

## *A Banner Year: Studying Religion and the Enlightenment in 2019* (Editorial Introduction)

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*Studies in Religion and Enlightenment* (SRE) returns after a brief hiatus during the very busy spring and summer of 2019! This year was a milestone for eighteenth-century studies with the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) preceding the quadrennial congress of the International Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ISECS) in Edinburgh, Scotland. We at SRE believed 2019 would be an opportune year to take a snapshot of the robustness and diversity of religious content on the eighteenth-century studies conference circuit. This report chronologically surveys the major eighteenth-century conferences in 2019 and concludes with in-depth accounts of individual conferences by Tonya Moutray (reporting on H-WRBI) and Brijraj Singh (reporting on ISECS).

The eighteenth-century conference circuit began 2019 with the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (BSECS) conference “Islands and Isolation” (St. Hugh’s College, Oxford, January 4-6, 2019). Emma Salgård-Cunha chaired a panel on “Islands—or Communities—of Cultural Authority: Theology and Religion, the Law, and the Scottish Enlightenment.” Next year’s BSECS conference, “Natural, Unnatural and Supernatural,” will feature Donna Landry and Hannah Williams as plenary speakers. Williams will deliver a plenary address on “The Religion Problem” (January 8-10, 2020).

The South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (SCSECS; Dallas, February 21-23, 2019), one of the earliest of the US regional conferences, had a particularly strong representation of religious content. Brett McNelly (Brigham Young University) chaired two panels on “Religious Perspectives and Perspectives on Religion.” Angelina Dulong, one of McNelly’s panelists, presented the paper “But Where Does it Come From? Moral Virtue in Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela*.” Dulong’s paper subsequently won the SCSECS Presidential Prize. The essay will be featured in an upcoming volume of *1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era* (edited by Kevin Cope and published by Bucknell University Press). As McNelly points out, the “Religious Perspectives and Perspectives on Religion” panels “demonstrate the compelling ways religion and literature intersected throughout the long eighteenth century, whether in poetry, fiction, drama, or even review criticism.” Shortly before 2019 commenced, McNelly and co-editor Paul E. Kelly also published a collection of essays originally slated for publication in the journal *Religion in the Age of Enlightenment*, one of the casualties of the abrupt closing of AMS Press. McNelly and Kerry’s volume *New Approaches to Religion and the Enlightenment* (Fairleigh Dickinson Press, 2018) is reviewed by Brijraj Singh (Hostos Community College) in this current issue.

ASECS, the largest eighteenth-century conference based in North America, was held in Denver (March 21-23, 2019). ASECS featured major panels or roundtables that considered the society’s evolution over the last 50 years, including the role of women in ASECS history and the work still to be done in rendering the conference more inclusive for minorities and nontraditional scholars. ASECS included an encouraging array of religious content, particularly Dustin Stewart’s (Columbia University) “ASECularization, 1969-2019” panel. The “ASECularization” panel was followed by a lively Q&A session that, prompted by questions from audience member Michael Griffin (University of Limerick), considered the emotional significance of Catholic or “baroque” language in the eighteenth century. Panels

on other aspects of religion included “Women Writer’s and the Postsecular Eighteenth Century,” chaired by Juliette Paul (Christian Brothers University), “Religious Satire,” chaired by Aleksandra Hultquist, (Stockton University), and “New Horizons of Evangelicalism in the Eighteenth Century,” chaired by Douglas Winiarski (University of Richmond).

2019 was certainly a banner year for eighteenth-century studies: not only did ASECS celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, but the summer was filled with major conferences either specifically focused on religion or with significant religious content. These conferences included “Ort und Orte der Religion in der Aufklärung / The Place of Religion in the Enlightenment” (Halle, Germany, June 5-7, 2019); the “History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland” conference (H-WRBI, June 6-8, 2019); and the international congress of ISECS (July 14-19, 2019).

