



7 March 2025
International Post-graduate Online Symposium
New Directions for Church History: Methods and Sources

This an international online symposium is hosted by the [Ecclesiastical History Society](#). This year's post-graduate colloquium centers on methodologies, sources and cross-disciplinary approaches. It brings together post-graduate students whose research interests are focused on or intersects with church history. This event aims to showcase how the field is currently being reshaped by the work of these young scholars based in Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, India, the Philippines and Spain.

7 March 2025 from 9AM to 4PM (GMT)

This is an online only event held on zoom

<https://univ-lille-fr.zoom.us/j/98113402516?pwd=BZadEmWorj7SmNQq0c7rLTSE87hoou.1>

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Les Religions du Monde ou Démonstration de toutes les Religions & hérésies de l'Asie, Afrique, Amérique, & de l'Europe.
Alexandre Ross (Thomas La Grue, transl.), Amsterdam, 1666, Dixième division, p. 209.

Organising committee:

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Conference programme

8:50 (GMT): Welcome by Aude de Mézerac-Zanetti

Panel 1: Cross-disciplinary approaches to religious history

Chair: Michael Fraser (University of St Andrews)

9:00 **Layla Koch** (University of Heidelberg): "Think of the Children!" Church History at the Intersection with Childhood Studies

9:30 **Elena Bonacini** (Wolfson College, Cambridge): 'Behold the Man': Mazzuchelli's Ecce Homo Chapel in Renaissance Italy's New Jerusalem as an Experiment in Intermediality

10:00 **Lluís Coromina Verdaguer** (University of Girona and Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona): A prosopography method for sociocultural and religious historiography: obituaries of the medical press (Catalonia, 1890-1936)

10:30: Break and chatroom

Panel 2: Book history and Church history

11:00: A panel discussion facilitated by Aude de Mézerac-Zanetti with

Heather Glover (University of Lincoln): Book History as Church History: Middle English Texts and Victorian Monastic Identity

Illia Kovalenko (UC Louvain and Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris): Printed book and spiritual teachings: crossbreeding Church history and history of the book

Lunch break 12 to 1PM

Panel 3: Working with new and old sources in religious history

Chair: Joseph Hardwick (Northumbria University)

13 :00 **Br. Dennis Amarante** (University of Santo Tomas, Manila and Sto. Domingo Convent, Quezon City): State Records in the Study of Philippine Church History: Description, Challenges, and Opportunities

13:30 **Alison Zilversmit** (University of Edinburgh): Reading Along the Historian's Grain: Analyzing Frank Klingberg's History of SPG's "Humanitarian" Slavery

14 :00 **Marie Rabecq** (Université Lyon 2 Lumière, France): "Faith and careful necessity": the Oneida Community and the boundaries of church history

14:30 Break and chatroom

Panel 4: Means of control and communication in Indian missions

15:00 A panel discussion facilitated by Hilary Carey with

Arshiya Anand (Jawaharlal Nehru University): Establishing Ecclesiastical Order in Colonial Delhi, c. 1850-1900

Aayushi Gupta (University of Cambridge): Picturing Evangelism: The Impact of Technological Developments on the Photographic Practices of Two Zenana Missions in British India, 1880–1950.

16:00 Final words by Hilary Carey.

Abstracts and Biographies

Dennis Amarante

“State Records in the Study of Philippine Church History: Description, Challenges, and Opportunities”

Sources on the history of the Catholic Church in the Philippines are voluminous. Despite challenges brought about by turbulent events such as the Second World War, neglect, and weather conditions, a sizable amount of sources dating back to the 16th century were preserved. Although scholars can rely solely on church records, it is also worth mentioning that one can also sift through the records maintained by state cultural agencies. Thus, this paper intends to remind its readers of such, with particular focus to the context of the Philippines. It is hoped that through this study, an interest in using state records will be ignited especially among Philippine Church historians, leading to the enrichment of one's discussion since perspectives from non-church institutions and persons will inevitably be included. This will also be helpful for local historians as well as those in other disciplines as this highlights the intricate and complex relationship between church and state in the Philippines as shown both in its history and its current context. This paper particularly provides a description of the following records: the Erreccion de los Pueblos records (compilation of records pertaining to the towns established during the Spanish colonial period) from the National Archives of the Philippines; and the Philippine Revolutionary Records (compilation of records concerning the Philippine Revolution and the First Philippine Republic) and the Historical Data Papers (compilation of data collected from towns as mandated by President Elpidio Quirino in 1951) from the National Library of the Philippines. Examples of documents in these records series will also be presented using internal and external criticism, as well as the skills and requirements needed to read and access them.

