Dieu en France et aux États-Unis: Quand les mythes font la loi* (with Blandine Chélini-Pont) (Paris: Berg International, 2005). His most recent book, *Spiritual Weapons: The Cold War and the Forging of an American National Religion*, was published by Praeger Press in January 2009.

**Gregory Price Grieve** is an ethnographer who works at the intersection of everyday religious practice, globalization, human rights, media and South Asian Religions. He is an Associate Professor in the Religious Studies Department of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. Grieve's undergraduate degree is in Film Making, and he was trained as an Historian of Religion at the University Chicago. His monograph *Rethinking Religion In Nepal* (2006) concentrates on the study of lived religion in Nepal, with a focus on what he calls "prosaic religion" - those low-lying everyday occurrences that are concerned with pragmatic material worldly affairs and that tend to lie in the jurisdiction of non-elite practitioners. Grieve's edited volume, *Historizing 'Tradition' in the Study of Religion* (2005), uses a critical comparative framework, to critique "tradition" as a category in the historical and comparative study of religion. Currently Grieve is working on the relation between models of the self, Buddhism and human rights, in articles such as "Do Human Rights Need a Self? A Skillful Reading of Engaged Buddhism, Literature and the Heroic Compassion of the Samsaric Subject." He is also working on the relation between Buddhism, new media and contemporary society in such articles as "Imagined Bodies, Real Selves: Contemplative Practices in The Virtual World of Second Life," and "There is no Spoon? *The Matrix*, Ideology, and The Spiritual logic of Late Capital."

**Tim Jensen** teaches in The Study of Religions, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark. He is currently the General Secretary of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR). He has been lecturing on issues pertaining to religious freedom within the framework of Humanity in Action ([www.humanityinaction.org](http://www.humanityinaction.org)), as well as at the Danish Institute for Human Rights (<http://humanrights.dk/>). Dr. Jensen is co-editor of *Human Rights, Democracy*

& Religion, University of Southern Denmark, Odense 2005, and he has published several articles on religious freedom, state-religion, minority-religions, as well as on religious freedom, parents' rights and religious education, and he has published several articles on the Muhammad cartoon crisis. Of his publications in English, mention may be made of

“European and Danish Religious Education: Human Rights, the Secular State, and *Rethinking Religious Education and Plurality*, *Journal of Religion & Education*”, Vol.32, No. 1, Spring 2005, 60-78; “Religious Pluralism in Denmark”, *Res Cogitans*. Special Issue: *The Rights and Plights of Religious Minorities*, Nr. 4 - Vol. 2 - 31.12.2007, 1-26). “In the Wake of the Cartoon Crisis: Freedom of Expression of Academics in Denmark.”, In *The Study of Religion and the Training of Muslim Clergy in Europe, Academic and Religious Freedom in the 21st Century*, eds. W. B. Drees, and P. Sjoerd van Koningsveld. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2008.

**William Sweet** received his PhD from the University of Ottawa, a DEA from the Université de Paris 1 – Sorbonne, and his D.Ph from Saint Paul University. He was Professor of Philosophy at St Francis Xavier University (1990-2007), and is currently at St Thomas University, where he has served as Vice President Academic and is currently Professor of Philosophy and Professor of Religious Studies. He has taught as Visiting Professor at universities in Asia and Europe, including Fu Jen University (Taiwan) and the Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram (Dharmaram College, Bangalore, India). Dr Sweet is Past-President of the Canadian Philosophical Association, current President of the World Union of Catholic Philosophical Societies, a member of the Steering Committee of the Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de Philosophie, and a Vice President of the Istituto Internazionale Jacques Maritain (Rome). He is an editor of *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies* and editor of *Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions*. Dr Sweet has published extensively in philosophy and religious studies, particularly in the history of modern philosophy and religion, the philosophy of religion, and cross-cultural philosophy. His most recent books are *Religion and the Challenges of Science* (Ashgate, 2007) and *The Dialogue of Cultural Traditions* (RVP, 2008). He has received a number of awards, including the President's Award for Research at St Francis Xavier. Forthcoming publications include: *Before and After Democracy: Philosophy, Religion, and Politics*, University of Ottawa Press, 2009. Recently published: *Freedom of Religion* (ed.) Bangalore: Centre for the Study of World Religions (thematic issue of the *Journal of Dharma*, 2006) [a revised and significantly expanded version will appear as a book] *Freedom of Religion*, Bangalore: Centre for the Study of World Religions, in 2009; “Freedom of Religion and Religious Heritage,” in *Prajna Vihara* [journal of philosophy and religion, Assumption University of Thailand], Vol. 6, No. 2 (2005); reprinted, with major revisions, as “The Right to Freedom of Religion in Multicultural Democracies,” in *Globalisation – Cultures – Religions: Globalisierung – Kulturen – Religionen*, edited by Chibueze Udeani and Claude Ozankom (Amsterdam: Rodopi Press, 2006); “Universal Human Rights and Cultural Integrity,” [in English and in Farsi] in *Human Rights and the Dialogue of Civilizations*, Qom (Iran): Mofid University Publishing House, 2001; Reprinted [in Chinese], with revisions, as “Philosophical Foundations, Cultural Integrity, and Human Rights,” in *Universitas [Che hsiueh yü wen hua]- Monthly Review of Philosophy and Culture [Fu Jen University]*, 354 (November 2003).

