AAR Upper Midwest Region  
University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN  
April 4, 2020

Call for Papers:  
The Regional Program Committee of the AAR invites proposals for papers, panels and roundtables to be presented at the 2020 Regional Meeting in St. Paul, MN. The deadline for submissions is December 31, 2019. Please note: We meet at the same time and place as the SBL regional meeting and in cooperation with them, but our Call for Papers is independent.

Proposals may address any aspect of the discipline of Religious Studies. We welcome proposals for 1) single papers for a particular session, 2) panels with multiple papers on a designated topic, or 3) roundtables or workshops with a focused discussion on a particular text or topic. We seek proposals on various religious traditions from a variety of perspectives, including historical, philosophical, theological, social scientific, thematic, and political. Also note the joint sections of AAR and SBL.

All presenters at the regional meeting must register for the conference. Failing to register by two weeks before the conference risks not appearing in the program.

For Master’s Students: The region encourages MA students to present strong papers. Paper proposals from MA students must be accompanied by the nomination of a faculty advisor. Please include the name and contact information of the faculty advisor in your submission.

For Undergraduates: Reflecting the preponderance of undergraduate institutions in our region, the Upper Midwest regional meeting includes undergraduate papers. The region welcomes the full scholarly participation of undergraduate members in the meeting.

Please note the following requirements for undergraduate papers:

- Undergraduates may submit paper proposals for the Undergraduate Research Sessions only.
- Each instructor (full-time, contingent, adjunct or other faculty) may propose two undergraduate papers by students at their institutions; students’ instructor sponsors are responsible for selecting the two papers for submission and vetting them for quality.
- Undergraduate students should complete the online registration.
- Each undergraduate paper must include the name and email address of the faculty sponsor at the end of the paper abstract. The Undergraduate Research Sessions are convened by Dr. Bruce Forbes, Morningside College, Sioux City, IA.
- Instructor sponsors should submit undergraduate proposals by email to Dr. Forbes by emailing him directly (forbes@morningside.edu). Please indicate in the subject line of your email “Undergraduate Submission to AAR.”

Proposal Requirements:
All AAR Proposals (except undergraduate proposals, instructions above) should be submitted through this form (linked here). Questions about this form should be directed to the current AAR Regionally Elected Coordinator Dr. Elizabeth Coody.
(coodye@morningside.edu). All papers will be sent to reviewers anonymously; that is, your name and institution will be removed before reviewers see your proposal. Please indicate the session to which you wish to present your paper. Each proposal should include a title. The proposal text should be no longer than 300 words, and it should formulate a scholarly topic or problem for inquiry and articulate a thesis or argument. Proposals for panels or roundtables should be the same length and do not need a singular thesis, but they should identify the unique contribution of the topic or text being explored. An individual paper which is being submitted for the panels should also be 300 words in length and have its own thesis. The individual papers being submitted for a prearranged panel need to identify for what panel they are being submitted. There should be communication between the organizer(s) of the panel and the individual submitting a paper to it prior to submission to AAR.

JOINT AAR/SBL SESSIONS

MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON THEOLOGY, RELIGION AND BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION
This section seeks papers that address theology, religion, or the Bible from diverse racial, ethnic, and demographic perspectives in conversation with analysis of other forms of difference.

Coordinators: Bernon Lee, Bethel University, St. Paul, Minnesota
Victor Ezigbo, Bethel University, St. Paul, Minnesota

TEACHING RELIGION, THEOLOGY, AND THE BIBLE
This section welcomes proposals on topics that explore pedagogical issues specific to the teaching of religion, theology and the Bible in undergraduate, graduate, or seminary settings. Analyses of educational theory, teaching practices and the ways values affect teaching and learning are encouraged. In addition to papers, presentations may include opportunities to engage participants in activities or discussion.

Coordinator: Suzanne Hequet, Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota

WOMEN IN THE BIBLE
Submissions are sought on topics having to do with women and the Bible. This includes papers or creative presentations dealing with women who appear in biblical texts or with feminist, womanist, or mujerista readings of biblical texts. In addition, this section deals with the reception of biblical texts by a woman or women throughout history, or discussions of how a text has affected women at different points in time.