Br. Dennis C. Amarante, O.P. is a simple professed friar of the Philippine Province of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans). He received his Bachelor of Arts in History degree from the University of Santo Tomas, Manila in 2019. He is currently taking up an Associate program in Philosophy (Preparatory for Theology) in the same university. His fields of interest are post-World War II and post-Vatican II Philippine Church history and historical methodology

Arshiya Anand

“Establishing Ecclesiastical Order in Colonial Delhi, c. 1850-1900”

After the charter of 1813, Ecclesiastical project of the British became official means to propagate Christianity in India. With the coming of the Society for the Propagation of Gospel (SPG) in 1853, there is a transformation in Delhi's status as not just a mere space in the hands of colonial rule but rather a 'Mission Station'. There were literary changes in the city via pamphlets, journals and translations of Bible into Indian languages. The latter culminated to make Delhi a hub of religious and social disturbances. It also marked the onset of church services taking place in different languages. Conversion of educated and elite was distinctive in this period as compared to the previous missions. This paper shall analyse the role played by

the church (SPG) to bring change and transformation in Delhi's culture which also led to stratification of the Christian faith itself.

Arshiya Anand was awarded a Masters in Modern History (2016) from Jawaharlal Nehru University. She holds a M. Phil (2018) and has submitted her Ph.D. to Centre for Historical Studies at JNU. She has been a Research fellow (2020-2021) and Senior Research Fellow (2022-2023) at Delhi State Archives. She has worked as Research Assistant at the Manuscript Section of Prime Ministers Museum and Library (2023-24). Her teaching assignments includes Guest Appointments at Hansraj College and Kalindi College at Delhi University. She is currently working as a Teaching Fellow at Ashoka University, Sonapat. She is interested in histories of city, space, caste and gender in colonial India.

Elena Bonacini

“Behold the Man’: Mazzuchelli’s Ecce Homo Chapel in Renaissance Italy’s New Jerusalem as an Experiment in Intermediality”

Perched on the mountainside near an Alpine town in the Piedmont region of Northern Italy, the Sacro Monte at Varallo is a remarkable place of pilgrimage that consists of 45 chapels, 800 statues, and 4,000 painted figures. Each chapel features a tableau vivant of a religious scene that local artists meticulously reconstructed with life-size statues painted on wood, clay, or plaster. So accurate are their details that these statues seem about to emerge out of their surroundings to interact with the viewer. Real clothes, horsehair wigs, and glass eyes complete the effect. An inscription from 1491 on the earliest chapel of this site explains its founder’s vision: ‘Brother Bernardino Caimi from Milan envisioned the sacred places of this mountain so that those who cannot travel to Jerusalem could see it right here’. Although the local community continues to promote its heritage as Renaissance Italy’s New Jerusalem, Varallo remains outside the canon of Renaissance art associated with major cities such as Milan, Florence, or Rome. Drawing on recent theories of intermediality, my paper explores some of the complexities of the interaction between painting, sculpture, and architecture in the chapel of Pierfrancesco Mazzuchelli’s Ecce Homo and argues that the intermediality of this chapel contributes to a multisensory experience of worship that allows the viewer to engage more meaningfully with the theological significance of the scene of Pilate’s judgement of Christ.

Elena Bonacini is studying for an MA in History of Art and Visual Culture at Wolfson College, Cambridge, after completing her first MA in English Literature at St Peter’s College, Oxford, and her BA in English Language and Literature at Christ Church, Oxford.

Heather Glover

“Book History as Church History: Middle English Texts and Victorian Monastic Identity”

Studies of Victorian monasticism have tended to focus on representations of monasticism by secular writers and on tensions between Catholic religious and their Protestant counterparts. The intellectual, artistic and spiritual lives of nineteenth-century monks and nuns have, therefore, been little acknowledged. This partly reflects a perceived lack of sources: the archives of working monasteries are relatively inaccessible and the published works of monks and nuns can be hard to trace. The book histories of Middle English texts, however, offer important insight into the beliefs and experiences of Victorian monastic communities. Following broader nineteenth-century interest in the Middle Ages, monks and nuns worked as editors and interpreters of early texts. Focusing on two such religious, my paper argues that the Cistercian Henry Collins’ editions of Revelations of Divine Love and the Dominican Augusta Theodosia Drane’s translations of Middle English devotional poetry offer insight into their formation of monastic identity.

