

THEOLOGY AT THE BORDERS

SST Annual Conference

12-14 April 2021

ONLINE

#SST2021

With plenary papers from

John Bradbury

Rachel Muers

Joshua Ralston

Casey Strine

Andrea White

and a plenary panel on *Theologising Brexit*
with Anthony Reddie, Harvey Kwiyani,
Anna Rowlands, and Selina Stone

Further information and booking details: www.theologysociety.org.uk

SST

Society for the
Study of Theology

Welcome

A Message from the President of the Society for the Study of Theology (SST)

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2021 SST conference. I hope that you will find this conference to be a space for rich conversation, and that you will feel able to contribute to that conversation as well as to listen to the contributions of others.

This year's theme is 'Theology at the Borders', and we want this to be a conference where we don't just talk about border-crossing, but also embody it. Some of that border crossing is geographical. I would love to be welcoming you all in person, and having the chance to eat, drink, and socialise with you all together in one place – but meeting online means we have the unusual opportunity to welcome people from around the world, crossing the borders of countries and continents in a way we have never done before. We also want this to be a conference that crosses other kinds of border, enabling conversation between multiple theological disciplines, between people pursuing theology in very different institutional contexts and at different career stages, between people with very different backgrounds and forms of experience, and between people facing very different demands on their time and attention, especially at present.

The study of theology is inherently a shared and an embodied process, and that remains true even when our activity and our presence to one another are mediated by screens and microphones. We therefore want this to be a conference that will involve more than simply listening to papers and asking questions, and we hope you will join in with some of the other activities we have planned. There will be opportunities to chat together, to eat and drink together, even to cook together. Theological conversation belongs in the midst of our life together.

I hope you enjoy this year's conference – and I hope that we might see you again in future years.

Professor Mike Higon
SST President

SST Officers and Executive Committee Members



Professor Mike Higton
SST President



Professor David Clough
SST Vice-President



Dr Jenny Leith
SST Treasurer



Dr Karen O'Donnell
SST Secretary



Anupama Ranawana
SST Assistant Secretary



Dr Devon Abts
SST Executive
Committee Member



Dr Katie Cross
SST Executive
Committee Member



Dr Andrew Hayes
SST Executive
Committee Member



Dr Emily Kempson
SST Executive
Committee Member



Dr Joanna Leidenhag
SST Executive
Committee Member



Dr Dulcie McKenzie
SST BAME
Representative



Prof Anthony Reddie
SST BAME
Representative



Rev Andrew Taylor
Co-Opted Executive
Committee Member

Contents

Key Information	2-3
Outline Programme	4-5
Plenary Speakers & Respondents	6-7
Special Conference Events	
Annual General Meeting	7
Diversifying the Curriculum Panel	7
Postgraduate Lunch with SST Leadership	7
Clergy Scholars Networking Coffee	7
Timetable: Short Papers on Theology at the Borders & in Theological Streams	8-16
Abstracts: Short Papers on Theology at the Borders	17-40
Abstracts: Papers in Theological Streams	41-53
SST Society Update	54-55
Zoom Guidelines	56

Key Information

Social Times

We are conscious that a big part of what people enjoy about SST is the opportunity to talk to interesting people and catch up with friends. Replicating those impromptu conversations is difficult on zoom. During the breaks in the day and in the evenings, we will be using a free platform called Wonder. This platform offers a way to replicate those conversations in a much more informal way. You will find Wonder links in the break sections of the timetable. The password for all sessions is Theology. It is very simple to use and hopefully will give space for some of the social aspect of SST. If you would like to watch a short video on how Wonder works then you can see it [here](#).

Publishers

We are pleased to welcome a range of publishers to this year's online conference. Delegates will receive emails from the publishers in advance of the conference, advertising various publications, events, and conference discount codes. Publishers have provided virtual exhibits with titles relevant to SST and information on contacting relevant publishers can be found below.

Bloomsbury

Website: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/superpage/tt-clark-at-society-for-the-study-of-theology-conference-2021>

Discount Code: TTCSSST21 (35% discount on selected titles).

Point of contact: anna.turton@bloomsbury.com

Brill

Website: <https://www2.brill.com/2021-SST>

Discount Code: 72150 (50% on E + P book titles– valid till 1 June 2021)

Point of contact: jonquiere@brill.com

Combined Academic

Website: <https://www.combinedacademic.co.uk/theology/>

Discount Code: CSF21SST (30% discount valid until 31 May 2021).

Point of contact: enquiries@combinedacademic.uk

SCM Press

Website: <https://chbookshop.hymnsam.co.uk/features/sst21-online-conference-bookstall>

Discount Code: SST21 (20% off at checkout)

SCM Press will be holding drop-in sessions with Senior Commissioning Editor David Shervington where delegates are welcome to drop in and discuss any book project ideas they may have. You will be admitted into the meeting as soon as it is available.

Monday 12th April 4-5pm, Tuesday 13th April 4-5pm and Wednesday 14th April 9-10am.

Meeting ID: 497 477 510

Passcode: Bonhoeffer

SPCK

Website: www.spckpublishing.co.uk/sst and www.ivpbooks.com/sst

Discount Code: SST25 (25% off valid until 30th April 2021).

Point of contact: sales@spck.org.uk

Wiley Contact Information

Website: <https://www.wiley.com/SST>

Discount Code: 14424 (30% off on www.wiley.com valid until 30th April 2021).

Point of contact: ataxic@wiley.com.

Advertisements

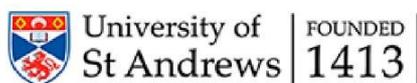
The conference programme includes a number of advertisements. If you would like more information about reception sponsorship or advertisement, please speak to the SST Secretary.

Morning and Evening Prayer

Morning and evening prayer will be held each day online. Morning Prayer is 0830-0845 on Tuesday and Wednesday morning. Evening Prayer is at 2130-2145 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights.



Encouraging women's full participation in the academy and church according to each woman's convictions and conscience.



logos.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/logia/

Programme Overview

Monday 12th April 2021

Time	Event
1115	Welcome to SST
1130	Plenary 1: Theology and (Its) Borders: Hearing Shibboleth <i>Rachel Muers, Former SST Presidential Address</i>
1300	Lunch Wonder Room
1400	Short Papers & Papers in Theological Streams Session 1
1530	Coffee Wonder Room
1600	SST AGM
1730	Dinner Wonder Room
2000	Plenary 2: TBC <i>Andrea White, Union Theological Seminar</i>
2130	Evening Prayer led by Julie Gittoes
2130	SST Cocktail Making Wonder Room

Tuesday 13th April 2021

Time	Event
0830–0845	Morning Prayer led by Jarel Robinson-Brown
0900	Plenary 3: <i>Theologising Brexit: A Liberationist and Postcolonial Critique</i> by Anthony Reddie <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anthony Reddie (author)</i> • <i>Selina Stone (respondent)</i> • <i>Harvey Kwiyani (respondent)</i>
1030	Coffee Wonder Room
1100	Short Papers & Papers in Theological Streams Session 2
1230	Lunch Wonder Room
1330	Short Papers & Papers in Theological Streams Session 3
1500	“Users Guide to the Publisher’s Brain” with David Shervington, Senior Commissioning Editor with SCM Press.
1600	Coffee Wonder Room
1630	Short Papers 4
1730	Dinner Wonder Room

2000	Plenary 4: At the Borders of Christian Learning: Islamic Thought and Constructive Christian Theology. <i>Joshua Ralston, University of Edinburgh</i>
2130	Evening Prayer led by Phil Wall
2130	SST Cook-Along Wonder Room

Wednesday 14th April 2021

Time	Event
0830 – 0845	Morning Prayer led by Adesola Akala
0900	Plenary 5: A Theology of Non-Theological Factors: Ecumenism and the Borders of Doctrine <i>John Bradbury, General Secretary, URC</i>
1030	Coffee Wonder Room
1100	Short Papers 5
1300	Lunch Wonder Room Postgraduate Lunch with SST Leadership
1500	Panel: Diversifying the Curriculum Chaired by Anu Ranawana in conversation with Rosalee Ewell and Sian Hawthorne.
1630	Coffee Wonder Room
1630	Clergy Scholars Networking Coffee hosted by Julie Gittoes
1700	Plenary 5: Back Where You Came From: The Ancestral Narrative and the Migrant Exegetical Imagination <i>Casey Strine, University of Sheffield</i>
1830	Dinner Wonder Room
2000	SST Pub Quiz Wonder Room
2130	Evening Prayer led by Judith Rossall

Plenary Papers, Speakers, and Respondents

Plenary papers are [available online](#) to be read in the weeks before the conference takes place. Plenary speakers will give short summaries of their papers in the plenary session before an early career scholar offers a response to the paper. The rest of the plenary session will be given over to discussion of the themes and ideas raised in the paper. You can submit questions in advance via [the form on the SST website](#).

Plenary 1: Rachel Muers (former SST President), University of Leeds.

Theology and (Its) Borders: Hearing Shabboleth

11.30am, Monday 12th April.

Chair: David Clough, SST Vice-President.

Early Career Respondent: Clare Radford, Lincoln Theological Institute, University of Manchester

Plenary 2: Andrea White, Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Title TBC

8pm, Monday 12th April.

Chair: Anthony Reddie, SST BAME Representative

Early Career Respondent: Nicola Carrey Whyte, Princeton Theological Seminary.

Plenary 3: Panel on *Theologising Brexit: A Liberationist and Post-Colonial Critique* by Anthony Reddie

9am, Tuesday 13th April.

Chair: Dulcie McKenzie, SST BAME Representative.

Plenary Speaker: Anthony Reddie, University of Oxford.

Respondents: Harvey Kwiyani (Liverpool Hope University) and Selina Stone (St Mellitus)

Plenary 4: Joshua Ralston, University of Edinburgh.

At the Borders of Christian Learning: Islamic Thought and Constructive Christian Theology.

8pm, Tuesday 13th April.

Chair: Joanna Leidenhag, SST Executive Committee Member.

Early Career: Steven Firmin, University of Oxford

Plenary 5: John Bradbury, General Secretary Elect, United Reformed Church.

A Theology of Non-Theological Factors: Ecumenism and the Borders of Doctrine.

9am Wednesday 14th April.

Chair: Katie Cross, SST Executive Committee Member.

Early Career Respondent: Jarel Robinson-Brown, St Mellitus.

Plenary 6: Casey Strine, University of Sheffield.

Back Where You Came From: Reading Stories about Migration in Genesis with People Seeking Sanctuary in Sheffield

5pm, Wednesday 14th April.

Chair: Mike Higton, SST President

Early Career Respondent: Nomi Pritz-Bennett, University of Cambridge.

Special Conference Events

Annual General Meeting

4pm, Monday 12th April.

All SST members are welcome to attend. As well as updates on the work of the Society, there will be opportunity to vote for new Executive Committee members and the theme of the 2023 annual conference.

Diversifying the Curriculum Panel

3pm, Wednesday 14th April.

Chair: Dulcie McKenzie, SST Executive Committee Member

Panellists: Sian Hawthorne, SOAS and Rosalee Velloso Ewell, Redcliffe College.

Postgraduate Lunch with SST Leadership

1pm, Wednesday 14th April.

There will be an opportunity for postgraduate students to meet with the SST Leadership for an informal discussion. There will also be opportunity to hear more about the forthcoming SST Postgraduate conference on the theme of Reconciliation taking place at the University of Cambridge, 13-15 September 2021. Bring your own lunch!

Clergy Scholars Networking Coffee

4:30pm, Wednesday 14th April.

There will be an opportunity for those who are clergy scholars and may not be formally attached to universities or colleges to meet for a coffee and a chat. This is an informal support network. Grab a coffee and join us for a chat. Hosted by Julie Gittoes.

Monday 12th April 2021: Paper Session I

Type of Session & Convener	1400-1430	1430-1500	1500-1530
Short papers Andrew Hayes	Breaching Borders, Breaking Boundaries and Bridging Barriers: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman Adesola Akala	Thinking about Redemption in “the Land of Rape and Honey”. Jane Barter	Incessantly Colonized Border(s): Mother-Tongue Reading and Decolonial Reflection on Reflection on Proverbs 22.28. Risaw Walis
Short Papers Katie Cross	Of Creation, Limitation, and Transgressing Borders: Gender Transition and the Disruption of Nature. Susannah Cornwall	‘Her Bleeding Stopped’: The Embodied Borderland of the Menopause. Julie Gittoes	Imagining the Unseen: Breaching the Borders of Perceptual Experience via Transcendent Imagination. Buki Fatona
Theological Stream: Christology and Trinity Jenny Dagers & Emily Kempson	<i>Forma servi, forma dei</i> : Rereading Augustine’s Theology of Participation. Kirsty Borthwick	Epistemic Suffering and Christ’s Human Knowledge. Simon Hewitt	Christ’s Topography. Ryan Turnbull
Theological Stream: Philosophy and Theology Marika Rose & Elizabeth Pyne	Stealer, Steal Her, We Cross the Border. Bojan Koltaj	You Are What You See: Environmental Ethics as a Critique of the Conditions of the Self Caleb Gordon	Dependence and Disability: A Theological Conversation with Elizabeth Barnes. Calli Micale

<p>Theological Stream: Theology and Science</p> <p>Mark Harris & Sarah Lane Ritchie</p>	<p>Madness and Religious Experience.</p> <p>Tasia Scrutton</p>	<p>The Idealist View of Divine Action in Nature</p> <p>Edward Epsen</p>	<p>Remembering Augustine: Memoria and Genomic Memory Mechanisms.</p> <p>Christine F. Stephenson</p>
<p>Theological Stream: Theological Anthropology</p> <p>Al McFadyen & Stephan van Erp</p>	<p>Human Vulnerability and the Constitutive Sociality of the Self: Rethinking the Relation between Personal and Social Sin.</p> <p>Charlotte Bray</p>	<p>The Value of the 'Abyss' in Theological Anthropology.</p> <p>Edward Howells</p>	<p>Proximate and Ultimate Contexts: Using Kelsey to Understand Humanity in the Context of Dementia.</p> <p>Andrew Kimmitt</p>

Tuesday 13th April 2021: Paper Session 2

Type of Session & Convener(s)	1100-1130	1130-1200	1200-1230
<p>Theological Stream: Church, Ministry and Theology</p> <p>Julie Gittoes</p>	<p>Steps, Screens and Web-Cams: Exploring Borders in Digital Pastoral Care.</p> <p>Kenneth Wilkinson-Roberts</p>	<p>“In Continual Remembrance”: Preaching and the Eucharist in the <i>Books of Homilies</i></p> <p>Hannah Marie Richardson</p>	
<p>Theological Stream: Theological Ethics.</p> <p>Esther McIntosh & Margaret Adam</p>	<p>Everyday Embodiment in the Age of Austerity.</p> <p>Clare Radford</p>	<p>Ludic Contingencies: Tragedy as Play in Donald MacKinnon.</p> <p>Thomas Graff</p>	<p>Vitoria and the Role of Place in Determining the Implications of Theological Ideas.</p> <p>Joel Pierce</p>
<p>Short Papers</p> <p>Andrew Taylor</p>	<p>T. F. Torrance and the Boundary Between Theology and the Sciences.</p> <p>Taylor Lankford</p>	<p>At the Border of the Human: Reading Aquinas on Origins, Grace, and Historicity.</p> <p>Euan Alexander Grant</p>	<p>General Revelation, A Matter of Boundaries or Limits?—A Dialectical Reflection.</p> <p>Taylor D. Holleyman</p>
<p>Short Papers</p> <p>Susannah Cornwall</p>	<p>Anti-Theodicy at the Centre: Reflections on Black and Feminist Critiques of Theodicy.</p> <p>Ben Humphris</p>	<p>More than Mestizo: Gloria E. Anzaldúa and a Christology of Nepantla.</p> <p>Joel Mayward.</p>	<p>Methodological Bridges in Feminist Trauma Theologies.</p> <p>Karen O’Donnell</p>

Short Papers Jenny Leith	Poetry and Non-Violent Theological Constructions of the Self. Oana Marian	Crossing Linguistic Boundaries: The Spirit, Pentecost, and Code-Switching Black British Poetry. Beth Dodd	'One River, Many Wells': Borderless Borders of Faith. Jenny Miller
Short Papers Marty Philipps	Constructing a Theological Framework for Inclusion for a Global Christian Aid Organization. Nina Kurlberg	In Among the Weeds: Theologies of Campaign, Compromise, and Change in Churches' Political Engagement. Helen Dawes	Doctrine Without Borders? Does Postcolonialism undermine the Catholicity of Christian Doctrine? Richard Clutterbuck
Roundtable Anupama Ranawana	Roundtable: The Role and Vocation of the Theologian with Mario I. Aguilar, Hasna Khutan, Jarel Robinson-Brown and Selina Stone.		

