

Brian P. Bennett

EDUCATION

Ph.D. History of Religions with a specialization in Russia, University of Chicago, 1999

B.A. Religion *summa cum laude*, Princeton University, 1987

EMPLOYMENT

Professor, Religious Studies, Niagara University, 2013 – present

Associate Professor, Religious Studies, Niagara University, 2007 – 2013

Assistant Professor, Religious Studies, Niagara University, 2001 – 2007

Lecturer, Classics & Religious Studies, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1998 – 2001

Adjunct Professor, Religious Studies, Saint Xavier University, Chicago, 1996 – 1997

PUBLICATIONS ORCID: 0009-0004-0499-7722

Books

Sacred Languages of the World: An Introduction (Wiley 2018)

Religion and Language in Post-Soviet Russia (Routledge 2011; paperback 2016)

Articles, Chapters, Reviews

“Sacred Languages,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Religion*, forthcoming

“Esperanto: One Language, Many Religions.” *Histoire culturelle de l’Europe*, 2022

“Petropolis: The Place of Latin in Early Modern Russia.” In *Multilingualism, Lingua Franca and Translation in the Early Modern Period*. Routledge, 2022.

"How the Jesuits Helped to Bring Latin to Russia," *americamagazine.org*, March 2020

“Afterword.” In *Aspects of Performance in Faith Settings: Heavenly Acts*, ed. Andrey Rosowsky. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019.

“Orthography and Orthodoxy in Post-Soviet Russia.” In *Orthography as Social Action: Scripts, Spelling, Identity and Power*, ed. Alexandra Jaffe, Jannis Androutopoulos, Mark Sebba, and Sally Johnson. Mouton de Gruyter, 2012.

“The Myth of Cyril and Methodius and Competing Maps of Europe.” *Journal of Religion in Europe* 4, no. 2 (2011): 245-272. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/187489211X574445>

“Critical Juncture: Church Slavonic and the Discourse of Cultural Preservation in Post-Communist Russia.” In *Discourse and Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Aleksandra Galasińska and Michał Kryżanowski. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Review of Tope Omoniyi and Joshua A. Fishman, eds, *Explorations in the Sociology of Language and Religion*, in *Multilingua* 27, no. 4 (2008): 447-49.

Review of Sergei Zhuk, *Russia’s Lost Reformation: Peasants, Millennialism, and Radical Sects in Southern Russia and Ukraine, 1830-1917*, in *History of Religions* 47, no. 4 (2008): 339-42.

“On the Politics of Church Slavonic in Post-Soviet Russia.” In *Language and Politics: selected papers of the international conference, September 29-October 4, 2004, sponsored by the American Society of Geolinguistics*, ed. Wayne H Finke and Leonard R N Ashley. Cummings + Hathaway, 2008.

“Hermetic Histories: Divine Providence and Conspiracy Theory.” *Numen* 54, no. 2 (2007): 174-209. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/156852707X185005>

“Religious Education at the Crossroads in Contemporary Russia.” In Молодежь на перекрестках: Материалы 5-й международной научной конференции [Youth at the Crossroads: Materials of the 5th International Conference], 147-49. Karelian State Pedagogical University Publishing House, 2006.

“Sign Languages: Divination and Providentialism in the *Primary Chronicle* of Kievan Rus’,” *Slavonic and East European Review* 83, no. 3 (2005): 373-395.
[doi:10.1353/see.2005.0135](https://doi.org/10.1353/see.2005.0135).

Review of George A. Maloney, ed. and trans., *Nil Sorsky: The Complete Writings*, in *Religious Studies Review* 30, nos. 2-3 (2004): 210.

“Studying ‘Native’ Texts,” *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion* 13, no.1 (2001): 24-27.

PRESENTATIONS

“Uses of Braille in Different Faith Traditions,” Nordic Network on Disability Research, Reykjavík, 2023

“The Impact of Unicode: The Case of Church Slavonic,” poster presentation, Association for Written Language and Literacy, online, 2021.

“Sacred Scripts in a Wired World.” 5th International Conference of Applied Linguistics: Languages and People, Vilnius, 2019.

“Latin in Early Modern Russia: Status Quaestionis,” A Host of Tongues: Multilingualism, Lingua Franca and Translation in the Early Modern Period, Lisbon, 2018.

“Religions, Languages, Resources and Repertoires,” Sociolinguistics Symposium 21, Murcia, 2016.

“Crossovers: Sacred Languages in Concert Halls,” Heavenly Acts II: Language, Performance and Identity in Faith Contexts, London, 2016

“Unicode: Standardizing Sacred Scripts,” The Sociolinguistics of Globalization, Hong Kong, 2015

“Esperantism: Between the Religious and the Secular,” American Academy of Religion, San Diego, 2014

“Homaranismo: A ‘Religion of Humankind’ for a Multi-Confessional Russia,” *The Varieties of Russian Modernity II: Religion, State and Approaches to Pluralism in Russian Contexts*, Moscow, 2014

“The Question of Church Slavonic in the 21st Century,” *Sociology of Language and Religion: An International Conference in Honor of Joshua A. Fishman*, New York, 2013

