

Roger Ebbatson is Visiting Professor at Loughborough University, having previously taught at University College Worcester and the University of Sokoto, Nigeria. He is the author of a number of literary studies, including *Lawrence and the Nature Tradition* (1980), *Thomas Hardy: Margin of the Unexpressed* (1993), and *An Imaginary England* (2005). His theoretical re-reading of selected Victorian texts, *Heidegger's Bicycle*, is forthcoming.

The motif of prophecy has long been a powerful one in Russian literary culture. **Philip Gorski's** paper discusses how a number of nineteenth century writers utilised the prophetic figure in their work to represent radically divergent varieties of Christian spirituality.

Selected Reading

Lev Shestov; 'The Gift of Prophecy' in *All Things Are Possible and Penultimate Words* (Ohio, 1977).

Nikolai Zernov, *Three Russian Prophets*, SCM, 1944.

Sergei Bolshakoff, *Russian Nonconformity*, (Philadelphia, 1950).

Maxim Gorki, *The Lower Depths* ('Na Dne').

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *A Writers Diary*.

Anton Chekhov, *Ward Number 6*.

Leo Tolstoy, *A Confession and Other Religious Writings* (Penguin).

Philip Gorski has taught at the Universities of London (Goldsmiths'), Loughborough and Nottingham Trent, also for the Workers Educational Association. Amongst his publications are an introduction to Walter Brierley's novel *Sandwichman* (Merlin Radical Fiction, 1990) and, most recently, 'The Holy Fool In Russian Fiction', in *Souroz*, a journal of Russian Orthodox thought (Oxford, 2006). He is currently writing a PhD thesis at the University of Nottingham.

Dr Alison Searle will discuss rational and prophetic elements in Richard Baxter's 1691 treatise entitled *The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits* which was aimed at the indolent, atheistic and unbelieving amongst his contemporaries in the City of London.

Alison Searle (Leverhulme Visiting Fellow, Queen Mary, University of London, and Dr Williams's Centre for Dissenting Studies) is interested in the relationship between literary and theological discourses in Britain and America during the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. During the tenure of her Leverhulme Fellowship she is researching the unpublished letters of Richard Baxter focusing particularly on his communication with female correspondents.

CLSG Secretary: Dr Roger Kojecký secretary@clsg.org
10 Dene Road, Northwood, Middlesex HA6 2AA
01923 823319 07811 807878

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DAY CONFERENCE

Prophetic Voices

Saturday 11 November 2006

The Seminar Room
Corpus Christi College
Merton Street
Oxford

OX1 4JF

Tel. (lodge) 01865 276700

Programme

- 10.00 Arrivals and coffee
10.30 Introductions
10.45 **Paul Cavill**
True Prophetic Song
11.00 **Christopher Rowland**
*'John saw these things Reveal'd in Heaven
On Patmos Isle': the prophetic voice of
Revelation*
12.15 **Roger Ebbatson**
*Prophetic Landscapes: Thomas Hardy and
Richard Jefferies*
- 1.15 Lunch
2.00 **Philip Gorski**
Prophetic Voices in Russian literature
2.40 **Alison Searle**
*The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits: Richard
Baxter's Prophetic Voice*
- 3.15 Tea
Work in progress
Plans
Prayer
4.00 Close

Paul Cavill's paper will focus on a crucifixion image in a prayerbook, a small manual of private devotion, written c. 1030 for Aelfwine, later abbot of New Minster, Winchester. The image draws on the early church understanding of the crucifixion as royal victory rather than suffering. The paper will briefly explore some Biblical and prophetic aspects of this tradition and its afterlife in the Christian literary tradition.

Selected Reading

- Barbara Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography* (Cambridge, 1990).
J.M. Neale, *Mediæval Hymns and Sequences*, 3rd edn (London 1867).

Dr Paul Cavill published *Maxims in Old English Poetry* and *Anglo-Saxon Christianity*, both in 1999, and *Vikings: Fear and Faith in Anglo-Saxon England* and *A Treasury of Anglo-Saxon*

England, both in 2001. He teaches at the University of Nottingham, and is a committee member and former CLSG Secretary.

Christopher Rowland writes: 'Prophecy is a crucial part of Christian history. The work of William Blake offers a distinctive approach to the prophetic vocation too long neglected in Christian theology.'

Selected Reading

- H. Bloom, *Ringers in the Tower: Studies in Romantic Tradition*, (University of Chicago Press, 1971).
S. Goldsmith, *Unbuilding Jerusalem: Apocalypse and Romantic Representation*, (Ithaca, Cornell UP, 1993).
J.F.C. Harrison, *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850* (Routledge, Kegan and Paul, 1979).
J. Kovacs and C. Rowland, *Revelation: the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ*, Blackwell Bible Commentary (Oxford, Blackwell 2004)
M.D. Paley, *Apocalypse and Millennium in English Romantic Poetry* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1999).
S. Prickett and C. Strathman, 'Blake and the Bible' in Nicholas M Williams, *Palgrave Advances in William Blake Studies* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 109-31.
C. Rowland, 'Ezekiel's Merkavah in the Work of William Blake and Christian Art' in H. de Jonge, *The Reception History of Ezekiel*, (Ashgate, 2007), pp. 182-197.
— 'Blake and the Bible: Biblical Exegesis in the Work of William Blake', *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 7 (2005), pp. 142-55.
R. Ryan, *The Romantic Reformation: Religious Politics in English Literature 1789-1824*, (CUP 1997).

Christopher Rowland, Dean Ireland Professor of the Exegesis of Holy Scripture, University of Oxford, has been teaching New Testament studies in Oxford for the last fifteen years. His recent writing has been on the history of the Book of Revelation, of which his work on Blake has been an important part.

Roger Ebbatson writes: 'Is there a dialectical relationship between the late-Victorian literary evocation of the English landscape as a paradisaical place and the blasted terrain of No Man's Land? Whilst Richard Jefferies, in *The Story of My Heart* (1883) or Thomas Hardy, in *Tess* (1891), offer the trope of an ecstatically conceived South Country of the imagination, their work simultaneously prophesies the possibility of a reversal to the mechanistic landscapes of modernity. The 'inspired duplicity' of the prophetic voice detected in the Flintcomb-Ash sequence of *Tess* or in Jefferies' 'After London' is finally made manifest in the degraded terrain of the Western Front as explored, for instance, in the poetry of Georg Trakl.'

Selected Reading

- Richard Jefferies, *The Story of My Heart* (1883).
Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891).
Martin Heidegger, *Basic writings from 'Being and time' (1927) to 'The task of thinking' (1964)*, Routledge 1993.
Roger Ebbatson, *An Imaginary England*, Ashgate, 2005.
Jeremy Hooker, *Writers in a Landscape*, Wales Univ Press, 1996.
Simon Pugh, ed., *Reading Landscape*, MUP, 1990.

Booking Form

CLSG Conference 11 November 2006

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Dr Roger Kojecký, CLSG Secretary, 10 Dene Road,
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