Sponsored by the Interdisciplinary Center for European Enlightenment Studies (IZEA) and co-organized by Laura Stevens (University of Tulsa), Daniel Fulda, and Sabine Volk-Birke (both of Martin Luther University), the bilingual “Place of Religion in the Enlightenment” conference brought together an interdisciplinary band of leading scholars of religion in the Enlightenment. Evan Haefeli (Texas A&M University) described the conference as one in which “philosophers, historians, art historians, and literary scholars from Europe and America examined the many ways that religion figured in Enlightenment culture. Many of the presentations dealt with Protestant Britain and Germany, but several treated Catholic Europe. Topics included the religious quality of cosmopolitan culture; encounters with, or representations of, religious others (Catholic, Muslim, Hindu); collecting, displaying, and categorizing religion and religious difference; transformations and reforms in both Protestantism and Roman Catholicism prompted by an emphasis on reason. Primarily focused on elites (highly educated individuals, aristocrats, and religious leaders), significant attention was also given to women’s participation in these phenomena.” Dr. Haefeli’s observations coincided with a number of comments by scholars at other conferences this year that spoke to a growing recognition of the need to consider not only the “global” eighteenth century, but also to consider global religions in the eighteenth century. The importance of incorporating global and indigenous perspectives was a thematic thread weaving throughout eighteenth-century conferences this year. The ASECS program, for instance, featured on its program cover page “Eagle of Delight” (c.1822), a portrait of Hayne Hudjihini of the Otoe Tribe by Charles Bird King. Further, the ISECS program featured a detail of the well-known double portrait of Dido Elizabeth Belle Lindsay and her Cousin Lady Elizabeth Murray (c. 1780) attributed to David Martin.

Questions of inclusivity were raised at the “50 Years of Women at ASECS” roundtable and by Laura Stevens at “The Place of Religion” conference. Indeed, Stevens pointed out that, despite the organizers’ efforts to the contrary, and despite the bilingual format, the conference remained largely Eurocentric rather than global in its scope. Nevertheless, the “Place of Religion” conference brought together leaders in the study of religion in the “long” eighteenth century, developed important conversations about global perspectives and the politics of language access and translation (including the dominance of English at eighteenth-century conferences), and featured three plenary addresses and a public keynote address. Phyllis Mack (Rutgers University) presented the opening plenary “‘Wilt Thou Go on my Errand?’ The Travels and Travails of Quaker Women Preachers”; Wolfgang Braungart (Universität Bielefeld) followed with the Plenary “Religiosität in der Literatur um 1800,” and Kim Sloan (British Museum, London) delivered the Public Keynote, “The Display of Religious Objects. The Enlightenment Gallery in the British Museum and Sir Hans Sloane’s Miscellanies.” Kristina Bross (Purdue University) presented the final Plenary on “Millennialism, *Translatio*, and the English Global Imagination.” The conference also

included several exciting outings, from a casual reception at a “Krug” on the banks of the River Saale to an upscale dinner at the MahnS Chateau. The conference organizers further provided attendees with the opportunity to take a guided tour of the Francke Foundations, a “Guided Stroll to Selected Religious Sites of Halle” with Dr. Andrea Thiele, and an excursion to “Lutherstadt,” Wittenberg with Dr. Hans-Jürgen Grabbe.

In addition to the “Place of Religion” conference, several other conferences with eighteenth-century religious content were hosted in Germany and nearby countries. Bärbel Czennia (McNeese State University) kindly translated these German conference titles and provided brief descriptions. Held shortly after ASECS, “Berlin, Preußen und die Katholiken im 18. Jahrhundert” / Berlin, Prussia, and the Catholics during the 18th Century (March 25, 2019, Katholische Akademie in Berlin) was a lecture series on the history of Saint Hedwig. More recently, “Korrespondenznetzwerke protestantischer Fürstinnen im 16. -18. Jahrhundert” / Correspondence networks of Protestant female rulers/princesses, 16th-18th century (September 18-20, 2019) was held at the University of Greifswald. Elsewhere in Europe, the “Aufklärung und Religion” / Enlightenment and Religion conference (March 22-23, 2019) was held at the Universität Luzern, Switzerland and the 4th Isnard-Wilhelm-Frank Conference “Building Bridges and Paving the Way: Dominicans at the Frontiers of Catholic Christianity” (October 17-19, 2019) was held in Vienna, Austria. The annual conference of the Selma Stern Center for Jewish Studies conference “Diaspora and Law: Culture, Religion, and Jurisprudence beyond Sovereignty” was held November 17-19, 2019 (Berlin-Brandenburg).

