

Editorial

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As the newly appointed Editor, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our previous Editors Professor Mark Wynn and Dr. David Eford for their distinguished editorial leadership over the last few years. Mark served the journal as Assistant Editor in 2014–15 and Editor in 2016–18. David served it as Assistant Editor in 2016–17 and Co-Editor in 2017–18. Through their editorial roles, they provided outstanding service to the journal and, more broadly, the field of the philosophy of religion. My goal is to be an editor like them—rigorous and conscientious in processing submissions but also kind and gracious towards all colleagues involved.

Religious Studies was launched in 1965. The founding editor was H. D. Lewis, a Welsh theologian and philosopher of religion at King's College, London. Cambridge University Press has published the journal since its birth. In the early days the journal aimed to publish not only philosophy of religion papers but also papers addressing relevant topics in historical, comparative, psychological and sociological studies of religions. The journal, however, naturally evolved into a platform for philosophers of religion. That is why the subtitle "*An International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion*" was added in 1994. The fiftieth anniversary of the journal was celebrated at a conference in Leeds. The event was organised by Professor Robin Le Poidevin, Mark's predecessor and another outstanding editor. *Religious Studies* is now widely considered one of the most prestigious philosophy of religion journals.

My priority as the new editor is to maintain the uncompromising academic quality of the journal. I will ensure that *Religious Studies* remains the first choice of submission for many authors. To achieve this goal, following my predecessors, I will pay particular attention to the efficiency of the journal's review process. I will ensure that submissions are processed in a careful and timely manner and that authors receive helpful feedback when their papers are sent out to anonymous referees. We are aware that rigorous yet prompt processing is important, especially for junior scholars on the job market and authors who participate in research-assessment exercises, such as the Research Excellence Framework in the UK.

I will also endeavour to enhance the web presence of the journal through our newly launched Twitter and Facebook pages (@CUPRelStudies). We will regularly publish updates on forthcoming papers, new issues, prizes, and other activities and events relevant to the journal. I hope this will contribute to the further

expansion of our readership and increase the flow of high-quality submissions particularly from younger academics and overseas scholars.

I am also keen to address gender and regional disparities in submissions. There is no easy solution to this problem as it is part of a wider problem in philosophy and religious studies. I will nevertheless put my best effort into tackling this issue. I will ensure that the editorial board represents the diversity of the field and seek a way to offer language support for authors who are not native speakers of English.

Finally, I will introduce a novel online initiative titled the *Religious Studies Archive*, which will utilise enormous historical resources in back issues of the journal. We will occasionally publish a special online issue focusing on a specific topic in the philosophy of religion. Such an issue will collect the best papers on the topic found among back issues along with the guest-editor's introduction. I believe this will provide useful resources for scholars and students.

The current issue is a collection of best papers submitted for the Postgraduate Essay Prize competition held in 2017 and sponsored by Cambridge University Press and the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion. I should acknowledge that this issue reflects the stellar editorial work of Mark and David, rather than mine. They spent much time and effort organising the competition and processing an overwhelming number of submissions. I am privileged to have my first editorial for *Religious Studies* published in this issue as I believe the quality of the papers is proof that the future is bright for the journal and the philosophy of religion more generally.