

DOCTORAL STUDENT SHORT BIOGRAPHIES 2009-10

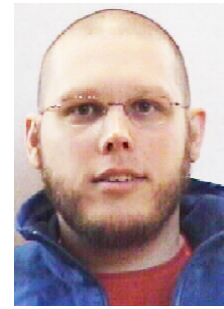
RICHARD BENDA is a second year doctoral student in Religions and Theology at the University of Manchester studying with Dr. Michael Hoelzl. The working title of his thesis is "Weighed and Tested: Christian and Muslim Communities and the Rwandan Genocide." His research will address key questions in relation to religious authority and the role of faith in response to the complexity of African identity-based conflicts, of which the Rwandan genocide is an extreme case. This research is designed to be an invaluable academic contribution to the process of peace building and reconciliation for the people of Rwanda. In the context of the increasing visibility of religion in the public arena and in international politics especially, the project will assess the political potential of Christianity and Islam in Rwanda both as agents of conflict and actors in peacemaking. Before arriving in Manchester Richard was half-way through his first year of Law School when the Rwandan Genocide happened and life as he knew it ceased to exist. It took him three years to realize that despite personal abyssal loss, national moral collapse and a future without dreams, life had to go on for those who survived! So he returned to Law School and graduated with a Masters Degree. He then went on to study for a BA and Ma in Religions and Theology at the University of Manchester which has led him to his current doctoral work. He can be contacted at: richard.benda@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk.



ANDY CROME recently completed a PhD in Religions and Theology at the University of Manchester, working under Professor Graham Ward. His thesis title was "The Jews and the Literal Sense: Hermeneutical Approaches in the Apocalyptic Commentaries of Thomas Brightman (1562-1607)." He has forthcoming publications on early modern friendship and seventeenth-century eschatology. His current research is focused on seventeenth century millennialism and hermeneutics. He is particularly interested in the effect of millennial speculation on Christian views of the Jews in the early modern period. His other major research interest is the development of contemporary Christian Zionism and dispensational theology. He is currently a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the R&T and English departments at Manchester. He can be contacted at: andrew.crome@manchester.ac.uk.



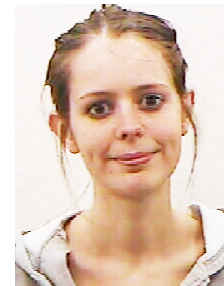
KYLE GINGERICH HIEBERT is currently a second year PhD student working under the supervision of Professor Graham Ward in Religions and Theology at the University of Manchester. Broadly conceived, his doctoral work is an inquiry into the extent to which contemporary debates in political theology end up compromising the harmonious blending of differences rightly sought by employing a rhetorical violence that reduces non-Christian others to the wastebasket of nihilism. He holds a M.A. (by Research) in Philosophical Theology (Distinction) from the University of Nottingham, a H.B.A. in Philosophy (High Distinction) from the University of Toronto and a B.Th. in Theology and Ethics from Canadian Mennonite Bible College. His research is supported by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the University of Manchester. He can be contacted at: kyle.gingerichhiebert@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk.



CLARE GREER is currently a PhD candidate in her writing up year, under the supervision of Professor Graham Ward. Her doctoral work explores the significance of the Hegelian philosophy of Gillian Rose (1947-1995) for contemporary orthodox political theology, particularly her interaction with John Milbank. She holds an MA in Religion, Culture and Society (Distinction) and BA in Religions and Theology (First Class) both from the University of Manchester. Her research is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. She can be contacted at: clare.a.greer@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk.



RUTH HADLEY's undergraduate degree was conducted in Religious Studies at Lancaster University. Since then, she has returned to her native city of Manchester to pursue her particular interest in the contemporary interrelation between religion and politics at the Centre for Religion and Political Culture for both her MA and now PhD degrees. She is studying with Dr. Michael Hoelzl, and her research focuses on the concept of tolerance under the working title, "The Intolerance of Tolerance." It challenges the validity of the contemporary promotion of tolerance as the long term solution to the "dilemma of difference;" the question of how people with different and even opposing value-belief systems might peacefully co-exist. The research undertakes a genealogical survey of tolerance from its Latin origins in the term "tolerare," to "tolerance" as promoted in the 1995, UNESCO sponsored, "Year of Tolerance." It also examines the contemporary academic arguments for and against a public political policy of tolerance. The aim is to situate tolerance firmly within the historical process; expressive of particular historical values and particular historical interests. The question is ultimately addressed whether alternative solutions to the "dilemma of difference" ought perhaps to be upheld and what, if necessary, abandoning the current policy of tolerance might entail? She can be contacted at: ruth.hadley@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk.



ALEXANDER HENLEY is working on a doctorate in Middle Eastern Studies supervised by Dr Andreas Christmann and Professor Youssef Choueiri. His thesis centres around an historical study of the political roles of key religious leaders in Lebanon's principal power-sharing communities. His past work has concentrated on the institutions of the Maronite Catholic Church in relation to national and transnational themes of Maronite identity, part of which has been published under the title "Politics of a Church at War: Maronite Catholicism in the Lebanese Civil War," in the

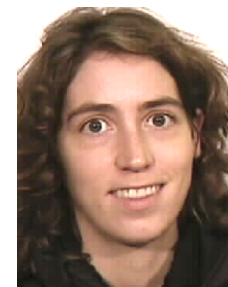


journal *Mediterranean Politics*. He completed his BA in Theology (2006) and MA in Middle Eastern Studies (2007) at St Chad's College, University of Durham. He is a resident tutor at St Anselm Hall, Manchester, and his doctoral research is supported by the Centre for the Advanced Study of the Arab World. He can be contacted at: alexander.henley@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk.