Upcoming events include “Book religion or binarity? Bible Hermeneutics and Gender in the European Context of the 18th Century” (March 9-13, 2020, Villa Vigoni)—a conference sponsored by the German-Italian Centre for European Excellence—and “(Ge)Schlechte(r) Religionswissenschaft!? Multidisziplinäre Ansätze einer kritischen Genderforschung zu Religion” (March 25-27, 2020, Ruhr-University Bochum). While not specific to eighteenth-century studies, this last conference promises a compelling study of the intersection between gender studies and religious studies. Czennia translated the conference title as “Gendered religious studies? Multidisciplinary approaches of critical gender research on religion” and explained that the parentheses in the original title “constitute a pun on ‘schlecht’ meaning ‘bad’ and ‘Geschlecht’ meaning ‘gender’ ... so the title plays with prejudices against gender studies.” Many thanks to Dr. Czennia for her translations and explanations!

Also in the summer of 2019 was “Landscapes and Environment” (June 6-8, 2019), the conference for the History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland (H-WRBI). Tonya J. Moutray (Russell Sage College) generously provided an extensive report on papers and panels related to the eighteenth century at H-WRBI. Please read that report further below.

But amid the cornucopia that was the eighteenth-century conference circuit this year, the biggest event was certainly ISECS. Held at the University of Edinburgh and organized by Brycchan Carey (Northumbria University) and a distinguished international committee, ISECS attracted over 1,600 scholars and featured almost 500 panels. 18 of those panels focused explicitly on religious content—from the shaping of sacred space to religious and irreligious identities; from religion in eighteenth-century Scotland to the role of the concept of salvation; from Catholicism to Moravianism; from secularization to toleration—ISECS included a constellation of religious perspectives. Dr. Daniel Fulda, one of the organizers of the “Place of Religion in the Enlightenment” conference, presented the final plenary address on “Pictures of the Enlightenment: Then and Now / Images des Lumières: à l’époque et de nos jours.” Yet despite ISECS being the largest of the eighteenth-century conferences, despite featuring a woman of color on the program cover, despite plenary sessions focused on global perspectives, cultural geography, and colonization, and despite a fascinating walking

tour of “Black Edinburgh” curated by Dr. Lisa Williams of the Edinburgh Caribbean Association, even ISECS struggled to integrate non-Western, non-Christian perspectives. This lacuna is particularly noticeable given the influence of the Ottoman Empire on the Mediterranean in the early modern period and eighteenth century and given that European colonization, imperial expansion, and trade enterprises increased contact with (though not necessarily understanding of) non-Christian religions in South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Africa, and North and South America in the eighteenth century. Despite the efforts of a growing number of scholars, Western scholarship continues to be limited by its reliance on Eurocentric archives—a product of the dominance of English, German, and Romance languages in eighteenth-century studies. It can only be hoped that graduate schools in which these languages are dominant will encourage students to learn non-Western languages to enable the next generation of scholars to build multi-lingual and multi-cultural bridges across archives in the way that Michael Talbot (University of Greenwich) and Farish Noor (Nanyang Technological University) have done in their recent work on Anglo-Ottoman diplomacy and the political imagining of Southeast Asia in the “long” nineteenth century, respectively.

Brijraj Singh (Hostos Community College) provides below some thoughts on the hits and misses of attempts to make religious content “global” in eighteenth-century studies. His evaluation of panels at ISECS is an appropriate conclusion to a report on the role of religion in the global context of current eighteenth-century studies. Please see his report below. ISECS will be held in Rome in 2023.

2019 is drawing to a close, but the summer didn’t exhaust opportunities to learn more about religion in the eighteenth century. The Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (CSECS) and the Northeastern American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (NEASECS) joined for the conference “Éthique(s) des Lumières / Ethic(s) of/in the Enlightenment” in Québec, October 16-19. Katherine Binhammer (University of Alberta) chaired a panel on “Religious Enlightenment(s) / Lumière(s) religieuse(s)” at which several individual papers were presented, including Norbert Puszkar (Austin Peay State University) on “Ethics, Religion and Revelation. Lessing’s ‘Ring Parable’ in *Nathan the Wise*” and Andrea Speltz (University of Waterloo) on “Religious (In)tolerance: Lessing’s *Nathan the Wise* at Stratford Festival 2019.” Katherine M. Quinsey (University of Windsor) spoke on “Augustan Theology and the Ethics of Animal Welfare.”

