A year in Göttingen
By Alun Morton Thomas, 2nd year PhD candidate, Loyola Institute.

"Situated near the scenic Harz region, Göttingen is a historic university city close to the geographical centre of Germany. Boasting a long tradition of German biblical scholarship, Göttingen has nurtured such luminaries as Julius Wellhausen, Alfred Rahlfis and Walther Zimmerli. It continues to be an important centre for biblical research, being the home of the Septuaginta-Unternehmen and new research areas such as the Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon project and the Scripta Qumranica Electronica. Having been awarded a one-year DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst) scholarship based on the promise of my doctoral studies at the Loyola Institute, Göttingen seemed a natural place to spend my time in Germany.

During my stay, I was under the supervision of Prof Reinhard Kratz (Theologicum, Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities) who directed my ongoing investigation of the translation technique(s) of the earliest known Aramaic and Greek translations of the Book of Job. I was invited to present a paper on an aspect of my research at the Seminar für Altes Testament Doktorandenkolloquium (Old Testament Seminar) which was an intense yet stimulating experience. I was also able to explore fields not strictly within my domain such as taking a course in a South Semitic language - Classical Ethiopic (Ge'ez). While the intellectual benefits were substantial, it was also a personally enriching experience, allowing me to meet new colleagues and friends from around the world. Living in Germany really helped me to improve my German, to try kayaking, and most importantly of all - taste some excellent Bratwurst!

The Theologicum Göttingen where Loyola PhD student Alun Morton Thomas spent a year.

A Hunger for Depth and Meaning
On Friday September 15th and Saturday September 16th the Synge Lecture Theatre was full to capacity, the occasion being a two-day International Conference titled, 'John Main: A Hunger for Depth and Meaning.'

John Main studied Law at Trinity College (1950-1954). He became Regius Professor of Law in College (1956-1958). Thereafter he became a Benedictine monk and explored resonances of prayer and meditation in what was described as ‘the universal wisdom of humankind’ linked with the centuries-long Christian tradition of contemplative prayer and mystical theology. Set in the university context which helped form him, the conference explored John Main’s thought and the Christian mystical theology traditions which continues to have great relevance today.

The conference demonstrated how it is that a great symphony of different voices comprises the Christian mystical tradition. Four lectures from Professor Bernard McGinn, widely regarded as the preeminent scholar of mysticism in the Western Christian tradition would be an important landmark for us as well as for her. Mary’s thesis is on ‘The Narrative of Human Flourishing: A study of the dialogue between Victor White (Theologian) and Carl Jung (Analytical Psychology) on the frontier between theology and psychology.’ Mary is photographed after graduation with Dr Bob Geldof, who received an honorary degree for his “contribution to society” at the same ceremony.
Hunger for Depth and Meaning (contd)

We asked some of our staff about what they were excited about teaching this year:

Assistant Professor of Theological Ethics Jacob Erickson writes: "I'm excited to teach Deanna Thompson's book The Virtual Body of Christ in a Suffering World (Abingdon Press, 2016) for my Ethics of Embodiment module. Thompson is a brilliant theologian who writes beautifully about the trials and tribulations of everyday life with an eye to fresh theological concepts. In this book, she reflects on her journey with stage IV cancer and how she came to a different understanding of churchly life, a different sense of the theology and ethics of the "Body of Christ" in a digital age. Can virtual connectedness be an ethical tool for attending to suffering in the world? Thompson makes a compelling case for the positive power of internet community, while also acknowledging its pitfalls."

Assistant Professor in Theology in the Catholic Tradition Katie Dunne "Elizabeth Johnson's Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God - a wonderful text for undergraduates considering pressing contemporary theological issues. Johnson always offers significant insight, and speaks powerfully about what it means to search for who God is...and how God acts in the world..."

New MPhil in Christian Theology
By Dr Fáinche Ryan, Director of the Loyola Institute

The Masters in Christian Theology got off to a great start this September (2017). The students come from the United States, the United Kingdom as well as from Ireland. There is an RE teacher, a College Chaplain, a housewife, and a project manager, among the student body. This rich variety of experiences and educational backgrounds adds greatly to the classroom discussions. The explorations of theology remain lively, as students and staff grapple with key questions of our time.

The programme is designed in such a way that people working full-time can complete the required six taught modules in the evenings (Mondays and Thursdays). In addition, for those who are free, or who work flexible hours, there are one or two optional modules offered during day time.

As well as helping people who wish to pursue further study in theology, or those who wish to seek employment in church work, this MPhil is proving attractive to people who simply want to know more about God, and to those who want to explore what the rich Christian traditions may have to offer in discussion, and indeed often in confrontation, with the major and often very menacing issues of today. Our hope is that, having had a good start this year, we will build on this in the years ahead.

King David according to Bertolt Brecht

Largely forgotten, even by those familiar with his work, Brecht's theatrical fragments of a life of David flowed from his pen just after the Great War but just prior to the arrival of the Kleist Prize in 1922 and the acclaim that would launch his extraordinary career. His own diaries from the time offer a vivid picture of the young Brecht surrounded by friends, torn between women, desperate for success, and the acclaim that would launch his extraordinary career. His own diaries from the time offer a vivid picture of the young Brecht surrounded by friends, torn between women, desperate for success, and the acclaim that would launch his extraordinary career. His own diaries from the time offer a vivid picture of the young Brecht surrounded by friends, torn between women, desperate for success, and the acclaim that would launch his extraordinary career.

The Loyola Trust sponsored a scholarship specifically to encourage religious education teachers to study theology. Rionach Donlon of the Loyola Trust with the winner Eoin Walshe. Eoin is an RE teacher in Le Chéile Secondary School – Secondary School in Tyrellstown.

Loyola Institute Lecture Series 2017/2018

**Wednesday 22nd November**
Dr Gemma Adamson O.C.S.O. - 'Jesus Christ or Fist of Foe?'

**Wednesday 31st January**
Dr Michael Kieran
"Stand upright and raise your head?"
Doing theology in dangerous times

**Wednesday 28th February**
Dr. Pat Riordan S.J – ‘Does Common Good Mean Anything?’

**Wednesday 28th March**
Sylvie Goulard – ‘Breit and Europe, a political and spiritual challenge’

**Thursday 12th April**
Prof Lisa Suleiman - ‘To be or not to be confirmed’

All lectures are at 7.30 pm in Loyola Institute, Loyola/ISE Building, TCD Admission Free and all welcome; See more at www.tcd.ie/loyola-institute
Hunger for Depth and Meaning (contd)

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**King David according to Bertolt Brecht**

Largely forgotten, even by those familiar with his work, Brecht’s theatrical fragments of a life of David flowed from his pen just after the Great War but just prior to the arrival of the Kleist Prize in 1922 and the acclaim that would launch his extraordinary career. His own diaries from the time offer a vivid picture of the young Brecht shuttling between Munich and the family home in Augsburg, surrounded by friends, torn between women, desperate for success, and all the while with ‘David on the brain’. It is this David, alluded to in the diaries and exhumed from Brecht’s notebooks, which Dr David Shepherd (Loyola Institute) and Nicholas Johnson (TCD Drama) adapted for the stage for the first time in English, and offered to audiences in Dublin (Beckett Theatre) and London (Greenwood Theatre) this past July as, The David Fragments: Drawing on theatrical experiments with an ensemble, the play offers new insights into the early Brecht: a writer entranced but not enchanted by the biblical David and utterly committed to translating the biblical tradition into his own evolving theatrical idiom.
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