

DAMAYANTHI M.A. NILES

AREA OF STUDY	THEOLOGY
ADDRESS	Eden Theological Seminary 475 East Lockwood Ave. Saint Louis MO, 63119-3192 314 918 2594 dniles@eden.edu
PRESENT POSITION	Professor of Constructive Theology Eden Theological Seminary Jan 2001 – Interim Academic Dean May 2020 - Allen and Dottie Miller Chair of Mission and Peace September 2021 -
FORMER POSITION	Research Associate (Associate Director) for the Christianity in Asia Project, Centre for Advanced Religious Studies, Faculty of Divinity, Cambridge University, June 1998 – 2000
PERSONAL BACKGROUND	Born: September 14, 1965, Jaffna Sri-Lanka
EDUCATION	Ph.D. University of Chicago, 1998 M.Div. Princeton Theological Seminary, 1991 B.A. St. Olaf College Majors: Religion & Psychology, 1988
DOCTORAL EXAMINATIONS	1. History of Christian Thought through the Reformation 2. Modern and Contemporary Christian Thought 3. Theological Topic (Theology of Religions) 4. History of Religions: Method and History of the Discipline 5. History of Religions: Special Area (Hinduism & Buddhism)
DISSERTATION COMMITTEE	Co-advisors: David Tracy and Wendy Doniger Reader: Anne Carr
CHURCH AFFILIATION	Ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament, Giddings- Lovejoy Presbytery St Louis MO, Presbyterian Church, USA

HONOURS

Member of the leadership team for the 2014-15 Wabash Center workshop for Pre-Tenure Theological School Faculty

Inducted into the Martin Luther King Collegium of Scholars at Morehouse College. Atlanta Georgia, April 3, 2008

Recipient of the 2005 Summer Grant for Research, Wabash Centre

Participant in 2004 Workshop on Teaching and Learning for Pre-Tenure Theological School Faculty, Wabash Centre

The Edward Robert Scholarship in Preaching, Princeton Theological Seminary (1990)

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Development Advisory Committee (FDAC) for Association of Theological Seminaries (ATS) (2001-04)

American Academy of Religion (AAR)

Congress of Asian Theologians (CATS)

Network of Theological Enquiry (NOTE)

Theological Educators for Presbyterian Social Witness for the PCUSA (TESWP)

Member of the Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia (FTESEA), consultation tea (2013 -)

Steering Committee member of Association of Asian/North American Theological Educators (AANATE) (2014 - 2018)

CHURCH COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Member of the Vision Team, Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy (2018 -)

Member of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) of the Presbyterian Church USA (2006 -2012)

Member of the Executive Committee General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (2008 -2012)

Chair of the Sub-committee on Interfaith Relationships for GACER (2007-2012)

PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCE

Presbyterian Representative to the Interfaith Relations
Commission, National Council of Churches (2007-2009)

Acting Dean, Eden Theological Seminary (August 2013 –
January 2014)

Adjunct Professor for the Advanced Pastoral Studies
Summer Term at San Francisco Theological Seminary,
June 5 – July 13, 2006 and June 8-July 16, 2009 at San
Anselmo California.

Led workshop “Doing Theology in a Pluralistic World” at
the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators
(APCE), January 30, 2006

On Board of Editors, *Madang: International Journal of
Contextual Theology in East Asia* published twice a year
by South Korean progressive theologians (2004 -)

Co-lecturer with Dr Philip Wickeri, “New Directions in
Mission in the 21st Century” at the Global Institute of
Theology (GIT) in conjunction with the General
Assembly of World Alliance of Reformed Churches
(WARC) in Accra, Ghana, July 22 - August 15, 2004

Adjunct Lecturer, “Introduction to Asian Theology:
Women and the Ecumenical Movement”, Women 's
Studies Program, United Theological Seminary of the
Twin Cities, Summer Term 1999

Co-Guest Lecturer with Dr Kathleen Billman
"Feminist/Womanist Theology," D.Min Program,
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Summer 1995 &
Summer 1996

Guest Lecturer, "Asian Theology - A South Asian
Perspective" in Introduction to Ethics, McCormick
Theological Seminary, Chicago, Spring 1996

Guest Lecturer, "Construction of Feminist/Womanist
Theology" in Women and Pastoral Care, Lutheran School
of Theology at Chicago, Winter 1993 & Spring 1994

PUBLICATIONS

Doing Theology with Humility Generosity and Wonder: A
Christian Theology of Pluralism. Minneapolis; Fortress
Press, 2020

“We Are a Storytelling People: An Asian American reflection on identity after Immigration” co-authored with Christine Hong in Insights: The Faculty Journal of Austin Seminary, vol 132 No. 1 Fall 2016

Worshipping At the Feet of the Ancestors: Hendrik Kraemer and the Making of Contextual Theology in South Asia, Wien : Lit ; UK : Distribution, Global Book Marketing, 2012

“It’s Time to Dance with Dragons” International Review of Mission, Vol 100.2, No. 393, November 2011.