Shortly after CSECS/NEASECS, the East Central regional conference (EC/ASECS) celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the “Crossroads and Divergences” conference in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania (October 24-26, 2019). Mary Wellington (University of Mary Washington) chaired a panel on “Visitors and Voyeurs in Catholic Europe.” A month later, the UCLA Alpert School of Music hosted the symposium “You Imagine Me, and I Exist: The Afterlives of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648-1695)” on Nov 22-23, 2019. The symposium coincided with the world premiere of Opera UCLA’s *Juana*. The opera is based on the novel *Sor Juana’s Second Dream* (1999) by Alicia Gaspar de Alba (UCLA); Gaspar de Alba and Carla Lucero (who also composed the music) wrote the libretto. In related news, the next SCSECS conference will be held in St. Augustine, Florida (February 7-8, 2020) and chairs are still seeking papers for panels on the Catholic Enlightenment, the Spanish American colonies, women and religion, and other religious content.

The current issue of *SRE* features perspectives on, or reviews of, Asia and orientalism (Kevin Cope, Jeffrey Galbraith); Western perceptions of the Qur’an (Siti Sarah Binte Daud); a diverse, multi-essay consideration of religion in the Enlightenment (Brijraj Singh); Roman Catholicism in late seventeenth-century Britain (Anne Barbeau Gardiner, Andrew Starkie); and the role of religion in the Scottish Enlightenment (Mark Spencer, Robin Mills). These reviews and commentaries serendipitously coincided with a year in which the importance of

incorporating global perspectives increasingly became a concern on the conference circuit and in which ISECS was hosted in Edinburgh. The Scottish eighteenth century will continue to be at the forefront of scholarly conferences on eighteenth-century religion: the conference “Religion and the Scottish Enlightenment” will be held at Princeton next year (June 4-7, 2020). Please see below for the reports from Dr. Moutray and Dr. Singh. ~ Sam Cahill

**Report from Tonya J. Moutray  
History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland (H-WRBI), British Institute of  
Historical Research at the University of London, June 6-8, 2019.**

“Landscapes and the Environment” was the theme of this year’s History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland (H-WRBI) conference, which took place at the British Institute of Historical Research at the University of London, June 6 through 8. The topic cast a wide net, bringing together historians, literary critics, archivists, and women religious into discussion about the landscape and environments of women religious. The research spanned from the medieval period to the present and included analyses of women’s communities outside of the U.K. and Ireland.

Caroline Bowden (Queen Mary University) began the conference with a delightful paper on “Gardens and Plants in the Convents of the Augustinian Canonesses in Exile 1600-1800.” Using blueprints, drawings, and watercolors of convent gardens and landscapes, Bowden analyzed three English Benedictine houses in Louvain, Bruges, and Paris, all of which were founded in the early seventeenth century. The significance of the garden spaces was threefold. First, gardens were used as spiritual spaces in which members could engage in devotional reading and meditation, as well as participate in religious rituals. Second, gardens had a practical purpose to provide food, including fruits and vegetables, and some dairy and meat, to the community. Food and other supplies also had to be brought in, as garden spaces for growing food or grazing animals were not large enough to support the community. Herbs were also grown in the “Apothecary Garden” so that medicines and teas could be made. Finally, the garden enabled physical health through recreation and work. Bowden also discussed the use of outbuildings located in the garden that served as infirmaries or additional housing, as well as instances in which workers and other outsiders were allowed into the garden. As a “liminal space,” connecting nuns to the outside world, the garden mediated the strictures of the Rule of Enclosure with the practicalities of real life.

The third session focused on the development of convent schooling in Ireland in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The research emphasized the mobility and adaptability of Irish women religious as they established numerous branches of their orders, and expanded their efforts across differing geographical and cultural topographies. Catherine Nowlan-Roebuck (University College Dublin) examined the development of Presentation convent schools under the direction of Hanora (Nano) Nago (1718-1784), whose religious institute, the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, became the largest provider of education to girls in Ireland. Nagle’s protégé, Teresa Mullaly, worked to further the order’s mission, developing a number of new foundations across Ireland after Nagle’s death. The expansion of the institute peaked from 1807 to 1830, with the development of 22 houses across 14 counties. Without resources to build separate schools, the Presentation sisters often used space within their homes to run their schools. Their focus on providing education to girls took precedence over waiting for funding to build schools or buy more property. The integration of schools within the convent, literally a “convent school,” posed logistical challenges for the sisters as they sought to remain enclosed. Despite these challenges, the sisters became leaders in girls’ education in Ireland in the nineteenth century.

