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What is the relationship between the methods and goals of graduate education in religious studies and the aims of professional life as it is lived in seminaries and divinity schools? How do persons trained in graduate departments of religion successfully make the transition to teaching in institutions of theological education? The latter is the concrete thematic question that sets the agenda for the articles in this edition of *Spotlight on Theological Education*; but in order to answer it, our authors, some explicitly and others implicitly, tangle with the former.

For Daniel Aleshire, Executive Director of the Association of Theological Schools, the vital difference between doctoral education in a graduate division of religion and theological studies is that learning and teaching in theological education is not primarily a matter of content. Often the same materials are learned and taught in both contexts — the difference at stake is one of *pedagogical purpose*. Students in seminaries ask: “1) How is disciplinary information integrated into a comprehensive religious knowledge?; 2) What does the information mean for their personal religious understanding and identity?; and 3) How is the information most useable in their practice as religious leaders?” Aleshire notes that these questions are rarely at the foreground of graduate training, which is often exclusively dedicated to mastery within a particular disciplinary trajectory. But to learn all there is to know about postmodern or postcolonial readings of Biblical texts in no way insures that the instructor is well-equipped to show how such readings might be serviceable to would-be religious leaders and their communities.

Aleshire wisely observes that new theological educators also face significant challenges in the areas of scholarship and service. With respect to scholarship, there is often little clarity about whether expectations for publication for tenure at seminaries differ from the standards faced by mentors at graduate research institutions. The challenge with service expectations, on the other hand, comes not from any lack of clarity but instead the rather clear expectation to teach and serve actual religious communities, matters that are hardly integral to typical graduate training. Add to that the likelihood that newly minted PhDs might bring with them the driving ethos of graduate institutions that research is far more important than service, and incoming faculty might well face a difficult culture shock. In sum, Aleshire manages to give a vivid, even stark, sense of the multiple challenges faced by new faculty as they move from doctoral education to seminary and divinity school life.

Fortunately, there is some reason to believe that we inhabit a propitious moment in which the chasms that customarily divide graduate training and seminary teaching might be at least somewhat mitigated. For a host of theoretical reasons, the divide between theory and practice is being interrogated as theoreticians acknowledge that the generation and transmission of academic knowledge is itself a cultural practice that is permeable to and inseparable from the generation and transmission of knowledge in religious communities and society at large. As theories of knowledge production demonstrating that knowing is situated, embodied, politically committed, and generated by practical cultural engagement proliferate in the academy, there is reason to hope that graduate training can richly attend to, and perhaps even participate in and learn from religious communities they study. That hope notwithstanding, the challenges that Aleshire names are considerable.

Emmanuel Lartey of Emory University's Candler School of Theology has made the transition from graduate religious studies programs to seminaries multiple times, and on several continents to boot. He brings to his reflections the widest possible range of experiences. Consequently, his maxims strike the reader as hard-won wisdom. One of his maxims is worth special attention: "A practical theological orientation and interest can serve to ground, problematize, and add complexity to academic scholarship." Lartey recalls the special insight he was able to gain by attending seminary after working in a psychiatric hospital. He strikes a note frequently heard in these essays: that theological education is distinctive because it both requires from instructors and must generate in students practical wisdom.

In his interview with Emmanuel Lartey, Alton Pollard, Dean of Howard University School of Divinity, cautions against overstating the difference between religious studies and theological studies. Pollard speaks of his experience as a happy participant at Emory University where he was able to work simultaneously in theological studies at Candler School of Theology and in religious studies as part of the Graduate Division of Religion. Pollard notes that the methods and materials studied in the graduate division enriched and deepened his work at Candler. He notes, "I expected there to be an enormous tension between what I thought theological education represented and what graduate religious studies represents. But, again, the deeper I went, the more that seemed to me not to be the case."

Pollard acknowledges that the distinctive question of normativity marks theology over and against religious studies. That emphasis notwithstanding, he believes that the divide between these two kinds of inquiry will be mitigated as seminaries and divinity schools are compelled to attend more richly to questions of religious diversity. As theologians try to articulate the meaning of their faith in rich conversation with other religious traditions, Pollard argues, scholars and students alike will find themselves working on both sides of the religious studies/theology divide.

A most intriguing moment in this interview comes when Lartey poses a shrewd question about the preparedness of newly minted scholars for theological education — a matter that Pollard, in his role as dean, must constantly assess. For Pollard what is missing in some scholars is not insufficient preparation for teaching theology because their work and training has been in religious studies. No, what is missing is a certain kind of wisdom: "The issue that I find the most difficult is not with the academic preparation, it's really more so with the *life* preparation and whether persons are able to translate what they get from the depth of academic scholarship into their own everyday existence." Here, Pollard strikes the same note that Aleshire sounds: disciplinary mastery of academic materials, whether those materials fall under "religious studies" or "theology," does not necessarily mean that the instructor knows how to deploy that knowledge in the service of what Aleshire calls "comprehensive religious knowledge," or what Edward Farley has elsewhere called "theologia," or sapiential wisdom. Aleshire and Pollard together raise the vital question: how do we train persons so that they might become students

who generate and transmit comprehensive religious knowledge?

Edwin Chr. van Driel, who teaches theology at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, holds a position contrary to Pollard's inasmuch as he sees a deeper tension between religious studies and theological studies. He writes, "The academy is very interested in talking about 'religion.'...The church, on the other hand, is not interested in talking about 'religion'; it is interested in God." For van Driel, this marked difference requires that persons who want to teach in seminaries must prepare themselves in a distinctive key: "Working at a seminary demands graduate school training that allows one to talk about God rather than talking about religion and to take responsibility for the seminary's calling to be the academic voice of the church."

In a tight job market, it might well be asked whether any graduate student can elect a mode of training that is specifically suited for one segment of the market alone. Can graduate students afford that luxury? Moreover, Pollard might well ask what do graduate students lose in breadth by bypassing the study of religion in a variety of modalities? Can one teach in a seminary and hope to be attentive to religious diversity without a religious studies training that requires some competence in knowledge of other religious traditions? Nonetheless, van Driel raises critical questions. However porous the boundaries between religious studies and theological studies may become, surely it remains the work of teachers and students in seminaries to speak forthrightly and normatively about God in service to living ecclesial communities. Van Driel argues compellingly that to be best prepared for that work, prospective seminary professors would do well to earn an MDiv, participate in church internships as part of a field education program, and graduate from a doctoral program that is robustly theological. Van Driel's passion for the formation of pastors comes through with remarkable force.

Taken together, these essays place before readers a difficult question that will require sustained treatment in the future: how best are we to train theological educators so that they may be effectively prepared for generating in their students practical and comprehensive religious knowledge? They have done us a profound service in demonstrating that we can no longer continue to ignore this question.