Coordinator: Susan Myers, University of St. Thomas, St Paul, Minnesota

MARTIN LUTHER STUDY GROUP
"Reading, Writing, and Teaching Martin Luther's," A Panel Discussion
An invited group of scholars from the region will discuss approaches to Luther's life, with special reference to the spate of recent biographies of the Reformer. The 500th anniversary of the 95 Theses occasioned numerous new biographies of Martin. And now, after some time to digest, it is time to discuss: 1) What's new, interesting, distinctive? 2) Which approach the "definitive" category? 3) Which might be particularly well-suited for use in a classroom setting? 4) Any new paradigm/approach worthy of note?

Coordinator: The Rev. Dr. William R. Russell, Pastor, Augustana Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota
AAR SESSIONS

BUDDHISM (New Unit)
Submissions are welcomed on topics in all areas of the study of Buddhism. Historical periods of interest may range from the inception of Buddhism to the present, and may relate to texts, traditions, teachings, or practices from any geographical area where Buddhism has been or is present, whether Asia, the West, or elsewhere. We seek proposals for scholarly inquiries into a variety of topics: philological and textual studies, new translations, intellectual history, philosophy, art, literature, ethics, ritual, sociology, psychology, centers of education, both ancient and modern, the liberal arts, digital and technological developments in research, and politics, to mention only a number of commonly-recognized topics of inquiry. Proposals are encouraged from both established scholars and graduate students.

Coordinator: Donna Brown, St. Paul’s College/University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Terry Kleven, Central College, Pella, Iowa

ETHICS
This section seeks papers that address the intersection of religion and ethics. All papers concerned with this general area of interest are welcome. Preference will be given to papers that address how religious worldviews and beliefs shape social and personal ethics or how the moral perspective of other discourses (politics, law, medicine, economics, etc.) shape religious praxis. Topics may be contemporary or historical in nature, and both analytical and practical perspectives are welcome.

Coordinator: Dave Scott, Morningside College, Sioux City, Iowa

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGION
This section seeks papers dealing with the theological, cultural, intellectual, and institutional history of all religious traditions. Of special interest would be papers dealing with interactions between Muslims, Jews, and Christians throughout history.

Coordinator: Jim Kroemer, Concordia University, Mequon, Wisconsin

INTERRELIGIOUS STUDIES
This section invites proposals that critically examine, through various modes and methods of inquiry, encounters and relations, in the contemporary world and historically, between, within, and/or among groups with significant difference in worldview or lifeway (including religious, non-religious, and secular traditions). We welcome proposals that are multi- and interdisciplinary, incorporate alternative pedagogies of presentation, make use of new media, and reflect the dialogical nature of this field. In addition to encouraging critical analysis of local, regional, national, and international interfaith organizational models and other praxis-oriented responses to religious pluralism, we also welcome papers that map the discourse of interreligious studies.

Coordinator: Hans Gustafson, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota

JUDAISM AND ISLAM (New Unit)
We invite proposals on topics related either to Judaism or Islam or to both religions in any historical period and in any geographical place in which they are present. We encourage papers on a variety of topics, including rabbinical Judaism, medieval Judaism, Judaism during and after the Enlightenment, the formative period in Islam, Quranic Studies,
medieval Islam, and Islam during and after the Enlightenment. We welcome a variety of types of inquiry, including textual, philological, philosophical, legal, historical, and political, and from both established scholars and graduate students.

**Coordinators:** Samuel Kessler, Gustavus Adolphus College, Saint Peter, Minnesota  
Terry Kleven, Central College, Pella, Iowa

**NEW RELIGIONS**
This section seeks papers relating to religious movements less than 150 years old, as well as recent sects and movements emerging from historical traditions, worldwide, from a wide range of disciplinary approaches.

**Coordinator:** Murphy Pizza, St. Catherine University / Minneapolis College of Art and Design / St. Mary's University of Minnesota

**PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION/ SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**
This section invites papers that examine the interface between philosophy and religion, including both philosophical positions within religion and philosophy of religion more generally, as well as constructive theological work in dialogue with both historical traditions and aspects of the contemporary context.

**Coordinator:** Andrés Albertsen, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

**RELIGIONS IN NORTH AMERICA**
This section seeks proposals analyzing religious traditions, practices, and communities in North America from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives.