Ruth Ferris and Deirdre Raftery (University College Dublin) presented on the Irish Loreto sisters who developed schools not only across Ireland, but globally, including Australia, India, and the U.S. Mother Mary Teresa Ball, (1795-1862) founded the first Dublin branch in 1821 and had been educated at the Bar Convent in York, a location rich with a history of subversive Catholic activity during Penal times. Both Ball and her successor, Mother Michael Corcoran (1846-1927), fourth superior General of the Loreto order, supported global missions and set about to expand their reach. Ball's approach to establishing Catholic missions was "to follow the customs of the country," enabling the sisters to integrate into radically different environments. Raftery discussed the ways mission life brought challenges for which the sisters were not prepared, and had almost no advance knowledge of, including tropical diseases. For example, the sisters' work in India was very challenging with nuns struggling both in health and in cultural adaptation. The Loreto sisters' challenges appear to have been fodder for Rumer Godden's *Black Narcissus* (1939), which was brought to the screen in 1947. By the end of Corcoran's leadership, sixteen convents had been established in India, a testament to the sheer determination of the Loreto Sisters to make foreign missions a success.

New methods of data collection and mapping were also explored, notably by Angelika Hansert (University of Maynooth). Her research traced and analyzed the geographical placement of religious houses in the archdiocese of Freiburg beginning in 1846 through the pre-Vatican II era. Using QGIS, an open-source geographical information system (GIS) application, Hansert mapped the growth of religious foundations across one region over this two hundred-year period, gaining insights into the strategies that enabled a successful enterprise to take root.

The conference concluded with a convent walk in London curated by Paul Shaw, archivist at St. Mary's Convent in Middlesex. Shaw traced religious life in London from its Anglo-Saxon origins to the present day. The tour commenced at All Hallows By-The-Tower, founded by the Benedictine Abbey at Barking (7<sup>th</sup> century). Other locations included the former site of St. Clare's Abbey on The Minories (Medieval Franciscan convent), St. Helen's Church, Bishopsgate, (Medieval Benedictine abbey), the Catholic Church of the English Martyrs, Tower Hill (the former site of two 19<sup>th</sup>-century women religious congregations, Poor Servants of the Mother of God, and the Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux), and St. Aloysius Catholic Church, Somers Town, Camden. This latter location became home to émigré French priests during and after the French Revolution, one of whom, Abbé Guy Carron, founded St Aloysius's church in 1808 to serve Catholic immigrants. In 1830 St. Aloysius's Convent was established there by the Society of the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ), an order founded at Amiens by Marie-Madeleine Victoire de Bengy, Vicomtesse de Bonnault d'Houet in 1820. She managed Carron's parochial schools, and the order expanded globally and is currently active. The tour concluded at the new convent, school, and spirituality center in Somers Town, where FCJ sisters met with conference goers, sharing their legacy of collaborative ministries, including new programming focused on engaging community members in environmental reflection and activism.

### **Report from Brijraj Singh ISECS Congress, University of Edinburgh, July 14-19, 2019**

After being a conference goer for 35 years, I have learned a few things. First, many papers are delivered by scholars who are working towards a bigger project, and their presentations either summarize or are part of their larger findings. If, through an exposition and analysis of one or two related issues which may in themselves not be very familiar to the audience, a significant argument is advanced or larger issues, whether literary, theoretical, or socio-

political, raised, the papers tend to be successful, especially if they are cleanly constructed and delivered audibly and deliberately. Unfortunately, a few papers in this category fail either because they lack a larger context or because the speaker, conscious of time constraints, reads her text at breakneck speed, or in a voice which does not carry beyond the first few rows. The most memorable papers, however, do not necessarily try to say anything new. Rather, they take a bird's eye view of a fairly extensive body of material and offer insights and relationships which put the topic being discussed in a context that raises important issues, either about the human experience or the practice of reading texts. What one takes away from such presentations is not information about a subject but ways of approaching it.

