

The ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions (Europe 1100-1800) presents:

Front Cover Image: Relics of St Valerius, Weyarn, Germany. ©Paul Koudounaris, *Heavenly Bodies: Cult Treasures and Spectacular Saints from the Catacombs* (London: Thames and Hudson) 2013.

# RELICS & EMOTIONS

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,  
40 COLLEGE CRESCENT, PARKVILLE  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Date: FRIDAY 21 MARCH 2014

Time: 9am - 5pm

Conveners: Dr Sarah Randles and  
Professor Charles Zika

For more information, contact Jessica Scott  
at [jessica.scott@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:jessica.scott@unimelb.edu.au) or go to  
[www.historyofemotions.org.au](http://www.historyofemotions.org.au)

Relics are the bodily remains of saints, or objects that came into contact with saints during their lives or after their death. Relics may be preserved bodies or bones, either whole, as fragments, or as detachable body parts such as hair, teeth and blood. In the case of the resurrected body of Christ and the assumed body of the Virgin, Christ's foreskin and the Virgin's breast milk were venerated as relics. Items of clothing worn by saints, or the cloths in which bodily relics were wrapped were also considered to be relics; as were footprints, and earth and rocks collected from holy sites. Such objects are understood by believers as tangible links between heaven and earth, capable of channelling God's power and performing miracles.

The Middle Ages saw the establishment of a cult of relics, in which the locations where prominent relics were held often became the focus of pilgrimage. Relics were sold, stolen and exchanged as gifts. Elaborate reliquaries were created to contain and display them, and these performed important roles in the collective rituals of communities. During the Reformation relics were rejected as superstitious at best; but the Counter-reformation church re-emphasised their importance, particularly by distributing new saintly relics from the Roman catacombs.

The study day will focus on the emotions involved in the veneration and rejection of relics, from the early Middle Ages to contemporary Australia. It will consider how relics function as objects of desire and derision, as instruments of power and sources of conflict, and as markers of personal, as well as local, regional or national identity. There will be a focus on the power of relics both to arouse and regulate emotions such as trust, hope or fear, and on the ways such emotions can be transformed by changing religious, social and political contexts. Papers will also explore how individual and collective emotional responses to relics have helped shape and strengthen, as well as divide and debilitate communities.

## SCHEDULE

TIME	SPEAKERS
9.00 – 9.20	Registration, coffee and tea
9.20	Welcome
9.30 – 11.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FELICITY HARLEY-MCGOWAN, University of Melbourne 'Biting off more than you can chew: emotional extremes in early medieval devotion to relics of the True Cross'</li> <li>HELEN HICKEY, University of Melbourne 'Liquid Relics and Fluid Emotions: Christ's Tears and Blood in Pre-modern France'</li> <li>LISA BEAVEN, University of Sydney 'Footsteps of an angel: Imprint relics in early modern Rome'</li> </ul>
11.00 – 11.30	MORNING TEA
11.30 – 1.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MATTHEW MARTIN, National Gallery of Victoria 'Drinking the Health of the King – Jacobite Glasses as Relics'</li> <li>CLAIRE WALKER, University of Adelaide 'St Justin the Jacobite: Relics and Politics in the English Augustinian Convent in Paris, 1694 – 1720'</li> <li>CHARLES ZIKA, University of Melbourne 'Saints Eleutherius and Cyrillus at the Shrine of Mariazzell (1650): Reflections on the emotional powers of relics and images'</li> </ul>
1.00 – 2.00	LUNCH
2.00 – 3.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CONSTANT MEWS, Monash University 'Thomas Aquinas and Catherine of Siena: relics, images and living saints'</li> <li>SARAH RANGLES, University of Melbourne 'The Stuff of Miracles: The Cloth Relics of St Mary MacKillop and the Virgin of Chartres'</li> </ul>
3.00 – 3.30	AFTERNOON TEA
3.30 – 4.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ALEXANDRA WALSHAM, University of Cambridge (keynote) 'The Pope's Merchandise and the Jesuits' Trumpery: Catholic Relics and Protestant Polemic in Early Modern England'</li> </ul>
4.30 – 5.00	DISCUSSION

## Felicity Harley-McGowan

The University of Melbourne

### BITING OFF MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW: EMOTIONAL EXTREMES IN EARLY MEDIEVAL DEVOTION TO RELICS OF THE TRUE CROSS

Of the many and various Christian relics that came to circulate across the Mediterranean basin in the medieval period, fragments of the True Cross of Jesus were among the most prized. Confrontation with the wood of the cross provoked deep emotional responses in Christians almost from the point of its 'discovery' in the fourth century, when according to Cyril of Jerusalem, a frenzy for fragments saw a remarkable dissemination of pieces across the globe. This paper will examine these responses to the Cross, comparing their vivid documentation by patristic and early medieval writers with their visual representation by early medieval artisans.

