

# RELIGION

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## Visions and Visionary Experience in Religion

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### The Modern Marian Apparition: A Form of Religious Vision

In Kibeho, a village in the little, mountainous country of Rwanda in Central Africa, about a hundred people have gathered in the courtyard of a Catholic girls school. The focus of their attention is Alphonsine Mumureke, a woman in her mid-twenties, who is gazing upward and praying the Rosary. Suddenly Alphonsine stops her prayers, drops to her knees, and begins to speak with someone whom no one else can see. She describes her visitor as a woman, incomparably beautiful, dressed in a white seamless robe and a white veil. The first time she saw her, she said, on the 28th of November in 1981, the woman's hands were joined at her breast and her fingers pointed toward heaven. When she asked the woman who she was, the woman reportedly told her, "I am the Mother of the Word." Alphonsine and the hundreds and sometimes thousands of people who gather around her almost every day to be present at this unusual scene believe that the woman is the Virgin Mary.

Kibeho is only one of hundreds of sites which have attracted some public attention in our century as a result of reported visions, or more specifically, apparitions of the Virgin Mary. Most of these apparitions have taken place and have been understood in the religious context of the Roman Catholic faith, and to understand the importance of these events, one must understand their status in Roman Catholic doctrine and devotion.

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Catholic doctrine holds that the Virgin Mary has been assumed, bodily, into heaven where she exercises special intercessory powers. This, in conjunction with a long tradition of popular belief in the posthumous apparitions of saints (and especially Mary) to their earthly devotees, has predisposed many Catholics to expect some appearances of Mary on earth in modern times, in response, perhaps, to some crisis or particularly pressing need. This belief has been encouraged by the fact that Roman Catholic authorities have declared a handful of reported modern apparitions worthy of "human faith" and have sanctioned special devotions at their sites. Nonetheless, the church has insisted that whatever may be communicated to the faithful in these apparitions can be no more than "private revelations" which can add nothing new to the Church's doctrine. The right to decide whether a particular apparition is or is not worthy of "human faith" belongs, officially, to the bishop in whose diocese the apparition has occurred. In fact, however, very few of the hundreds of Marian apparitions reported in the past two centuries have ever been officially approved or disapproved.

Most modern Marian apparitions have been brief but recurring experiences, spread out over the course of a few days, weeks, or months, of a small group of seers. Many of these apparitions have attracted considerable attention for a while within a limited geographical area but have not inspired the kinds of devotion that would cause them to be remembered very long by very many people. Some modern apparitions, however, have inspired such devotion, and a few, such as La Salette (France, 1846), Lourdes (France, 1858), and Fatima (Portugal, 1917) have become major international pilgrimage sites visited annually by tens of thousands (and in the case of Lourdes, millions) of people. The past decade, moreover, has seen the rise of international pilgrimages approaching these dimensions to at least two sites where a series of Marian apparitions is

still in progress, the lesser known of these being Kibeho, and the better known, Medjugorje, Yugoslavia. There are few Catholics anywhere today who have not heard of Medjugorje, where, almost daily since June of 1981, one or more of six young people have been reporting appearances of a woman they call the *Gospa* (Madonna).

While the best known of earlier modern Marian apparitions all took shape in conservative Western European Roman Catholic contexts, some of the best known of the more recent apparitions are not so closely bound to those contexts. The Kibeho apparition, for example, clearly reflects both traditional Roman Catholic and traditional African religious piety. Medjugorje, while rooted in Roman Catholic piety and politics, has been closely followed by many Serbian Orthodox Christians and even Muslims. At Zeitoun, a suburb of Cairo (Egypt), Muslims, Coptic Christians, and Roman Catholics have all, at various times since April of 1968, reported seeing the figure of the Virgin Mary above the dome of St. Mary's Orthodox Coptic Church. And in the past few years phenomena related to apparitions such as weeping icons and statues have attracted much attention even in the United States in such diverse places as Phoenix, Lubbock, Chicago, and the suburbs of Los Angeles, Detroit, Cleveland and Pittsburgh.