All these kinds of presentation were on display at the sessions of the ISECS Conference I attended. In a session on "Catholicism and the Enlightenment," Ivo Cerman of the University of South Bohemia talked about "Catholic Criticism of Natural Law in Central Europe." He argued that up to about 1743 philosophers, led mostly by lawyers, maintained that God had created natural law and men, through His inspiration, could discover and understand it. In various universities, especially Salzburg, it was maintained that man's reason, itself God-given, was sufficient to uncover natural law. This attitude changed after 1743 when theologians started a counter offensive and argued the fallibility and inadequacy of reason. Thus the ceiling of a church near Prague has a picture of angels destroying books on natural law. The speaker did not explain why the change occurred after 1743, nor did he try to suggest what the consequences of this change were to Catholic theology.

Joanne Myers of Gettysburg College spoke on Catholic identity in eighteenth-century Britain. Her paper suggested that Catholics of the period were torn between loyalty to the State which was anti-Catholic, and an adherence to their faith in the face of all kinds of obstacles and hindrances imposed by the State. Discussing Richard Challoner's two-volume *Memoirs of Missionary Priests* (1741, 42), she showed how he believed that the penal laws in effect against Catholics were so strict that they could be compared to believers being martyred. Yet, though they were martyred, as it were, they died loyal to the nation. Moving to William Maude's diaries, she pointed out that he was a merchant who sheltered Challoner during the Gordon riots. Unlike Challoner, he said that penal laws treated Catholics lightly, a statement that was meant to show his support of the State. But he also recorded his regular presence at Mass. Indeed, his diaries have an almost excessive number of entries of the times he went to Mass. The speaker tried to theorize this excess by arguing that perhaps it was a way of his expressing rebellion against penal laws, even as he kept alluding to his loyalty to the king by insisting on the lightness of these laws. During Q & A one member of the audience drew attention to the fact that some Catholic thinkers saw similarities between ideas, prevalent in China around the mid 18th century, that natural laws could be discussed by reason and the argument relating to natural law in Europe.

In a session on "Religion in Eighteenth-Century Scotland," Stewart Brown of the University of Edinburgh gave a fine presentation on "Preaching the Scottish Enlightenment: Providence, History and Presbyterian Identity" in which he explored the symbiotic relationship between a group of Scottish Presbyterian Church members known as the Moderates and the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment. The Moderates preached tolerance and improvement. They emphasized personal morality as well as Church doctrine. Their main form of expression was sermons. They put forward a vision of a peaceful world of progress and benevolence. They looked to Anglican models, especially the sermons of Bishop Tillotson, for their preaching. William Leechman offered lectures on preaching; in 1777 Hugh Blair published a very popular collection of sermons. He subsequently brought out four more volumes and made a lot of money from them. The sermons of the Moderates emphasized divine providence in the progress of nations and civilizations. William Robertson made the point that God was actively involved in the world's workings, and the progress or

decline of nations was all part of God's plan. In addition, the Moderates opposed slavery and encouraged missionary work. They also emphasized a certain humanity common to all people everywhere.

Through analyzing the views of the Moderates and showing their affinity with the ideals of the Scottish Enlightenment, the speaker was able to show how a religious movement, far from remaining confined within one church, became part of, and indeed to an extent instrumental in, the growth of a new and dynamic intellectual philosophy and helped shape the manners and morals of a nation.

Michael Kugler of Northwestern College, in a paper entitled "The Womb of Providence': The Scottish Science of Human Nature as Physico-Theology and Theodicy," maintained that by the eighteenth century natural philosophers had an explanation of the natural world which theologians then used to explain the workings of providence. They held that Nature symbolized the workings of God's providence and could therefore be regarded as a divine contriver. They also saw the presence of evil as being itself part of God's order in the universe. The speaker established these positions with the help of examples taken from the writings of two Scottish theologians, Bonnard and Adam Ferguson. In fact, as he pointed out, Ferguson started out as a teacher of natural philosophy, and his work expanded from there seamlessly into the realm of moral philosophy and theology.

The topic of Claire Loughlin (University of Edinburgh)'s paper was "Contesting 'Popery' in Eighteenth-Century Scotland: Liberty, Tyranny, and the Limits of Protestant Unity." Her general argument was that "Popery" was not just Catholicism but a rhetorical trope representing tyranny, illiberality and control, and she examined the Marrow controversy to establish her point. Unfortunately she read her paper too fast for me to be able to take all her points in.