FELICITY HARLEY-MCGOWAN is an historian of art, whose research and teaching interests extend across the fields of Greek, Roman, late antique, Byzantine, Medieval and Renaissance art. Her

specific area of expertise lies in the origins and development of Christian iconography within the visual culture of Roman late antiquity, and the renewed interest in this iconography demonstrated in art of the early Renaissance.

## Helen Hickey

The University of Melbourne

### LIQUID RELICS AND FLUID EMOTIONS: CHRIST'S TEARS AND BLOOD IN PRE-MODERN FRANCE

From the 1180s, the Abbey of the Trinity at Vendôme in France attracted pilgrims who venerated one of the tears that Christ shed at the sight of Lazarus's empty tomb. Legend has it that an angel collected the tear in a vial, which remained in Jerusalem until the Crusades. Geoffrey Martel of Anjou was rewarded for his assistance in defeating the Saracens with a relic of the Holy Tear which he gave to the Vendôme abbey. Around the 1100s, the Abbey of the Trinity in Fécamp, Normandy, claimed it possessed a relic of the blood of Christ, a relic purportedly collected by Nicodemus at the Crucifixion, placed in the trunk of a fig tree, and washed up on the shores of Normandy. Again, this relic of the blood of Christ drew large crowds of pilgrims. Both relics, one

evaporated - the other desiccated, were thought to be thaumaturgic: the Holy Tear for its ophthalmologic powers to heal eye disorders and for its ability to influence the weather and bring rain, the Holy Blood for healing spiritual and bodily ailments. Most studies of medieval relics stress their important role in attaining and cementing personal and communal piety. The pairing of relics with their medical cures is also taken-for-granted in ecclesiastical literature. Yet both of the examples raise intriguing questions about the specific role liquid bodily products of Christ play in the devotional and emotional landscape of their venerated. This paper explores a selection of anomalies that concern the emotions associated with the Holy Tear (*La Sainte Larme*) as a tear and the Holy Blood as blood in both their story of origin and their medieval and early modern reception.

HELEN HICKEY gained her PhD in medieval literature from the The University of Melbourne. A forthcoming article on the inquisitions of insanity and medieval poetics will appear this year in the collection *Theorising Legal Personhood in Pre-modern England* (Brill). Her current project on the relic of *La sainte larme* in France was funded by a generous grant from the Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature, History Department, The University of Oxford. This grant enabled her to investigate medieval and pre-modern archives in Oxford, London, Paris and Vendôme in 2013.

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## Lisa Beaven

*The University of Sydney*

### FOOTSTEPS OF AN ANGEL: IMPRINT RELICS IN EARLY MODERN ROME

This paper examines the nature of stone relics in early modern Rome that were believed to be imprinted by divine beings, both saints and angels. These relics were venerated as contact relics but also operated as important proof of the miracle of their presence on earth. In particular I want to concentrate on a relic that was thought to represent the footsteps of the archangel Michael when he alighted on the Castel Sant'Angelo and appeared to Gregory the Great, signalling the end of a terrible plague. This stone with two small footprints was venerated in S. Maria in Aracoeli until the 1640s when it was recognised as a votive offering to Isis and removed from the church. As a form of *spoglia* it mediated between the past and present, as well as the earthly and celestial realm. Fioravante Martinelli's petition to have the stone reinstated in the church reveals not only the emotional intensity with which such stones were worshipped, but also the way they functioned, as markers and portals to another world.

*LISA BEAVEN is an art historian specializing in art patronage and collecting in seventeenth century Rome, and is a lecturer in early modern art at the The University of Sydney. She has published widely on collecting in journals such as the Art Bulletin, the Burlington Magazine, Master Drawings and the Journal of the History of Collections. Her book, An Ardent Patron: Cardinal Camillo Massimo and his Antiquarian and Artistic Circle in Rome, was published in 2010 by Paul Holberton Press, London and CEEH, Madrid. With Professor Angela Ndalanis she was awarded an ARC Discovery grant in 2013 to work on the project 'Experiencing space: sensory encounters from Baroque Rome to neo-baroque Las Vegas'.*