What leads people to gather in such large numbers at the site of a Marian apparition? Few of those who come to these sites expect to see the Virgin Mary themselves. They may, however, expect to see a sign which will confirm for them the reality of the Virgin's presence at these places: rosary beads changing color, the sun spinning or acting in some other unusual manner, or the outline of a woman or a Communion Host appearing in some unlikely place or captured in a photograph. And if the apparition is a continuing one, they may hope to hear the seer deliver some important message from the Virgin. Messages delivered at recent apparitions have included warnings about the cur-



rent sinful state of the world, the need for repentance and return to the sacraments and other traditional devotions, and the assurance that Mary, who is the mother of all, dearly loves her children and has come to prepare them for coming chastisements.

These motives would seem, however, to be mostly secondary. Most of those who gather at apparition sites are, in fact, seeking the alleviation of suffering or the resolution of a crisis. Many hope for the alleviation of a physical or spiritual affliction plaguing themselves or a loved one. Many hope for the overcoming of a breach in familial relationships or troubles associated with joblessness or poverty. And many come seeking help for a community, nation, or world that they fear is poised on the brink of disaster.

## Suffering, Crisis, and Healing at Marian Apparition Sites

Students of Marian apparitions have often noted that these events are most common where the Catholic faith or Catholic institutions are threatened. The apparition at Fatima, Portugal, in the summer of 1917, occurred in the midst of some of the most repressive measures ever taken by any government in Western Europe against Roman Catholicism, and the military revolt on December 6 of that year, which the apparition helped inspire and which brought an end to this persecution, became popularly known as the "Fatima coup." At Kibeho, in 1981, in the months just preceding the apparition, Catholics had been deeply troubled by a series of attacks on the statues of the Virgin which adorned or which stood outside their churches. And in 1987 in the western Ukraine, where an apparition in an abandoned chapel at Grushevo on the first anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster reportedly drew half a million visitors to that village in its immediate aftermath, a strongly Roman Catholic populace had been practicing their faith illegally for many years. It would be a mistake, however, to think that the suffering and crisis of a community under threat, which may provide the public superstructure for interest in a Marian apparition, is more important than the private and personal suffering and crisis which draw people into these events on a religious level rather than simply a social or a political one.

The reports of the experiences which constitute or which cluster around a Marian apparition are replete with intensely personal images of suffering and crisis. Visionaries often describe the Virgin herself as weeping over the sins which have brought her son so much grief and pain. At La Salette, for example, the two young visionaries said that they saw a woman seated on a rock and weeping, and when they approached her, she stood and told them that the world's sins had made her son's arm "so heavy" that he could scarcely hold it back.

And more recently, the Medjugorje visionaries have reported seeing the Virgin on her knees imploring her son to pardon the sins of the world which have so offended him.

Apparition seers themselves have often led lives filled with tragedy, and pilgrims often understand the seers' personal tragedies as making them personally qualified to be the Virgin's spokespersons. They are seen as persons who can well understand the kinds of suffering which have brought people to these sites and, at least for the duration of these visions, they are understood to be the vehicles through which visitors may receive the Virgin's special graces and blessings. As the heirs of a centuries-long tradition of suffering Catholic saints reputed to have special powers, such as the power to read consciences, the power to discern religious vocations, and even the power to heal physical or spiritual infirmities, these apparition seers are eagerly sought out by visitors for interviews and prayer sessions, often under the direction of local clergy. Such meetings, when they are possible, usually become the focal points of the apparition pilgrimage, and many people have left them confident that they have been given by the Virgin that grace or blessing that will alleviate their suffering, assuage their crisis or, more generally, bring them the healing that they require.

Healing, broadly understood, seems to be the goal of most of the millions of people who are attracted to Marian apparitions, and one can scarcely understand this without some acquaintance with the apparition whose site has become the most visited Christian healing shrine of modern times. Located on the river Gave in the foothills of the French Pyrennes, Lourdes was transformed from a small town into a small city and a major pilgrimage site in the latter decades of the nineteenth century through the visionary experiences of the teenaged Bernadette Soubirous. At the time of these experiences, in the Spring of 1858, Bernadette's indigent family was living on the charity of relatives and found it hard to put food on the table, and Bernadette herself was in poor health, having suffered for almost a decade from chronic asthma. Bernadette's visions, all of which were in a grotto near the river, were of a young woman about her own age wearing a white dress with a blue sash. Several weeks after the visions began important townspeople were speculating about their religious import and crowds were gathering to observe Bernadette's ecstasies. On one occasion, all were amazed as she crawled to the back of a grotto, dug in the ground to uncover some muddy water, drank some of it and smeared some on her face. Bernadette said afterward that the woman of her vision, whom most people now believed to be the Virgin Mary, had directed her into the grotto and told her to drink the water there and wash in it. Later that day, others dug at the spot and uncovered a spring, which was immediately assumed to have healing powers.

