



YANNA

A vehicle for ferrying news and views among members and contacts of the NZASR



Preface

Welcome to the 64th edition of Yana, the official newsletter for the New Zealand Association for the Study of Religions (NZASR). The reception for last year's issue was highly favourable and so we would like to thank everyone who made it a success and our general membership for your support. Our special appreciation also goes to all the contributors to this year's issue, particularly the various departments who sent us news and other announcements, Chloe FitzPatrick for the book review and Dr. Arthur Buehler for granting us an interview. We could not have done this without you all. The next issue of Yana will come out in September 2016 and we look forward to your continued support. Once again thank you and enjoy the read.

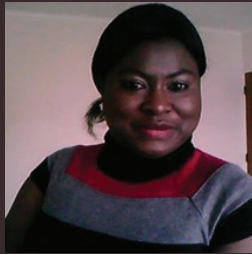
Comfort Max-Wirth

Editor

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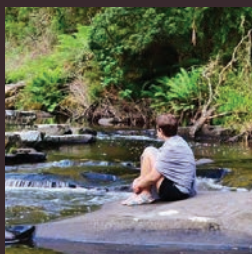
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For archived copies of Yana: www.nzasr.ac.nz/publications



News from programmes



Waikato University Student Centre

Waikato

As from this year the former 'Religious Studies' programme has been replaced with 'Studies in Religion' at the University of Waikato. While 'RELS' papers still exist, the change signals an intention to embed the study of religion in an interdisciplinary context. Accordingly, a new core paper - RELS206 Religion in Secular Society: Comparative Perspectives - has been launched as a B semester paper. It is being team-taught with lecturers offering perspectives from across many of the subjects and disciplines within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, including Screen & Media, Demography,

History, Sociology, Politics, Geography, Gender Studies, Literature and Philosophy. As a subject of study, religion pops up just about everywhere.

A new doctoral candidate, Katherine Jennings, has recently completed the confirmation process for her interdisciplinary PhD within Studies in Religion. The working title of her thesis is 'Acquiring the Ardabil: Arts acquisition and Anglo-Muslim relations, 1875-1900.'

The Waikato Islamic Studies Group, affiliated to the Studies in Religion programme, launched the first issue of its online Review earlier this year, with the second edition due out in September. The Group is hosting an Islamic Studies conference at the

University of Waikato in mid-November. For more information contact:

islamic-studies-group@waikato.ac.nz

Recent publications of Professor Douglas Pratt include a co-edited (with Dr Virginie Andre of Deakin University) Special Issue of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations with the theme of Religious Citizenship and Islamophobia. The journal's publisher, Taylor and Francis have selected this issue to be re-published as a book.

Prof. Douglas Pratt, Professor & Convenor, Studies in Religion Programm: dpratt@waikato.ac.nz



Victoria

Dr Geoff Troughton was awarded a three-year Marsden Fast Start grant for his project, “A Banner of Peace? Missions and Peace Activism, 1814–1850.” This project will examine the role of peaceable ideas and activism in missionary Christianity. In so doing, it offers a fresh analysis of early nineteenth-century New Zealand history, and of global missionary projects, focusing on crucial dynamics of cultural exchange and religious adaptation.

Dr. Michael Radich has published two books in the past year, all published by the Hamburg University Press: *The Mahāparinirvā-a-mahāsūtra and the Emergence of Tathāgatagarbha Doctrine* and *A Distant Mirror: Articulating Indic Ideas in Sixth and Seventh Century Chinese Buddhism* (co-edited with Lin, Chen-Kuo).

Michael is also currently spending a year in Germany on a prestigious Alexander von

Humboldt Foundation Fellowship for Experienced Researchers. He is located at the Numata Center for Buddhist Studies at the University of Hamburg, where his host is Professor Michael Zimmermann. He is spending this time working on the history of the (somewhat renegade) concept of “pure consciousness” (*amalavijñāna), as found in the works of Paramārtha (499-569) and his Chinese successors; and on computer-assisted methods for the analysis of canonical Chinese Buddhist texts for internal evidence pertaining to questions of style, attribution and dating.