Article on DT Niles for the Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology edited by David Fergusson, Karen Kilby, Iain Torrance & Ian A. McFarland, Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2011

Three articles on Contextualization in Theology, DT Niles, & M.M. Thomas for Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity edited by Daniel Patte Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2010

Prayer in the Prayers for the New Social Awakening: inspired by the new social creed, edited by Christian Iosso and Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008

“Wasteful Abundance : An Asia Christian Perspective on the Plurality of Creation” in Negotiating Borders: Theological Explorations in the Global Era edited by Patrick Gnanapragasam & Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, Delhi: ISPCK 2008

“How the Study of Popular Religion Can Help Us in Our Theological Task,” International Review of Mission, Vol. 93, No. 369, April, 2004

“Toward a Broader Theological Conversation,” QUEST - a journal for the Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia (ACUCA) and the United Board of Christian Higher Education in Asia (UBCHEA), Vol. 3, No. 1, April, 2004

“Whose Text Is It Anyway?: The Way Text Functions in the Building Identity and Community” in Scripture, Community and Mission: Celebrating the Life of D. Preman Niles, ed. Philip L. Wickeri, CCA/CWM , 2003

“An Asian Context” & “A Common Hope Is Always Context-Specific,” Hope For the World: Mission in a Global Context, ed. Walter Brueggemann, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, 2001

“The Plurality of Hope: Toward Further Dialogue and Engagement” in Plurality Power and Mission: Intercontextual Theological Explorations on the Role of Religion in the New Millennium, ed. Philip Wickeri, Janice Wickeri, and Damayanthi Niles, Council for World Mission, 2000

“In Search of a Theological Methodology that takes Plurality Seriously in the Task of Mission” in The People of God Among All God's People: Frontiers in Christian Mission ed. Philip L. Wickeri, Christian Conference of Asia & Council for World Mission, 2000

FORTHCOMING
PREPARATION

The Fallacy of Pure Identity coming out in an edited volume for the Parliament of World Religions

PRESENTATIONS

Presentation: *The Fallacy of Pure Identity*, at the Parliament of World Religions session on Buddhist Violent Extremism in Sri Lanka November 4 2018

Guest Lecture on “Reunderstanding Christian Theology in a Pluralistic World” for Mo Ranch Circle of Friends, at Presbyterian Mo Ranch Conference Centre, Texas October 22-25 2012

“Theologians Journey Through a War Torn Land” Series of Adult Education class taught at Kirkwood Presbyterian Church (February 26, March 4, 11 & 18 2012) & Ladue Chapel St Louis MO (April 15 & 22 2012)

“Constructive Theology” Christian Theological Seminary Jaffna Sri Lanka Sept 26-Oct 7 2011

Bible Studies, Theological College of Lanka Pilimatalawa
Sri Lanka October 12-13 2011

Methodist Training Retreat for the Methodist Church of
Sri Lanka October 27-29 2011

Keynote paper at the Religion and Culture conference at
the Institute for the Study of Religions and Cultures at
Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand July 24-30, 2007

Tollefson Lecture, November 9, 2006 at the Buena Vista
University, Iowa

Lecture on “Constructing a Christian Theology on
Pluralism,” 2006 at Lexington Theological Seminary
March 2, 2006

Presented a paper on “Christian Theology's Engagement
with Religious Pluralism” at the request of the National
Council of Churches USA at the American Academy of
Religion (AAR), November, 2005 at Philadelphia.

