

Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) was active during the Renaissance, developing adventurous ideas even while serving as a churchman. The religious issues with which he engaged — spiritual, apocalyptic and institutional — were to play out in the Reformation. These essays reflect the interests of Cusanus but also those of Gerald Christianson, who has studied church history, the Renaissance and the Reformation. The book places Nicholas into his times but also looks at his later reception. The first part addresses institutional issues, including Schism, conciliarism, indulgences and the possibility of dialogue with Muslims. The second treats theological and philosophical themes, including nominalism, time, faith, religious metaphor, and prediction of the end times.

THOMAS IZBICKI is a Cornell PhD who has worked on the papacy and canon law in the later Middle Ages. Among his interests are Pope Pius II, Nicholas of Cusa, Juan de Torquemada and Antoninus of Florence.

JASON ALEKSANDER is Professor of Philosophy and Associate Dean of Faculty Success and Research at San José State University. He works primarily in the areas of medieval and Renaissance philosophy, Dante studies, and the philosophy of religion.

DONALD F. DUCLOW, Ph.D (1974), is Professor of Philosophy Emeritus at Gwynedd Mercy University. He has published widely on the medieval Christian Neoplatonic tradition, including *Masters of Learned Ignorance: Eriugena, Eckhart, Cusanus* (Ashgate/Variorum, 2006).

*Photo Credit:* Bronze memorial plaque of Cusanus by Werner Kofler, Brixen Cathedral, 2001.  
Photo: Geraldine Duclow, with permission of the photographer.



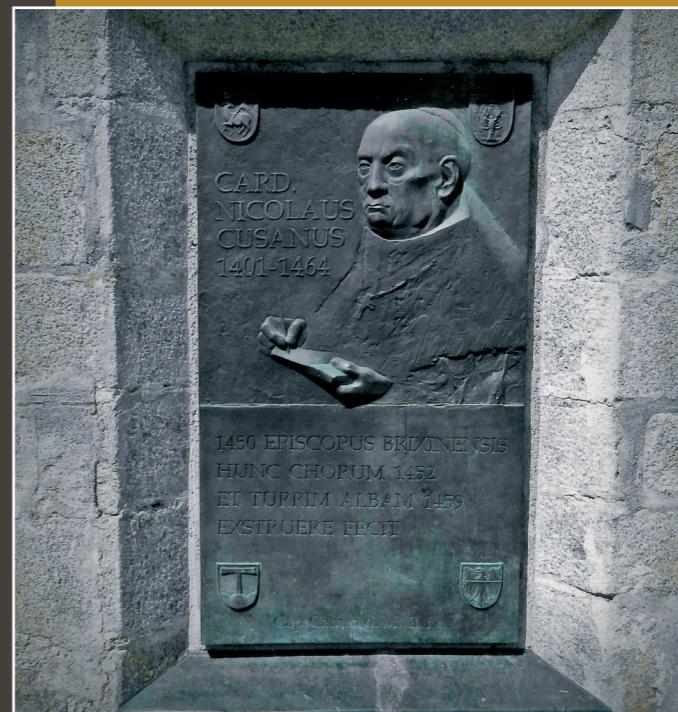
Studies in the History  
of Christian Traditions, 188  
ISSN: 1573-5664  
[brill.com/shct](http://brill.com/shct)

SHCT  
188

Izbicki, Aleksander & Duclow (Eds.) Nicholas of Cusa and Times of Transition

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

# Nicholas of Cusa and Times of Transition *Essays in Honor of Gerald Christianson*



*Edited by*  
Thomas M. Izbicki, Jason Aleksander  
& Donald F. Duclow

Robert J. Bast

BRILL

SERIES EDITOR

BRILL

## Nicholas of Cusa and Times of Transition

# **Studies in the History of Christian Traditions**

*Editor-in-Chief*

Robert J. Bast (*Knoxville, Tennessee*)

*Editorial Board*

Paul C.H. Lim (*Nashville, Tennessee*)

Brad C. Pardue (*Point Lookout, Missouri*)

Eric Saak (*Indianapolis*)

Christine Shepardson (*Knoxville, Tennessee*)

Brian Tierney (*Ithaca, New York*)

John Van Engen (*Notre Dame, Indiana*)

*Founding Editor*

Heiko A. Oberman†

VOLUME 188

The titles published in this series are listed at [brill.com/shct](http://brill.com/shct)

# Nicholas of Cusa and Times of Transition

*Essays in Honor of Gerald Christianson*

*Edited by*

Thomas M. Izbicki, Jason Aleksander and  
Donald F. Duclow



B R I L L

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Bronze memorial plaque of Cusanus by Werner Kofler, Brixen Cathedral, 2001. Photo: Geraldine Duclow, with permission of the photographer.

The Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available online at <http://catalog.loc.gov>  
LC record available at <http://lccn.loc.gov/>

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: [brill.com/brill-typeface](http://brill.com/brill-typeface).

ISSN 1573-5664

ISBN 978-90-04-37526-0 (hardback)

ISBN 978-90-04-38241-1 (e-book)

Copyright 2019 by Koninklijke Brill nv, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill nv incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Hes & De Graaf, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Rodopi, Brill Sense, Hotei Publishing, mentis Verlag, Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh and Wilhelm Fink Verlag.  
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill nv provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.

This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

# Contents

List of Illustrations ix

Contributors x

Tribute to Gerald Christianson XVI

*Thomas M. Izbicki, Jason Aleksander, and Donald F. Duclow*

## PART 1

### *Historical Studies*

- 1 Una ecclesia in rituum varietate: Unity and Diversity of the Church according to Nicholas of Cusa 3  
*Walter Andreas Euler*
- 2 The Political Philosophy of Franciscus Zabarella as Seen in His Public Addresses and Other Works 15  
*Thomas E. Morrissey*
- 3 The Response of the Spanish Kingdoms to the Reform Efforts of the Council of Constance (1414–1418) 26  
*Philip Stump*
- 4 Tyrannicide and the Question of (Il)licit Violence in the Fifteenth Century 48  
*David Zachariah Flanagin*
- 5 The Council of Basel and Other Political Assemblies as Cultural Phenomena 64  
*Michiel Decaluwe*
- 6 The Legate Grants Indulgences: Cusanus in Germany in 1450–1453 81  
*Thomas M. Izbicki*
- 7 Cusanus, the Greeks, and Islam 96  
*John Monfasani*

- 8    Reading Cusanus' *Cibratio Alkorani* (1461) in the Light of Christian Antiquarianism at the Papal Court in the 1450s 113  
      *Il Kim*
- 9    Between Cusanus and Luther: Kymeus' *The Pope's Hercules against the Germans* 129  
      *Philip Krey*
- 10   Language, Leadership, and Locations of Church Reform in the *Libellus ad Leonem Decimum* 145  
      *Christopher Bellitto*
- 11   Sharing Friends and Foes: On the Relation between Nicholas Cusanus and Martin Luther 159  
      *Knut Alfsvåg*

**PART 2**  
***Philosophical and Theological Studies***

- 12   Justification by Faith in Nicholas of Cusa 175  
      *Peter Casarella*
- 13   Faith as *Poiesis* in Nicholas of Cusa's Pursuit of Wisdom 197  
      *Jason Aleksander*
- 14   Cusanus and Nominalism 219  
      *Meredith Ziebart*
- 15   Between Time and Eternity: Neoplatonic Precursors to Cusanus' Conception of "Non-Temporal Time" in *De aequalitate* 242  
      *Elizabeth Brient*
- 16   Before the Icon: The Figural Matrix of *De visione Dei* 262  
      *David Albertson*
- 17   The Metaphor of Light and the Light of Metaphor in Nicholas of Cusa 286  
      *Clyde Lee Miller*

- 18 "Our Substance is God's Coin": Nicholas of Cusa on Minting, Defiling,  
and Restoring the *Imago Dei* 301  
*Donald F. Duclow*
- 19 Apocalypticism and Church Reform in Nicholas of Cusa 320  
*Richard J. Serina, Jr.*
- 20 The Conjecture on the Last Days (*Coniectura de ultimis diebus*):  
Cusanus and Concordist Eschatology 334  
*Bernard McGinn*
- Gerald Christianson 345  
Christianson Festschrift Indexes 350