The reputation of Lourdes as a place of healing has been built chiefly around this spring, whose waters are directed now into some public baths and some quite accessible public spigots. Today, every year, some three to six million pilgrims come to Lourdes, and while drinking and washing in the water are rituals in which some of their hope comes to focus, also important for them are the daily confessions, Masses, and processions. A medical bureau at the shrine receives many reports of inexplicable cures, all of which it thoroughly investigates, and while on the average less than one of these per year has met the strict criteria established by the Roman Catholic Church for judging a miracle, the many votive plaques lining the chapels and the many testimonials in shrine periodicals make it clear that thousands of people have had experiences at this place that have, for them, been experiences of healing.

Bernadette herself became the focus of much attention as a result of her experiences. But while she was eagerly sought out by many early pilgrims and asked to pray with them and bless their rosaries, town and church officials, with her cooperation, soon arranged for her a rather well ordered and protected life shielded from all but the most important visitors. Moreover, while she had quickly gained the reputation of a young thaumaturge with healing powers, she denied that she possessed such powers and tried her best to escape the spotlight into which she had been thrust by her visions. Thus while the town, the Church, and the state, each for its own reasons, worked to encourage the flow of visitors to Lourdes, Bernadette moved to Nevers, joined the Sisters of Charity, and lived in their mother house in that city until her death in 1879. She was beatified by the Roman Catholic in 1925 and canonized in 1933.

At Medjugorje, Vicka Ivankovic has, in many respects, assumed and played out the role which Lourdes pilgrims in the immediate aftermath of that apparition, assigned or tried to assign to Bernadette. Acutely ill and reported to have a brain tumor, Vicka suffers from blinding headaches and since 1984 has had two abdominal operations. Thus, while most of the other Medjugorje seers have now left home and attempted to lead normal lives, Vicka has not, and in spite of her poor health, she has regularly met and prayed with many of the people from all over the world who have flocked to see her. These meetings with Vicka have, for most of these pilgrims, been profoundly moving—because of the meaning she has been able to find in the suffering which she and they have shared with each other in their prayers.

Vicka is a contemporary Christian manifestation of the wounded healer, a type of person found in a number of religious traditions who is well acquainted with pain and who has been able to bring healing to others by helping them make sense of their suffering. The way in which she and her visitors have found sense in their suffering is



sketched in one of the Virgin's messages reported at Medjugorje on March 29, 1984: "This evening I am asking in a special way for your perseverance in trials. Ponder how the Almighty is still suffering because of your sins. So when sufferings come, offer them as your sacrifice to God."

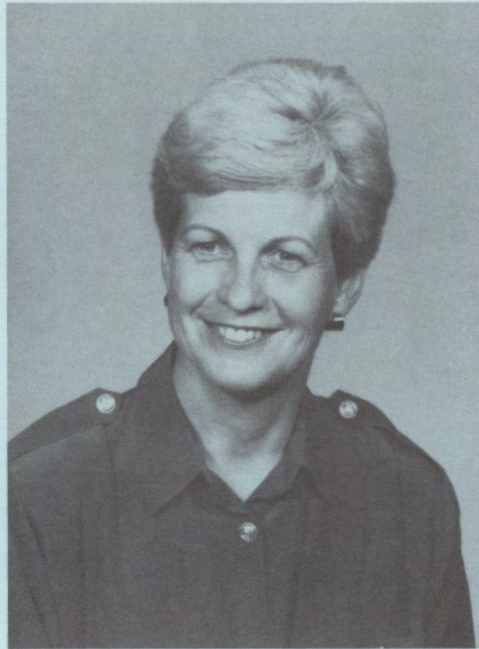
In modern folk Catholicism, suffering persons who find the meaning of their lives in their offering of sacrifices to God are understood as having been assigned, like both Jesus and Mary, a special vocation of suffering, and are commonly known as Victim Souls. Such persons have attracted an immense amount of popular attention in recent times, their appeal is one of the most intriguing but least understood aspects of modern Christianity, and the association of these persons with Marian apparitions is a matter that I find especially interesting and that I think merits particular study.