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Philip Fountain as a teaching fellow for 2015-2017. Philip’s teaching and research focuses on the intersections between religion and international aid and development, understood broadly to include practices of charity, community development, disaster relief, humanitarianism, peacemaking, and missionary activities. He received his doctorate in Anthropology from the Australian National University and has

conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Indonesia, the United States, Canada and Papua New Guinea. He has regional interests in Asia and the Pacific. Philip has published *Religion and the Politics of Development* (co-edited with Robin Bush and R. Michael Feener) and has guest edited special issues in *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, *The International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters*, and *Asian Ethnology*. He has a particular interest in the work of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a North American Christian service organisation in the Anabaptist tradition. Prior to joining Victoria’s Religious Studies Philip was Senior Research Fellow at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore and he remains involved with a project housed at ARI on ‘Religion and NGOs in Asia’ funded by the Henry Luce Foundation.

Dr. Rick Weiss, Programme Director:
Rick.Weiss@vuw.ac.nz



Otago

It has been an eventful year at Otago. In the first semester the department learned, sadly, that Taneli Kukkonen will not be returning to Otago. Taneli has decided to stay at the NYU Abu Dhabi, where he spent 2014-5 as a visiting lecturer. His chocolate drawer and good company will be missed by many. In July, the programme welcomed Christopher Hartney, from the Religion Department at the University of Sydney, to give the biannual Moore Lectures. This year's Moore three-part lecture took place on the 100-year anniversary of the Gallipoli landings; and Hartney's lectures examined the place of

the 'religious' in ANZAC commemorations. More speakers are also coming in semester two. From August to October, the programme is hosting a four-part speaker series on Islam in Asia. Fortnightly, visiting scholars will be giving public talks and informal workshops on aspects of Islam in Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The series is supported by the Centre for Islam and Muslim Cultures.

Dr. Ben Schonthal, Postgraduate Co-ordinator and Convenor of the Religion seminar:
ben.schonthal@otago.ac.nz



Massey

With the closure of the Religious Studies programme, Christopher van der Krogt is moving into the History programme where he will be teaching existing papers on the Crusades and the Tudor Reformation, introducing a new paper on Early Christianity, and presenting a revised version on his paper on Islam (insha Allah). Douglas Osto will be teaching the papers, Introduction to Asian Thought, East Asian Philosophy, and Indian Philosophy. Along with the rest of the School of Humanities, we are looking forward to moving back into the newly restored art nouveau Sir Geoffrey Peren Building in time for semester one, 2016.

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2015 Joint Conference for the NZASR and AASR

In 2015 the New Zealand Association for the Study of Religions (NZASR) will meet jointly with the Australian Association for the Study of Religions (APSA). The conference will take place at the Mercure Resort in Queenstown, on New Zealand's South Island, from midday Tuesday, the 8th of December to midday Thursday, the 10th of December 2015. There will be multiple streams of panels; plenary lectures and meals will be held together. Papers are invited on all themes in the academic study of religion. We encourage submissions from postgraduate students. Speakers will have approximately 20 minutes to deliver their paper, with additional time for questions and discussion. Postgraduates are particularly welcome to submit papers. The call for papers

will close on 31 October 2015. Abstracts should be submitted online at the conference website: <http://www.nzasr.ac.nz/conference/> Registration at early bird and student rates will close on 30 September 2015. Further details of rates and how to register are available on the conference website.

The conference is hosted by the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Otago. Please direct general questions or questions relating to NZASR to Benjamin Schonthal: ben.schonthal@otago.ac.nz or Will Sweetman: will.sweetman@otago.ac.nz Questions relating to AASR panels, meetings or programmes can be directed to Douglas Ezzy: Douglas.Ezzy@utas.edu.au

Peace Conference

Victoria University of Wellington presents the "Peace, not war, shall be our boast": Historical,

Theological and Contemporary Perspectives on Peace and Christianity in New Zealand' conference from 18-20 November 2015.

This conference aims to offer a forum for critical reflection on Christian contributions to peace and peacemaking in New Zealand. It will provide an opportunity to evaluate Christian contributions historically, and consider the relationship of peace to Christianity.

The conference will be hosted by Victoria University of Wellington, with support and assistance from: The National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Otago; The Religious History Association of Aotearoa New Zealand; and The College of St John the Evangelist, Auckland. For more information, contact Dr Geoff Troughton: geoff.troughton@vuw.ac.nz.