Tuesday 13th April 2021: Paper Session 3

Type of Session and Convener(s)	1330-1400	1400-1430	1430-1500
<p>Theological Stream: Black Theology</p> <p>Dulcie McKenzie</p>	<p>An Investigation and Critique of Two Alternative Visions Existing Within the Seventh-Day Church.</p> <p>Colin Brewster</p>	<p>Intersectionality as Means of Social Justice for Christian Women of Colour.</p> <p>Sonia Soans</p>	<p>A Black Woman's Prophetic Rage: Religious Epistemology as Needed Boundary Crossing.</p> <p>CL Nash</p>
<p>Theological Stream: Theology & The Arts</p> <p>Ben Quash & Devon Abts</p>	<p>Clement of Alexandria and the Cultivation of Taste.</p> <p>Jane Heath</p>	<p>The Receding Hair Line - Collapsing Bodily Borders in Magdalene Art</p> <p>Siobhan Jolley</p>	<p>Tradition and the Individual Theologian: Henri de Lubac, TS Eliot, and the Aesthetics of Tradition.</p> <p>Joshua Mobley</p>
<p>Short Papers</p> <p>Emily Kempson</p>	<p>Maybe It's Providence: Race at the Borders of Climate and Cross.</p> <p>Anupama Ranawana</p>	<p>Bread of Life in Broken Britain: Food Banks, Faith and Neoliberalism.</p> <p>Charles Roding Pemberton</p>	<p>Theologising with Sacred Sex Workers: Towards an Indecent Dalit The(a)ology with the Silences Goddess.</p> <p>Eve. R. Parker</p>
<p>Short Papers</p> <p>Andrew Taylor</p>	<p>Transgressing the Boundaries Between Metaphysics and Rage.</p> <p>Jonathan Platter</p>	<p>An Embedded 'Othering' in Ecclesiology? Querying Orientalism's role in Ecclesiological Anthropology.</p> <p>Jeremy Michael Rios</p>	<p>Dying as a Natural Border: Karl Barth on Christ's Redemption of Death.</p> <p>Roger L. Revell</p>

<p>Short Papers</p> <p>Helen Dawes</p>	<p>Religion Towards Integration? The Case of Migrant Mothers in Belgium.</p> <p>Ma. Adeinev Reyes-Espiritu</p>	<p>Militarization and/at the Borders of Being: Colonial Christian Anthropologies as Border Patrol.</p> <p>Melissa Pagán</p>	<p>Borders as Liminal Spaces of Compassion: Student Perspectives on the Rohingya Migration.</p> <p>Mia Sasaki</p>
<p>Themed Panel</p> <p>Julie Gittoes</p>	<p>Panel discussing <i>A Dogmatic Ecclesiology: The Priestly Catholicity of the Church</i> by Tom Greggs (Baker, 2019) with Tom Greggs, Rachel Muers, and John Bradbury.</p>		

Tuesday 13th April 2021: Paper Session 4

Type of Session / Convener(s)	1630-1700	1700-1730
Short Paper Nicola Carrey Whyte	Defining Borders: Theological Truth Claims and their Margins in Intercultural Discourse. Eckhard Zemmrich	Karl Barth and Mou Zongsan: Religious Roots of Political Responsibility in Europe and Asia. Luke Lee
Short Paper David Clough	A Theology of Sin in Conversation with the Evolution of Morality and Morality in Non-Human Animals. Marina Hannus	Humans as Praying Animals: Pursuing a Path between Anthropocentrism and Biocentrism. Hannah Malcolm
Short Paper Mike Higton	Can we “knit together into one the searching mind and the incomprehensible nature”? Dora Bernhardt	Transgressing Secular and Sacred: Mythopoeisis & the Possibility of a Peaceful Ontology. Andrew Shamel
Short Paper Devon Abts	Theologising with Nadia Murad: Empathic Cartographies at the Borders. Mario. I. Aguilar	<i>Noli me tangere</i> —the Theological Potential of Borders in Indigenous Reconciliation Processes. Edda Wolff

Wednesday 14th April 2021: Paper Session 5

Type of Session / Convener(s)	1100-1130	1130-1200	1200-1230	1230-1300
Short Paper Joanna Leidenhag	Theology at the Borders of Psychosis: Transcendence of the Artificial Borders of Sanity. Rachel Noel	Thinking Theologically at the Borders of Psychological ‘disorder’. Niamh Colbrook	Bi-Polarisation and the Church, the Response Offered in Koinonia. Elizabeth Welch	Making Present the ‘Absent’ Theological ‘Ways of Knowing’ From the Global South. Daniel Jara J.
Short Paper Scott Midson	A Scattered Family: Exploring a Theology of Migration from a Hong Konger Perspective. Calida Chu	Draining the Channel with a Spoon: Theological Responses When Migration Overwhelms. Peter Selby	Migrant Religiosities: Theological Reflections on the Elasticity of Religious Borders. Eric M. Trinka	Immigration, Human Rights, and Reproductive Justice: How to be Hospitable at the Border. Margaret Kamitsuka
Short Paper Andrew Taylor	Pannenberg’s Pneumatology which Bridges the Sacred/Secular Distinction. Jae Yang	‘Personal’, ‘Social’, and ‘Political’: Re-Exploring the Borders via Pannenberg and Cavanaugh. Clement Yung Wen	Putting Signs in Place: A Semiotic Account of Creaturely Belonging. Peter Leith	‘Truth is a Mode of Being’: Challenging Borders in Cognitive Theory. Austin Stevenson

Short Paper	Who I Am: Queering Theological Borders in Song.	Christ in Black and White: Reading James Cone with Karl Barth to Decolonize Incarnational Doctrine.	At the Limen of Personhood: Empathy, Slavery and the Rise of Social AI.	Crossing the Boundary of Heaven and Earth: Abu Qurrah's Philosophical Argument for a Trinitarian God.
Andrew Shamel	Danielle Anne Lynch	Matthew Kinmore	Jordan Joseph Wales	Oskari Juurikkala
Short Paper	Enforced Disappearances in Mexico: Bonhoeffer's Public Theology Engaging with Mexican Necropolitics.	Pink Crosses in Ciudad Juárez.	Hope in the Wake of Slavery: Rearticulating Christology to Overcome the Racial Antagonism.	
Kirsty Borthwick	Samuel Efrain Murillo Torres	David Tombs	Jason Shields	
Short Paper	The De-colonization of Mission Through the Creation of the Council for World Mission.	Spatial Boundaries in Theologies of Culture and John Henry Newman's Use of 'Englishness'.	The Role of Borders in the Thinking of Protestant Territorial Churches.	
Rhiannon Grant	Victoria Turner	Jacob Phillips	Augur Pearce	
Short Paper	Wrestling with an Octopus: Poverty, Violence and Political Theology in an Age of Austerity.	Paying Attention to Women Living with Addiction: Toward a Political Theological Method with Simone Weil and William Cavanaugh.	A Peculiar Framing of Christian Theological Ethics in Consideration of the Filipino Value System.	
Ben Fulford	Chris Shannahan	Flo O'Taylor	B. Moreno Bragas	

Short Papers on Theology at the Borders: Abstracts (Alphabetical by Presenter's Surname)

Mario I. Aguilar: Theologising with Nadia Murad: Empathic Cartographies at the Borders
Tuesday Session 4

This paper explores the following questions of empathic cartographic significance: How do we diversify the challenge of negative universalism? Is it plausible to develop empathy with the Other within the theologising of the poor and marginalised? And, if systematic theology is only a contextual theology from the minority standpoint of a cartography in Europe, how do we develop empathic cartographies in what Kristien Justaert has labelled materialistic metaphysics in liberation theology? The methodology is of a reading the bodily text of slavery by Nadia Murad under ISIS not focusing on the facts that happened but on the questioning of ISIS of how to denigrate those at the borders of theologising. For it is through those border-crossings that cartographies of significance can be developed by creating empathic cartographies of full dissonance. For the dangerous otherness and poverty-stricken isolation become the actual divine attributes and an incarnational progressiveness that leaves empathic cartographies at the centre for ever. In summary, this is a follow up of *After Pestilence* (2020) and *Religion, Torture and the Liberation of God* (2015) in what one could describe as the divine attributes of theologising with a slave such as Nadia Murad, former captive of ISIS, as a methodology of divine experience

Adesola Akala: Breaching Borders, Breaking Boundaries and Bridging Barriers: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman
Monday Session I

The fourth chapter of the fourth gospel presents a clear case of borders on three dimensions. The pericope begins with an emphasis on the geographical boundary between Judea and Samaria. Jesus' circumvention of the common route from Judea to Jerusalem that bypasses Samaria, was a purposeful act. This tactical move, which was a missional strategy to preach the gospel in Samaria, required a second transgression of boundaries on two levels. By conversing with the Samaritan woman, who was integral to his mission, Jesus contravened the cultural divide between Jews and Samaritans on one hand, and on the other, social restrictions placed between males and females in public interaction. The third boundary was the Samaritans' theological beliefs, which differed from the Jews, particularly regarding worship. Jesus' objective was to offer himself as the bridge that would end this ancient spiritual schism. By revealing himself as Messiah and Saviour, Jesus opened the door to true knowledge and worship of God. The woman brings her village to Jesus, who is recognised and accepted as the Messiah. John 4 demonstrates how and why it is sometimes necessary to breach historical or humanly-created borders to build bridges that foster effective theological and spiritual discourse.

Jane Barter: Thinking about Redemption in "the Land of Rape and Honey"
Monday Session I

This paper seeks to think theologically about the models of redemption that tacitly inhere in two documents arising from colonial Canada. Specifically, it wishes to think of the spatial imaginaries that inhere in the respective representations of restored Indigenous life in Canada in the 2015 Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Report of the

National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019), titled “Reclaiming Power and Place.” In these respective visions, I wish to suggest that the bounded spatiality of the TRC remains the nation state, which brokers redemption construed as reconciliation between Indigenous persons and the state. In contrast, the space of restored relations implicit in the Report of the National Inquiry is much more radically construed as it consists in the reclaiming of space that was taken—bodies and land alike. The model of redemption implicit is not spatially constructed within the bounds of future nationhood, but is instead messianically announced wherever women’s bodies are recovered and remembered. Not only does this form of messianic remembering constitute a far more thorough critique of colonization, it also affirms the possibility of hope for Indigenous resurgence beyond the (colonial and patriarchal) nation state.

Dora Bernhardt: Can we “knit together into one the searching mind and the incomprehensible nature”?

Tuesday Session 4

Apprehending and describing the “ultimate” relation between God and creature has been a perennial challenge and task for theology. While for Gregory of Nyssa it is faith that “knits together into one the searching mind and the incomprehensible nature,” the relationship between “the searching mind” – epistemology – and “the incomprehensible nature” – ontology – can also be conceptualized differently, for example as done by the Jesuit philosopher-theologian Erich Przywara. In my paper I argue that rather than advocating a “theology after epistemology,” what Przywara attempts in his remarkable *Analogia Entis* is also a “knitting together into one” of, and thus transcending the border between, epistemology and ontology, immanence and transcendence; albeit from a different, more philosophical point of view. Speculative as it may be, metaphysics should nevertheless have a connection with everyday reality, so I intend to demonstrate how the principle of the *analogia entis* throws light upon one particular epistemic practice, the role of orality/aurality in the knowledge of God.

B. Moreno Bragas: A Peculiar Framing of Christian Theological Ethics in Consideration of the Filipino Value System

Wednesday Session 5

This year marks the 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines. Thus, the legacies of historic Christian mission and colonialism is highly regarded as monumental to Philippine history. The theological ethics of Christianity permeated in the Filipino people’s lives indeed. In this paper, however, I argue that the known Filipino values need not be totally despised as scornful traits when it is rightly understood in the utterance of virtuous Filipinos. In fact in order for the Filipino to experience authentic Christian transformation, all our values need to be the stimuli of our actions and convictions, as these may be aligned to character formation that need to be enhanced through habituation in its right manifestation. In the first section, I will briefly survey the known Filipino values and highlight the negative implications that effectuated in a Filipino and the society at large. I shall also discuss in the next section a misconception in Evangelical theology that human beings are naturally sinful, thereby making all its faculties flawed – even that of the Filipino traits. In ending, I will synthesize the Filipino Value System and Christian Theological Ethics.