### Studying Religious Visions and Visionary Experiences: An Invitation to an Interdisciplinary Conference

In recent years, persons working in various academic and clinical disciplines have become increasingly interested in religious visions. By religious visions I mean both those well known visions which over the centuries in different cultures have been important for particular religious traditions, and those scarcely known visions which have been of some religious significance for their subjects and perhaps a few of their friends. The current interest in the academic world in these visions has been spurred, in part, by the growing realization that even in modern secular society where they are rarely if ever discussed, such visions are really very common. Persons who study modern visions and who let it be known that they take these experiences seriously may find that almost everyone knows someone, usually a relative or close friend, who has had a vision of some kind which has been of religious significance for that person.

Scholars who take religious visions and visionary experience seriously may, in their studies of these phenomena, use the methods of a variety of disciplines. Sociology, psychology, anthropology, literary criticism, and history are the disciplines whose rules and guidelines have most often been adopted here. While scholars committed to different disciplines or schools within these disciplines have often moved in different directions in their studies and reached different conclusions, there has been a growing awareness that these differences are necessary and complementary, and that one cannot understand such a thing as religious visions without asking different kinds of questions and positing different kinds of answers.

Editor's note: See page five of this issue of *Religion* for information about a forthcoming conference on religious visions.



## Judge Deanell Reece Tacha to Discuss "Religion and the Bill of Rights: Separation and Accommodation in the Third Century" at the Kansas School of Religion Annual Meeting, April 17, 1991

Judge Deanell Reece Tacha, Circuit Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, will present the annual KSR lecture for 1991 on "Religion and the Bill of Rights: Separation and Accommodation in the Third Century" in this Bicentennial Year of the Bill of Rights. This address will be at the annual KSR banquet in the Big Eight Room, Kansas Union, University of Kansas on Wednesday, April 17, scheduled from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M.

Judge Tacha graduated from the University of Kansas with a B.A. degree in American Studies and completed her law degree of Doctor of Jurisprudence at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 1971. She was a White House Fellow in 1971-72 and then became an associate with the Law Firm of Hogan & Hartson in Washington, D.C. before returning to Kansas. She joined the faculty of the School of Law of the University of Kansas in 1977, serving as Associate Dean from 1977 to 1979 and as Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs of the University of Kansas from 1981 to 1985.

Appointed as Circuit Judge in 1985, she continues an active leadership role in the legal profession. Currently she is chairperson of the Judicial Conference Committee on the Judicial Branch, a member of the Executive Committee of the Appellate Judge's Conference of the American Bar Association, a member of the Commission on Women in the Profession of the American Bar Association, and a member of the Board of Visitors of the University of Michigan School of Law.

Judge Tacha has also participated in a variety of academic and community organizations. She was national president of the K.U. Alumni Association in 1988-89 and president of the Lawrence Arts Center Board of Directors during the same period. Currently she is a member of the Board of Trustees of St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City and of Baker University in Baldwin City. She has also served on the President's Commission on White House Fellows, on the Kansas Committee for the Humanities, and on several boards and committees of the First United Methodist Church in Lawrence.

Among her publications are studies of "An Expanded Concept of Affirmative Action Against Sex Discrimination," "The Kansas Open Meeting Law," "Real and Personal Property Law," and "Oil and Gas Law."

**Reservations for the KSR annual banquet are needed by Friday, April 12.** Checks for reservations at \$11.00 per person may be sent to the Kansas School of Religion, 1300 Oread Avenue, Lawrence, Kansas 66045. Telephone 913-843-7257. The lecture begins at 7:00 o'clock for those unable to attend the banquet.