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## Matthew Martin

*National Gallery of Victoria*

### DRINKING THE HEALTH OF THE KING: JACOBITE GLASSES AS RELICS

Perhaps the most ubiquitous class of Jacobite material culture, Jacobite glasses played an important role in the social rituals through which supporters of the exiled Stuart dynasty expressed their proscribed political loyalties in eighteenth-century Britain. Amongst Jacobite glasses,

one small group in particular stands out: those glasses which incorporate into their stems coins minted during the reigns of Charles II and James II. These glasses generally post-date the death of James in exile in 1701 and the coins they contain are often Maundy coins – coins distributed to the poor by the reigning English monarch during the Maundy Thursday service. English coin glasses have usually been understood to be, at best commemorative objects celebrating a particular monarch, at worst a clever glass-making trick. I would like to suggest that, at various times, these glasses had a much more profound significance, and function. The belief in the King's touch – the power claimed by French and English kings to cure various ailments through the laying of hands on the sufferer – lent to objects which had been handled by the legitimate monarch an aura of healing power. Furthermore, a relic cult of James II arose after his death, in conjunction with the pursuit of his beatification by the exiled Jacobites, and James's bodily relics were reported to have effected numerous healings. In this context, I argue, glasses incorporating coins handled by the late Stuart monarch take on the character of contact relics and the use of these glasses by Jacobite supporters assumes a significance far greater than mere commemoration of an exiled ruler. With such glasses, a Jacobite loyalist drank, literally, the 'health' of the King.

*MATTHEW MARTIN is Assistant Curator in the department of International Decorative Arts at the National Gallery of Victoria and is a Research Associate in the MCD The University of Divinity. He was formerly Director of Studies at the Melbourne College of Divinity. His research interests include the role of porcelain in Baroque cultures of representation, eighteenth-century porcelain sculpture and sculptural aesthetics, the role of confessional identity in eighteenth-century artists' networks, and patronage and art collecting amongst eighteenth-century Recusant elites. He recently curated Kings over the Water, an exhibition of Jacobite glass in the collections of the NGV.*

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## Claire Walker

*The University of Adelaide*

### ST JUSTIN THE JACOBITE: RELICS AND POLITICS IN THE ENGLISH AUGUSTINIAN CONVENT IN PARIS, 1694 – 1720

In 1694 the English cloister of Augustinian canonesses in Paris received the relics of St Justin the Martyr as a gift from the exiled queen Mary of Modena. The convent received permission to conduct a week of religious observances focused on the relics each year. They would be placed in

the convent church for public veneration, and a series of masses and religious ceremonies would take place, culminating in a procession of the relics through parts of the monastic enclosure.

This paper explores the ways the nuns employed the ritual centred upon St Justin to foster a Jacobite community, both within the cloister and beyond its enclosure among British exiles and the Parisian clergy and laity. Examining the annual festivities surrounding the relics, it will argue that the popularity of the occasion often reflected changing political fervour for the Jacobite cause. But it will also explore the nuns' emotional investment in the relics of an early Christian martyr: Why was the feast of St Justin such an important event in the cloister's annual liturgical calendar, and what does this reveal about the importance of relics in post-Reformation religious communities?

*CLAIRE WALKER is a Senior Lecturer in History at the The University of Adelaide, and an Associate Investigator in the Centre for the History of Emotions. She has written extensively on the exiled English cloisters in France and the Low Countries in the seventeenth century, most recently publishing an article in the Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies (2012) on nuns' role in collecting and distributing news in royalist intelligence networks during the 1650s. In 2009, she co-edited Moral Panics, the Press and the Law in Early Modern England with David Lemmings and is currently completing a collection of essays on gossip and rumour in Early Modern Europe, co-edited with Heather Kerr.*

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## Charles Zika

*The University of Melbourne*

### SAINTS ELEUTHERIUS AND CYRILLUS AT THE SHRINE OF MARIAZELL (1650): REFLECTIONS ON THE EMOTIONAL POWERS OF RELICS AND IMAGES

Like many Marian pilgrimage sites, the Austrian national shrine of Mariazell promoted a cult largely free of relics. Objects of personal and collective devotion as well as the source of countless miracles were statues, paintings and altars. The revival of the shrine by the Hapsburgs from the 1570s led to the donation of numerous precious objects. But for the most part these precious objects were votive gifts rather than relics. Yet one spectacular gift of 1650 involved relics – the bones of two martyr saints from the Roman catacombs, Eleutherius and Cyrillus, donated by Pope Innocent X in 1650. Abbot Benedict Pierin had the bones and

skulls of these martyrs wrapped in silk, adorned with jewels and pearls and placed on an elaborate ornamented frame to create a stunning Baroque portable shrine. The paper will reflect on the emotional power of such a gift in 1650 and why it might have stimulated such a precious and elaborate setting for the martyr's bones – in the context of contemporary developments at the Marian shrine and within the political and religious culture of the Hapsburg state. It will also raise questions as to whether sacred relics and sacred images arouse different sets of emotions within devotees. Does the materiality and origin of a sacred object shape or circumscribe human responses, and in particular, emotional responses?