Calida Chu: A Scattered Family: Exploring a Theology of Migration from a Hong Konger Perspective

Wednesday Session 5

Family has often been used in the ecclesiological discourse in Chinese Christianity, especially referring church to a family (jia). Simultaneously, the Communist Party of China also often employs the concept of family to protect the State's interest. In light of the increasing number of Hong Kong migrants to the Global North due to social instability, this paper explores a theology of migration in this phenomenon and problematises the ideas of family in the two aforementioned perspectives. Employing family life cycle theory (McGoldrick et al. 2014), this presenter argues that migration resembles dysfunction of one's family, which are forced to restructure and relocate to another geographical position that allows the family to maintain functioning. While disappointed with their original family, their home country, the root and influence, especially the fear and trauma that caused the migration, have never been ceased. The paper intends to offer a theological response and suggests that churches in the host countries can act as an "extended family" to show hospitality to these migrants with a hybrid identity, who are neither fully refugees nor economic migrants, neither fully Chinese nor British.

Richard Clutterbuck: Doctrine without borders? Does postcolonialism undermine the catholicity do Christian Doctrine?

Tuesday Session 2

Christian doctrine involves an irreducible claim to universality. That claim has become problematic in recent thought. Postcolonial theory challenges the cultural dominance of Western thought and is suspicious of claims to universal discourse, seeing them as a reflection of European domination. Postcolonial theology, through exponents such as Sugirtharajah, critiques claims of universal Christian doctrine and asserts the rights of each culture to develop its own understanding of Christianity. The paper will ask whether Christian Doctrine is inescapably colonial. It looks at the relationship between doctrine and empire in the formative period for Christian Doctrine and points to its ambivalent nature. It goes on to suggest that the universality of Doctrine can be in creative tension with the critique of postcolonialism. Maintaining this tension will require a chastened but affirmative account of divine providence, of the Holy Spirit active through human history and the life of the church.

Niamh Colbrook: Thinking theologically at the borders of psychological "disorder"

Wednesday Session 5

This paper contributes to ongoing discussions concerning the role of experience in theological methodology. I argue for the importance of theological reflection at the borders between psychological "health" and psychological "disorder". Attention to the lived experiences of psychological "disorder", I suggest, illuminates theologically important structures of world-experience that might otherwise go unnoticed. I offer the example of "existential feeling" - a concept developed in the discipline of phenomenological psychopathology - to enlighten how our capacities to feel, think, and act emerge in relation to our bodily being-in-the-world. I place this concept in dialogue with Simeon Zahl's discussion of the practical and emotional impact, or "affective salience", of doctrines. I demonstrate how the notion of existential feeling elucidates experiential structures underpinning affective salience and offers resources for developing Zahl's discussion anthropologically and pastorally. A theological methodology that thinks with and through "pathological" experience, I argue, can contribute constructively to

Christian theology, including and beyond efforts to understand and respond to psychological “disorder” in its own right. This paper thus reflects on the importance of developing theological methodologies not only at the borders of disciplines, but also at the ambiguous and porous borders of pathology and health.

Susannah Cornwall: Of Creation, Limitation and Transgressing Borders: Gender Transition and the Disruption of Nature
Monday Session 1

Trans people’s bodies and identities are often deemed to cross and critique borders in various ways, though trans people are also sometimes accused of reinforcing borders by shoring-up the notion that gender is binary. In this paper I rebut theological objections to gender transition (such as those of Andrew T. Walker and Oliver O’Donovan) which hold that transition represents illegitimate transgression of divinely-ordained limits. Such objections do too little to acknowledge the freighted and non-morally-immaculate status of appeals to “nature”: here I show, after Karen Barad, that constructions of trans bodies as uniquely or distinctly recalcitrant are possible only because of broad assent to a fiction that cis (non-trans) bodies are not also technologized and enculturated. If accounts of gender and sex as fluid and/or unstable represent a break with gender and sex as the Christian theological tradition has usually understood them, then this disjunction may do important work in highlighting the ways in which theological anthropologies have assumed and perpetuated harmful hierarchies of race, sex and species. Gender transition thus does constitute threat to concepts of humanness as bounded, but not in quite the way that its theological detractors have supposed.

Helen Dawes: In among the weeds: theologies of campaign, compromise and change in churches’ political engagement
Tuesday Session 2

When I visited the Office of Government Relations of the Episcopal Church in the USA, a staff member commented that we had really got ‘in among the weeds’ of the political engagement of their Church. Our conversations had not stopped at the headlines of policy asks, but had got into the details of how churches work for social change in a contemporary democracy. The resonances with the parable of the wheat and the weeds are clear and speak to the challenge of engaging from points of principle with processes that are provisional and shaped by compromise. It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that an examination of how churches work across the complex space between local communities, political structures and inter/national organisations reveals competing, sometimes conflicting, theologies of the church’s mission and of social change. This paper will examine the boundary space between campaign and compromise in churches’ practices of social and political engagement. In doing so I will set Archbishop William Temple’s theological and practical shift from provocateur to statesman alongside current Church of England investment policies, to identify and outline some of the operational theologies that are visible in contexts that encompass practices of protest, example and persuasion.

Beth Dodd: Crossing Linguistic Boundaries: The Spirit, Pentecost and Code-Switching Black British Poetry
Tuesday Session 2

The audition of the Spirit in Acts 2:1-14 presents the birth of a global church that crosses cultural and linguistic boundaries. From Gregory the Great to the Venerable Bede,

multilingualism as a mark of cross-cultural unity has long been a feature of ecclesiological interpretations of this passage. For all its utopian connotations, the miracle of xenoglossia occurs within human history, where languages encode relations of power, ideology and oppression. The macaronic or code-switching poem combines cultural worlds through the mixing of languages. Simultaneously self-consciously political and aesthetically sophisticated, the modern Black British poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, Benjamin Zephaniah, Kei Miller or George the Poet might combine Patois, Black British English and Standard English not to transcend linguistic boundaries but to exploit, undercut and renegotiate the cultural relations embedded in language. These poems reimagine the porous boundaries not only between human cultures but also between orality and textuality, prose and poetry. This paper analyses code-switching poems alongside postcolonial interpretations of Acts 2 to interpret the Pentecost miracle in the light of the creative imagination and to gain insights into the transformative power of the Spirit working not just in spite of but within and through human culture and human history.

Buki Fatona: Imagining the Unseen: Breaching the Borders of Perceptual Experience via Transcendent Imagination

Monday Session I

There is a challenge facing a certain class of faith-based imaginations, which I term 'transcendent imagination'. An example of a transcendent imagination is reached via John Scottus Eriugena's (c.800-c.877) description of God as 'nihil per infinitatem': which roughly translates as, 'God is nothingness because God is infinite'. 'Nihil per infinitatem' enables transcendent imagination because it encourages the imaginer to transcend the borders of her everyday experience. Although transcendent propositions are meant to be imagined in order for us to appreciate the transcendence of their subjects; what kind of imagery could possibly accompany such a borders-of-experience-breaching imagining? To hold a mental image of God's nothingness on account of God's infinitude seems impossible. The challenge to transcendent imagination is that its lack of imagery doesn't explain the key features of imagination. If this challenge is true, then, transcendent imagination doesn't exist. And, thus, transcendent propositions are meaningless. In this paper, I present an alternative, embodied, imagistic—that is, imagery-based—account of transcendent imaginations. This account, which draws on abstract art, philosophy of mind, and neuroscience, holds that our perceptual experience of abstract compositions is analogous to our embodied imagining of transcendent propositions. That is, looking at abstract compositions and thinking about transcendent propositions are similar phenomena.

Julie Gittoes: 'Her bleeding stopped': the embodied borderland of the menopause

Monday Session I

When a woman, whose illness led to constant bleeding, reached out to touch the hem of Jesus' garment in the hope of healing, Luke describes it as the moment when her suffering ended. This short paper seeks to explore the ways in which women's bodies express the borderlands of life and mortality, with a particular focus on the impact of the menopause (drawing on work by Rosemary Radford Reuther and Susannah Cornwall). In public discourse, conversations about the menopause are being shaped by high profile voices within the media such as Kirsty Wark and Mariella Frostrup: exploring questions of science, self-care and our reluctance to talk about it. In response, there is scope for a holistic theological contribution to understanding bodies which bleed, and live and give life; and, when they stop bleeding, inhabit a physical borderland. Firstly, a reflection on matriarchs within the biblical narrative

who carry glimpses of the stigma of infertility. This opens up further questions what is possible or impossible when it comes to promise, fulfilment, tragedy and letting go. Secondly, a reflection on the ecclesial body shaped by water and wine; and the ways in which the Eucharist speaks of suffering and healing.

Julie Gittoes: Panel discussing *A Dogmatic Ecclesiology Vol. 1: The Priestly Catholicity of the Church* by Tom Greggs
Tuesday Session 3

Participants: Tom Greggs, Rachel Muers, and John Bradbury.

Euan Alexander Grant: *At the Border of the Human: Reading Aquinas on Origins, Grace, and Historicity*
Tuesday Session 2

History might not seem a central category in Thomas Aquinas' thought but it exerts a hidden force at certain seams or borders in his theology. In particular, Thomas' construal of the originating border of the human, the 'production' of Adam in short-lived original justice, encodes a historical orientation within his whole treatment of human nature and its relationship with grace. Thomas's thought developed towards affirming Adam as created in grace, rendering 'pure nature', if not quite Rahner's remainder-concept, then neither any stage or state in the constitution or life of human beings. His understanding of human origins places all human beings within a history and a narrative in which nature is always-already oriented towards or away from God known and loved in the life of grace. This conception has contemporary interest for understanding the human at its borders with the nonhuman, temporal or ontological. If the theological 'border' of hominization is constituted by a history-inaugurating gift of grace, oriented towards the life of Jesus, then a proper articulation of the relation of the human and the non-human must also be a proper appreciation of the way in which the non-human too is oriented to and taken up in this history.

Marina Hannus: *A Theology of Sin in Conversation with the Evolution of Morality and Morality in Non-Human Animals*
Tuesday Session 4

Biological science and anthropology present accounts of human ancestry that provides little distinction between early Homo Sapiens and other contemporary hominins. Despite such a close kinship with non-human animals and our common ancestors, theology retains that humanity is distinct and unique. One argument towards this claim is that humanity is unique in possessing morality. In response to such a claim, my paper considers the evolution of morality and research that shows that humankind is not alone in possessing some form of morality. I look at evidence of both morality and viciousness within non-human animals and accounts of how and why morality emerged as part of evolution. Based on the conclusions, I consider the questions: (1) What are the ramifications for theology if we consider some non-human animals to possess morality? (2) What theology of sin can be true to scientific evidence while also show congruence with biblical stories and tradition? I answer these questions with a framework that defines sin as 'unfaithfulness' and argue that sin holds additional dimensions compared to morality – where sin is concerned with the creature-divine relationship, and more specifically the relationship between God and humankind.

Taylor D. Holleyman: General Revelation, a matter of boundaries or limits? – A Dialectical Reflection

Tuesday Session 2

In Immanuel Kant's Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics, a distinction is made between the boundaries (Grenzen) and limits (Schranken) of cognition. Boundaries, according to Kant, always carry a positive presupposition, i.e. boundaries presuppose contiguity with that which lies beyond them. Limits, on the other hand, are mere negations. This subtle but important distinction allows the possibility of transcendental ideas. It is because of this distinction that Kant's critique of reason is able to make room for faith. This paper employs Kant's boundary-limit distinction as a means to interrogate the place of general revelation in constructive theology. Having affirmed reflection upon the Word of God (i.e. special revelation) as the primary task of theology, where is the place of general revelation within this nexus? Is general revelation beyond the limits or merely at the boundary of theological reflection? It is to be suggested that, even with the 'infinite qualitative distinction' in hand, the contingency of general revelation is a moral, practical and theological imperative.

Ben Humphris: Antitheodicy at the Centre: Reflections on Black and Feminist Critiques of Theodicy

Tuesday Session 2

Black and Feminist perspectives on evil have been called 'theodicy at the margins.' I contend, however, that some perspectives are neither theodical (n) or marginal. Leaning first on the concept of Kantian antitheodicy, I will argue that Black theologians and Feminist philosophers can be unified to show how the enterprise of theodicy is morally misplaced. Then, I will extend my analysis to literary sources deployed by Black and Feminist thinkers to explore how their critiques are communicated. The use of creative writing to transmit appropriate reactions to evil and suffering place the emotional connection of readers at the centre of their understanding. Henceforth, a reflection on Black and Feminist critiques can reveal that instead of offering 'theodicy at the margins', they present antitheodicies of central importance. Such articulation refines this area of study in the philosophy of religion by making sure voices from contexts of structural oppression are not restricted to the borderlands of the discipline.

Daniel Jara J.: Making present the 'absent' theological 'ways of knowing' from the global South

Wednesday Session 5

More than a frontier, the epistemological fracture between the theologies from the global North and South relate to Fanon's abyssal line between metropolis and colonies. This "chasm" makes impossible any equalitarian relation between both sides of the line. On a theological level, what lays at the other (southern) side of the line is local, alternative, post-colonial, third-world, indigenous, informal, unofficial, particular, oral etc. Meanwhile, at the 'correct' side of the abyssal line, there is modern, academic, formal, global, scientific, published and written theology. This paper states the need of a new epistemological paradigm in Theology that will allow the emergence and study of unknown Christian experiences and reflections from the global South as well as the use of methodological tools, which do not overlook their most salient characteristics. It denounces the self-given position of privilege of academic western theology over other Christian reflections from around the globe; it sketches the main differences between the theological knowledge from the global North and the ways of knowing from the global South; and it proposes De Sousa Santos' 'Sociology of the absences

and emergences' as a suitable method to make present or to let "emerge" these southern absences, so they may share the same epistemological status as their counterparts from the global North. Finally, it enunciates three kinds of emergences: seed ruins, counter-hegemonic appropriations, and liberated zones. And it elucidates the roles they could play in intercultural theological exchanges.

Oskari Juurikkala: Crossing the Boundary of Heaven and Earth: Abu Qurrah's Philosphical Argument for a Trinitarian God
Wednesday Session 5

The Syrian bishop Theodore Abu Qurrah (c. 750 – c. 825) was a leading early exponent of theological exchange between Christian and Islamic cultures and faiths. Rooted in Byzantine orthodoxy, Abu Qurrah was nevertheless original in his attempt to render his Christian faith intelligible and attractive to Arabic listeners and readers, both Christian and Muslim. In his apologetic piece *Theologus Autodidactus*, he develops a peculiarly modern and personalistic argument for the Trinity, building on the idea that a communion of persons is something greater than a lonely Oneness. Abu Qurrah's writings have attracted very little scholarly attention (partly for having been translated into English only recently), but they are interesting both historically and in terms of contemporary religious dialogue. This paper critically examines his trinitarian argument, evaluating its prospects and problems in terms of Christian-Muslim dialogue. The paper especially highlights the consequences of the way in which Abu Qurrah crosses the usual boundaries of the divine-creature distinction.