## 1991 and the Faculty of Religious Studies

**S. Daniel Breslauer**, whose field is modern Jewish studies, not only offered normal department classes in biblical studies, the history of Judaism, and Islamic studies in 1987-1990, but continues a popular course on "Understanding the Bible," for KU Continuing Education. He also conducted special independent readings for religious studies majors on myth, symbol and ritual. This latter overlaps with his research. During the year he delivered several scholarly papers on the theory of myth espoused by the modern Jewish thinker Martin Buber. At the end of July 1990 he completed a manuscript on "Martin Buber on Myth: An Introduction" to be published by Garland Press. His present research has shifted from Martin Buber to the thought of a contemporary American Jewish thinker, Mordecai M. Kaplan. This year Professor Breslauer has been particularly active in professional service, reviewing manuscripts submitted to scholarly publishers, serving as vice-president of the Midwest Jewish Studies Association, and acting as an elected member of the Faculty Council of the University of Kansas and a selected representative on SenEx, the executive committee of the University Council.

★★★★★★★★★★

**John Macauley**, whose field of teaching is the history and development of the Christian Church (particularly in the post-Reformation period in Great Britain) has until this year held a joint appointment in the departments of History and Religious Studies. In the spring he relinquished his appointment in the History Department and will continue to teach half-time for religious studies, while also holding the rectorship of Trinity Episcopal Church, Lawrence. In July he attended the summer conference of the Ecclesiastical History Society which met at Chichester in England. The theme of the conference centered on "The Church and the Arts." Continuing his research interests, Professor Macauley is working on an edition of the letters and papers of Richard Mountague, seventeenth century bishop of Chichester.

★★★★★★★★★★

**Tim Miller** continues his interest in new religious movements and the American communitarian tradition. In the spring of 1990 he published *American Communes, 1860-1960: A Bibliography* with Garland Publishing. This fall he is finishing two other books, *The Hippies and American Values* (University of Tennessee Press) and *When Prophets Die: The Postcharismatic Fate of New Religious Movements* (an edited volume being published by the State University of New York Press).

Meanwhile he is investigating the origins of the 1960s wave of American communitarianism, and plans to go on to study more specifically the spirituality of some of the communes of that era.

Professor Miller is national chair of the New Religious Movements Group of the American Academy of Religion, the principal professional society for religious studies, and is a member of the board of directors of the National Historic Communal Societies Association, a smaller interdisciplinary group of scholars. For the 1990-91 school year Tim has had his teaching load adjusted; he did not teach last fall in order to devote full time to his research, and then is teaching an overload in the spring. He is teaching sections of Religion in American Society, History of Religion in America, and New Religious Movements.

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**Robert Minor**, whose field is history of Asian religions with a research specialty in religion in modern India, is finishing research on his major project: the history of a contemporary religious movement in India (the Aurobindo movement) which was building a city to practice its goals. Due to infighting, the Indian parliament and courts became involved, raising issues of religion and a secular state. He presented a paper at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in November, 1989 on the parliamentary debates and is preparing a paper he

was invited to present at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in November, 1990, in honor of a University of Wisconsin history professor. Both are to be published in edited volumes. He is also completing articles on religion in India for the forthcoming *Harper's Dictionary of Religion*. He continues to teach the principal course "Living Religions of the East" which is full and overflowing as well as "Approaches to the Study of Religion" and in the spring of 1990, "Religion in India." In spring 1991 he will teach a seminar on the most well-known Asian text; the *Bhagavadgita*, on which he has written a commentary. He is currently Chairperson of the Department of Religious Studies.

★★★★★★★★★★

This past July and August, **Paul Mirecki** studied Greek and Coptic manuscripts in the collections of the Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago) and the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor). In August he read a paper at Notre Dame University entitled "Coptic Magical Papyri at the University of Michigan." Last summer he completed an article surveying the history of twentieth-century research in Manichaeism, co-authored by Samuel Lie (Warwick University, England) which will appear in the *Journal of Royal Asiatic Studies*. Last spring he authored the article "The Antithetic Saying at Mark 16:16" for the *Festschrift* for Helmut Koester (Harvard) and the article "Coptic Manichaean Psalm 278 and Gospel of Thomas 37" for the *Festschrift* for Julien Ries (Catholic University, Brussels, Belgium). He is currently teaching courses in early Christian literature and history.

