

Abstracts and Biographies in Alphabetical Order by Author's Surname

Paola Baseotto (Insubria University, Italy)

Prophecy, Vision and Human Flourishing in Spenser's "Faerie Queene"

I will discuss Edmund Spenser's masterful use of the literary, scriptural and philosophical implications of the *topoi* of prophecy and vision in *The Faerie Queene*.

The poem is characterized by a profound "orientative impact," to use the terminology of art psychology, which expands "the observer's awareness of meanings, implications, and even potentialities for action." (Hans Kreitler) I argue that Spenser's narratives of prophecy and vision stimulate aesthetic peak experiences in readers who are offered philosophical and ethical lessons about the meaning of human flourishing, i.e., the unfolding of a well-functioning, virtuous personality. Spenser's texts provide interesting illustrations of views of the function and meaning of rapture and revelation by modern positive psychologists such as Abraham Maslow and Mihály Csíkszentmihályi.

Paola Baseotto holds a PhD from the University of Reading (UK) and teaches English at Insubria University, Italy. Her research interests centre mainly on the works of Edmund Spenser and on the theological, legal and medical treatises of the Renaissance period. She is the author of articles for academic journals and of the volumes Fighting for God, Queen and Country: Spenser and the Morality of Violence and "Disdeining life, desiring leaue to die": Spenser and the Psychology of Despair. She has been invited to teach seminars at Loyola (Chicago), Princeton and City University of New York. She is corresponding editor of The Spenser Review. Email:

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Moti Benmelech (Herzog College, Israel)

Messianism: Between Prophecy and History

Prophecy not only enables a look into the future, but it can also serve as a tool for a better understanding of the present. Looking at current events through a prophetic perspective can give one a new understanding of these events and their deeper meaning and implication. On the other hand, when the present is inconsistent with the prophecy, it may result with a conflict or dissonance. This paper deals with such a conflict and the newly created messianic concept that follows. This new messianic approach embodies prophecy, history and messianism. The first third of the 16th century was a period of extensive preoccupation with messianism within the Jewish communities of Italy and Israel. One of the causes for this awakening was an obscure ancient prophecy, attributed to a child prodigy, known as the child's prophecy. In 1517, Avraham Halevi, a prominent cabbalist and scholar wrote a commentary to the child's prophecy that became immensely popular and copies of it were distributed throughout the Jewish world. In his commentary, Halevi claimed that the prophecy predicts and refers to the various historical events of the time: the rise of the ottomans, the geographical discoveries, the Protestant reformation etc' as signs of the approaching end and the arrival of the messiah in 1540. Halevi predicted further of the advances in the messianic process, in the following years. As the predicted dates passed without any signs that redemption was actually happening, a new messianic concept formed - the **Historical Messianism**. According to this new concept the role of the messianic precursor is to shape the historical reality in the form of the messianic prophecy. To this end, he must act in the political-historical arena, contact kings, emperors and even the pope, and manipulate them to make decisions in accord with the prophetic model. This was indeed the aim of the two most prominent 16th century Jewish messianic heralds: David HaReuveni and Shlomo Molcho.

Dr. Moti Benmelech teaches medieval and early modern history in Herzog College, Israel. His research focuses on religious and social aspects of Italian Jewry during the 15th and 16th centuries and their interrelation, and on early modern Jewish Messianism. His papers suggest a new perspective on Portuguese conversos in early 16th century, illuminate the obscure pretender David ha-Reuveni who claimed to be an ambassador from a free Jewish state in Arabia, and, most recently, explore the changes in the image of the ten tribes through the ages. His book "Shlomo Molcho, A Biography of a Joephite Messiah" will be published shortly by the Ben-Zvi Institute Press. Email: m.benmelech@gmail.com

Jürgen Beyer (Tartu University, Estonia)

A prophecy about a flood to occur in Sleswick and Holstein in 1756: an analysis of the contemporary newspaper debate

On 11 November 1754, the semi-official weekly *Schleswig-Holsteinische Anzeigen* published a query concerning some seemingly simple verses circulating in the Duchies of Sleswick and Holstein. The prophetic verses stipulated a connection between the golden horns found in 1634 and 1736 and huge floods on the west coast following shortly thereafter. The prophecy had allegedly been made by an Anna Thomsen in 1614. It predicted all floods since 1614 and a most devastating flood to come on 15 November 1756, preceded by the finding of a golden tablet in the place where the golden horns had been found. The weekly asked its readers for further information about the circulating prophecy.