Margaret Kamitsuka: Immigration, Human Rights, and Reproductive Justice: How to be Hospitable at the Border
Wednesday Session 5

In light of recent episodes at the U.S. border with Mexico, this essay addresses troubling moral and theological questions in relation to migration and human rights, generally, and the reproductive lives of immigrant women and girls, specifically. Visibly pregnant asylum seekers were returned immediately to poor conditions in Mexico, presumably preventing their babies being born in America and receiving automatic citizenship. One pregnant unaccompanied teenager, who crossed illegally and was put into a holding facility, requested and was denied access to medical care for an abortion. These disturbing incidents challenge our understanding of human rights, reproductive justice, and hospitality. They also challenge us to address what it means both to open national borders to those seeking asylum, while also allowing for limits regarding the borders of women's bodily integrity. This essay explores ethical questions that these realities pose for two groups: pro-immigrant, prolife conservative Christians and pro-immigrant, prochoice progressive Christians. I propose an ethical approach to hospitality that supports prochoice, pro-immigrant human rights by drawing insights from stories of hospitality in the Bible and the writings of philosophers Jacques Levinas and Emmanuel Derrida.

Matthew Kinnemore: Christ in Black and White: Reading James Cone with Karl Barth to Decolonize Incarnational Doctrine
Wednesday Session 5

As a Black man born and raised in the American South, I am no stranger to the burden of embodiment often experienced by Black-Americans. Yet, despite our substantial experience with the challenges of embodiment, European and North American theologians rarely turn to

the black experience when articulating doctrines of the Incarnation. This essay compares Karl Barth's incarnational theology with that of the Black-American theologian, James Cone. Through this comparison, I identify the epistemological influence of European thought within Barth's work. Finally, this essay argues that Euro-American theologies must engage with non-white theologies in future articulations of the Incarnation. The only way to set theological talk about God free from epistemological categorizations as established by culture, is by continually expanding our talk of God beyond individual cultures. This is the critical task of modern theology, because the 21st-century Church will be remarkably different than the European dominant Church of previous centuries. The fastest growing Christian populations are found in Sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, if theology is to remain relevant to the growing body of Christ, it must engage in dialogues across cultures, nationalities, genders, and ethnicities at the doctrinal level about who Jesus is and why he matters.

Nina Kurlberg: Constructing a Theological Framework for Inclusion for a Global Christian Aid Organization.

Tuesday Session 2

Inclusion is a high priority issue within the aid sector. Practices within its remit often focus on increasing access to pre-existing groups or structures, with emphasis placed on bringing those at the margins to the centre. Within the faith-based sphere, the word 'unity' is commonly used to describe inclusion's goal. This paper seeks to construct a theological framework for inclusion for a global Christian aid organization. Using data collected through internal interviews, two challenges are brought to the dominant sectoral conceptualizations of inclusion. Firstly, interpretational nuances between the languages used across the organization call into question its centre-focused nature. In some parts of Asia, for example, 'inclusion' is interpreted as a net that covers people. Secondly, reconciliation emerged as a preferable goal to unity since it carries the sense of righting injustice and legitimizes liberation—important here due to the hidden boundaries that operate within the organization, privileging certain voices at other's expense. Drawing on Grace Ji-Sun Kim's work, it is argued that a theological framework for this context must begin with the Spirit of God; a reconciliatory and decolonizing force with the power to erode the boundaries between the centre and margins. Practical implications of this argument are explored.

Taylor Lankford: T.F. Torrance and the Boundary between Theology and the Sciences

Tuesday Session 2

In his *Dogmatics in Outline*, Karl Barth makes the striking statement that 'Dogmatics is a science.' By this Barth means that dogmatics, as with the natural sciences, is 'an attempt at comprehension and exposition, at investigation and instruction, which is related to a definite object and sphere of activity'. Thus, in Barth's estimation, theology and the sciences share, at the very least, a common methodology: both theology and science are concerned with real knowledge which can be gained from attempts to hear, organize, and expound definite facts related to a given object. T.F. Torrance makes similar claims in *Theological Science*, wherein he argues that theology is the 'science' of God. Torrance makes strides within *Theological Science* to explain Christian theology as an essentially rational event, and that real knowledge of God begins with a posteriori reflection on the objective revelation of Godself in the world. According to Torrance, theology is a science in so far as it is the subjective (human) experience of an objective reality (God) wherein true knowledge is gained as the subject assumes a posture of objectivity towards its object. Such claims by Barth and Torrance illustrate their estimation of the close relationship between theology and the sciences. While

affirming this close relationship as perceived by Torrance, this paper will consider the stark boundary which Torrance draws between theology and the rest of the sciences. According to Torrance, the nature of the object of theology (Godself) establishes a radical difference between theology and the science, and this difference is key if theology is to claim real knowledge of God.

Luke Lee: Karl Barth and Mou Zongsan: Religious Roots of Political Responsibility in Europe and Asia

Tuesday Session 4

This paper examines and compares the political ethics of responsibility in Karl Barth and Mou Zongsan, two leading thinkers of the 20th-century Protestant Christianity and New Confucianism. For Barth, Christian political responsibility denotes the priestly and prophetic witness of the Christian community to respond to the divine Word of God. For Mou, Confucian political responsibility signifies new outer kingliness as a way of self-negation of innate knowledge. Both thinkers shared a democratic vision which grounds political responsibility in safeguarding fellow humanity in our common life, protecting suffering humanity from chaos and hegemonies, and facilitating the formation of responsible humanity according to distinct traditions. Corresponding to this normative commitment, they held a practical commitment to social democracy and articulated their religious ethics in European and Asian various crises. For these reasons, we contend with recent suspicions on two figures' political relevance, arguing that it is better to interpret their religious ethics as praxis theories that contain critical judgment on political actions and virtues. More importantly, their political visions and engagements will raise significant interfaith dialogue on human responsibility and inspire contemporary thinkers and practitioners to propose a responsible role in our common life at risk.

Peter Leith: Putting Signs in Place: A Semiotic Account of Creaturely Belonging

Wednesday Session 5

In this paper, I draw on Susannah Ticciati and Rowan Williams' semiotic readings of the creature-creator distinction in order to provide an account of creaturely belonging. Set against the backdrop of the way in which we have become dis-embedded from (or bordered off from) the environments in which we live, this paper highlights the way in which theological uses of semiotics (i.e. the study of signs) needs to be attentive to questions of place. I begin by setting out the semiotic distinction between creatures and God: God can never be a sign, whereas we are constituted as signs. In light of the way in which signs need to be interpreted, I will then go on to consider the way in which God makes the interpretation of signs possible, thereby enabling creatures, as signs, to be made sense of. Finally, given the way in which signs need to be contextualised in order to be interpreted, I will argue that creatures need to be contextualised within the world in order to be faithful to their nature as signs of God. Consequently, I will suggest that we need an embedded, ecological understanding of creaturely belonging, in contrast to dominant 'container' models of place.

Danielle Anne Lynch: Who I Am: Queering Theological Borders in Song

Wednesday Session 5

Music offers space for theological reflection outside the usual boundaries and borders of theological thought. It blurs the criteria of our critical judgements and offers new ways of thinking theologically. It allows us to go beyond our words to experience theology in action,

in song. I challenge, with Althaus-Reid, “the theological logic which considers that theology must be presented systematically, progressively... instead of disruptively and moment-based.” Song queers theology, destabilising and deconstructing harmful and restrictive patriarchal boundaries around our embodied, gendered, sexual lives. Song as theology disrupts theological norms, challenges categorical and binary thinking, emphasises the bodily and the transient, connects intimately, and, ultimately, in acting holistically on those who encounter it, draws the person of faith deeper into the mystery of God. Song offers an alternative space in which to evaluate theology, bringing with it a different set of concerns and questions. I will recontextualise the imago Dei theological anthropology, demonstrating the process and product of queering theology in song, and showing that we need fluidity and movement in our theologies, recognising an ongoing process of becoming who we are each made to be in the image and likeness of God.

Hannah Malcolm: Humans as Praying Animals: Pursuing a Path between Anthropocentrism and Biocentrism

Tuesday Session 4

This paper will treat prayer as a lens for discerning the role of humans in relation to other creatures. Environmental ethics has tended to either overemphasise human distinctiveness or creatureliness, positions often referred to as anthropocentrism and biocentrism. Both misrepresent human nature in their desire to eliminate the necessary tension defining our finite perspective: we can observe our distinctiveness from other creatures, but we cannot deconstruct it and identify its precise essence. Rather than claiming to identify the essence of human nature or deny its particularity, I will use prayer to argue that an unspecified, mysterious distinctiveness in our reading of human nature is not an enemy to environmental ethics. Instead, it is a guide, modelling the need for attention to both our distance from and closeness to other creatures. Such an approach invites us to re-embed humans in our finitude and contingency while nevertheless treating human nature as containing a particular call to participate in Christ’s work of transformation.

Oana Marian: Poetry and Non-Violent Theological Constructions of Self

Tuesday Session 2

My paper explores theological thinking and arts practice at their mutual borders, broadly, and, more specifically, the poetry of Colette Bryce within the context of queer, white, female, Northern Irish Catholic identity formation. J. Kameron Carter has argued compellingly that, “any gesture to constitute identity for ourselves, rather than to receive it as constituted in the God-Man Jesus will in some sense bear traces of violence,” and yet the poetry of Colette Bryce rests in the dynamic theopoetic intersection of divine reception and human self-constitution. While drawing from an Irish/ Northern Irish literary ecology more broadly, my paper interrogates the racial meanings of writing by white poets, investigating cultural citation practices along the literary imaginary of the Irish/ Northern Irish border (in poems such as “And They Call it Lovely Derry”), while thinking critically about non-violent alternatives to the constitution of identity – and maybe even sacred being – within modernity’(and Western Christianity’s) tenacious self-versus-non-self-other formulation. Situating these poems within the current crisis of the UK/EU/Ireland border, I put Bryce’s poems in conversation with the theo-political investigations of Catherine Keller, Mayra Rivera and Heather Walton, as well as the theo-ethical and theo-philosophical inquiries of Shawn M. Copeland and J. Kameron Carter.

Joel Mayward: More than Mestizo: Gloria E. Anzaldúa and a Christology of Nepantla
Tuesday Session 2

Nepantla, a term of Nahuatl origins, means “in-between space” or “at home in the middle.” It has been used to describe the experience of living in a hybridized culture after European colonialism in Latin America, an existence in the liminal space of tenuous borderlands (la frontera). Feminist queer cultural theorist Gloria E. Anzaldúa describes this as “seeing double” from two different cultural perspectives simultaneously, a state beyond either/or binaries, “a psychological liminal space” and “the bridge between the material and the immaterial; the point of contact y el lugar between ordinary and spirit realities.” Just as Latino theologian Virgilio Elizondo applies mestizaje to Christology in his Galilean vision of the Christ of the Mexican-American borderlands, I will consider Christ’s incarnation as nepantla, the Son ontologically residing within this liminal God-human space, two distinct natures in one person. Though beneficial, Elizondo’s mestizo metaphor may come close to monophysitism, suggesting the two natures blend or fuse into a hybridized single nature. In contrast, Anzaldúa’s nepantla is the paradox of two natures/identities being genuinely unified while remaining distinct, a permanent-yet-dynamic liminality. Ultimately, considering Christ as nepantlera offers fresh theological insights beyond Western and white English-language constructs, thus expanding our Christological borders.

Jenny Miller: One River, Many Wells' - Borderless Borders of Faith
Tuesday Session 2

Contemporary views of Interfaith are often characterised by what is commonly understood by the word 'Interfaith' in relation to the importance of tolerance and understanding between Faiths. In this paper, which is based on an award-winning essay with the World Congress of Faiths (2019), I argue that the word Interfaith more accurately points to a spectrum of ways which currently exist in relation to a contemporary understanding of Interfaith in the 21st Century. I will reflect on the subtle spectrum of meaning of 'Interfaith' in terms of how this term might slightly differ from, yet encompass, nuances of similar phrases, such as, 'Inter Faith', 'Multifaith', 'Interreligious', 'Inter-spiritual' or even 'Inter-mystical'. I will consider an interfaith depth ecumenical theology, 'One River, Many Wells' (Fox) and some counterarguments such as syncretism. Meister Eckhart said that, 'God/Divinity is a great underground river that no one can dam up and no one can stop' and Fox extends this analogy, in saying, 'there is one underground river - but there are many wells into that river...Many Wells but One River...' This paper will explore Fox's ecumenical theology of Interfaith as a model which crucially enables 'borderless' Universalism/Pluralism to sit harmoniously alongside the borders of particularism.

Rachel Noel: Theology at the Borders of Psychosis: Transcendence of the artificial borders of sanity.
Wednesday Session 5

Implicit in theology, is the expectation that the author is 'sane'. In Western society there is a widespread labelling of 'madness' that serves to isolate and separate perceived 'mad' voices from the so-called 'serious' work of theology. According to Lacan, psychotic thought has a high degree of freedom, but by not conforming to accepted standards of thought, is therefore not capable of being part of religious discourse. Drawing on my own lived experience of psychosis, this paper takes the work of Catherine Keller into conversation with Isabel Clarke's

work on psychosis, spirituality and madness in order to examine and critique the borders between psychosis and spirituality. Keller articulates a theology from the deep, that has to learn "to bear with its own chaos", whilst Clarke links the highest realms of human consciousness and the depths of madness, challenging the primacy of rationality and encouraging a paradigm shift in how we view the (often perceived hard) borders between psychosis and spirituality. This paper draws together the themes of chaos, depth and the trans-liminal state of psychosis, to redeem the voice of madness in theology and to dispute the borderland between psychosis and spirituality.

Karen O'Donnell: Methodological Bridges in Feminist Trauma Theologies
Tuesday Session 2

Feminist theologies and trauma theologies have much in common as constructive theologies, however they are separated by a methodological no (wo)mans land, in which artificial disciplinary borders have grown. In this paper, I address the specificity of methodology in Feminist Trauma Theologies drawing on the voices of the many 'Mary' characters in the New Testament as a bridge between the borders of feminist theologies and trauma theologies. Re-reading the narratives of these women, I propose that feminist trauma theology creates a methodological bridge between these two theological disciplines. Beginning from a place of honest confrontation with God and overcoming fear, it allows space for divine interruption into faith, experience, and theology even as it holds to the goods of the Christian tradition. Feminist Trauma Theology constructs narrative that has the flavour of testimony and functions in the public/political sphere. The construction of this theology is done in community, recognising the traumatic experiences of our fellow humans and the need to address the experience of trauma from a place of faith. This methodological bridge transcends artificial borders in an essential examination of the intersectional nature of trauma theologies.

