Third Paper Assignment

Write a paper that addresses one of the two following topics.

1. In this class we have seen several authors call attention to the distinction between ‘inward’ (mental, private) and ‘outward’ (material, observable) features of religion. Describe how this distinction functions in the work of both Clifford Geertz and Wilfred Cantwell Smith. Pay particular relation to the relationship each one sees between inward and outward when it comes to religion, and identify what seems to you to be the most important point of difference between the two. Finally, say whether you think one of the two accounts is to be preferred to the other, and if so on what grounds.

2. Wilfred Cantwell Smith argues that we should give up the term ‘religion’. In your paper set out the case he presents for this position. Do not simply summarize his text; rather, identify the reasons he presents for thinking that the term ‘religion’ ought to be abandoned. Then, critically assess his case. Do you think scholars should give up the term ‘religion’ for the reasons he presents? If not, why not? If so, which of the reasons Smith presents seem to you to be the most convincing, and why?

Requirements and recommendations:

Your paper should be 6-7 pages in length, double-spaced. Use 1” margins and a 12-point font. Number your pages.
Write concisely. Do not pad your paper with unnecessary prose.
Do not simply summarize the contents of our texts. Speak only about such matters as are clearly relevant to the questions detailed in the assignment.
Make explicit reference to our assigned texts in your exposition. Whether you quote our authors directly or paraphrase their words, you need to provide a textual reference for each significant claim you make about their positions.
Make sure your writing is grammatically and syntactically correct. Make use of the Writing Center if you need help in doing so.
Check your paper over carefully for spelling and typographical errors before turning it in.
Do not submit a first draft of your paper as a final draft.
Make sure your paper addresses the assigned questions.
Papers are to be turned in to my office, 208 Chapin Hall (under the door if I am not in). Students from the Other Four Colleges may submit their papers by email.

Due date: Friday, April 8, 4:00 PM