Book Review



Old Books, William Hoiles, 2008
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Old_books.jpg

Religion, Nationalism, Genocide

A Review of *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* by Michael Sells (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). Undergraduate Submission: Chloe FitzPatrick, Victoria University of Wellington

The Bridge Betrayed examines the relationship between religion and nationalism in the Bosnian genocide and concludes that Serbian nationalism is religious at its core. This is not an ancient phenomenon, but rather a modern one beginning in the nineteenth century with the complex transference of the 'othering' from the Ottomans to the Bosnians. This 'othering,' Sells argues, was largely based on a religious understanding of Serbian and Bosnian national identity and was ultimately responsible for the genocide. The foundations of Serbian

nationalism were therefore entrenched in the concept of 'Christoslavism,' a direct link between the Serbian people and the Serbian Orthodox Church. While Sells' argument is convincing on the whole, it owes much to the geo-political and academic context of its publication, and leaves several areas unexplored, including the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church as a legitimating authority in post-Yugoslav state-building and the relationship between religion and the rape camps. Ultimately what cannot be denied is the apathy of the international community to the cries of humanity during the genocide, and a terrifying statement on the violence that can be produced when nationalism and religious identity collide.

Crucial to Sells' analysis is Vuk Karadžić's (1787-1864) Serbian folk tale compilation, the 'canonical source and voice of the "national spirit"' (31). This

includes the myth of Prince Lazar, a 14th century figure who is the hinging link of Serbian religion and nationalism, and whose narrative is strongly Christological: "surrounded by a group of disciples, partaking of a Last Supper, and betrayed by a Judas" (31). Lazar represents the Serbian Nation, betrayed by a Serb who had converted to Islam, and killed by the Ottomans. These Christological foundations of nationalism were later built on Petar II Petrović-Njegoš (1813-1851), whose epic *The Mountain Wreath* portrayed the struggle between the Orthodox Serbs versus Muslims as a Manichean struggle between good and evil (41). Through this epic, religion and Serbian national mythmaking became increasingly entwined.

Sells argues that the transference of 'othering' from the Ottoman Turks to the Bosnians was hugely



important in underwriting the genocide. Serbian nationalism was developed in the mid nineteenth century in an environment where Serbs were under occupation by the Ottoman Turks. With the much later collapse of Josef Tito's Yugoslavia, this anti-Turk sentiment, embedded in nationalist myths, was redirected towards Muslim Bosnians. Serbs came to believe that they themselves were subject to a genocide by the perceived high birth rate of Muslims (Bosnian and otherwise). The Serbian Orthodox Church supported this, claiming "it is no exaggeration to say that planned GENOCIDE is being perpetrated against the Serbian people in Kosovo!" (58). Church authorities also denied the existence of rape camps and insisted that while Serbs were native to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bosnians arrived only with the Turkish occupation (82; 133). The role of religion in conceptions of national identity is also evident in President Plavšić's claim that Bosnian Muslims had "genetically deformed material that embraced Islam... with each successive generation this gene simply becomes concentrated" (XIV-XV). Through these methods, Christoslavism was rallied to its peak and otherness was transferred from Ottomans to Muslims in general (and particularly Bosnians). It is significant that throughout the genocide, Serbs called their victims 'Turks.'

The Bridge Betrayed was heavily influenced by

the geo-political and academic era in which it was written, not one year after the Dayton Peace Accords and the publication of Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* (1996). The three parties involved in the Bosnian Genocide are aligned with three of Huntington's 'civilisations:' the Serbs are Orthodox, the Croats are Western, and the Bosnians are Muslim. Sells seems influenced by this thesis, arguing that 'Sarajevo is at the centre of ethnic and religious fault lines which stretch around the world' (139). Given the criticisms that have since been raised of Huntington's cultural hegemonic analysis (Dornan, 2005), this is in hindsight a minor issue with Sells' approach.

Interestingly, Sells does not consider the Church in terms of "legitimate authority" (Spencer, 1970). With the collapse of Yugoslavia, the Balkans were in a state of political anarchy. State-building in the Balkans would have needed to appeal to a legitimate source of higher authority to justify the war for territory. The Serbian Orthodox Church provided this authority, having been in existence in Serbia since the early thirteenth century (Aleksov, 2010). Christianity has a long history of legitimating territorial war (Tyerman, 2004), and it is possible that state-builders appealed to the religious character of the Serbian people to legitimate their ethnic project (Hutchinson, 2009). Religion may have been imperative in the creation of Serbian nationalism, but similarly the Serbian

Orthodox Church may have been a legitimating tool by political actors.