# Illustrations

## Figures

- Frontispiece: Gerald Christianson, by Gregory Christianson, with permission of the photographer xvi
- 9.1 Cover page of John Kymeus, *Des Bapsts Herkules wider die Deudschen [The Pope's Hercules against the Germans]*, Ottokar Menzel, *Cusanus-Studien VI, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, vol. 21, 6 (1940–41). 128
- 17.1 Figura Paradigmatica: P, *De coniecturis, Nicolai Cusae Cardinalis Opera* (Paris: 1514). 288

## Tables

- 6.1 Indulgences Granted During the Legation Journey, 1451–1452 87
- 6.2 Indulgences Granted During the Brixen Residency, 1452–1453 90
- 6.3 Recipients of the Jubilee Indulgence, 1451–1453 91

# Contributors

## *Jason Aleksander*

is Professor of Philosophy and Associate Dean of Faculty Success and Research at San José State University. He works primarily in the areas of medieval and Renaissance philosophy, Dante studies, and the philosophy of religion. He also serves as Secretary of the American Cusanus Society.

## *David Albertson*

is Associate Professor of Religion at the University of Southern California. His publications include the award-winning monograph, *Mathematical Theologies: Nicholas of Cusa and the Legacy of Thierry of Chartres* (Oxford, 2014); a co-edited volume on theological ethics, *Without Nature? A New Condition for Theology* (Fordham, 2009); and over twenty essays on Nicholas of Cusa, Christian mysticism, and medieval Platonism. He currently serves as President of the American Cusanus Society.

## *Knut Alfsvåg*

is Professor in Systematic Theology at VID Specialized University, Stavanger, Norway. He received his doctorate from Asian Graduate School of Theology in 1995, serving at that time as lecturer in Historical Theology at Kobe Lutheran Theological Seminary. He has held his present position since 2005. He has published works on Cusanus, Luther, apophatic theology and on the relation between modernity and Christian theology. In 2010, he published *What No Mind Has Conceived: On the Significance of Christological Apophaticism*. In 2018, he published *Christology as Critique: On the Relation between Christ, Creation and Epistemology*. Both works discuss both Cusanus and Luther.

## *Christopher Bellitto*

is Professor of History at Kean University in New Jersey, where he teaches courses in ancient and medieval history. A specialist in church history and reform, he is the author of ten books, including the companion volumes *Renewing Christianity* and *The General Councils* along with *Nicolas de Clamanges: Spirituality, Personal Reform and Pastoral Renewal on the Eve of the Reformation*. He is the author of over 30 peer-reviewed articles, has been a Fulbright Specialist at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, and won a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Dr. Bellitto also has long experience as an editor, having co-edited six collected volumes, including *Re-assessing Reform: A Historical Investigation into Church Renewal and Reforming*

*the Church Before Modernity: Patterns, Problems, and Approaches*. He currently serves as Academic Editor at Large of Paulist Press and series Editor in Chief of *Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition*.

*Elizabeth Brient*

is Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Georgia, Athens. After receiving her doctorate from Yale University in 1995, she has focused her research on the epochal transition from the Middle Ages to modernity and on the problem of new beginnings. She has written a number of articles on the epochal transition to modernity with particular reference to late medieval Neoplatonism, the metaphysics of the infinite, and on metaphor, dealing especially with the thought of Meister Eckhart, Nicholas of Cusa, Hans Blumenberg, and Hannah Arendt. She is the author of *The Immanence of the Infinite: Hans Blumenberg and the Threshold to Modernity* (Washington, DC: 2002).

*Peter Casarella*

received his Ph.D. in 1992 from the department of Religious Studies at Yale University and was from 2009–2014 the fourth President of the American Cusanus Society. In 2013 he went to the University of Notre Dame as an Associate Professor. He has edited or co-edited the following volumes of essays: with George Schner, S.J., *Christian Spirituality and the Culture of Modernity: The Thought of Louis Dupré* (Eerdmans, 1998); with Will Storrar and Paul Metzger, *A World for All? Global Civil Society in Political Theory and Trinitarian Theology* (Eerdmans, 2011); *Cusanus: The Legacy of Learned Ignorance* (Catholic University of America Press, 2006), and *Jesus Christ: The New Face of Social Progress* (Eerdmans, 2015). *Word as Bread: Language and Theology in Nicholas of Cusa* appeared from Aschendorff Verlag in 2017. He is currently working on a book on the doctrine of God from a Latino/a perspective: *The God of the People*.

