

Public universities are supported by a complex and diverse society comprising believers in a variety of faiths as well as non-believers, too. In such universities, what protocols should govern the study and teaching of literature concerned with one or another religion's version of the sacred? How does or how should religious discourse circulate in public space? Or should it not at all? Must public institutions be functionally atheistic? What happens to the reception of a literary work when something of its original context in the sacred is removed? When, in effect, it becomes a "literary" rather than a sacred work? Alternatively, what happens to the reception of literary works like Shakespeare's that, even as they are not "sacred," become in a sense "canonized"?

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ENGLISH, NEAR EASTERN STUDIES, AND
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TEXTS SACRED AND CANONICAL

THEIR CIRCULATION IN PUBLIC CULTURE

RACKHAM AMPHITHEATRE

4.10.2010

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

A SYMPOSIUM TO HONOR

Ralph
WILLIAMS
ON HIS RETIREMENT

SCHEDULE

9:30-10:00 AM COFFEE & WELCOME

10:00-11:30 AM **Keynote**
SARAH BECKWITH Duke University
"Changes of the Heart: Metamorphosis, Recognition,
Conversion in Some Shakespeare Plays"

BREAK FOR LUNCH

1:00-2:30 PM **Panel I**
GABRIELE BOCCACCINI University of Michigan
"Beliefs are Facts, Too! Teaching Theology Historically
in a Secular, Multi-Religious Environment"

THERESA TINKLE University of Michigan
"The Bible in History"

SHERMAN JACKSON University of Michigan
"Islam and the Public University: Between Our Reasons
for Concern and Our Concern for Reason"

ALEXANDER KNYSH University of Michigan
"Islamic Studies in the American Classroom: Between
Pedagogy and Academism"

BREAK

2:45-4:15 PM **Panel II**
ERIC JAGER University of California, Los Angeles
"Augustine's *Confessions*: Sacred Autobiography/Secular Classic"

KARLA TAYLOR University of Michigan
"Dante, Philology, and Teaching Religious Literature in a Public
University"

MICHAEL SCHOENFELDT University of Michigan
"Teaching George Herbert and John Milton to Believers and
Non-Believers"

JOHN PARKER University of Virginia
"Why Take Pre-Modern Drama Seriously? Some Thoughts on
Piety, Scholarship and Play"

BREAK

4:30-5:00 PM **CLOSING**
RALPH WILLIAMS University of Michigan
Q&A and closing comments by Ralph Williams