Rape camps remain a prominent symbol of the genocide but are not adequately discussed or linked to a religious project. The appropriation of women's bodies is a common technique for ethno-nationalists generally, and the mass rape of Bosnian women formed an integral part of Serbian ethnic cleansing, a tactic to "ethnicise through rape, which, as an instrument of war, served to define the female body as an ethnic boundary" (Drezgić, 2010). Mass rape is considered an act of genocide, carried out with the intent to "cause serious bodily or mental harm to members of the [national, ethnic, religious] group" (General Assembly of the United Nations, 1948). The rape camps were a hugely significant feature of the Bosnian genocide, but if there is a link between them and the Serbian faith, or the religious nature of Serbian nationalism, *The Bridge Betrayed* neglects to tell us.

Where *The Bridge Betrayed* is uncomfortably right is its analysis of the international community's role in the genocide. The Arms Embargo on the former Yugoslavia allowed the Serbs, who had already captured the Yugoslav arms holds, to attack the Bosnians who were unable to access weapons for legitimate defensive purposes (116-7). Furthermore,



the international community's refusal to act resulted in what Sells calls "pseudo-pacifism and false humanitarianism that rewarded aggression and punished victims" (131). These criticisms are still politically salient. Often proponents of the 'Responsibility to Protect,' an argument for humanitarian intervention, will refer to Bosnia as an example to support their case for humanitarian interventions (Evans & Sahnoun, 2002). If Edmund Burke was correct in stating "the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing" then the international community is fundamentally at fault in allowing a genocide to occur before our eyes.

The Bridge Betrayed stands as an excellent example of what academic writing should be: empathetic, rational, and human. To the international community's condemnation of the Bosnian victims as 'no angels,' Sells replies 'as if it is angels, rather than humans who deserve our sympathy' (133). That Christoslavism could be rallied to the levels of violence causing the Bosnian genocide is a distressing statement on Christian nationalism. The line between nationalism and religion remains a politically salient issue. The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria stands as a testament to the difficulties of separating church and state, and the violence wrought when the two cross, and the recent veto by Russia to call the massacre of

eight thousand Bosnian men by Serbs at Srebrenica a genocide shows the ongoing political relevance of this particular conflict. We have much to learn from the Bosnian genocide and The Bridge Betrayed about placing humanity and empathy before politics.

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Retrospective interview

Dr. Arthur Buehler
Monday June 30, 2014

Dr. Buehler was former Senior Lecturer in Victoria's Religious Studies programme.

Yana: Who is Dr. Arthur (Art) Buehler?

AB: He is a Flâneur. My life as a Flâneur is hanging out with people. It was when I was hanging out with people, actually people in West Africa, that I realized that Islamic culture is different from non-Islamic culture. I also realized this when I was hanging out with people on a regular basis in Yemen from 2 o'clock in the afternoon to 6. It was like everything stops for people to chew God while they hung out; very civilized. While I was doing that I realized there was a lot of interesting Islamic history that no one knew about, which was why when my term was up (I was teaching Arabic in Sanaa), I came back to the US and said 'well, I will do what I enjoy doing best which is hanging out with people and get paid for it.' And that is what I've been doing since 1985 — that's my major research methodology. I wish that my colleagues will interact more with people and not just with their books. By doing that, maybe we could deserve the name Humanities, but at this point I don't think Humanities in the Western educational system are very 'human.'

Yana: What is your area of research and teaching in Religious Studies?

AB: I specialize in Sufism — that's a huge topic — and, in that, I focus on the Naqshbandiya and most of that has been on the Indian sub-continent and a little bit of Turkey. I have been teaching introductory courses in Islam, and Mysticism and contemporary practice. This I have done at Victoria for 10 good years.

Yana: Are you retiring or moving on to something else? And where?

AB: I am retiring from doing academic work and moving to Amman.

Yana: Amman of all places, what brings you there?

AB: My wife has a "real" job there.

Yana: And what are you going to do with all the time on your hands now?

AB: Actually I am going to be a lot busier than I was here. I have to start reading for my next book; I have a project in Istanbul, and I might be starting an institute; yeah, I have a lot of things to do.