The final paper in the session was Paul Tonks (Yonsei University)'s "Articulating a Global Identity for the Eighteenth-Century Scottish Kirk: Robert Millar's History of the Propagation of Christianity." He said that for Millar education was the chief method for the spread of Christianity. Millar was more in favor of using local converts from among whom to choose pastors than sending missionaries out to the unconverted. He admired August Herman Francke's work in Halle, both for its social dimension as well as for its support of missionaries. Millar's work was highly popular among the working classes, and weavers, shoe makers and others subscribed to it heavily.

During Q & A, I was not quite able to make out the response to a question about the Catholic response to Protestant attacks on Popery. However, Mr. Brown said that the Moderates were not totally opposed to Catholicism. They read and quoted from Catholic sources and treated them respectfully. In fact, there was a dynamic of attraction as well as repulsion between the Presbyterians and the Catholics.

Another point made had to do with the popularity of Millar's work among the working classes. If more weavers subscribed to it at the end of the century than at the beginning, it was not that his popularity among them had grown but simply that there were more of them, and they were more important in Scotland by the end of the century than before.

It may not be inappropriate here for me to say something about my own presentation on "Ziegenbalg Debates the Hindus," delivered at a session on India and the Enlightenment. Together with Heinrich Plutschau, Ziegenbalg is arguably the world's first Protestant missionary, and did his work in Tranquebar in south India at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Two years after his arrival in India he was invited to a formal debate with a Hindu holy man; on a later occasion he got involved in an informal or impromptu debate with a number of Hindus. These two debates formed the subject of my paper. The first ended in a draw, but it taught him that his Tamil was good enough not only for him to understand his



interlocutors but also to advance his religious views clearly. He learned, too, that though he made every effort to gather and study Hindu texts, the Hindus themselves were ignorant of them because the Brahmins, who owned them, refused to share them with others. This gave him a decided advantage. It also made him develop an anti-Brahmin attitude, which he realized was generally shared by the people, and this led him in subsequent debates to attack Brahmins frontally, accusing them of ignorance, immorality, and helping in the spread of superstition. He put these lessons to good use in the impromptu debate in which he won the assent of a number of his interlocutors.

In Q & A I discussed Ziegenbalg's relationship with the Roman Catholics, which was antagonistic, and said that Plutschau was responsible for persuading the Danish governor that slaves, who were being brought up as Catholics, be sent to him and to Ziegenbalg for two hours of Protestant instruction daily and their children be brought up Protestant. In response to another question I said that Ziegenbalg was not interested in converting people for the sake of conversion. He wanted to make sure that they were truly committed to Christian doctrine and values, for which purpose he would catechize and examine them to make sure that they were sincere and their knowledge sound. The result was that he won very few converts; but though he built small, he built strong, and the Lutheran Church is thriving in south India today. I also discussed him briefly as a scholar of Tamil and of Hinduism, mentioning some of his translations of Tamil texts into German as a way of familiarizing audiences in the West with the best of Hindu thought. Finally, in response to another question, I said that though his opposition to, and criticism of, Hinduism never abated, he came to appreciate its enormous power of creating myths, its creative energy, and its celebration of the variety of life.

### **Upcoming Conferences (2020)**

BSECS, "Natural, Unnatural and Supernatural" (St. Hugh's College, Oxford, UK, January 8-10, 2020)

<https://www.bsecs.org.uk/conferences/annual-conference/>

SCSECS, "The Speedy Enlightenment" (St. Augustine, Florida, February 7-8, 2020)

[http://www.scsecs.net/scsecs/2020/2020\\_panels.html](http://www.scsecs.net/scsecs/2020/2020_panels.html)

ASECS (St. Louis, Missouri, March 19-21, 2020)

<https://www.asecs.org/asecs-2020>

ECSSS-ISSP, "Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Scotland" (Princeton Theological Seminary, New Jersey, June 4-7, 2020)

<https://ecsss.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/pts-call-for-papers-2020.docx>

History of Women Religious Britain and Ireland (Margaret Beaufort Institute, Cambridge, UK, July 2-3, 2020)

<https://historyofwomenreligious.org/>