★★★★★★★★★★

**Robert Shelton** continues to serve the University in the role of University Ombudsman as well as Associate Professor of Religious Studies. As Ombudsman, he deals with a wide array of personal, group and institutional issues, conflicts and problems. In the past year, he has increasingly reflected on this role as practice in his major field of scholarly expertise, social ethics, and led a workshop at an international meeting of university and college ombudsmen on "The Ombudsman as Practitioner of Social Ethics." His specialization in ethics continues to be in ethical issues in health care. For three years, 1986-1989, he served as one of twelve members in a national Roman Catholic-United Methodist dialogue on ethical issues in the care of the dying. The dialogue report, to which he contributed, is published under the title, *Holy Living and Holy Dying*. He also published "The United Methodist/Roman Catholic Dialogue on Death and Dying," in *Ecumenical Trends*, October, 1989, a publication of the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute. He is currently working on a chapter for a forthcoming yearbook on bioethics from Kluwer Publishers, in which he will interpret recent developments on a number of issues in the Methodist tradition.

Professor Shelton's book, *Loving Relationships*, was among a selection of books from peace church publishers displayed in a Book Fair in Moscow, the Soviet Union, in 1987 and 1989.

★★★★★★★★★★

**Sandra Zimdars-Swartz** has for several years been studying modern apparitions of the Virgin Mary. Her book, *Encountering Mary: From La Salette to Medjugorje*, has been published by Princeton University Press. Last fall she traveled to Italy and France to begin research for a biography of Melani Calvat, one of the visionaries at La Salette (France, 1846). Together with her husband, Paul Zimdars-Swartz, she is also working on a textbook that will introduce students to the discipline of religious studies and that will be accompanied by a computer-aided tutorial.

This year Professor Zimdars-Swartz is teaching "Introduction to Religion," one of four principal courses offered by the Department of Religious Studies to fulfill the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences requirement for a course in philosophy and religious studies. She is also teaching two special topics courses: "Mother as Religious Metaphor" (Fall 1990), and "Visions and Visionary Experience in Religion" (Spring 1991).



# Visions and Visionary Experience in Religion

## An Interdisciplinary Conference

The Department of Religious Studies has organized an interdisciplinary conference on "Visions and Visionary Experience in Religion" to be held on the campus of the University of Kansas on April 7-9, 1991. The conference includes presentations by three keynote speakers and twenty-four other scholars representing a variety of disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. Session topics will focus on visions in Christianity and Judaism, as well as in Native American, Chinese, South Asian, and Egyptian religious traditions.

The conference is free and open to the public. Preregistration, however, is requested to facilitate planning for space and refreshments. Information concerning local accommodations, restaurants, and campus parking will be sent upon receipt of your preregistration form. Conference buildings are accessible to the handicapped.

### Sunday, April 7 (Sunday sessions are held in Smith Hall, Room 100)

- 1:30-3:00 Conference Opening, James Muyskens, Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Keynote Address:  
"Basque Visionaries in France: The Organization of Perception"  
William Christian, Jr., Grand Canary Islands
- 3:00-4:00 Session I: Visions in Modern Roman Catholicism  
"Speaking of Miracles"  
Lawrence Taylor, Lafayette College  
"Apparitions as Intentional Phenomena: A Methodological Investigation Focusing on the Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Medjugorje, Yugoslavia"  
Walter L. Brenneman, Jr., University of Vermont
- 4:00-4:15 Break
- 4:15-5:15 Session II: Visions in Early Christianity  
"The Transfiguration in the Gospel of Mark"  
James E. Lanpher, University of Notre Dame  
"Children as Mediums in the Greek Magical Tradition"  
Paul Mirecki, University of Kansas
- 5:30-6:45 Dinner Break
- 7:00-9:00 Session III: Visions in Later Christianity  
"Transpersonal Psychologies and Medieval Affective Mysticism: A Comparison"  
Ulrike Wiethaus, Central Michigan University  
"Jacob Boehme and the Problem of Visions in the 17th Century Protestantism"  
Paul Zimdars-Swartz, Hall Center for the Humanities, University of Kansas  
"Visions in the Early Reorganized Latter Day Saints"  
Clare Vlahos, University of Kansas  
"A New Typology of Religious Experience: Foundations for a Study of Visionary Experience"  
Blaire E. Einhorn, University of California, Santa Barbara