Yana: What has been your overall experience at Victoria University and in the Religious Studies department?

AB: Wonderful—there is no word that I can think of other than wonderful—I've had a wonderful experience working with my good students and working with all of my colleagues in Religious Studies. This is extremely rare in an academic programme.

Yana: Really? How?

AB: Well, in the United States, they have a tenure

system and the tenure process brings out everyone's dark side. Even when you are lucky to get tenured, you cannot relax because the people who don't like you are not happy that you are there, but you have to work with them for the rest of your life. I mean in a marriage you can get divorced, but not in academia and this does not make for harmony. But here in New Zealand, everyone arrives with a permanent job — well, permanent till you are 65 — and so all that process of people exhibiting their dark side is non-existent. I really can't speak for all the departments in Victoria, but I can speak for ours that it's been wonderful — a very high standard of ethical behavior, open communication, collegiality, like it should be.

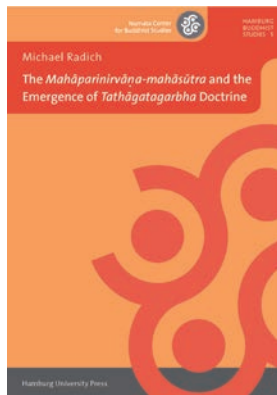
Yana: What would you miss most about your teaching and research at Victoria?

AB: I will miss my good students because they keep me (I hope) from one of the occupational hazards of university professors — they expect their students to agree with them. Now, this is not the rhetoric. The rhetoric is something else; rather than to think for themselves, they learn to conform and you conform by agreeing with your lecturer and then you get an 'A.' Well, in my classes — of course I wished I had more students who disagreed with me — but fortunately my good students will challenge me on things and this is good for everybody. It is always good not to be complacent in how you look at the world. That is what I am going to miss the most.

New Publications

Books

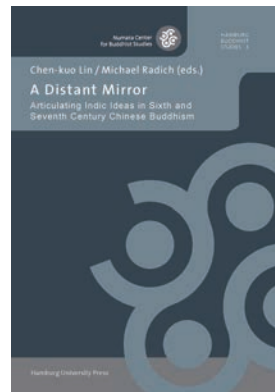
Michael Radich. *The Mahāparinirvā-a-mahāsūtra and the Emergence of Tathāgatagarbha Doctrine.* Hamburg Buddhist Studies 5. Edited by Michael Zimmermann. Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2015.



Famously, tathāgatagarbha doctrine holds that every sentient being has within the body a womb for Buddhas, or an embryonic Buddha - the potential for full buddhahood. Previous scholars have seen this doctrine as originating in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra. In this book, Michael Radich argues that rather, the Mahāparinirvā a-mahāsūtra is most likely our earliest extant tathāgatagarbha text. Radich then argues that tathāgatagarbha ideas originated as part of a wider pattern of docetic Buddhology – ideas holding that Buddhas are not really as they appear. Buddhist docetic texts are clearly troubled by the notion that

Buddhas could have flesh-and-blood human mothers. The Mahāparinirvā a-mahāsūtra is one such text, and tathāgatagarbha functions as a better substitute for imperfect human maternity: rather than a putrid, painful human womb, buddhahood springs from a “womb” inherent in every sentient being, which promises final liberation from flesh altogether. This book should interest readers concerned with the history of Buddhist ideas, gender in Buddhism, the early Mahāyāna, the cult of the Buddha’s relics, and relations between Buddhist ideas and practice.

Lin, Chen-kuo and Michael Radich, eds. *A Distant Mirror: Articulating Indic Ideas in Sixth and Seventh Century Chinese Buddhism.* Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2014. 978-3-943423-19-8.



In this book, an international team of fourteen scholars investigates the Chinese reception of Indian Buddhist ideas, especially in the sixth and

seventh centuries. Topics include Buddhist logic and epistemology (pramāṇa, yinming); commentaries on Indian Buddhist texts; Chinese readings of systems as diverse as Madhyamaka, Yogācāra and tathāgatagarbha; the working out of Indian concepts and problematics in new Chinese works; and previously under-studied Chinese evidence for developments in India. The authors aim to consider the ways that these Chinese materials might furnish evidence of broader Buddhist trends, thereby problematizing a prevalent notion of “sinification,” which has led scholars to consider such materials predominantly in terms of trends ostensibly distinctive to China. The volume also tries to go beyond seeing sixth- and seventh-century China primarily as the age of the formation and establishment of the Chinese Buddhist “schools”. The authors attempt to view the ideas under study on their own terms, as valid Buddhist ideas engendered in a rich, “liminal” space of interchange between two large traditions.