*Michiel Decaluwé*

has studied history at Ghent University in Belgium and is studying Protestant theology at the University of Tübingen in Germany. After receiving his doctorate with a study of the papal politics of Pope Eugene IV towards the Council of Basel, 1431–1449 (Ghent University, 2005) he worked at the University of Freiburg, Germany and in Rome, Italy. He published several articles on the history of the councils of Constance and Basel and of the conciliar decree *Haec sancta*. He is currently preparing a book on the mental process of decision making on political assemblies of the late Middle Ages.

*Donald F. Duclow*

is Professor of Philosophy Emeritus at Gwynedd Mercy University, and Visiting Scholar in Religious Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He has published widely on the Christian Neoplatonic tradition in the Middle Ages. His book *Masters of Learned Ignorance: Eriugena, Eckhart, Cusanus* (Ashgate Variorum, 2006) includes twenty of his articles. He serves as Vice President of the American Cusanus Society, and is a member of the Wissenschaftliche Beirat of the Cusanus-Gesellschaft.

*Walter Andreas Euler*

is since 2001 professor of Systematic Theology at the Faculty of Theology at Trier, Germany (the faculty is not part of the University of Trier). He studied Catholic Theology at Passau and Freiburg, where he received his doctorate. Between April 2007 and September 2016 he was director of the Institute of Cusanus-Research in Trier. His monographs are *Unitas et Pax: Religionsvergleich bei Raimundus Lullus und Nikolaus von Kues* (2nd edition 1995) and “*Pia philosophia*” et “*docta religio*”: *Theologie und Religion bei Marsilio Ficino und Giovanni Pico della Mirandola* (1998). He has edited texts of Ramon Lull and Nicholas of Cusa and is editor of *Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeitraege der Cusanus-Gesellschaft* 32–35 as well as co-editor of *Nikolaus von Kues: Predigten in deutscher Übersetzung*.

*David Zachariah Flanagin*

is Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at Saint Mary's College of California. Since receiving his doctorate in the History of Christianity from the Divinity School at the University of Chicago, his research has focused primarily on late-medieval ecclesiology and the history of biblical interpretation. In addition to numerous articles, he is co-editor of *Reassessing Reform: A Historical Investigation into Church Renewal* (2012) and is currently completing a survey of western biblical exegesis entitled *Reading the Bible through the Ages*.

*Thomas M. Izbicki*

is Humanities Librarian Emeritus at Rutgers University. Since receiving his doctorate at Cornell University in 1973, he has done extensive research on the medieval Church and its laws. He has published on the papacy, mendicant religious orders, the discipline of the sacraments and medieval clothing and textiles. Most recently he has joined the editorial board of *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*. His monographs are *Protector of the Faith: Cardinal Johannes de Turrecremata and the Defense of the Institutional Church* (Catholic University

of America Press, 1981) and *The Eucharist in Medieval Canon Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2015). He has translated Latin texts of Pope Pius II, Juan de Torquemada and Nicholas of Cusa into English.

*Il Kim*

Korean born and raised in Tokyo, received his BA and MA in architecture from Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, and Ph.D. in architectural history from Columbia University's Department of Art History and Archaeology. He is an assistant professor at Auburn University's School of Architecture, teaching both history and design. His current research centers on the influence of scientific knowledge and engineering techniques on the development of fifteenth-century theology/philosophy. He is working on a book based on his dissertation, the focus of which is the intellectual relationship between Alberti and Cusanus.

*Philip Krey*

is the Ministerium of New York Professor of Church History Emeritus and former president of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Since receiving a Fulbright Fellowship to the University of Munich in 1989 and his doctorate at the University of Chicago in 1990, he has published widely in the areas of the history of medieval and reformation history of biblical interpretation and medieval and reformation spirituality. His publications include *Nicholas of Lyra: The Senses of Scripture* with Lesley Smith (Brill), *Martin Luther's Spirituality* with Peter Krey (Paulist Press), *The Catholic Luther*, with Peter Krey (Paulist Press). With Tom Ryan and Ian Levy he is currently editing the series, *The Bible in Tradition* (Eerdmans). He has helped to translate works by Nicholas of Lyra, Pope Pius II, and ancient and reformation commentaries of Hebrews and the Letter to the Romans. He currently serves as the senior pastor of St Andrew's Luther Church in Perkasie, PA.