**Robert Yelle** is Assistant Professor in the Department of History and the Honors Program at the University of Memphis. He holds an A.B. in Philosophy from Harvard University, a J.D. from the University of California at Berkeley, and a Ph.D. in the History of Religions from the University of Chicago. His first book was "Explaining Mantras: Ritual, Rhetoric, and the Dream of a Natural Language in Hindu Tantra." He earned a Guggenheim Fellowship for the completion of his second book project, tentatively entitled "The Disenchantment of Language: Protestant Literalism and the Discourse of Modernity from England to India." His contribution to this conference will

focus on the influence of Christian theological categories on the secularization of law and the development of freedom of religion in Britain and colonial India

#### PROJECT COORDINATOR

**Rosalind I. J. Hackett** is Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at UT. She is also adjunct faculty in Anthropology and a faculty associate at the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy. She is the President of the International Association for the History of Religions. As a specialist on the religions of Africa, she has published widely on new religious movements in Africa, religious pluralism, art, and religion in relation to human rights (e.g. *Religious Persecution as a U.S. Policy Issue*, co-ed., 1999). Her latest publication is *Proselytization Revisited: Rights Talk, Free Markets, and Culture Wars* (ed., London: Equinox, 2008), and a co-edited work, *Religious Dimensions of Conflict and Peace in a Neoliberal Africa* is under review with the Univ. of Notre Dame Press. She is bringing to completion *Nigeria: Religion in the Balance* (US Institute of Peace). Her future research plans include a monograph on religious regulation in Africa and a co-edited work on new religious media in Africa. She has held fellowships at Harvard University Law School and the Center for the Study of World Religions (2000-01) and the University of Notre Dame, where she was Rockefeller Visiting Fellow at the Joan B. Kroc Institute of International Peace Studies from 2003-04. She has served in an advisory capacity for the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, the Office of International Religious Freedom (State Department), the UK Government's Advisory Board for the ESRC/AHRC/FCO project: 'Radicalisation' and Violence, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, the, University of Connecticut UNESCO Chair in Comparative Human Rights Annual Human Rights Conference, and the Oslo Coalition on School Education and Religious Tolerance and Intolerance.

#### CORE FACULTY

**Robert C. Blitt** joined the University of Tennessee College of Law faculty in 2007. He came to Tennessee from Washington, DC, where he served as International Law Specialist for the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), an independent, bi-partisan agency created by Congress to monitor the status of freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief abroad. Prior to joining the Commission, Professor Blitt spent over five years in the Middle East, where, among other things, he served with the Department of International Agreements in Israel's Ministry of Justice, clerked for the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Israel, and directed projects at Physicians for Human Rights (Israel). In 2002, Professor Blitt was a Rabin Fellow for Peace and Tolerance at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Among his writings, Professor Blitt has produced a detailed human rights analysis of Iraq's 2005 constitution, as well as other articles including "The Religion-State Relationship and the Right to Freedom of Religion or Belief: A Comparative Textual Analysis of the Constitutions of Predominantly Muslim Countries," and, most recently, "How to Entrench a De Facto State Church in Russia: A Guide in Progress."

**Tricia R. Hepner** is assistant professor of anthropology at UT. Her research and teaching interests include political and legal anthropology, and especially issues of human rights. Her work on Eritrea and its diasporas has focused on the ethnographic dimensions of political violence, refugeehood, and seeking asylum. She serves as Amnesty International's Eritrea country specialist and has worked extensively on religious persecution issues in both applied and academic capacities. She is the author of *Soldiers, Martyrs, Traitors, and Exiles: Political Conflict in Eritrea and the Diaspora* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) and co-editor of *Biopolitics, Militarism and Development: Eritrea in the Twenty-First Century* (Berghahn Books, 2009). Her research articles have appeared in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, the *Africa Policy Journal*, and *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*.

**Mark Hulsether** is a Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Tennessee, with special interests in the interplay of religion and social issues in recent history of North America. He has written numerous articles on the course of the religious left in the US since the 1940s, various aspects of US popular religion, and issues of theory and method in the academic study of religion; these have appeared in such venues as the *American Quarterly*, *Reviews in American History*, *Religion*, *the Journal of Transnational American Studies*, *Religious Studies Review*, and widely-read anthologies such as the *Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion* (Routledge, 2005), *Religion and Popular Culture in America* (University of California Press, 2005), and *Cultural Studies: an Anthology* (Blackwell, 2008). Dr. Hulsether has been the recipient of three different NEH awards, most recently for study in Oaxaca, Mexico, in the summer of 2007. His most recent book is *Religion, Culture, and Politics in the Twentieth Century United States*, co-published by Columbia University Press and Edinburgh University Press last year.

**David A. Reidy**, J.D., Ph.D. is Lindsay Young Associate Professor of Philosophy and Adjunct Associate Professor of Political Science at UT. He works in political and legal philosophy, with special attention to theories of justice, human rights, and democracy, and to the work of John Rawls. He has edited or co-edited four volumes and authored one monograph and dozens of articles and review essays on these topics. His essays have appeared in *Public Affairs Quarterly*, *Philosophical Studies*, *Journal of Ethics*, *Human Rights Review*, *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence*, *Political Theory*, *Philosophical Forum*, *Journal of Social Philosophy*, *Economics and Philosophy*, and other journals and various encyclopedias and anthologies. Professor Reidy has twice won the Berger Prize from the American Philosophical Association for his work in the philosophy of law and he recently received a NEH Fellowship to support of his current work on John Rawls.