Flo O'Taylor: Paying attention to women living with addiction: Toward a political theological method with Simone Weil and William Cavanaugh
Wednesday Session 5

This paper is an exploration of Simone Weil and William Cavanaugh as potential resources for constructing a political theological framework capable of paying attention to women living with substance dependence. Weil, who described herself as neither a politician theologian, nor a theologian at all, is a thinker that fits and transgresses both categories in a way that enriches the field. While addiction is often framed in individualised, pathological terms, we will identify it as a specific facet of social relatedness. We recognise women living with substance dependence are often located 'outliers' and 'blameworthy' in both church and society, and consider what mythic structures undergird such a location, challenging them with more accurate narratives. We shall draw Weil into dialogue with Cavanaugh's thought, to attend to these socio-political realities of women's lives. In doing so, we might negotiate a space between a realism that lacks the imagination to offer an alternative to the current socio-political system, and a communitarian utopia that is in danger of idolatry and naivety. Instead, we will pursue a third way, not of compromise, but of tension, capable of attending to reality, recognising the systems of injustice present, and constructing a response of resistance. This paper shall argue we first pay attention to the socio-political reality of women living with addictions, in order to rupture the imagination that marginalises them, before constructing an alternative socio-political imagination in pursuit of love and justice.

Melissa Pagán: Militarization and/at the Borders of Being: Colonial Christian Anthropologies as Border Patrol
Tuesday Session 3

Privileging the context of the US/Mexico border and deploying a feminist decolonial methodology, this paper begins with an analysis of how the nexus of the coloniality of being/coloniality of gender supports increasing militarization at sites of ideological and physical borders. Policing around ideological borders of humanity is a tactic used to create and sustain categories of persons who are “constitutive outsiders” of being at the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. Such categorizations inform how the US government doles out rights of entry and freedom from violence to some, while denying these rights to others, on the basis of favored characteristics of “authentic humanity” structured around white supremacist and colonial-nationalist discourses of identity and belonging. While many Christians decry violence and have put forth campaigns towards the demilitarization of borders, dominant Christian anthropological frameworks undermine this work as they themselves are rooted in the logics of coloniality of being/coloniality of gender. Thus, they perpetuate rather than subvert the policing that occurs at ideological borders of being. I ultimately argue that Christian colonial theological anthropologies function as an ideological border patrol that sanctions, even if inadvertently, the increasing surveillance and violence deployed against “outsiders” at physical borders today.

Eve R. Parker: Theologising with Sacred Sex Workers: Towards an Indecent Dalit The(a)ology with the Silenced Goddess
Tuesday Session 3

This paper will theologise with the contemporary devadāsīs of South India, focusing on Dalit girls who from childhood have been dedicated to the goddess Mathamma and used as village sex workers. Such theologising requires engaging with the lived religiosity of the Dalit villagers where the goddess plays a central role and where Jesus has become a local village deity. It will therefore explore notions of multiple religious belonging and religious hybridity apparent in the narratives of the contemporary devadāsīs and consider the possibilities of a Dalit the(a)ology that reconsiders the role of the goddess in a Christian Dalit theologising. It will seek to provide a model of Dalit Liberation Theology that supports the need to be affirmative to the Dalit identity yet challenges existing Dalit theological discourses to see beyond the hetero-patriarchal gaze. The worship patterns, beliefs, mythology and the suffering of the Dalit communities bring about a the(a)ologising with the divine that is rooted in a relationship with a God/dess that acts in the here and now, transgresses purity laws, and responds to the most 'indecent' of needs. This paper therefore challenges Dalit theological discourse to continue to journey towards an Indecent Dalit theologising that crosses religious boundaries in order to be truly indigenous and liberating to the most marginalised within the Dalit communities.

Augur Pearce: The Role of Borders in the Thinking of Protestant Territorial Churches
Wednesday Session 5

The doctrinal aspect of the Protestant Reformation was facilitated in many places by a constitutional aspect, a territorial understanding of the Christian community. The official religion of kingdoms, principalities and cities was reformed on the premise of territorial autonomy in spiritual affairs. But this brought an important corollary: if external prelates had no right to interfere in a territory's religious life, then that territory's ecclesiastical structures could equally not extend their authority beyond its borders. What did this imply for a believer

moving from one place to another? Early attempts to answer this conundrum could be seen in English approaches to the aspirations of London's Stranger Churches, or to its expatriate merchants in Continental factories. As territories changed hands by cession in the following centuries, or representative government weakened colonial links to the Imperial centre, new ecclesiastical borderlines came into being. The reluctance of the nineteenth century Church of Scotland to offer oversight to English Presbyterians, and agreements on membership still current between Swiss and German Landeskirchen, bring the story to the present day. The paper describes the contemporary legacy of the sixteenth century territorial church and links it to some of the justifications offered during its history.

Charles Roding Pemberton: Bread of Life in Broken Britain: Food banks, Faith and Neoliberalism

Tuesday Session 3

The provision of emergency food parcels through the UK's food bank network has been one of the most visible expressions of religious identity since the 2008 great recession. It has also been one of the most politically contested, with academics, activists, religious leaders and politicians vying to contextualise the food bank phenomena within divergent discourses. In this paper, I will outline the findings of my two years of research at County Durham Food bank and the conclusions of my forthcoming monograph on the subject (Spring 2020) with SCM Press: Bread of Life in Broken Britain: Food banks, Faith and Neoliberalism. The paper will suggest that the common inclination to locate the study of British food insecurity in the political context of austerity (while crucial) has tended to foreclose the analysis of confessional aspects of volunteerism and the ecclesial, economic and political possibilities suggested by contemporary political theology. In this way, the paper will make a small contribution to the critical interrogation of three borders: the social border and the political centre, research at the borders of divergent disciplines, work conducted at the border of theological reflection and lay action.

Jacob Phillips: Spatial Boundaries in Theologies of Culture and John Henry Newman's Use of 'Englishness'

Wednesday Session 5

Theologies of culture present tensions around 'space' insofar as evaluating place-specific expressions of Christianity threatens ultimately to undermine the universal dignity of human nature in Christian teaching. This paper explores these tensions in dialogue with Newman's envisaging of a distinctively English form of Catholicism and recent articulations of 'Englishness' in cultural studies. Paul Tillich and Pedro Arrupe seek to avoid an evaluative-theological appropriation of certain cultures by de-emphasising space: the first with a 'prophetic negation of the gods of space', the second with latently Christoform elements of cultures residing in all places and uncovered by a temporal process. More recently, however, Kathryn Tanner unavoidably employs spatial categories insofar as anthropologists draw 'boundaries' between 'particular societies', and Joseph Ratzinger presents the notion of universality itself as originating in a particular place, i.e. Ancient Greece. Recent accounts of 'Englishness' in cultural studies present particular tropes of cultural expression as rooted in landscape and climate. The tropes in question are similar to those which Newman judged in terms of their theological suitability ('moderation'/'discretion'/'empiricism'). His evaluation of these tropes/themes (if grounded geographically, not ethnically), promises to show how an endurance of space in theologies of culture need not undermine universal human dignity.

Jonathan Platter: Transgressing the boundaries between metaphysics and rage
Tuesday Session 3

In this paper, I initiate a discussion between the recent trend in favour of a theological metaphysic that emphasizes gift and gratitude (instanced in thinkers like Milbank, Balthasar, and Ferdinand Ulrich) and Robert Beckford's *God of the Rahtid: Redeeming Rage*. In much theological metaphysics, we find extended contemplations on the goodness and giftedness of 'being', which is fulfilled in creatures through a posture of gratitude. However, we might wonder to what extent such metaphysical speculation is simply a projection of the material comfort of the privileged. To consider the viability of a metaphysics of gift and gratitude beyond the boundaries of privilege, I introduce Beckford's provocation to express holy rage and ask how a metaphysic of gift and gratitude might need revision or clarification in light of rage against the systemic injustices inflicted on racial minorities. On the way toward developing a constructive, synthetic account through the dialogue, I introduce Kathryn Tanner's account of the demands of the vulnerable on the 'ministers of God's gifts'. I argue that Beckford's account of rage might be a necessary provocation toward the shared pursuit of performing the gift and gratitude of being.

Anupama Ranawana: Maybe it's Providence: Race at the borders of Climate and Cross
Tuesday Session 3

This paper offers a reflection on how race, racialisation and racism operate as key terms for mobilising persons of Christian faith in North America, both those who deny climate change, as well as those actively involved in environmental justice movements. Empirically, the paper draws on a three year collaborative inquiry project that studied the aspect of climate and cross in Canada and the United States. Using the lens of liberation theology, this paper looks at the 'progressive eschatologies' present within both these movements, and how they lend themselves to racialized, imperialistic narratives, often transgressing and transforming and transmutating the borders of discourse on the political left, specifically the transforming and silencing of narratives of historic suffering. Within these movements, there is a focus on the world that is to come, rather than the world that is, and this focus automatically rejects a hermeneutic of justice (Peiris 1988). This paper argues that a lack of a justice narrative reinforces and recreates racialized borders that already structure the Christian Social Imagination (Karter 2016). In taking up this absence of justice, this paper also argues for the need for a political theology of race.

Anupama Ranawana: Roundtable: The Role and Vocation of the Theologian
Tuesday Session 2

Participants: Mario Aguilar, Jarel Robinson-Brown, Hasna Khutan, and Selina Stone.

Roger L. Revell: Dying as a Natural Border: Karl Barth on Christ's Redemption of Death
Tuesday Session 3

The reality of death is one which continues to haunt and torment humanity. In the wider Christian tradition, our dying has most commonly been linked with the fall, as a direct (even if not immediate) consequence of sin. Yet is this familiar theological narrative wholly accurate? Karl Barth thinks not and suggests that although death must certainly be linked with sin, there is more to the story. He thus contends that a careful examination of the Christ's dying reveals that death can in fact be spoken of as a creational reality. This paper introduces Barth's atypical

appraisal of death (CD III/2), with attention to its christological underpinnings. Along the way, I highlight several shortcomings of his perspective but ultimately judge that his account yields an insight worth retaining. This verdict is reinforced by more recent scholarship, which arrives at similar conclusions though by different routes. All of this suggests that Christ's 'victory over the grave' is something which overcomes the "sting" or problem of death (1 Cor 15) rather than death per se. Consequently, it is possible and appropriate to regard dying in non-punitive terms, as a natural, unworried border crossing between present and eternal existence.

Ma. Adeinev Reyes-Espiritu: Religion Towards Integration? The Case of Migrant Mothers in Belgium

Tuesday Session 3

In secularized societies like Belgium, where religion, especially of the migrants, can be perceived as a threat, religious and academic circles serve as a valuable platform to encourage discourse on spiritualities. This presentation is based on a qualitative empirical research into the lives of first-generation migrant mothers where data is mainly gathered from their participation in a semi-structured interview. In particular, the research project responds to the questions: i.) How is mothering a spiritual experience for first-generation migrant mothers of young children living in Belgium? ii.) In what ways does mothering as spiritual experience affect their integration in the society? This exploration gives some insights into the changes in religious practices that take place due to migration in the context of migrant mothers. It also takes a look at the centrality of religion in the lives of migrants who at times have been relegated to the peripheries of a society. This research on mothering—an area of study that is still confined to the margins of theological reflection—of female migrants, whose lived realities consist in confronting borders invites us to reconsider how much value to ascribe to borders.

Jeremy Michael Rios: An embedded 'othering' in ecclesiology? Querying Orientalism's role in ecclesiological anthropology.

Tuesday Session 3

Prominent in Western self-consciousness is our idea of the 'I,' sovereign, self-determining, and independent—a concept which appears often to struggle with the 'we' of ecclesiological anthropology. This paper proposes that a factor which may contribute to this struggle is a deeply embedded 'othering' in the composition of Western theological anthropology, whereby the 'I' of the Western self reinforces its individuality at the expense of a given non-Western 'we.' The paper argues this thesis in two ways. First, it documents the state of the Western 'I' by linking Charles Taylor's account of the Western self, Tu Wei Ming's account of the non-Western self, and Edward Said's Orientalism. Second, it points to examples of a latent ecclesiological distortion by showing how Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology is an extension of Hegel's concept of community—itsself formed by Orientalism—which similarly depends on a process of othering. The paper argues that together these concepts form a combination that is toxic for both ecclesiology and theological anthropology. The paper concludes with some suggested ways forward.

Mia Sasaki: Borders as Liminal Spaces of Compassion: Student Perspectives on the Rohingya Migration

Tuesday Session 3

In response to recent attention surrounding the Rohingya refugee exodus, this paper explores university-age student perspectives and the tension of the Christian response to this mass migration. These perspectives range from students in refugee camps and migrant education to those in international institutions in Bangladesh and Myanmar. Students from migrant backgrounds had experienced the marginalization and instability of migration but still wrestled with religious differences between Buddhists, Christians, and Muslims. Students from the Myanmar international university--mostly well educated and upper-middle class--held a largely homogeneous view that Rohingya are illegal migrants from Bangladesh. Juxtaposing the other outlooks, the student perspectives from Bangladesh was sympathetic to the Rohingya, perhaps influenced by the majority of students coming from countries with a high percentage of Muslims. Thus, in contrast to the dominant Western media viewpoint, this paper broaches some of the complexity of the context. The multiplicity of views makes room for a theological discussion about borders and when these boundaries should be transgressed or retained. From this, I hope to not only examine the Rohingya situation, but to re-envision migrant areas, recast as spaces of liminality and compassion.

Peter Selby: Draining the Channel with a Spoon: theological responses when migration overwhelms

Wednesday Session 5

Simon Jenkins' pithy attack on migration control, points to the pressing need to discern a theological response when attempts to 'take control of our borders' encounter the reality of borders overwhelmed. This short paper will focus on the significance of that experience, a fact of life among the earliest discoveries. Up to the end of my fingertips is I, myself; what is beyond the end of my fingertips is not I, not myself. That initial and unavoidable exploration leads to the discovery that reality often through the experience of my border overwhelmed, of my lack of control of what is beyond the boundary of myself and particularly of my inability to prevent it from crossing into myself. What is true of the border of the personal body is true of the borders of the body corporate. The biblical record, and the subsequent experience of those who have sought to be guided by it, is of attempts of various kinds to address the experience of borders overwhelmed, by denial, by violence, by the politics of alliance or revolution. If the response that is commended is faith, what are the dispositions and actions that such a response implies?