*Bernard McGinn*

is the Naomi Shenstone Donnelley Professor emeritus at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, where he taught for thirty-four years before retiring in 2003. He received an STL from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome in 1963, and a PhD from Brandeis University in 1970. His major area of research has been in the history of patristic and medieval theology, especially the history of apocalypticism and mysticism. His current major project is a multi-volume history of Western Christian mysticism under the general title of *The Presence of God*. Seven volumes have been published between 1991 and 2017.

*Clyde Lee Miller*

is Professor of Philosophy at Stony Brook University (SUNY) in Stony Brook, Long Island, New York. There he has taught ancient and medieval philosophy to undergraduates and graduate students since 1973 and served as Associate Dean for Personnel in the College of Arts and Sciences from 2001–11. He has given many conference presentations with the American Cusanus Society and published many papers on Nicholas of Cusa, as well as a translation of Nicholas' *Idiota de mente* and Jean Gerson's *De consolatione theologiae*. His monograph, *Reading Cusanus: Metaphor and Dialectic in a Conjectural Universe*, was published by Catholic University Press in 2003. He is currently completing a book exploring “conjectures” in several of Nicholas’s theoretical writings and sermons.

*John Monfasani*

received his B.A. from Fordham University in 1965 and his PhD. in history from Columbia University in 1973. From 1971 to his retirement in 2016, he taught in the history department of the University at Albany, State University of New York, rising from the rank of Lecturer to Distinguished Professor. From 1995 to 2010 he was the Executive Director of the Renaissance Society of America. His first book was *George of Trebizond: A Biography and a Study of His Rhetoric and Logic* (Brill 1976), for which he received the 1980 John Nicholas Brown Prize of the Medieval Academy of America. He has since published thirteen other books and has three more in the press. He has published or has in the press 95 articles.

*Thomas E. Morrissey*

is a Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus at State University of New York at Fredonia, N.Y. He received his doctorate at Cornell University in January 1973 and in the decades since then has done extensive research and writing on the conciliarist traditions and the Council of Constance. In 2014 he published a set of seventeen of these studies in a volume entitled *Conciliarism and Church Law in the Fifteenth Century: Studies on Franciscus Zabarella and the Council of Constance*.

*Richard J. Serina, Jr.*

teaches religion at Concordia College-New York, and is formerly Guest Professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Research Fellow at the Center for Reformation Research, St. Louis. He earned his doctorate from Concordia Seminary with a dissertation on Nicholas of Cusa. In addition to various articles on late medieval and Reformation ecclesiology and church

reform, he has published *Nicholas of Cusa's Brixen Sermons and Late Medieval Church Reform* (Leiden 2016), and has co-edited volumes on Lutheran ecclesiology and the Leipzig Debate of 1519 between Martin Luther and John Eck.

*Phillip Stump*

is professor emeritus of history at the University of Lynchburg. His research has focused on ideas of renewal and reform and on the late medieval conciliar movement. Most recently he has published a critical edition of the decrees of the Council of Constance (1414–1418) in the *Conciliorum oecumenicorum generaliumque decreta* vol. 2.1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014); “The Continuing Relevance of *The Idea of Reform*,” in *Reassessing Reform: A Historical Investigation into Church Renewal*, ed. Christopher M. Bellitto and David Zachariah Flanagin (Catholic University Press of America, 2013); and “Ideas of Reform and Tradition at the Late Medieval Reform Councils,” in *Transforming Topoi: The Exigencies and Impositions of Tradition*, ed. Andrew James Johnston, et al. (Göttingen 2018), 41–57.

*Meredith Ziebart*

received her doctorate in Philosophy at Albert-Ludwigs University, in Freiburg, Germany (2010). Since then she has been a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of Quebec at Montreal, taught at Loyola University Maryland, and is currently an Independent Scholar based in Kelowna, British Columbia. She has served on the Executive Committee of the American Cusanus Society since 2012 and been Editor of the *American Cusanus Society Newsletter* since 2014. She has published a number of articles related to Cusanus and mystical theology, as well as the monograph *Nicolaus Cusanus on Faith and Reason: A Case-Study in 15th-Century fides-ratio Controversy* (Brill 2014). Since 2016, she has been co-collaborator with David Albertson (USC) on the NEH-funded research project “The Tegernsee Debate on Love and Knowledge: Letters and Treatises on Mystical Theology from the 1450s”, and has translated many documents by Cusanus and others in his milieu.