In the course of the following months several authors sent contributions to the journal. We thus learn that the verses could be read in almost every inn across the country and that some people out of fear had sold their possessions in the polders. The learned contributors pointed out several inconsistencies in the predictions, most notably wrong dates for finding the Gallehus horns [now dated to the fifth century; stolen from a Copenhagen museum in 1802]. Furthermore, an at least 150 year old prophecy attributed to another woman, named Hertje, emerged. She, too, had predicted a flood, but had left the exact time for the event open. Apparently someone had concocted the new prophecy on the basis of the old one. The learned contributors therefore agreed that the prophecy should not be taken seriously.

The series of articles in the weekly allows us not only to study a certain prophecy related to the late medieval tradition of so-called sibylline predictions, but also provides insights into contemporary reactions – both by learned men and by “simple folks” – before and after the date set for the flood.

Dr Jürgen Beyer, born in Hamburg in 1965, studied at the Universities of Tübingen, Paris I and Copenhagen and obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge. He has worked at Uppsala University, Tartu University, Södertörn University College and Copenhagen University and is currently senior research fellow at Tartu University Library. He has published widely on the cultural history of early modern Lutheranism, including the history of prophecy. Email: jurgen.beyer@ut.ee

Fiona-Jane Brown (Independent researcher, Aberdeen)

From God or from Man?: incidences of second sight in Scottish fishing communities and their interpretations

“Second Sight”, a vision of the future, usually a grim one, warning of death, occurred quite often amongst the fishing communities of Scotland. Antiquarians believed such people to be more superstitious and inclined towards the supernatural because of the uncertainty of their profession. As part of my doctoral research I collected several oral testimonies from fishermen concerning second sight and found that interviewees interpreted them very differently depending on their cultural background. I will focus mainly on three extracts, one from North East Scotland in which the visions are attributed to God and accepted as a “theophany”, a divine revelation given to comfort those who experienced it; the second from the Isle of Lewis where a curious dream greatly upsets a young man after attending his friend’s funeral, and thirdly, from Barra, where the teller is not fearful, and accepts the incident as part of his cultural heritage. This paper will consider the various reactions to second sight in each area, how factors of age, geography, religion, and regional cultural identity affect these reactions. Ultimately I seek to show that personal belief shapes the individual reaction to the experience of second sight even in the present day.

Dr Fiona-Jane Brown is a graduate of the University of Aberdeen, gaining her first degree in English and History in 1995; she continued by gaining a diploma in Librarianship at the Robert Gordon University, in 1996; thereafter she worked in various academic libraries, attaining chartered status in 1999. Working in Further Education between 1999 and 2004, she has gained many qualifications in Information Technology. Thereafter, she returned to Aberdeen’s Elphinstone Institute to undertake a part-time taught MLitt in Ethnology and Folklore. Gaining a distinction in 2005, she continued full-time to complete her PhD in July 2010. Email: folklore.quine@gmail.com

Constantin Canavas (Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany)

Transformations of a prophetic discourse from Greek into Arabic: (Pseudo) Apollonius of Tyana and his Arabic identities

Predicting the future was a common attribute of extraordinary persons in Late Antiquity. However, such persons were regarded in controversial ways, at least according to historical sources. In the case of Apollonius of Tyana (1st century CE) such controversies involve assessments of his attributes – an ideal wise man, philosopher, magician, and prophet. These attributes were connoted *per se* quite differently in the pagan Greco-Roman, the early Christian and, later, Muslim societies.

The goal of the present study is to revisit the history of the perception of Apollonius of Tyana (Balīnūs in the Arabic tradition of translated pseudo-epigraphic treatises) and to trace transformations of these patterns with respect to the figure of the prophet. Of special interest is the theological boundary: the relevance of mantic in the Greco-Roman tradition, the role of early Christian polemics against distinguished pagan personalities, as well as the theological considerations of Arabic or Iranian Islamic traditions with respect to prophecy and prophets. On the narrative level a crucial issue is the transmission or transformation of (apparently) allegorical figurations with respect to the prophet Apollonius/Balīnūs.