Andrew Shamel: Transgressing Secular and Sacred: Mythopoeisis & the Possibility of a Peaceful Ontology

Tuesday Session 4

Central to John Milbank's project of 'out-narrating' the mythos of secular modernity has been a contention that it represents a metaphysics of violence which can only be overcome by the mythos of Christianity and the uniquely peaceful ontology and metaphysics it announces. In this paper, I argue that Milbank is working with an insufficiently Trinitarian conception of mythos which prevents him from escaping the very agonistics he is seeking to overcome. Drawing on Jean-Louis Chretien's phenomenology of prayer in Call and Response, I argue that all of our mythopoeisis, including the mythoi decried by Milbank, participate in the always/already speech-response that is begun in the call ex nihilo into being. This participation

is a way of figuring the more general participation in the Father's creation, Christ's response, and the Spirit's movement of love. A Trinitarian, participatory rendering of mythos allows us to speak of our myth-making as rooted in the intra-Trinitarian movement, the 'ontological peace' Milbank seeks to speak. This participation transgresses the boundaries between sacred and secular and gestures toward the eschatological unity to which all of our making points and to which we are all being drawn by God's prevenient desire.

Chris Shanahan: Wrestling with an octopus: Poverty, violence and political theology in an age of austerity

Wednesday Session 5

The convergence of multidimensional pre-existing poverty, a decade-long neo-liberal 'age of austerity' and structural inequality represents a perfect storm for people who are left out and left behind in contemporary Britain and an unprecedented challenge for academics, activists, preachers and policymakers. Drawing on original UK-wide case study, interview and survey data from the ongoing 'Life on the Breadline' research project this presentation will shine a light on the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary Christian responses to poverty and the theological traditions that they exemplify. Through its engagement with the work of Johann Galtung and Gustavo Gutiérrez the presentation will demonstrate that only an intersectional theology of liberation can provide the resources needed to fashion modes of faith-based activism that are capable of defeating the death-dealing direct, structural and cultural violence of contemporary poverty and forging an ethic of holistic liberation

Jason Shields: Hope in the wake of slavery: rearticulating Christology to overcome the racial antagonism

Wednesday Session 5

As we attempt to come to terms with the terror of slavery and its afterlife that permeates every facet of society, the idea of hope is often elusive. Western Christianity must reckon with the reality that the issue of race is a theological problem. This requires it to be critically evaluated in light of its own dark and complex history. The quest for hope in this paper will require us to engage with writers in Black Studies and Black Theology as they attempt to make sense of what it means to be black and exist within the superstructure of modernity's project of racial antagonism and legacy of slavery. The use of a black epistemology sets the stage for dismantling of the project of white supremacy and its interwoven violence that has permeated Christianity. It is necessary to divorce the Christ of scripture from the Christ of white supremacy, and in so doing, pave the way for a Christology that has the generativity to dismantle the racial antagonism that has held blackness in opposition to whiteness. Christ in the particularity of his Jewish body is therefore the event of liberation which engages in the redemption of all bodies.

Austin Stevenson: 'Truth is a Mode of Being': Challenging Borders in Cognitive Theory

Wednesday Session 5

Leen Spruit has noted that "the metaphysical framework of Thomas [Aquinas'] doctrine of the intelligible species is constituted by his theory of participation, which eliminates any radical cleavage between the material and spiritual realms, as well as between the ideas of mental receptivity and activity" (*Species Intelligibilis*, 170). In this paper, I follow up Spruit's contention and explore the ways that Aquinas's participatory ontology structures the relationship between concepts that tend to be separated by strict boundaries—spirit and

matter, act and potency, and receptivity and spontaneity—and their impact on his cognitive theory. At the same time, I nuance Spruit’s claims, emphasizing that participatory ontology is not a matter of blurring distinctions, but of recognizing that all things exist according to their proper mode of being. In so doing, illuminate one of the most concrete and significant ways in which the doctrine of creation shapes Aquinas’s understanding of human nature.

David Tombs: Pink Crosses in Ciudad Juárez
Wednesday Session 5

This paper examines the deaths and disappearances of girls and women in Ciudad Juárez, on the Mexico-USA border. Drawing on the work of Nancy Pineda-Madrid, 'Suffering and Salvation in Ciudad Juárez' (2011), it explores gender-based violence documented by activists and human rights group as a starting point for theological reflection. Between 1993 and 2011, Juárez became internationally known as a site of 'femicide', a term used for 'the killing of women because they are women'. Although the rate of femicide in Juárez has declined in the last decade, sexual and gender-based violence against women in different forms remains high. Part 1 of the paper provides a brief overview of the deaths and disappearances in the Juárez femicide, with attention to the use of sexual violence to humiliate, discredit, and stigmatise victims. Part 2 discusses feminist responses to the femicide and the use of wooden crosses painted bright pink as a form of protest. Part 3 takes up Pineda-Madrid’s invitation to reflect theologically. It explores how the use of sexual violence in Juarez to humiliate, discredit, and stigmatise victims might also offer insights into the stripping and naked exposure of Jesus as intentional acts of humiliation, discrediting, and stigmatisation.

Samuel Efrain Murillo Torres: Enforced disappearances in Mexico: Bonhoeffer's public theology engaging with Mexican necropolitics.
Wednesday Session 5

Mexico is experiencing its highest levels of violence. Enforced disappearances have been happening for 50 years and nowadays are normalized: more than 73,000 people are missing with on average one person disappearing every hour. The Mexican government has more than 26,000 unidentified bodies. The most violent year was 2019 with 38,000 killed. However, 2020 surpassed this number. Bonhoeffer's Christological theology (through the form, formation and place of Christ in life and history), offers the possibility of recognizing a corrupted heritage from the past, and acknowledging the present hope, love and faith. In bringing this theology into dialogue with the context of enforced disappearances, this paper argues there is the possibility of stopping the harming and future healing in the current national, forensic, necropolitical crisis in Mexico. The account offered will be an Aesthetic Public Theology from the Margins.

Eric M. Trink: Migrant Religiosities: Theological Reflections on the Elasticity of Religious Borders
Wednesday Session 5

This project explores the boundaries of belonging and effects of religiosity in contexts of migration for the purpose of asking what contributions can be made to theological reflections on the nexus of religion and migration in light of present data on migrant religiosity and internal religious pluralism. Like other aspects of culture, humans carry their religious identities with them as they traverse geographies. While some elements of cultural enactment appear to be placed on-hold during experiences of relocation, only to emerge later in settled

conditions, religion defies this tendency. Plasticity and comprehensiveness are hallmarks of many migrants' religious repertoires. Migrants' religiosities are shaping the contents of religion around the world. To accomplish this task, I will set these findings in constructive conversation with biblical texts of migration that themselves show evidence of a tendency towards religious elasticity and comprehensive representations of divinity in contexts of mobility. In doing so, it will be argued that such biblical texts provide a more robust starting point for constructing a theology of migration than is often realized.

Victoria Turner: The De-colonialization of Mission Through the Creation of the Council for World Mission

Wednesday Session 5

The Council for World Mission (1977) has a long legacy, tracing back to the 1795 London Missionary Society (LMS), Britain's first pan-denominational Missionary Society. Resistance from indigenous Christian leaders to the structure of the LMS was recorded from 1901, but the Society did not change organisationally until 1966, when it responded to changing theology in the home churches. By 1975 however, the overwhelmingly British Board of Directors realised they were not delivering mission from the six continents and convened a meeting with the churches in the mission field. This meeting, held in Singapore has been called a 'Kairos moment' as it led to the complete restructure of the organisation in 1977, to the extent that one historian of mission exclaimed that it was no longer 'recognisable' as a missionary society. Power shifted from the West across the border to the Majority World, but this shift was designed and controlled by Western churches. A missional direction, theological stance, and global agenda emerged and partner churches had to fit this vision to benefit from the CWM. This paper argues that the drive from Western churches to de-colonise mission, in actuality, enabled power to continue to reside in the West.

Jordan Joseph Wales: At the Limen of Personhood: Empathy, Slavery, and the Rise of Social AI

Wednesday Session 5

The Trinitarian tradition transformed the Roman persona (role) into the relational person, who lives most fully in the inter-subjective communion of affective and cognitive empathy with another. Near-future social AIs will give us this experience without possessing any subjectivity of their own. They will also be consumer products, designed as subservient instruments of their users' satisfaction. Here are two theological challenges: First, by instrumentalizing apparent persons will we grow accustomed to the experience of slaveholding? Or will we resist this corrosive acquiescence, but only by resisting empathy for our possessions' apparent personalities, and so ending as mild sociopaths? Second, where experience and theory collide on personhood's traditional border, some contemporary thinkers attempt to overcome the dilemma by expanding personhood or giving "rights" to social AIs. This inclusivity raises provocative challenges demanding careful theological reflection. Informed by contemporary computer science, I analyze these problematics in conversation with philosopher of technology Gilbert Simondon and by a critical retrieval of the semiotics and cultural critique of Augustine of Hippo, central to the genealogy of our contemporary relational understanding of the person. In the transcendent perspective of theology, perhaps we may find how to live personally among the apparent persons soon to come.

Risaw Walis: Incessantly Colonized Border(s): Mother-tongue Reading and Decolonial Reflection on Proverbs 22:28
Monday Session I

The concepts of border for Taiwan's Indigenous Peoples (hereafter, TIPs) are culturally varied from that of modern state. Speaking from my Sediq tribe's term, border can be translated as Gnyusan. Its deep-seated meaning relates to a territorial integrity of other tribes, hunting zones demarcation and most importantly a traditional wisdom of mutualism with the ancestral lands and environment. Yet, under the postcolonial land condition, modern states have employed aggressive policies to re-register and represent indigenous borders, forcing indigenous peoples to abandon traditional ways of engagement with the land, environment and other tribes as well as alienating from the ancestral mother-lands. This paper firstly stands from this social location and postcolonial condition to ponder the incessantly indigenous colonized border(s) condition. Then Taiwan-yuan-chu-min Tribal Biblical Interpretative Method, a tribal biblical de-colonial and contextual reading strategy dedicated to incorporating tribal philosophies, wisdoms and ideas behind mother-tongue, will be applied to re-read Proverbs 22:28. It is expected to summon Sediq's traditional land knowledge and to critically reflect the incessantly colonial border(s) against the background of TIP' postcolonial land experience. It also states the significance of mother-tongue as a means of re-imagining and practicing TIPs' contextual theologies and theologizing framework.

Elizabeth Welch: Bi-polarisation and the church, the response offered in koinonia.
Wednesday Session 5

The last few decades have seen the church succumbing to the bi-polarisation, individualism and self-identity that is increasingly prevalent in this divided world, and moving away from the unifying sense of koinonia and relationality that flows out of the triune God and enables borders to be crossed. This paper will look at four areas: 1. the understanding of the koinonia that is God's gift; 2. the way that koinonia has been explored in ecumenical dialogues; 3. how koinonia offers a way forward, at times costly, in relation to division and separation in the church; 4. the gift of koinonia in a divided world, bringing openness, listening, acceptance and the willingness to engage with radical difference, for the sake of a more loving, generous and inclusive world.

Edda Wolff: Noli me tangere – The Theological Potential of Borders in Indigenous Reconciliation Processes
Tuesday Session 4

Noli me tangere – the theological challenges and potential of “boundaries” and “borders” in Indigenous reconciliation processes. In my paper, I will explore the potential of boundaries and borders as a pillar of reconciliation work using the example of the ongoing process between the diocese of British Columbia and local First Nation groups. Respecting cultural, social and personal boundaries and acknowledging where these have historically (or even today) been violated is a core concern of Reconciliation processes. This involves topical issues, but also a fundamental sensibility for methods that are mindful of authentic expressions beyond colonial, logocentric understanding. Thus, recent approaches in Indigenous Studies have emphasised the importance of art and ritual as core aspects for Reconciliation. In a second step, I will explore the implications for a theological hermeneutics of Reconciliation. How does a renewed emphasis on boundaries and borders challenge theological thinking and interpreting? I will introduce “negative hermeneutics” as a method that focusses on breaks

and gaps and in leaving space for “in-between” spaces allows for a fundamental reevaluation of extra-lingual expressions and practices for theological research.

Jae Yang: Pannenberg's Pneumatology which Bridges the Sacred/Secular Distinction
Wednesday Session 5

Pannenberg's ecclesiology in *Systematic Theology*, Volume 3, discusses the church's relationship with creation and the broader society. While there are differences in terms of institutions, values, and purposes, what unites these spheres is the Holy Spirit as the all-encompassing force field which unites the sacred and secular, and the past, present and future. This paper argues that for Pannenberg, the presence of the Spirit in creation is background for the present day church. The church, as also Spirit-filled, not only looks backwards to consummate creation, but also looks forward to anticipate the eschaton and the future kingdom. The paper will draw two implications, one that bridges the secular and sacred divide, and one that overcomes the distinction between the past, present and future. Regarding the former, as the Spirit is present in both creation and the church, I argue that there is no ontological distinction between the two. Thus, the sacred and the secular are merely two aspects of salvation history leading toward the kingdom of God. Regarding the latter, I argue that the distinctions between past, present and future are minimized as the church not only consummates the past, but anticipates the future in a trinitarian manner which both unites and differentiates.

Clement Yung Wen: 'Personal', 'Social', and 'Political': Re-Exploring the Borders via Pannenberg and Cavanaugh
Wednesday Session 5

One of the major deficiencies of the late Wolfhart Pannenberg's (1928-2014) proposals regarding the relationship between 'church and world' is his lack of a 'social thought-structure' to complement his overriding emphasis upon a more individualistically-oriented 'Christian personalism'. After briefly, but critically, summarizing the key features of Pannenberg's thought on this matter (mostly through his writings that aim to disavow liberation theology and Marxism), this paper will explore whether William Cavanaugh's (1962-) understanding of 'individual bodies' and, importantly, 'social bodies' can ontologically serve as a helpful corrective. Along the way, while arguing affirmatively for such a prospect, the dialogue with Pannenberg will at the same time serve to tease out the question of whether Cavanaugh's constructive ecclesiological repositioning of 'social' and 'political'—by which the latter is given precedence in a manner that, in Cavanaugh's mind, the 'social' and 'political' are no longer 'opposed'—detrimentally risks blurring certain necessary borders between 'personal', 'social', and 'political', ultimately delimiting the array of Christian options for public and political engagement while also undoing the positive gains of 'Christian personalism' itself. In the end, it will be shown that the type of critical theological construction with regard to personhood, sociality, and ecclesial political engagement that is currently sorely needed runs through the impasse that is represented by the differences between Pannenberg and Cavanaugh.

Eckhard Zemmrich: Defining Borders. Theological truth claims and their margins in intercultural discourse
Tuesday Session 4

The postcolonial provincialisation of Europe concerns theological perspectives in a fundamental way: What, in Church History, used to be called doctrinal core statements gained

in Ecumenical consensus at early church councils both in Roman-catholic and Eastern-orthodox tradition, turned out to be also expressions of contextualized theologies derived from Hellenistic worldviews. A profound uncertainty as to unquestioned validity of what may be called orthodox Christian doctrine ensues up to the present day. Intercultural theology, investigating ways of theological communication which is crossing cultural borders, is not only concerned with empirically grounded descriptions of discourses transgressing such borders; it also is challenged to find ways of defining borders of Christian doctrine in light of those postcolonial insights. This short paper exemplifies ways and suggests criteria for theological truth claims which transgress cultural borders, yet strive to avoid the pitfalls of imperial thinking.