“Beyond the Great Tradition: A Conceptual Framework for the Study of ‘Religious Classics’,” *Sociolinguistics Symposium 19*, Berlin, 2012

“Russian Nationalist Inversions of the Cyrillomethodian Mythos,” American Academy of Religion, San Francisco, 2011

“Alphabet Mysticism in Post-Soviet Russia,” American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, 2010

“The Myth of Cyril and Methodius and Competing Visions of Europe,” American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, 2010

“Church Slavonic: From Sacred Space to Cyberspace,” American Society of Geolinguistics, New York, 2010

“The Diasporic Dimension of Liturgical Language: The Case of Russian Orthodoxy,” *Societas Linguistica Europaea*, Lisbon, 2009

“Depictions of Russian Orthodoxy in the American Media,” *Conference: Russia and the Modern World*, Institute of Business and Politics, Moscow, 2009

“The Latins are Coming, The Latins are Coming: Defending Cyrillic in Russia,” American Society of Geolinguistics, New York, 2008

“Abecedarian Ideologies: The Old Orthography in the New Russia,” *Sociolinguistics Symposium 17*, Amsterdam, 2008

“Scripting Identity in Post-Soviet Russia,” *Conference: Knowledge, Creativity & Transformations of Societies*, Vienna, 2007

“The New/Old Alphabet Mysticism,” American Society of Geolinguistics, New York, 2007 [invited lecture]

“The Visual Language of ‘Brand Russia’,” American Society of Geolinguistics, New York, 2006

“Contestations of Language and Religion in Post-Soviet Russia,” Sociolinguistics Symposium 16, Limerick, 2006

“Logos: Sacred Scripts and Faux Fonts,” World Congress on the Power of Language, Bangkok, 2006

“Western Christianity as Other: The Discourse of ‘Latinism’ in Russian History,” American Academy of Religion, Philadelphia, 2005

“The Discourse of ‘Orthodox Culture’ in Post-Communist Russia,” American Academy of Religion, Philadelphia, 2005

“Teaching a Liturgical Language: The Case of Church Slavonic,” American Society of Geolinguistics, New York, 2005

“The Mythos of Logos: Paratextual Accounts of the Church Slavonic Bible,” American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, 2005

“Myths of Mice and Men: Some Russian *Lubki* (Broadsheets),” American Academy of Religion-Eastern International Meeting, Montréal, 2005

“The Politics of Church Slavonic in Post-Soviet Russia,” American Society of Geolinguistics, New York, 2004

“Language as Civilizational Bridge and Barrier: The Case of Church Slavonic,” International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, Fairbanks, 2004

“Storied Books: Tales of Sacred Texts and the Construction of Religious Identity,” American Academy of Religion- Eastern International Meeting, Ottawa, 2002

“Books, Christianity, and the Fate of Rus’-Russia: The Clash of Interpretations,” American Academy of Religion, San Francisco, 1997

COURSES

Introduction to Religion
World Religions
Comparative Religion
Hieroglyphs to Hashtags
Monastery and Megachurch
Special Topic: Cults
Special Topic: Godless Utopia
Special Topic: Religion and Disability

LANGUAGES

Research proficiency (modern): Russian, French, Esperanto, German, Braille

Research proficiency (classical): Church Slavonic, Latin

Familiarity: Pali, Classical Greek, Modern Standard Arabic, American Sign Language

AWARDS & GRANTS

Excellence in Scholarship Award
Niagara University, 2021

Excellence in Scholarship Award
NU College of Arts & Sciences, 2008

Research Support Grant (Niagara University Research Council)
“On the Religious Significance of Braille”
for sabbatical research in Paris and environs, 2019-20

Research Support Grant (Niagara University Research Council)
“Homaranismo: The ‘Esperanto’ of Religion”
for work at the Hector Hodler Library, Rotterdam, summer 2014

Research Summer Stipend (Niagara University Research Council)
“How to do Things with Sacred Languages”
summer 2013

Research Support Grant (Niagara University Research Council)
“Religious Interpretations of Esperanto”
for work at Esperanto Museum, Vienna, summer 2012

Research Support Grant (Niagara University Research Council)
“Esperanto, Religion, and Soviet Communism”
for work at Hoover Institution, Stanford University, July 2011

Research Summer Stipend (Niagara University Research Council)
“Church Slavonic Online: From Sacred Space to Cyberspace”
summer 2010

Research Support Grant (Niagara University Research Council)
“The Diasporic Dimension of Liturgical Language Policy: The Case of Russian Orthodoxy”
for Societas Linguistica Europaea, Lisbon, September 2009

Research Summer Stipend (Niagara University Research Council)
“Abecedarian Discourse: The Old Orthography in the New Russia”
summer 2008

Research Support Grant (Niagara University Research Council)
“Slavonic in the Semiotic Landscape of Post-Soviet Russia”
for work at Hoover Institution, Stanford University, July 2007

Research Summer Stipend (Niagara University Research Council)
“The Discourse of Spiritual Culture (*dukhovnaia kul'tura*) in Post-Communist Russia”
summer 2006

Research Summer Stipend (Niagara University Research Council)
“The Liturgical Language Debate in Post-Soviet Russian Orthodoxy”
summer 2005