A close study of the later Arabic Apollonius/Balīnūs tradition (e.g. in the Arabic translation of a treatise of Apollonius transmitted by the esoteric author Jildakī, (14th century CE) reveals a dominant visionary component in which alchemical narratives are developed in an apocalyptic discourse exemplifying the Ismā‘īlī understanding of prophecy. The special focus on the Ismā‘īlī theosophical tradition in the horizon of the various lines of Islamic theology has been mainly driven since the 1940s by the French scholar Henry Corbin. It is precisely in an effort to stress the significance and the prophetic status of this alchemical discourse that Henry Corbin argues in favour of a *symbolical* function of the alchemical terminology instead of an *allegorical* reading.

Constantin Canavas is Professor Dr.-Ing. At Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HUAS), Faculty of Life Sciences. In 1979 he gained his Diploma of Chemical Engineering from the National Technical University of Athens, Greece and from then until 1988 was Scientific researcher at the University of Stuttgart. In that year he was appointed Dr.-Ing. on System Dynamics and Control there. Since 1993 he has been Professor for Automation, Technology Assessment, History and Philosophy of Technology at the HUAS. In 1999-2000 and 2004 he was visiting lecturer for Arab History at the University of Crete, Greece. His research fields are: History of medieval (Byzantine, Arab) science and technology; Iconography of Greek, Latin and Arabic manuscripts on scientific and technological subjects. Email: constantin.canavas@haw-hamburg.de

June Chisholm (Open University, UK)

Portents of doom in Greek tragedy

This paper will present examples of portents of doom from the three major tragedians of fifth Century Athens: Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Greek tragedy is rich in symbolism, some of which relates to these portents, and occurs in the form of omens, dreams, prophecies, and ghosts or visions, Aeschylus' *Oresteia* is a particularly fertile source of prophetic elements, and further examples can be found in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and Euripides' *Helen*, to name but three tragedies.

The paper will endeavour to identify common themes and metaphors in the portents of doom. It will discuss their internal function as a literary device in the context of both the narrative and the meaning of the whole play, including its impact on the audience. It will also examine their possible external functions in relation to superstition and the prevalent religious belief and practice of Ancient Greece.

Interpretations of these portents by characters within the narratives are, on first inspection, presented to us as uncomplicated and easy to grasp, but secondary scholarship has used psychoanalytic methods to reveal deeper, more obscure interpretations, particularly in relation to dreams. This paper will examine whether the application of psychoanalytic approaches is appropriate, bearing in mind that tragedies are based almost exclusively on imaginary characters of myth, characters who are prone to extreme behaviour in the context of remorseless dilemmas, rather than real people reacting to real situations.

June Chisholm is currently studying with the Open University, and after completing several Open University modules in the Humanities with an emphasis on classical studies, she is now working towards an MA in Classical Studies. She holds a Ph.D from St Andrews University and came late to the Humanities after careers in Dentistry and Science. At the moment her main interests lie in Greek Tragedy and theatre, Email: june.chisholm@btinternet.com

Dr Lisa Collinson (University of Aberdeen)

Second Sight, Sound Art and Scholarship

How do academics and artists respond to the rich ancient sources they encounter? Are their responses similar or different, and what can they learn from each other? How can scholars identify, share and explore the contemporary artistic potential of the sources they find and, equally, how can artists contribute to academic explorations of ancient sources? Could focusing on ‘vision’ help?

In this paper, I shall describe how curiosity about these questions (as a medieval historian) led to a collaboration with an archaeologist and two sound artists on an experimental, intermedia performance, in May this year. The performance, called ‘Cruel and Unusual’, explored some of the meanings of the bull to the ancient inhabitants of Scandinavia and the British Isles, and was partially based on my own current research into medieval women’s legal history. However, the mood, the frame story, and much of the artistic interpretation were moulded above all by our awareness of probable connexions between cattle, cult and vision in the Middle Ages, and later.

Particular sources of inspiration were the Scottish folk-tale ‘The Black Bull of Norrway’, the medieval Irish narrative *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, and an article on the practice of *taghairm* in Scotland. We also played with the Irish notion of red-eared fairy cattle, to match ‘second sight’ (suggested by dream-like film imagery) with uncanny ‘second sound’.