Papers in Theological Streams Abstracts (Alphabetical by Seminar Stream then presenter's surname)

Black Theology: Convened by Dulcie McKenzie (Tuesday Session 3)

Colin Brewster

An Investigation and Critique of Two Alternative Visions Existing Within the Seventh-day Church

In this research paper, I argue that two alternative visions exist within the Seventh-day Adventist church. The first vision came into existence prior to the American Civil War; the second after its conclusion. The paper investigates the problem: how did the trajectory of the SDA pre-Civil War Vision become interrupted and obstructed by the post-Civil War vision? The trajectory of the SDA church pre-Civil War, was its goal to achieve a fuller realization of its vision of wholeness and antiracist witness. However, by the time the church reached its post-Civil War stage, a pseudo counter-vision had become prevalent, concealed by the invisibility of whiteness and extended through the perpetuation of racism in church and society. Through an antebellum/postbellum prism, I explore this problem further, by engaging with the American historico-socio-religious context, in which the nascent SDA church emerged. I utilise this approach, in dialogue with other theologians and church historians, in order to establish a critique of the church's derailment from its initial trajectory. The critique includes the church's overall failure to detect the pseudo counter-vision and the need to expose it. Finally, from my analysis of the problem, I state how the SDA church can reestablish its trajectory and achieve its goal, while indicating that it needs to become involved collaboratively, beyond its borders with diverse others in a fuller vision of wholeness for all of God's creation.

Sonia Soans

Intersectionality as a Means of Social Justice for Christian Women of Colour

Black women have articulated intersectionality in their writing and activism long before Kimberlé Crenshaw coined it as a formal term in 1989. The basic idea of intersectionality is that an individual occupies multiple identities, some or all of which disadvantage an individual more than others. For black women this means fighting two sources of oppression, one against racism another against sexism. Black feminists have applied this framework to other social injustices they face, such as homophobia transphobia and ableism. The strength of intersectionality lies in its reflexivity and the manner in which it lends itself to understanding complex identities. Christian Women of Colour experience exclusion on the basis of both their race and gender. The public backlash against Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin's appointment is indicative of misogynoir faced by women of colour. Unravelling the abuse from only a racial or gender standpoint would not fully explain the situation as both race and gender were weaponised against her. While the Church has groups for understanding race, gender, sexuality and disability, they do so as discrete entities. Intersectionality as a means of understanding this backlash can help provide a means of understanding complex lived experience and even provide a means of justice.

CL Nash: A Black Woman's Prophetic Rage: Religious Epistemology as Needed Boundary Crossing

This paper identifies the Syrophenician woman as a Black, historic woman in Biblical text, and an example of the way prophetic rage operates to push boundaries. Because she uses her own epistemological awareness to counter the presumption of her innate inferiority, and because her challenge is levelled against a renown Jewish rabbi, I use her as a metaphor for both the academic and religious challenges which Black women level against boundaries in both institutions today. Women of African descent frequently raged against the theodical impulses which have shaped their real lived experiences and have formed their religious and theological epistemologies around such unmerited suffering. Womanist theologians transgress boundaries by speaking their own stories and standing firmly in their rights to operate as, not only receptacles of knowledge, but also producers of knowledge. When students of African descent are encouraged to mortgage their futures with high interest loans, or to spend their productive years meeting the rigors of this academic training, with no real hope of monetizing this with a professorship, we see a clear colonial boundary of epistemological worth. This notion, that Black minds must be colonized, is evident in the thinkers we use, the professors we use to teach about those thinkers, and the frameworks to which we frequently assign the concept of rigor. The border around academic epistemology, and our understanding of how theology does and must shape this, is worthy of further inquiry. How does religious epistemology function in higher education? Who is able to claim themselves producers of knowledge, and whose knowledge has validity within higher education? In its entirety, this project uses the Syrophenician woman, as a vehicle to understanding: 1) the epistemological heritage of the oppressed and its relevance for theological inquiry today; 2) the historical and contemporary means by which knowledge production is perceived as an elite right belonging to one group and elusive for others; 3) diversification of epistemological authority as part and parcel for decolonizing God. Using a womanist approach that interprets this concern through the lens of race, gender and class, I will also evaluate power dynamic through the triangle of: power, truth and right, as originally theorized by Michel Foucault. I will also buttress this argument with epistemological understandings of the "racial contract" in the work of Charles Mills.

Christology & Trinity: Convened by Jenny Dagers & Emily Kempson (Monday Session I)

Kirsty Borthwick

Forma servi, forma dei: Reading Augustine's Theology of Participation

In *De Trinitate*, Augustine distinguishes between Christ in *forma servi* (the form of a servant) and *forma dei* (the form of God). His intention is to preserve the boundary between God and creation whilst speaking meaningfully of the Incarnation. Augustine also articulates his trinitarian theology in participatory terms: it is as a consequence of the divine missions – the Father's sending of the Son and Spirit – that humanity is enabled to ascend to God via contemplation of the image of the Trinity in the human mind. In this paper, I will read Augustine's participatory theology in light of his *forma servi, forma dei* Christology. I will first argue that in the context of the divine missions, Augustine's Christology is intended as a statement of activity: Augustine's concern is with the manner in which Christ 'acts' and not in questions of his 'being'. I will thus insist that Augustine is misconstrued by recent attempts to read *De Trinitate* as an account of trinitarian ontology. Instead, I will argue for a reading of the work that foregrounds our participation in God's activity: our participation in God is not in ontological terms, but insofar as Christ perfects us for the activity of contemplation.

Simon Hewitt

Epistemic Suffering and Christ's Human Knowledge

There is a recent trend, particularly in analytic theological circles, towards making exalted claims about Christ's human knowledge. In particular, theologians have wanted to claim for Christ extensive knowledge of both the future and of general ('scientific') facts about the universe. We can call this superknowledge. This talk opposes the view that Christ had superknowledge from a novel perspective. I argue that there is a distinctive kind of suffering, epistemic suffering, which results from not knowing certain facts concerning the destiny and well-being of oneself and others. I argue that superknowledge would be incompatible with Christ undergoing significant epistemic suffering, and that this absence of epistemic suffering would have soteriological implications, undermining Christ's genuine solidarity with suffering humanity.

Ryan Turnbull

Christ's Topography

Recent theologies of place have tended to agree that a Christian theology of place should be located under Christology. Place is a category of body, and the centre of Christian reflection on the body is quite obviously the body of Jesus. Yet while there is broad agreement that 'place' is a Christological category, there is also great diversity in how, precisely, it is so. This paper surveys the various proposals for situating 'place' christologically before suggesting that 'place' is a distributed doctrine across all the christological loci. While embodiment is key to locating 'place' in Christology, it is helpful also to consider the role of the second person of the Trinity in the economy of divine self-disclosure. God's revelation of Godself to creation, while remaining a work of the entire Trinity, is particularly revealed to us in the life, work, and person of Jesus. Following the work of philosopher Jeff Malpas, I argue that attending to the connections between Jesus' body, 'place,' and the intelligibility of divine self-disclosure suggest that 'place' operant in all Christological sub-doctrines.

Church, Theology, & Ministry: Convened by Julie Gittoes (Tuesday Session 2)

Hannah Marie Richardson

'In Continual Remembrance': Preaching and the Eucharist in the *Books of Homilies*

The *Books of Homilies* (1549/1562) were produced during a profound time of religious change in England, where both doctrine and its (ad)ministration was called into question. This paper will argue that the theological framework of preaching and the Eucharist present in the *Homilies* - which emphasises personal devotion, the acquisition of doctrinal knowledge, and the very intentional reception of the Sacrament - is a useful basis for current discussions about mission, evangelism and worship. Not only do the ideas merit examination in themselves, but they emerge from, and are codified in, a time of great religious change, which bears similarities to the identity-changing situations in which churches find themselves today. This paper will consider how the two inter-related themes from the *Homilies* of community preceding Communion, and personal development as part of a community speak to present-day ministries of Word and Sacrament, especially those which appear to prioritise one over the other. It will be suggested that the *Homilies'* understanding of the reciprocal relationship between preaching and the Eucharist provides a sharp lens for intra- and inter-denominational engagement with contemporary concerns surrounding the ministry of the church and its identity in the modern world.

Kenneth Wilkinson-Roberts

Steps, Screens and Web-Cams: Exploring Borders in Digital Age

As part of my MA thesis, I explored people's experiences of digital pastoral care in the context of accessibility and inclusion. In this investigation, it emerged that accessibility is central to understanding the appeal and nature of digital pastoral care. Crucial here is digital technology's ability to enable networks and support structures to be formed in ways which make them inclusive and accessible to people who could be excluded from in-person, physical pastoral care services. In this paper, I want to explore more deeply how notions of space, access and distance operate in people's experiences of pastoral care on and offline, and what this tells us about the types of borders that can be found there. More specifically, I want to unpack the borders which digital technology can remove (such as steps and uncomfortable face-to-face dialogue), and borders which digital technology erects (like screens, web-cams and platform gatekeeping). This exploration raises important questions about how we understand accessibility, theology and ministry in the context of digital technology, with impacts for the way that we understand and deliver pastoral care in this context.

Philosophy & Theology: Convened by Marika Rose & Elizabeth Pyne (Monday Session I)

Caleb Gordon

You Are What You See: Environmental Ethics as a Critique of the Conditions of the Self

My paper analyzes David Bentley Hart's treatment of Gilles Deleuze's notion of 'folds' and its implications for environmental ethics. I build specifically on their shared position that the experience of self is generated by the world reflecting back to itself. This convergence of Hart and Deleuze provokes a question for environmental ethics about whether environments can or should be critiqued in terms of the conditions which generate and sustain self, similarly to the way we understand the sustenance and health of bodies. Hart offers an expanded account of 'folds', arguing that the material conditions of the world do not merely reflect each other but mediate a 'shining-through' of the divine. For Hart, this fulfills our creaturely receptivity and need for meaning – and is not a uniform feature of the world, but can 'shine through' more or less brightly depending on environmental conditions. On the other hand, for Deleuze, the world does not mediate the 'shining through' of God – though the shape of acquiring meaning and self-understanding does not differ much from Hart. The departures of their theology signal certain difficulties in critiquing the meaning of environments, but do not undermine the larger point: a need for environmental ethics to critique environments on the basis of the experiences they generate, and thus the selves they produce.

Bojan Koltaj

Stealer, Steal Her: We Cross the Border

Are there borders between theology and philosophy? What happens when we cross them in theological reflection? Should we, can we, or must we? How do we know when we have crossed over? Is crossing regulated and are there correct ways to do so? What about migration? What happens to our identity - are we still a theologian or are we a migrant that is not one or the other? Can theologians be anything but (a) migrant? This paper will investigate the phenomenon of borders between academic disciplines of theology and philosophy through autoethnographic reflection of my own crossing of the border in reflection upon theological thought. It will involve analysis of my publications and teaching, as well as conference presentations across disciplines against the wider cultural and political meaning of borders and their crossing. Rather than describing what I already knew, it will yield insights and provide a platform for the stories of other participants or attendees.

Calli Micale

Dependence and Disability: A Theological Conversation with Elizabeth Barnes

Some theologians argue that human dependence on God is a maximal relation of dependence. Ordinary relations of dependence within the world differ from the divine-human relationship only with respect to their degree. This is important, because if one's relation to God demonstrates the best possible mode of dependent relations, then humans, in their intra-worldly relations, ought to imitate this mode of relationality as best they can. Further, if humans image God in virtue of their dependency, then, dependence, in a strong sense, does not diminish worth; rather it confers dignity. Unfortunately, these arguments hang on the presupposition that relations of dependence *qua* dependence are of a single sort. In this paper, I argue that intra-worldly dependence is categorically different than one's dependence on God. I use Elizabeth Barnes's argument to show that intra-worldly relations of dependence are "hyperintensional," but dependence on God is unilateral and not open to substitution. Indeed, if one thinks God's transcendence through Kathryn Tanner's framework, then intra-

worldly relations are hyperintensional, because their activity takes place on the same plane or level of existence. In the end, I point towards some difficulties that this distinction creates for those thinking at the intersection of theology and disability.

Theological Anthropology: Convened by Al McFadyen & Stephan van Erp (Monday Session I)

Charlotte Bray

Human Vulnerability and the Constitutive Sociality of the Self: Rethinking the Relation between Personal and Social Sin

The language of social sin has become widespread in theological thought since its emergence in Latin American Liberation theology. The precise relation between personal and social sin, however, remains an ambiguous and contentious topic. This paper will examine Judith Butler's theory of the constitutive sociality of the self to argue that her concept of selfhood can help develop theological thought on the relation between personal and social sin. For Butler, we exist at every moment as beings in relation, and it is this very relationality that constitutes the formation of our subjectivity. There is a fundamental interdependency, permeability and fluidity of human selfhood. This impressionability leaves our cognitive, affective and volitional powers vulnerable to being misshapen by our social environments, in ways that harm both ourselves and others. In dialogue with Butler's idea of the vulnerability of embodied life, I seek to nuance the concept of selfhood, which underlies accounts of social sin. With the personal so intimately bound with the social, the two share an ambiguously indiscrete relationship. This appraisal of the complex relation between personal and social sin will be achieved by situating the acting individual as an embodied, historical, relational, and communicative being; I will further consider the impact this anthropology has for our understandings of freedom, agency and humanity's historical condition vis-à-vis God.

Edward Howells

The Value of the 'Abys' in Theological Anthropology

This paper examines the notion of the 'abyss' as part of a theological anthropology. Historically, the notion of the soul as abyss has been used to mediate between the intuitions of theological anthropology (Augustine) and negative theology (Dionysius). The abyss is both within the soul and beyond it, belonging intrinsically to the human person and pointing to God. Having briefly traced this history, the paper will ask what an 'abyssal' anthropology might contribute to self-understanding today. Two suggestions will be made. First, that it is capable of grounding the experience of psychological suffering, to give it value in relation to God (even if valuable in no other way), which will be illustrated with examples of popular and literary reference to John of the Cross' 'dark night of the soul' (as a fertile void or abyss). Second, that it is a tool of spiritual growth, with value, for instance, in the practice of spiritual discernment. The popular recovery of Ignatius of Loyola's rules of discernment today illustrate this: their interpretation requires an anthropology of 'inner poverty' (or abyss) aimed at movement beyond the self, to be free to move into the unknown, regarding this as affirming of the true nature of the self.