Participated in the Women in Leadership Seminar of the
Association of Theological Seminaries (ATS), October
21-23, 2005

Presentation at the Association of Theological Seminaries
(ATS) gathering of Asian Scholars, Spring 2005 at the
Redondo Beach, California

Keynote paper at the conference on Mission History and
Intercultural Theology, January 26-28, 2005 at the
University of Kampen, Netherlands

Presentation on “How to be Christian in a Pluralistic
World” at the Festival of Faiths, November 11, 2004 at
Louisville, Kentucky

Preacher at the General Assembly of the National Council
of Churches USA, November 10, 2004 at St Louis
Missouri

Lecturer for the Taiwanese Presbyterian Churches in
America, Oct 13-15, 2004 in St Louis, Missouri

Presentation at the Pastor-Theologian Conference, Centre for Theological Inquiry (CTI), June 24-27, 2004 at Montreal, Canada

Preacher at the Commissioning Service for Drs Anil and Teresa Henry, Chapel at Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee, April 11, 2003

Susan Draper White Lecturers in Women's Studies at United Theological Seminary, New Brighton Minnesota, March 4-5, 2002

Lecture "Sept 11, 2001, Empire and Religious Identity" at the Department of Christian Studies at the University of Madras, Chennai, India, January 17, 2002

Drafter and participation at the Network of Theological Enquiry (NOTE) meeting, Chennai India, January 6-11, 2002

Presentation at Congress of Asian Theologians (CATS) III, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, August 2001

"Looking for a Missiological Method that Takes Plurality Seriously," Mission Round Table - Joint meeting of Council for World Mission (CWM) and Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) Endeavour, Hong Kong, November 11-17, 1999

Presentation on the work of Mark Heim at 2001 Annual Meeting of the Council for Theological Education, Cleveland, Ohio, October 26, 2001

"A New Way Forward: The Use of Understandings of Religion in the Theological Task" Research Consultation on "Critical Review of Asian Theology: Debates and Methods" sponsored by the Programme for Theology and Cultures in Asia (PTCA), Hong Kong, November 1-5, 1998

Theological Reflector at the Annual General Meeting of the Division of World Outreach, United Church of Canada, Toronto, Canada, February 7-11, 1997

"Response of Young Adults to the Church" Global Mission Conference of the Presbyterian Church USA, Montreat, North Carolina, July 1989

PROJECTS

Participant in the Interfaith Consultation for the Presbyterian Church (USA) (Sept 18-12, 2014)

Member of the planning committee for the creation of an interfaith stance for Presbyterian Church (USA) 2012 -

Participant in the Ecumenical Consultation for the Presbyterian Church (Sept 27-29, 2007)

Drafter on the New Ecumenical Stance for the PCUSA (particular focus on "The Changing Ecumenical Landscape")

Participant in Network of Theological Enquiry (NOTE) Conference, "Prophetic Christianity and Church State relationships" Cape Town, South Africa, 2004

Participant in and part of the report drafting team at "Toward the Fullness of Life: Intercontextual Relationship in Mission" a Missiological Consultation sponsored by the WCC Mission and Evangelism Team, the Council for World Mission (CWM, London), the Community of Churches in Mission (CEVAA, Montpellier, France) and the United Evangelical Mission (UEM, Wuppertal, Germany), London, England, April 14-19, 2002

Participant in Network of Theological Enquiry (NOTE) Conference "Scripture, Community and Mission" Chennai India, January 2002

Participant in preparatory meeting for a study process to explore major challenges for mission today and to contribute to a renewed formulation of ecumenical mission theology sponsored by the WCC Mission and Evangelism Team, the Council for World Mission (CWM, London), the Community of Churches in Mission (CEVAA, Montpellier, France) and the United Evangelical Mission (UEM, Wuppertal, Germany), Geneva, Switzerland, March 26-30 2001

Participant in Campbell Scholar Mission Seminar, "The Mission of the Church in the 21st Century: Mission as

Action in Hope” Columbia Theological Seminary,
September-November 2000; other participants: Erskine
Clarke, Walter Brueggemann, Russel Botman, Douglas
John Hall, Ofelia Ortega, Janos Pasztor, Joanna Adams,
James Lowry

Organizer and Participant in Network of Theological
Enquiry (NOTE) Conference, “Looking for, Emerging
Trends in Theology,” Cambridge University, March 27-
April 2, 2000

**SUPERVISIONS
AT UNIVERSITY
OF CAMBRIDGE**

K.R. Goldie, Fitzwilliam College, M.Phil Theology
Thesis: “The Significance of Hinduism and Buddhism as a
Factor in Indian Church Union”

EXAMINER

PH.D. thesis for the Department of Christian Studies,
University of Madras, January, 2001

LANGUAGES

Reading knowledge of French, German, Hebrew, and
Greek, some conversational Tamil