Articles

Troughton, Geoffrey, Joseph Bulbulia and Chris G. Sibley. ‘Strength of Religion and the Future of the Churches.’ *Stimulus* 21, no. 2 (2014): 26-34.

Troughton, Geoffrey. ‘Church, Society, and the Challenges of Modernity in the Anglican Diocese of Auckland, 1918-1940.’ *Anglican and Episcopal History*, 84, no. 3 (2015): 1-19.

Resources for research



The Bookworm, c. 1850. Carl Spitzweg.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carl_Spitzweg_021.jpg

RME Collection Research Centre

A Growing Resource for the Study of Asian Religions, Cultures and Theologies.

The Rita Mayne England Collection in the Hewitson Library — now an integral part of the Presbyterian Research Centre on the Campus of Knox College, Dunedin — already a valuable resource for the study of religions, cultures and theologies in Asia, is growing significantly as new materials are added. Two features make this collection unique:

i) Its basis is a large working collection formed by John and Rita England, a husband and wife/scholar and librarian partnership, in the situations in which they worked for over 40 years. Dr John England is still active in the development of the Collection, named in honour of Rita and a significant outcome of her professional experience in managing literary and cultural resources in various countries.

Both Rita and John had key roles with the Programme for Theology and Cultures in Asia, writing, publishing and assembling resources, and in presenting workshops for younger scholars, lecturers and librarians in many parts of the region – their networks were extensive, inter-generational, inter-disciplinary and inter-faith and these are all features of the Collection.

ii) It is inclusive. The Englands' understanding of 'theologies and cultures in Asia' meant that they studied and collected the work of both specialists and general participants in different regions and in



different subject areas, so religions, theologies and cultures are studied in plural, and in inclusive terms. The Collection reflects a wide view of Christian history and thought, and of the cultural and religious contexts in which the theologies of Asia developed: 'living faiths, living theologies in living contexts'.

These theologies and cultures often reflect 'the other half' – the story of the Christian church 'east of Antioch,' written off as unorthodox or heretical by the western church but with a rich history and a variety of traditions, about which John England has written. That this was the Christian tradition known to the early Muslim community makes this area of study increasingly important.

The Collection includes major bodies of material from: China, Hong Kong, Japan, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and also material from Australia, Pakistan, Russia, Malaysia/Singapore, Burma, Korea, Thailand, Indo-China, and from Regional groupings relating to Inner Central Asia, Central Asia, and regional church history and theologies.

A strength is the inclusion of literature – novels, poetry — that reflects national and local cultures and presents the history and social conditions in which religions and theologies continue to develop. There are older publications, no longer readily available, and items that were only sold locally or in limited editions (theses, Festschriften). There are significant biographies.

Most of the material is in English but, as the Collection grows, material in western and Asian languages is being added. The Collection is very much a work in progress. It sits alongside the Hewitson's general and special collections and the Presbyterian Research Centre's extensive Archive which also contain significant Asian items. Approximately half of the 6,000 items in the Collection have been catalogued to date. A further 1,000 items are listed for deposit, and other donors are offering material from their own working collections.

The Rita Mayne England Collection will be an increasingly important academic research facility.

Already overseas scholars (well aware of England's role in the region) have visited it. The Collection is being progressively entered on the Hewitson Library's on-line catalogue <https://hewitson.mykoha.co.nz> and inter-library loan facilities are available. The Library has a nation-wide membership.

For enquiries and registration contact:
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Simon Rae, Convener, Presbyterian Research Centre Advisory Group (Dunedin).

Your Academic Forecast

TODAY



Busy, with a chance of procrastination. Expect chills.

THE NEAR FUTURE



Scattered showers and low brainstorming. Strong pressure front from your department. Expect a lot of hot air.

LONG TERM



Mostly cloudy hypotheses with dry funding conditions, overnight lows in publication with slippery conditions for graduation or tenure.

IF YOU STAY IN ACADEMIA TOO LONG



Low humility and bitter coldness. Expect heavy gusts of productivity and a drop in friends. Remain indoors.

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