

NAVSA Religion and Spiritualities Caucus  
Quarterly Bulletin (February 2022)

## **New Publications on Religion, Spirituality, and Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture**

### **Member Publications**

Bullen, J. B., Rosalind White and Lenore A. Beaky, co-editors. *Pre-Raphaelites in the Spirit World: The Séance Diary of William Michael Rossetti*. Peter Lang, 2022.  
[www.peterlang.com/9781789974423](http://www.peterlang.com/9781789974423).

A scholarly study and transcription of two previously-unpublished documents, the séance diary of William Michael Rossetti, 1865-1868, and a letter from Anna Mary Howitt to Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1856. Rossetti's diary records the spiritualist activities of numerous members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Howitt's letter to Dante Gabriel Rossetti, alternating between periods of full consciousness and spirit-guided dictation, is an exemplum of spiritualist writing in action.

Dixon, Joy. "Thoughts are Things': Theosophy, Religion, and the History of the Real," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 89 no. 4 (December 2021), pp. 1171-1179.

Part of a Roundtable on Theosophy and the history of comparative religion, which uses Theosophy's imperial history as a cautionary tale for thinking about new approaches to the history of religion.

Griffith, Laura. "'No Coherent Social Faith and Order': Sainthood and Secularization in *Middlemarch* and *The Daisy Chain*." *George Eliot-George Henry Lewes Studies*, vol. 73, no. 2 (2021), pp. 123-127. <https://doi.org/10.5325/georelioghlstud.73.2.0123>

This article compares George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871-72) with Charlotte Mary Yonge's *The Daisy Chain* (1856), contrasting Dorothea Brooke's inability to carry out her plans for reform with Ethel May's success in founding a school and a church, arguing that the world of *Middlemarch* is more secularized, in the way that Charles Taylor uses the term, than the world of *The Daisy Chain*.

King, Joshua. "Revelatory Beasts: Christina Rossetti on the Apocalypse and Creation's Worship." *Christianity and Literature*, vol. 70 no. 4 (2021), pp. 382-403.

Argues that Rossetti viewed the four beasts surrounding the divine throne in the book of Revelation as representing the worship of all members of creation, expanding our understanding of her ecotheology by showing how her view of creation's praise in her commentary on Revelation and her poetry drives her critique of anthropocentrism and her connection of the life to come to compassionate kinship with other creatures in the present. Awarded the Lionel Basney Award for outstanding article of the year in 2021.

Ledger-Lomas, Michael. "David Friedrich Strauss and the Life of Jesus Controversy." *The Cambridge Handbook to Modern German Theology*, edited by Grant Kaplan. Cambridge UP, 2022.

This piece lays considerable emphasis on the transnational reception of *Das Leben Jesu*.

Ledger-Lomas, Michael. "HMS Bacchante: Time Travel, Religions and the Victorian Monarchy." *The Bible and Antiquity in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, edited by Simon Goldhill and Ruth Jackson. Routledge, 2022.

This piece discusses the monarchy's role in the global exploration of world religions and their pasts in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### Reading Recommendations

Alexander, Nathan G. *Race in a Godless World: Atheism, Race, and Civilization, 1850-1914*. New York University Press, 2019. (Reviewed by Michael Ledger-Lomas in *Victorian Studies* in 2022).

Beiser, Frederick C. *David Friedrich Strauß, Father of Unbelief: An Intellectual Biography*. Oxford UP, 2020. (Reviewed by Michael Ledger-Lomas in *Journal of Religious History* in 2022).

Bell, Duncan. *Dreamworlds of Race: Empire and the Utopian Destiny of Anglo-America*. Princeton UP, 2020. (Reviewed by Michael Ledger-Lomas in *Victorian Review*)

Harris, Ruth. "Vivekanda, Sarah Farmer, and Global Spiritual Transformations in the Fin de Siècle." *Journal of Global History*, vol. 14 no. 2 (2019), pp. 179-98.

Zaman, Faridah. "The Future of Islam, 1672-1924." *Modern Intellectual History*, vol. 16 no. 3 (2019), pp. 961-91.

Schmidt, Leigh Eric. *The Church of St. Thomas Paine: A Religious History of American Secularism*. Princeton UP, 2021.

Steinberg, Oded. *Race, Nation, History: Anglo-German Thought in the Victorian Era*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021.

Storm, Jason Ananda Josephson. "A Theosophical Discipline: Revisiting the History of Religious Studies." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 89 no. 4 (December 2021), pp. 1153-1163.

Subin, Anna Della. *Accidental Gods: On Men Unwittingly Turned Divine*. Macmillan, 2021. (Reviewed by Michael Ledger-Lomas in the *Critic* in 2022)