

Friday Bulletin, March 13, 2015

Department of Religion, University of Florida

News and Upcoming Events

The Center for Greek Studies presents Professor **Trine Stauning Willert**, University of Copenhagen, Hellenic Studies Visiting Fellow, Princeton University, who will give a talk entitled “Untying the Bond between Nation and Religion: New Directions in Greek Orthodox Theology and Religious Education.” This talk will take place on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, from 4:00-5:30pm in 219 Dauer Hall, the Ruth McQuown Room. See: <http://classics.ufl.edu/event/untying-the-bond/>

Kocku von Stuckrad, Dean of the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands, will give a presentation on Tuesday, March 31, 2015, beginning at 6:15pm, titled “Theorizing Shamanism in the Contested Field between Academia, Colonialism, and Religious Practice.” The lecture will be held in Pugh Hall 170 and a reception will follow. *Lecture description:* “Theories of shamanism in the twentieth century have operated in a hybrid space between academia, colonialism, and religious identities. Discourses of authenticity and appropriation of religious heritage mark the borders of this contested field. The lecture addresses the underlying dynamics with a focus on what is often called “neoshamanism” and argues that this religious practice is in fact the materialization of scholarly discourses more or less detached from ‘indigenous tradition,’ although the construction of ‘indigenouness’ plays an important role in the formation and legitimization of knowledge in this field.” Anyone who is interested in meeting with Professor von Stuckrad during his visit should contact Professor **Bron Taylor**, who is organizing the event.

Presentations

Ken Chitwood (PhD student, Americas track) participated in the recent AAR Southeastern Conference for the Study of Religion (SECSOR) in Nashville, TN. He participated in a panel entitled “Conversations in American Islam” based on the book *The Cambridge Companion to American Islam* (eds. Juliane Hammer, Omid Safi). His paper was entitled, “Dreams of al-Andalus: narratives of reversion and identity reconstruction among Latina/o Muslims in the U.S.,” and Dr. **Juliane Hammer** (UNC at Chapel Hill) served as respondent.

Publications

Ken Chitwood published a book review with the journal *Alternative Spirituality & Religion Review*, Vol. 5, Issue 2 (March 5, 2015). The review is of *The Study of Religion: An Introduction to Key Ideas and Methods*, 2nd edition, by George Chryssides and Ron Geaves.

News

Ken Chitwood was appointed to the Religion Newswriters Association (RNA) Board of Directors as a Board Member. He will serve a three-year term on the board for the world's only journalism association for people who write about religion in the news media and who offers training and tools to help journalists cover religion with balance, accuracy, and insight. His appointment will be formally ratified by RNA members at the RNA National Conference in Philadelphia, PA (August 27-30, 2015). Congratulations, Ken!

On March 9, 2015, **Caroline Reed** (MA student, Americas track) successfully passed her thesis defense with honors. Her thesis is entitled "Spiritual Seeking: A Post-Structural Ethnographic Study" and was chaired by Professor **David Hackett**, with Professor **Manuel Vasquez** as a second committee member. Congratulations, Caroline!

On March 10, 2015, **John Balch** (MA student, Nature track) successfully defended his M.A. thesis, "Steps to an Ecology of Religions: Eco-Evolutionary Dynamics in the Cognitive Science of Religion." His advisors were Professors **Bron Taylor** and **Robin Wright**. Congratulations, John!

Deadlines

The department offers matching travel support. In order to apply for these funds, you will need to have applied for support from CLAS, International Studies, GSA, or any other external source. The application for departmental travel funds can be found at http://sites.clas.ufl.edu/religion/files/Religion_Travel_Support_Application.pdf. Please submit this application by email to Dr. Hackett by 4:00pm, Monday, March 23, 2015.