Frontispiece: Gerald Christianson, by Gregory Christianson, with permission of the photographer

# A Tribute to Gerald Christianson

*Thomas M. Izbicki, Jason Aleksander, and Donald F. Duclow*

Jerry Christianson has compiled an enviable record as a teacher and a scholar. His interests lie not only in Church history but also in music and liturgy, and his work extends beyond formal academics to ministry and community service. Jerry's role in the American Cusanus Society has included organizing conferences in Gettysburg, getting the proceedings of the conferences into print, and serving in executive positions, including three years as president. Therefore, we, his Cusanus colleagues, offer this tribute in gratitude for his labors and commitment.<sup>1</sup>

Born and raised in Minnesota, Jerry Christianson received his BA from Gustavus Adolphus College in 1955 and a BD from Augustana Seminary in 1960. He was ordained to the Lutheran clergy in June 1960. Jerry then undertook graduate study at the University of Chicago, receiving an MA in 1964 and a PhD in 1972. He taught at Augustana in 1966–67. Later in 1967, Jerry began teaching at the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary, now part of the United Lutheran Seminary. His teaching areas were the early Church, history of worship, the medieval Church, and Christian art and spirituality. In 1988, he became the Central Pennsylvania Synod Professor of Church History, a position he held through 2005, perhaps the longest tenure of a faculty member in his seminary's history. Christianson served as Professor Emeritus of Church History in Residence from 2006 to 2010.

A former student at the seminary, Gretchen Cranz Fornof, remembers Jerry Christianson's teaching role fondly:

While getting my MAR (1976) and MDiv (1996) at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, I was a student in every course he taught. Jerry's enthusiasm for his subjects and devotion to his students shone during classes and daily on campus. His broad interest in church history and worship, great Christian thinkers, and music is an integral part of who Jerry is. I will always be thankful for his presence in my life!

Another former student, Philip Krey, a contributor to this volume, says of Jerry's impact on his career:

---

<sup>1</sup> The Society previously honored Jerry with a session titled "Late Medieval Reform of Church and Society" at the 39th International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan, in 2004.

As I reflect upon Gerald Christianson as a teacher, I recall that when I arrived right out of college in 1972 at The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, he was already established as a professor there. That did not prevent him from immediately drafting me to present my college honors thesis on William Langland at a seminar that he was teaching on the late-medieval period. Petrified, I did my best, and, as usual, he showered encouragement and praise for my efforts. As a teacher, he was most adept at communicating the long-term relevance of the medieval period—its institutions and reforms—to contemporary reforms in the Church and our modern democratic institutions. He was a recruiter and a cultivator of prospects for historical and medieval scholarship. There is little doubt that he was the primary influence in my going on to graduate school to study with his own teacher, Bernard McGinn, at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. Like Dr. McGinn, Dr. Christianson has remained a teacher and mentor for his students throughout his career. He introduced us to his friends and colleagues. Jerry invited us to write and co-edit books thus launching our careers as scholars. He drafted many of us into the American Cusanus Society, where we were invited to present to international scholars. Jerry never thought it beneath himself to be part of the simplest but essential preparations for the seminars and conferences to which he invited us. He also painstakingly encouraged us to attend the annual Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo where he would join us for lunch and network for us. An accomplished scholar and exquisite writer, one always felt that he was looking out for you. He understands what it means to be Christ to the neighbor. To many he has been a mentor, encourager, door opener, inspiration, and friend.

As a publishing scholar, Jerry Christianson has authored a highly significant monograph, *Cesarini, the Conciliar Cardinal: The Basel Years, 1431–1438* (St Ottilien: 1979). His articles include studies of Francis of Assisi, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pius II), Giuliano Cesarini, Nicholas of Cusa, and ecclesiastical reform. He urged the American Cusanus Society to begin publishing the proceedings of its conferences, and he has often taken the lead in those projects. Working with Thomas Izbicki, Michiel Decaluwé, and Christopher Bellitto, he has co-edited several volumes of scholarly articles, most of them focused on Nicholas of Cusa, the Council of Basel, and other Church councils. He has been involved in translating important texts from Latin and German, while also editing important and often unpublished work of F. Edward Cranz, Morimichi Watanabe, and H. Lawrence Bond. His patience and steady hand have advanced all of these scholarly projects, along with studies of the German Awakening, music, and liturgy.