Andrew Kimmitt

Proximate and Ultimate Contexts: Using Kelsey to Understand Humanity in the Context of Dementia

Models of understanding humanity are increasingly put to the test by examining cases at the extremities of human experience. This can take the form of an exercise of 'boundary testing' in which an exercise of determining whether a particular person, group or category of experience can be ruled 'in' or 'out' of the class 'human.' Peter Singer engages upon this sort of intellectual exercise when he finds himself able to classify the person with dementia as 'non-person.' Thus far, theological responses have been overly pre-occupied by an anxiety to

demonstrate that people with dementia are on the 'inside' of a boundary between 'person' and 'non-person'. This paper argues that David Kelsey's conceptual distinction between 'proximate' and 'ultimate' contexts of God's relating towards humanity undercuts the temptation for theologians to engage in this conceptual 'boundary testing.' I argue that this conceptual distinction alleviates the possibility for anxiety regarding existential status of people with dementia. This frees the theologian to address the concrete lived experience of people with dementia, seeking a theological vocabulary of concepts and practices which might offer succour for people with dementia and those in their immediate circle of love and care.

Theological Ethics: Convened by Esther McIntosh & Margaret Adam (Tuesday Session 2)

Thomas Graff

Ludic Contingencies: Tragedy as Play in Donald MacKinnon

Throughout his *oeuvre*, contemporary English theologian Donald MacKinnon reflects recursively if unsystematically on the tenacious presence of tragedy in human experience. Amateur and seasoned readers alike read with trepidation, if not alarm, as MacKinnon unflinchingly injects moral and theological reflection with tragic consequence: human evil is intractable, suffering is unresolved, and loss and moral failure—intrinsic to human finitude—are therefore inevitable. Against notions of the tragic in MacKinnon undermining or subsuming theological reflection, I argue that one effective rhetorical means by which he conversely galvanizes theological reflection via tragedy is in and through a hermeneutic of play. If human contingency is inescapably enigmatic—a “riddle,” in MacKinnon’s language—it is also therefore inescapably ludic, and paradoxically generative of moral and theological insight. Accordingly, this paper proposes to trace a threefold taxonomy of tragedy as play in MacKinnon’s writings. In sum, this unexpected interpretive symbiosis allows him to: diagnose human evil at the heart of the passion narratives as a form of ridicule and mockery of Christ; provoke moral insight through counter-intuitive and parabolic meditations on human self-deception; and suggest a model of kenotic love rooted in the creativity of the Trinitarian life.

Joel Pierce

Vitoria and the Role of Place in Determining the Implications of Theological Ideas

The sixteenth century Spanish theologian and legal theorist Francisco Vitoria has played the role of both hero and villain in contemporary narratives of theology’s relation to the advent of European colonialism. He has been praised as an early proponent of something like human rights and liberal international law and also decried as the baptiser of Spanish colonial policy. I will argue that part of what underlies the complex reception of Vitoria’s thought is the way some of the conceptual pillars of his political theology are strangely transformed in moving the setting of their application from Europe to the Americas with some of the least attractive aspects of his thought on Europe being transformed into the most attractive arguments in an American context and vice versa. In this sense, Vitoria’s work is a fruitful field for examining the dangers and surprises that result when theological ideas go traveling. I will conclude by considering lessons contemporary theorists can draw from Vitoria’s life as well as his work, focusing particularly on the limitations of academia as a setting in which to do ethical and theological work.

Clare Radford

Everyday Embodiment in the Age of Austerity

In this paper, I consider where a theological focus on everyday embodied knowledge of grassroots communities disrupts cultures of judgement and stigma surrounding the interaction of disability and poverty in the UK. The past decade of austerity has had a deeply negative impact; a material impact through cuts to services and changes to disability benefits and assessments, and also a cultural impact by reinforcing political discourses that stigmatise both disability and poverty. Drawing on disability studies scholars and my own research with activist communities, I argue that austerity measures and the surrounding political discourse have created cultures in which people’s experiences of disability and poverty are routinely judged, disbelieved, and overridden. Through the work of Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Mayra Rivera, I outline theologies responsive to the everyday and embodied knowledges of grassroots

communities. In particular, I suggest the need for theologies that hold open space for the particularity and plurality of embodied experiences in marginalised groups. By way of conclusion, I reflect on how theological research practices may ultimately reinforce or disrupt cultures of judgement and disbelief in their representation and interpretation of daily embodied life.

Theology & Science: Convened by Mark Harris & Sarah Lane Ritchie (Monday Session I)

Edward Epsen

The Idealist View of Divine Action in Nature

Theologies of divine action in nature have sought to maximize traction with the sciences to secure their credibility. The first wave of ‘causal joint’ proposals targeted special sites within nature that might afford the possibility of non-interventionist yet fully objective divine influence. The paradigm has come under theological critique as being effectively deistic and given rise to a variety of informed theological counterproposals under the heading of ‘theistic naturalism’. What all extant proposals share is commitment to physical realism, the claim that (at least some) physical entities and facts are both mind-independent and ontologically basic within creation. However, I will argue that this metaphysical commitment undermines the body of scientific knowledge to which theologians wish to be responsive. Is there an alternative? Building on the work of Howard Robinson, I will show that there is a coherent account of mind’s place in nature that denies physical realism. Such an account would enable a theological description of God’s sustaining and governing action in nature through the ontological mediation of minds and laws causally constraining their sensations. Furthermore, this proposal yields a positive research program that makes essential use of the contributions of the natural sciences to understand the nature of embodiment.

Tasia Scrutton

Madness and Religious Experience

Suppose I seem to have a vision of the Virgin Mary or hear God’s voice. Or again, suppose I experience mental distress, akin to depression but also to a Dark Night of the Soul. How can I tell whether my experience is genuine and religiously valuable or whether it is pathological? How can people with pastoral and clinical roles discern when spiritual support, or when medical treatment, are more appropriate? Various options present themselves. One seeks to discern whether the experience has a divine or a natural cause, perhaps by close attention to the ‘symptoms’. A second adopts a compatibilist view of divine and natural causation, and looks instead to the teleology, to the direction of change taking place. I will explore a third option in dialogue with St John of the Cross and Con Drury. While agreeing with the second view about the relationship between grace and nature, I will argue that the presupposition that the experience could only be psychopathology or genuine religious experience is misguided, challenging the related assumption that ‘good’ religion is always comforting, not unsettling. I will then respond to perennial concerns about medicalisation of genuine religious experience ‘blocking’ grace.

Christine F. Stephenson

Remembering Augustine: Memoria and Genomic Memory Mechanisms

Memory fascinates Augustine yet puzzles him. His theology of *Memoria* (*Confessiones*, *De Trinitate*) is sophisticated, yet he finds himself unable to fully describe *Memoria*. *Memoria* provides the ability to remember God (innate memory). It is where God dwells; however, Augustine knows God cannot be placed into any space/soul. *Memoria* is irreducibly trinitarian. Augustine’s understanding is restricted by 5th century knowledge. Current knowledge regarding innate memory mechanisms include recent evidence for a synaptic communication process involving a novel neuronal gene (Arc). Arc’s structure, function, ancestral origins and highly conserved nature lends support to the theory of genomic/ancestral memory and

evolutionarily transmitted retained (innate) memory. Could a genomic mechanism of memory perhaps involving the Arc gene provide insight into developing further Augustine's theology of *Memoria* and of innate remembrance of God, consequently, uniting the physical and metaphysical? Is a genomic memory of God, as part of the *imago Dei* inherited, and activated when our souls are embodied? This paper proposes a theology of *Memoria* incorporating genomic memory that augments Augustine's theology of *Memoria*. It may seem incongruous to co-opt contemporary scientific thinking to supplement Augustine's theology of *Memoria*, but it is argued that such worries are offset by the analytical gains.

Theology & the Arts: Convened by Ben Quash & Devon Abts (Tuesday Session 3)

Jane Heath

Clement of Alexandria and the Cultivation of Taste

Clement of Alexandria has played very little role in modern discussion of the ancient tradition of theological aesthetics. Standard treatments highlight Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius; Balthasar also celebrated Irenaeus; but Clement has been mentioned in passing if at all. This omission goes hand in hand with another: namely, the lack of attention in modern theological aesthetics to the exercise of *taste* in everyday life as integral to cultivating contemplative attention to beauty and the divine image. This short paper seeks to develop a richer dialogue between the study of patristics and modern theological aesthetics by showing that Clement's programme in Christian formation is deeply concerned with taste, and that this can be relevant to modern debates about theology and the arts. In the ancient context, Clement reinterprets Plato's programme of social formation for *Kallipolis* ('City of Beauty') in the *Republic*; in the modern context, his instructions for Christian behaviour in *Paedagogus* II-III can be read as a theological counterpoint to Bourdieu's *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*.

Joshua Mobley

Tradition and the Individual Theologian: Henri de Lubac, TS Eliot and the Aesthetics of Tradition

Henri de Lubac's sense of tradition can be described as a pneumatological aesthetics. To be a traditional theologian is to make aesthetic judgments about the shape, tenor and "spirit" of previous ages. Faithfulness to that tradition entails both a "fittingness" to the past and a transformation for the present and future. TS Eliot, in his critical essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" develops a similarly aesthetic account of the tradition of poetry. Tradition, for Eliot, is like a series of monuments that form aesthetic relations to one another and as a whole. A new work of poetry – if it is truly traditional – enters into the aesthetic series, altering all the relations that went before. Even the most radically novel poetic contributions are thereby profoundly traditional, for they find their place in an ongoing aesthetic story. De Lubac and Eliot, I will argue, offer similar accounts of tradition and what it means to be traditional, providing us with promising paths for understanding both continuity and discontinuity in the "spirit" of tradition.

Siobhán Jolley

The Receding Hair Line – Collapsing Bodily Borders in Magdalene Art

This paper will explore the centrality of hair in Magdalene iconography, focussing on hair as a liminal bodily boundary in the visual reception of the mythologised Magdalene. Taking case studies from Italian Baroque artworks (including depictions by Titian, Caravaggio and Reni) it will consider how gendered conceptions of sexuality are foregrounded through the motif of hair, which is used variously to collapse and uphold borders around the Magdalene's body. Ultimately, it will argue that conceiving of hair as a liminal boundary better communicates a complex characterisation of the Magdalene that is theologically productive rather than reductive.

The Society for the Study of Theology Update

Thanks

The Society is very grateful to Karen O'Donnell who is stepping down from her role as SST Secretary. Karen has been the Secretary since 2018, overseeing the organisation of 4 annual conferences.

The Society would also like to extend its thanks to Devon Abts and Andrew Hayes who have both served on the SST Executive Committee for the last three years. We are very grateful for all their hard work and commitment to serving the work of the Society.

2023 Conference Theme

At the AGM there will be an opportunity to propose themes for the 2022 conference. In order to propose a theme, please complete [the form on the SST website](#). Proposals must be submitted by 5pm (BST) on Friday 9th April 2021.

SST Vacancies

The following positions become vacant at the SST2021 conference:

- SST Executive Committee Member x2
- SST Secretary

If you are interested in nominating yourself or someone you know for any of these roles, please contact the Secretary Karen O'Donnell (kodonnell@sarum.ac.uk) by Monday 12th April (before the AGM). These positions will be voted on at the AGM meeting on Monday 12th April at 4pm.

Theology & Race

In the last couple of years, the Society has partnered with the British and Irish Association of Practical Theology (BIAPT) and the Susanna Wesley Foundation to introduce a new bursary scheme to support attendance at both SST and BIAPT annual conferences for BAME scholars and students. We are delighted that the following institutions and departments have partnered with us to match funding to increase participation further still: Diocese of Birmingham; Diocese of Coventry; Diocese of Lichfield; Department of Theology & Religion at the University of Exeter; Department of Theology & Religious Studies at the University of Chester; Sarum College, Salisbury; Common Awards Partnership at Durham University; The Methodist Church; The Queen's Foundation, Birmingham.

If you represent or belong to an organisation whose members might benefit from the scheme (such as a church, diocese, society, university) please do consider becoming a named partner in this scheme. More information can be found [online](#) or have a chat with Assistant Secretary Anu Ranawana.

Gunton Prize Winner

TBC

SST Postgraduate Conference

The 2021 Postgraduate Conference will take place at Newnham College, University of Cambridge, 13-15 September on the theme of Reconciliation. Keynote speakers include Janet Soskice, Christoph Schwöbel, and Tom Greggs as well as a public forum on Reconciliation

with Anthony Reddie, Sarah Snyder, and Selline Korir. More information and the call for papers can be found at <https://reconciliation2021.com/>.

Future Conference Arrangements

After our very successful 2019 conference we have lined up the next six SST conferences to take place at the University of Warwick. The conference dates for your diary are:

- 28-30 March 2022 on the theme of “The End of the World”.
- 17-19 April 2023
- 8-10 April 2024
- 7-9 April 2025
- 13-15 April 2026

If you have any questions or comments about SST, please do get in touch with the Secretary Karen O’Donnell kodonnell@sarum.ac.uk.

Zoom Guidance

All of SST21 will take place on zoom. We are aware that a full day on zoom can be very fatiguing, so we do encourage you to take regular breaks from your screen where possible. If it is easier to just listen (and turn off your screen), please do so.

Zoom Etiquette

- Please mute yourself if you are not talking. Try to remember to unmute yourself when you want to speak!
- Please only use the 'chat' function to post **questions** – this makes it much easier for the chair to do their job.
- If you want to ask an oral question please use the 'raise hand' function and wait to be called on – again this makes it much easier for the chair.

Presenting via Zoom

- Please arrive 5 mins before the start of the panel to sort out any set up required.
- If you are presenting a short paper via zoom we recommend using a dedicated microphone if possible.
- All presenters will have the option of presenting using a PowerPoint (although you do not have to). We recommend you set this up as an Individual Window for ease of presentation: Click 'Slide Show' > Click 'Set Up Slide Show' > Select 'Browsed by an Individual (Window)'. Save your PowerPoint.
- The chair will keep an eye any questions in the chat box, so you do not have to do this.

Chairing on Zoom

- If you are chairing a panel during SST21 you will have been sent log in details for the SST zoom account. If you have not received these, please contact Karen O'Donnell asap (kodonnell@sarum.ac.uk). Similarly, if you have any problems on the day please email Karen.
- Please open the zoom room at least 5 minutes before the scheduled start time. All zoom panels will be set up so anyone can share their screen.
- You will need to admit people from the waiting room as they arrive. If you encounter any 'trolls' feel free to remove them from the room.
- Keep your speaker introductions brief.
- **Keeping to time is very important** as we have a large amount of papers taking place across the three days. Please ensure that you start and end sessions promptly. You should give your speakers a 2 min warning – either verbally or through the chat. Speakers have 20 mins followed by up to 10 mins for discussion and questions. Encourage participants to put questions in the chat box as the paper is given and then follow up on these in the discussion.