STEPHEN MCBAY is a first year PhD student in Religions and Theology working under the supervision of Professor Peter Oakes. His working thesis title is "Ethics from New Testament 'Powers and Principalities.'" The primary questions in the thesis surround the uses and meanings for the terms "powers and principalities" across New Testament texts which are traditionally attributed to the Apostle Paul with variegated degrees of reliability. It is an interdisciplinary problem involving Biblical Studies, Theology and Ethics which seeks to answer a simple question: If the Pauline exousiology is "true," substantially realistic and illuminating for the human condition, then how should people live? The question arose from field work and study concerning health care delivery to marked peoples in Central America, Palestine, and the United States. The goal is to discuss and strive toward visions of life and political exercise without defaulting into traditional and destructive categorical ideologies. Stephen received his BA in Sociology and English from the University of St. Thomas, did his Master of Arts work in Cultural Anthropology at the University of Houston, and most recently, received a Masters of Theological Studies from Houston Baptist University. He can be contacted at: stephenmcbay@gmail.com.



INGRID STORM is a doctoral candidate in the School of Social Sciences, supervised by Professor David Voas. Her research on "Majority Religious and National Identities in Europe" explores associations between different forms of religious and national identities in Britain and other western European countries. While Christian beliefs and practices are in decline in Western Europe, religious values, traditions and symbols appear to have continued importance for ethnic and national identifications. A mixed methods approach includes qualitative interviews as well as statistical modelling using data from the 2008 British Social Attitudes Survey and the 2008 International Social Survey Programme. Ingrid holds an MSc in Social Research Methods and Statistics (2008) from the University of Manchester; an MA in Anthropology (2007) from Binghamton University (State University of New York) and a BA in History of Religions (2005) from the University of Oslo in Norway. She has attended a number of international conferences and her previous research has been published in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion and Human Nature*. She can be contacted at ingrid.storm@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk



AN TEE is a doctoral student in her writing up year supervised by Dr. Michael Hoelzl. Before arriving in Manchester, she studied for an undergraduate degree in Chinese literature, which she followed up with a Master's degree in Western Philosophy. Her current thesis is based on the development of Christianity, and the Christian movement, in China. This particular topic has arisen from a number of factors, but the predominant pair relate to her own personal life. Firstly, her grandparents were born and raised in China, so the country has a personal resonance in her life, and work. Secondly, she has been a Christian for a number of years, now, and the rise of a significant world religion in a rising global force is significant for her. More specifically, her work focuses upon Bishop K. H. Ting, as he has proven to be the most significant Christian in



what some term "new China." She also has interests within the interplay of Marxism and religion, as her Master's thesis was based on the philosophy of Marx. As China becomes more overtly involved with the global economy, the development of religion and religious movements within China is of global interest. Furthermore, the development of Chinese religion within a pseudo-Marxist framework will be of significant impact to global philosophy and theology in particular. She can be contacted at: an.tee@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

THEODROS ASSEFA TEKLU is a second year doctoral student in Religions and Theology at the University of Manchester studying under Professor Graham Ward. Before coming to Manchester he completed an undergraduate degree at Addis Ababa University, as well as two postgraduate programmes: MA in Biblical and Theological Studies and PGDip in HIV and AIDS in Relation to Theological Studies both at the Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology (EGST). His previous theological work includes "Charismatic Worldviews and Christian Social Involvement: An Ethiopian Perspective" and "Female Genital Mutilation as a Risk Factor for HIV Transmission: A Theological-Anthropological Critique." The summary of the later has been published in *A Theology of HIV & AIDS by the Swedish Institute of Mission Research (2008)*. Recently he has developed an interest in the interplay between religion and politics with special reference to ethno-nationalism. The topic of his PhD research is "Towards a Theology of Ethnic Justice: The Case of Ethiopia." His research aims at questioning the adequacy of a secular versions of ethnic-national justice or freedom. Employing a triad of interrelated thinkers: Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault and Paul Ricoeur as a conceptual framework, his thesis will first of all explicate national myths and ideologies. Based on the analysis of the context, he will construct a theology of ethnic justice that can make a critiquing and also constructive contribution to the discourse of ethnic justice. He can be contacted at: theodros.teklu@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk



QI ZHENG is a doctoral student in her writing up year in the School of Law. She is supervised by Dr. Michael Hoelzl, and her research topic is "Carl Schmitt and Chinese Constitutionalism." In her dissertation, she explores two basic but important questions: 1) why has Carl Schmitt's political theory gained so much attention among Chinese scholars since the beginning of the twentieth century? and, 2) what is the link between Carl Schmitt's political theory and the modernization of Chinese constitutionalism? She can be contacted at: qi.zheng@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