Heather Glover is a PhD candidate and Graduate Teaching Fellow at the University of Lincoln. She completed her BA in English Language and Literature at Worcester College, University of Oxford, and her MPhil in English Studies at Emmanuel College Cambridge (funded by the Hugh & Velma Richmond Studentship in Medieval Literature). Her research focuses on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century engagement with medieval devotional writing, as evidenced by both literary and visual sources. She is

interested in book history, affect, and religious culture. She is a member of Lincoln Cathedral's new research group.

Aayushi Gupta

“Picturing Evangelism: The Impact of Technological Developments on the Photographic Practices of Two Zenana Missions in British India, 1880–1950.”

On 7th January 1839, François Arago presented photography to the French Académie des Sciences, introducing a medium that revolutionised visual communication. Over the nineteenth century, inventions such as the collodion process, George Eastman's invention of roll-film in 1884, and the affordable Kodak Brownie in 1900 made photography increasingly accessible, transforming the way people communicated and represented their worlds. Missionary societies quickly embraced these innovations, incorporating photographs into their strategies for outreach and engagement. This paper explores the impact of these technological developments on the photographic practices of two women's missionary societies active in India from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries: the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission (ZBM) and the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society (CZM). Focussing on the images published in their magazines, it shows that accessible photographic technologies allowed these organisations to shape perceptions of their work, forge emotional connections with supporters, and build a visual legacy that both reflected and reinforced their evangelistic ambitions.

Aayushi Gupta is a PhD student in History at the University of Cambridge. Her research focusses on the visual practices of British missionary women in India during the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. She is particularly interested in how these women represented themselves and the religious and ethnic Other, as well as the ideas, technologies, and contemporary pictorial conventions that influenced their photographic work.

Illia Kovalenko

“Printed book and spiritual teachings: crossbreeding Church history and history of the book”

Spiritualities are not a common source for the Early Modern Church history. After decades of ongoing studies of spiritual movements and theologies, the material conveying spiritual teachings – and notably, the printed book – is still out of scope of the mainstream research. Nonetheless, the book printing activities of spiritual writers are at the heart of confessionalization dynamics and Modern Era Church policies. A part of the missionary strategies, they contribute to the Konfessionsbildung and form a bridge between university and monastic theologies and popular religious beliefs and practices. The printed book of spirituality appeals to an interdisciplinary approach, allying social and cultural history of religion, critical history of texts and history of the book. The author will provide a quantitative study of the Archives of the Roman Congregation of Propaganda Fide and a graph database of Greek books of spirituality as examples to illustrate the approach he advocates in the paper.

Illia Kovalenko is a 2nd year PhD student at École Pratique des Hautes Etudes (Paris) and Catholic University of Louvain, in Belgium. He studied Orthodox theology in Ukraine and Greece; experimental psychology at Paris Nanterre University; and was trained in statistics and data analysis (R programming language and Neo4j data modelling). His PhD thesis is entitled “Agapios Landos (1585-1656) and Orthodox spirituality in the XVIIth century: a kaleidoscope at the crossroads of confessions” and embraces a broad range of topics, including Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant spiritual theologies; social and cultural history of the Orthodox Church, the Catholic and Protestant missions in the Greek Mediterranean and the history of the book.

Layla Koch

“Think of the Children! Church History at the Intersection with Childhood Studies”.

This paper illuminates the methodological benefits and new sources that the intersection of church history and childhood studies may offer. The history of childhood and youth has recently received much attention and repositioned children as crucial historical actors. This has included important methodological conversations on ‘agency’ that carry value beyond the field. So far, however, childhood studies have not broadly engaged scholars of religion and vice versa. Building on the case study of American children in the early-19th-century U.S. foreign missionary movement, this paper suggests how church historians may shed light on juvenile actors in religious institutions and beyond, new types of sources that this opens, and methodological questions that arise. The paper encourages researchers of religion to engage childhood to not only counter narratives that merely antagonize religion but to explore new concepts that are particularly exciting at the intersection with religion, such as childrens’ imagination.

Layla Koch (she/her) is a doctoral student at the University of Heidelberg, Germany. In her dissertation under the supervision of Jan Stievermann, she considers the roles of American children in the early U.S. Protestant foreign missionary movement, 1810-1865. The project aims to take seriously children’s enthusiasm and *Eigen-Sinn* (Honeck, 2024) both within the adult-centered categories of the movement (e.g. societies and monetary donations) and beyond (e.g. imaginative worlds and play). It further illuminates how the concept of childhood re-surfaced in further theological debates, including on conversion and religious maturity. She is the editor of *Digital Childhoods*. Her work has been supported by the German Fulbright Commission, the Baden-Württemberg Foundation, and the German Association for American Studies.