Jerry Christianson's many roles in church and the community are too numerous to list, even in brief. His services to the Lutheran Church are many and are deeply seated in his historical scholarship. Service to the Gettysburg community includes engagement with the region's history, most recently with the Seminary Ridge Museum in the original seminary building. He is the founder of Music Gettysburg and longtime host of the radio program "The Seminary Explores." His commitments have included Habitat for Humanity and historic preservation.

Few scholars have so fine a record of dedication to church, scholarship, and community. Consequently, we have assembled these essays in this festschrift to honor Jerry, our colleague in the American Cusanus Society, a moving force in much that we have done, and a generous host of academic gatherings.

These studies fall into two sections. The first section is largely historical, covering areas in which Jerry Christianson has excelled. Walter Andreas Euler provides an overview of Cusanus' place in the Church of his day, dealing with both the diversity he saw around him and the unity he wished to achieve without losing that diversity. His effort to find harmony in the dissonance of conciliar and papal politics marks Nicholas out as an unusual figure in his generation. This approach was carried over into Nicholas' efforts to deal with the Turkish threat to Christendom. The remaining studies in this section follow a roughly chronological sequence. Nicholas was born into the Great Western Schism (1378–1417), which divided the Western church between two, and then three, claimants to the papacy. Special attention is given to the Council of Constance (1414–18), including the conciliarist ideology it adopted to end the schism (Morrissey), its successful diplomatic efforts to end the schism (Stump), and the contemporary fight over whether tyrannicide is licit (Flanagan). There follow studies involving the Council of Basel (1431–49) and Cusanus himself. Topics covered include Basel's decision-making ethos, compared with other political bodies of the time (Decaluwé). Nicholas' career as papal legate occurred in this context. His legation addressed reform but also dealt with the hot topic of indulgences (Izbicki). Two essays discuss the cardinal's views of Islam in the *Cibratio Alkorani*: John Monfasani argues that the *Cibratio Alkorani* is more irenic and scholarly in its approach to Islam than were the writings of most of Nicholas' contemporaries, or even his own *De pace fidei*; and Il Kim links the *Cibratio Alkorani* to Christian antiquarianism in papal Rome. This section concludes with studies linking Cusanus to Martin Luther and the Reformation. The reformers treated Cusanus as someone who failed to follow through on Basel's reforming efforts (Krey), but he also was an early proponent of the reform of the Roman curia that was still being urged in the sixteenth century (Bellitto). In the section's final essay, Knut Alfsvåg surveys the issues on which Cusanus and Luther shared common ground, as well as of those on which their approaches strongly differed.

The second section focuses on Cusanus' unique line of thought, a subject pursued creatively at the Gettysburg conferences. The first two essays analyze Nicholas' views of faith in both their historical and pastoral contexts (Casarella) and their philosophical implications (Aleksander). The following articles examine Cusanus' contested place in intellectual history. Meredith Ziebart argues that Cusanus' theory of knowledge fits squarely within the Aristotelian rather than the nominalist tradition, and Elizabeth Brent traces the Neoplatonic sources for Nicholas's account of time and eternity. Taking up the Platonic strand, David Albertson shows how Cusanus' geometry—derived from Thierry of Chartres and his heirs—shapes the mystical theology of *De visione Dei*. Exploring the metaphor of light in *De visione Dei*, Clyde Lee Miller goes on to suggest that “the light of metaphor” illuminates much of Nicholas' symbolic theology. Donald Duclow then examines Cusanus' wide-ranging play with coins as metaphors for human beings as stamped with God's image. The volume concludes appropriately with the apocalyptic, both as it appeared in Nicholas' Brixen preaching (Serina) and as he attempted to conjecture or surmise the timing of the End in his *Conjecture on the Last Days* (McGinn).

The editors offer these studies as a tribute to Jerry Christianson in gratitude for his work as a teacher, scholar, colleague, and churchman.