CHARLES ZIKA is a Professorial Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne and Chief Investigator in the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. His most recent books include a co-edited collection (with Cathy Leahy & Jenny Spinks) related to a 2012 exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria, *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death & Disaster* (2012), and (with Margaret Manion) *Celebrating Word and Image 1250-1600* (2013).

## Constant Mews

Monash The University

### THOMAS AQUINAS AND CATHERINE OF SIENA: RELICS, IMAGES AND LIVING SAINTS

This paper examines continuities and contrasts in devotion to the relics of Thomas Aquinas and Catherine of Siena in the fourteenth century. In the period leading up to his canonisation, Thomas Aquinas became revered not just as a theologian, but as author of the Office of Corpus Christi (including the famous hymns *Adoro te devote* and *Tantum ergo sacramentum*), which articulated an affective devotion to the Eucharist, of profound importance in shaping later medieval devotional culture. Although Juliana of Cornillon originally proposed the Feast and composed an Office for the Eucharist, that composed by Thomas Aquinas provided a paradigm for devotion to all relics, manifesting grace simply through its presence. This paper explores the promotion of his relics, in particular after the Dominican Order succeeds in transferring them in late 1368 from the Cistercian abbey of Fossanova, south of Rome (where they had been since his death in 1274), and the impact of Thomas Aquinas on Catherine of Siena (d. 1380), whose cult effectively takes over from that of Thomas Aquinas in the mind of Raymond of Capua.

CONSTANT MEWS gained his DPhil from Oxford The University. He is Professor within the School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies, Monash The University where he is also Director of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Theology. He has published widely on medieval thought, ethics, and religious culture, with particular reference to the writings of Abelard, Heloise, Hildegard of Bingen and their contemporaries, including *Abelard and Heloise* (New York: Oxford The University Press, 2005) and *The Lost Love Letters of Heloise and Abelard: Perceptions of Dialogue in Twelfth-Century France*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Palgrave, 2008). His research interests range from the early middle ages to late medieval religious and intellectual culture, as well as the interface between various religious and ethical traditions.

## Sarah Randles

The University of Melbourne

### THE STUFF OF MIRACLES: THE CLOTH RELICS OF ST MARY MACKILLOP AND THE VIRGIN OF CHARTRES

On 17 October 2010 Mary MacKillop (1842-1909) was canonised by the Catholic Church as Australia's first saint, an occasion which was celebrated by the secular state as well as the church. The two miracles recognised by the Church were both effected by means of cloth relics, pieces of MacKillop's clothing given to two women suffering from acute myeloblastic leukaemia and metastatic lung cancer respectively, who were subsequently pronounced cured. The *sainte chemise* of the Virgin was venerated from the Middle Ages at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Chartres, an important site of medieval pilgrimage. It was credited with powers to ensure the safety of men in battle and women in childbirth, and protection against fire. Copies of the *sainte chemise*, sacralised by contact with the reliquary were given by the Cathedral chapter to queens of France, and sent with missionaries to North America. While these two relics derive from significantly different historical contexts and are consequently used in different ways, they exhibit similarities with respect to the relationships they create between the individual body and the body politic. This raises important questions about the materiality of cloth relics and their emotional functions.

SARAH RANDES is a Postdoctoral Fellow with the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. She is a historian of medieval material culture, especially textiles, and has published and forthcoming articles on medieval narrative textiles, deliberately concealed clothing and medievalism in Australian architecture. Her current project on the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Chartres focuses on the nexus between emotions and material objects, including pilgrim badges, the relic of the Virgin's 'chemise' and the fabric of the Cathedral itself.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

### Professor Alexandra Walsham

The University of Cambridge

### THE POPE'S MERCHANDISE AND THE JESUITS' TRUMPERY: CATHOLIC RELICS AND PROTESTANT POLEMIC IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

This paper has two interconnected objectives. It seeks to explore the place of relics and other religious objects in the devotional life of Catholics in post-Reformation England in tandem with how they came to be perceived and represented by the Protestant society by which they were surrounded. Drawing on a range of archival, textual and visual sources, it examines beliefs alongside collection, treatment and use, and it probes the origin and evolution of attitudes and concepts against the backdrop of the antagonism and conflict engendered and fuelled by the Reformation. It also suggests that these developments had some intriguing consequences: they not only led to the formation of an enduring polemical nexus between the relic and the commodity; they also helped to link the category of holy matter inextricably with the idea of ephemerality.

ALEXANDRA WALSHAM is Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Trinity College, the British Academy, and the Australian Academy of the Humanities. She has published widely on the religious and cultural history of early modern Britain. Her most recent book, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford UP, 2011) won the Wolfson History Prize and the American Historical Association Leo Gershey Prize.