**Coordinator:** Murphy Pizza, St. Catherine University / Minneapolis College of Art and Design / St. Mary’s University of Minnesota

**RELIGION AND SCIENCE**
This section encourages proposals that engage the intersection of religion and science as an academic discipline. A wide range of topics are welcome, especially those that look at current issues in religion/science debate, methodology, and the historical engagement of religion and science. Scholars from all disciplines are welcome to submit, both from the humanities and the sciences. In the spirit of creating themed sections, proposals that engage psychology, cognitive science, and religion are especially encouraged, but all relevant proposals are welcome.

**Coordinator:** Mike Berhow, South Dakota State University, Brookings, South Dakota

**RELIGION, GENDER AND SEXUALITY**
The Religion, Gender, and Sexuality Unit invites individual and panel proposals on religion, gender, and sexuality at the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, ability, and nation. Submissions are welcome on all topics that explore religious ideas and institutions in relation to social and cultural constructions of gender and/or sexuality. We encourage proposals from various cultural and religious traditions that analyze gender and/or sexuality in local and transnational contexts. This unit consolidates the women & religion and religion & sexuality units.

**Coordinator:** C. Neal Keye, College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, Minnesota

**RELIGION, THEOLOGY, AND THE ARTS**
Submissions are welcome on all topics examining the theoretical, historical, and/or practical interrelationships among religion, theology, spirituality, and the arts. In 2020, the session is particularly interested in receiving papers treating contemporary visual art
with a theological focus on matters pertaining to animism, anthropocentrism, and cosmologies. We are open but not limited to papers treating the visual, musical, literary, and dramatic arts.

Coordinator: Jennifer Awes-Freeman, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, St. Paul, Minnesota

WORLD RELIGIONS
Submissions are welcomed on any topics related to religious traditions other than Judaism and Christianity, or topics that involve comparative reflection on more than one religious tradition.

Coordinator: Michael Baltutis, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, Wisconsin

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS
Scholars may submit only one paper proposal to one session of the Upper Midwest regional meeting.

QUESTIONS AND OTHER TOPICS
Questions about the upcoming meeting or the appropriate section for proposals should be directed to the current Regionally Elected Coordinator, Dr. Elizabeth Coody (coodye@morningside.edu). Proposals for panels on topics not listed in the Call for Papers are to be brought to her attention. Papers for submission to the SBL should contact Dr. Blake Couey (jcouey@gustavus.edu).

TRAVEL GRANTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS
The Upper Midwest region is pleased to announce the availability of a limited number of awards to graduate students for completed papers. The Upper Midwest AAR/SBL Student Travel Grant is competitive. Two hundred fifty dollars and one night of housing during the conference will be awarded to a small number of graduate students on the basis of a submitted paper of appropriate length for a cogent 20-minute presentation (that is, no more than 2500 words, with approximately 2400 words a desideratum). To apply, please submit papers to Dr. Elizabeth Coody (coodye@morningside.edu) with the exact subject line “Submission: UMW Student Paper Travel Grant Competition” by December 31, 2019.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
We are excited to announce that our AAR national plenary speaker for 2020 will be Professor José Ignacio Cabezón, the Dalai Lama Professor of Tibetan Buddhist Studies at the University of California Santa Barbara.

The exemplary SBL regional plenary speaker for 2020 will be Dr. Bernard M. Levinson, Berman Family Chair in Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible and Professor of Classical and Near Eastern Studies and of Law at the University of Minnesota.

Note: The selection of keynote speakers for each society (AAR and SBL) alternates between scholars outside our region who are of national and international reputation and exemplary scholars in our own region. The two societies will also alternate national and regional scholars between them. For example, if the SBL has selected a scholar
from the national or international community, AAR will select a scholar from the region and vice versa.

**AAR UPPER MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICERS**

President: Dr. Murphy Pizza, St. Catherine University / Minneapolis College of Arts and Design / St. Mary’s University of Minnesota, magicmurphy@comcast.net
Vice-President: Dr. Michael Berhow, South Dakota State, michael.berhow@sdstate.edu
Regionally Elected Coordinator (2019-2020): Dr. Elizabeth Coody, Morningside College, coodye@morningside.edu
Program Coordinator: Dr. Samuel J. Kessler, Gustavus Adolphus College, kessler@gustavus.edu
Student Representative: Kaitlyn Lindgren-Hanson, University of Iowa