Marie Rabecq

“ ‘Faith and careful necessity’: the Oneida Community and the boundaries of church history”

The members of the Oneida Community (1848-1880) aimed at embodying the principles of “Bible communism,” a divinely-inspired form of organization. The Community is thus in itself an object for church historians interested in the emergence of religious structures in upstate New York. However, a perspective based solely on church history cannot but overlook some of the other constitutive facets of the complex structure of the Community, with its social practices, utopian aspirations, disruption of gender norms, and commercial ventures. In this presentation, it will be argued that the Oneida Community was a cohesive religious group strengthened by both faith-based and worldly practices, thereby highlighting the porosity of the theoretical distinction between church and secular history. Studying the Oneida Community as the intersection point of several historical fields, this case study will illustrate the possibility to include other tools and sources in the study of religious organizations.

Marie Rabecq is a PhD candidate in US civilization at Université Lyon 2 Lumière (France). She holds a Master’s degree with a specialization in American civilization from the ENS de Lyon (2024) and was awarded l’agrégation d’anglais in 2023. She is interested in the history of utopian communities and their relation to mainstream society. Her doctoral research focuses on the Oneida Community and the development of organizational structures.

Lluís Coromina Verdager

“A prosopography method for sociocultural and religious historiography: obituaries of the medical press (Catalonia, 1890-1936)”.

The proposal uses a differential source, the obituaries, to analyse the link between medicine and religion in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in a prosopographical work. The aim of this paper is to study the methodological dimension, according to sociocultural historiography, in order to establish if religion and science were antagonistic terms. The long tradition of research in the history of religion is considered (for example, in the case of Spain, William J. Callahan), but also contemporary historians (Jürgen Osterhammel, Christopher Alan Bayly), historians of science (Peter Harrison, Jaume Navarro) and historians of medicine (Mary Lindemann). In addition to historical, political and social contextualisation, five aspects are considered: religious manifestations in obituaries, the impact of religion on medical

associations, medical pluralism, religious language within secular or profane language, and atheism among health professionals.

Lluís Coromina Verdager is a substitute lecturer (profesor sustituto) in history of science at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. He holds a degree in history (2019), a master's degree in research in humanities (2020) and a master's degree in teacher training (2021) from the University of Girona. He is a PhD Candidate at the University of Girona. He has articles accepted for publication in *Dynamis*, *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez* and *Historia Contemporánea*. He is a member of the interuniversity research group "Work, Institutions and Gender" (attached to the University of Barcelona) and of the ministerial research project "Work and social mobility in contemporary Catalonia (1836-1936)."

Alison Zilversmit

"Reading Along the Historian's Grain: Analyzing Frank Klingberg's History of SPG's 'Humanitarian' Slavery"

Church historians studying colonial missions face the methodological difficulty of utilizing colonial archives that obfuscate colonized subjects. Consequently, Ann Stoler (2009) proposed reading "along the archival grain" to investigate colonial epistemology/ies as ethnographic subjects. Building on Stoler's framework, this project reads along the *historian's* grain to explore how historians might perpetuate these obfuscations. This paper examines Frank Klingberg's (1883-1968) history of the eighteenth-century slave-owning British Anglican mission Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG). SPG's most prolific historian, Klingberg portrays SPG's mission to enslaved African/African-Americans at the Barbadian Codrington slave-plantation as Anglican "humanitarianism"—calling SPG a *humanitarian* slaveholder. While contemporary scholars have rightly challenged Klingberg's conclusion, his idiosyncratic methodology merits further critical engagement. Examining SPG's 1780s annual sermons on slave-holding in conjunction with Klingberg's analyses of these sermons; these sources are read along Klingberg's grain to situate him in his "imperial humanitarian" context (Barnett, 2011) that perpetuates archival colonial obfuscations.

Alison Zilversmit, originally from San Francisco, California, is now a second year PhD student of World Christianity at the University of Edinburgh's School of Divinity, where she holds the Divinity Shaw Scholarship. Her current PhD project explores the British Anglican mission Society for the Propagation of the Gospel's history from 1901-1953 in colonial Zimbabwe. She is particularly interested in how SPG missionaries and black Southern Rhodesians co-created ideas and practices of land "development" during this period.