### Monday, April 8 (Monday sessions are held in the Jayhawk Room, Kansas Union)

- 8:30-10:00 Keynote Address:  
"Called on the Carpet: The First Vision of the Lord, Jacob Frank"  
Harris Lenowitz, Middle East Center, University of Utah

### Monday (continued)

- 10:00-11:00 Session IV: Visions and Visionary Experience in the Hebrew Scriptures  
"Exploring the Visions of Deborah, Early Prophet of Israel"  
Sigrid Peterson, University of Utah  
"Deuteronomy versus Shamans: Legalism as an Obstacle to the Visionary Experience"  
William Herbrechtsmeier, Central College, Pella, Iowa
- 11:00-11:15 Break
- 11:15-12:15 Session V: Visions and Visionary Experience in Later Judaism  
"Jewish Ethics and the Jewish Visionary Experience"  
Richard A. Freund, University of Nebraska  
"Gnosis as Visionary Experience in Corbin, Scholem, Jung and Others"  
Daniel Merkur, Toronto, Canada
- 12:15-1:30 Lunch Break
- 1:30-2:30 Session VI: Visions in South Asian and Modern Egyptian Sufism  
"Mystical Visions as Tools to Think With in South Asian Sufism"  
Marcia K. Hermansen, San Diego State University  
"The Role of Visions in Contemporary Egyptian Religious Life"  
Valerie J. Hoffman-Ladd, University of Illinois
- 2:30-2:45 Break
- 2:45-3:45 Session VII: Visions in the Hindu Tradition  
"Vision in the Lifestories of South Indian Singer-Saints"  
William J. Jackson, Indiana University-Purdue University  
"Liquid Visions: The Fluidity of Divine Perception among the Bauls of Bengal"  
June McDaniel, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC
- 3:45-4:00 Break
- 4:00-5:00 Session VIII: Visions in Chinese Buddhism  
"Seeing is Believing: Visions and Dreams in Early Chinese Buddhist Narratives"  
Robert F. Company, Indiana University  
"Visions in 13th Century Buddhism"  
Raoul Birnbaum, University of Iowa
- 5:00-7:00 Dinner Break
- 7:00-9:00 Session IX: The Theory and Communication of Visions  
"Visionary Experience from a Process Perspective"  
Blair Reynolds, Academic Editing Associates, Pittsburgh, PA  
"What is a Vision: An Attention-Shift Model"  
Willard Johnson, San Diego State University  
"Visions or Hallucinations: Discernment and Diagnosis in Religion and Psychotherapy"  
Edward R. Canda, University of Kansas  
"Meditation and Mandala Imagery in the Experimental Films of Jordan Belson"  
Edward Small, University of Kansas
- 9:00-9:45 Reception

(continued)



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Tuesday, April 9 (Tuesday sessions are held in the Jayhawk Room, Kansas Union)

- 9:00-1:19 Keynote Address:  
 "Discovering Americans: Indian Guides in Spirituality and the New Age"  
 Ann Braude, Carleton College
- 10:30-12:00 Session X: Visionary Experience in North America  
 Moderator: Timothy Miller, University of Kansas  
 "UFOs as Religious Visions"  
 Carol Matthews, University of Kansas  
 "Visions, Apocalypticism, and American Catholics"  
 Sandra L. Zimdars-Swartz, University of Kansas  
 "The Role of Vision in North American Shamanism"  
 William Lyon, Visiting Professor, University of Kansas

Sponsored by:  
 Department of Religious Studies, University of Kansas

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 College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Kansas

**Registration**

Visions and Visionary Experience in Religion:  
 An Interdisciplinary Conference  
 April 7, 8, 9, 1991  
 University of Kansas

Yes, I/we plan to attend the Conference \_\_\_\_\_(Number attending)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return by April 3, 1991 to:  
 Sandra L. Zimdars-Swartz  
 Associate Professor of Religious Studies  
 Smith Hall  
 University of Kansas  
 Lawrence, KS 66044

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