This emphasis on vision provided not only a genuinely academically-relevant core (since the meaning of cattle sacrifice in the North-East of Scotland remains an open question), but also artistic freedom to explore my research topic, which would otherwise have been difficult to attain, if I had attempted a more traditional public-engagement-with-research event, such as a lecture. It also afforded invaluable insights into artistic interests and working processes, which will shape my future work as a cultural historian.

Dr Lisa Collinson is a postdoctoral Research Fellow, working on the University of Aberdeen project Pathways to Power: The Rise of the Early Kingdoms of the North. Her doctoral thesis (Cambridge) investigated representations of royal performance in thirteenth-century Old Norse historiography, but more recent work (for example on the Leverhulme-funded Medieval Nordic Laws project) has focused on legal culture in medieval Scandinavia and the British Isles. During the spring of this year (2013), she has been involved in an AHRC-funded

cultural engagement project, which will be the subject of her conference paper. Email: l.a.collinson@abdn.ac.uk

James E. Doan (Nova Southeastern University, USA)

Women and Prophecy in Early Celtic Societies and Literature

This paper focuses on women prophets/poets/druids in early Celtic societies and literature. Already in the classical era we find the 1st-century C.E. Greek stoic philosopher and historian, Posidonius, referring to a group of priestesses living on an island near the mouth of the River Loire in the territory of the Samnitae (probably here an error for Namnitae, hence the region of Nantes in SW Brittany), among whose gifts is the power of prophecy.

In the first century C.E. the Roman geographer Pomponius Mela describes a community of nine virgins living off the island of Sena (Sein) on the Breton coast to whom he attributed magical and prophetic powers, such as arousing the waves of the sea by their singing, changing animals into whatever they wishes, curing incurable sicknesses and predicting the future for the benefit of the mariners who came to consult them.

In Tacitus' *Germania*, written ca. 98 C.E. and dealing with the various Germanic and Celtic tribes beyond the Rhine, we read that the "Germans" (perhaps including Celtic tribes or Germanic tribes influenced by Celtic institutions) believed that an element of holiness and a gift of prophecy resided in women, so that the men did not hesitate to ask their advice or lightly disregard their replies. Among these women Tacitus mentions one Veleda (whose name derives from proto-Celtic *wel-, meaning "to see": cf. Irish *file* for "poet" or "seer"). Living in a tower near the Lippe River, a tributary of the Rhine, she was apparently worshipped as a goddess by the Germanic tribes in the area and either prophesied their victory (or merely incited them) in a revolt against the Romans in 69-70 C.E. These types of women are found in medieval Irish and Welsh literature, reflecting their importance within these societies. The paper will also explore echoes of them in Old Norse and English literature (e.g., *Njal's Saga* and *Macbeth*).

James Doan received an M.A. in Folklore and Mythology from U.C.L.A., an M.A. in Celtic Languages and Literature as well as a Ph.D. in Folklore and Celtic Studies from Harvard. Since 1988, he has been a professor of humanities at Nova Southeastern University (NSU) in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, where he teaches courses in literature, the arts, folklore and mythology. His publications include Women and Goddesses in Early Celtic History, Myth and Legend (Working Papers in Irish Studies, Northeastern Univ., 1987), numerous studies of Welsh and Irish literature, and a recent co-edited collection of essays, The Universal Vampire (Rowman & Littlefield Pub. Group, 2013) Email: doan@nova.edu

Zohar Hadromi-Allouche (University of Aberdeen)

The Prophetess Eve: An Islamic Perspective of the First Woman

Prophecy and prophethood are main themes in the so-called 'Abrahamic' religions. This role is usually preserved for male figures, although the Bible does tell us of a number of female prophets, such as Miryam, Deborah and Anna. Later tradition in both Judaism and Christianity also acknowledges the role of women as prophetesses.

Islam, too, knows of a number of female prophets. Muslim tradition contains several lists of such prophetesses. These lists tend to vary in terms of the number and names of these divinely-inspired figures.

One name, though, occurs in all lists of female Islamic prophets: Ḥawwā', or Eve. This characterisation of the first woman is unique to Islam, as Jewish lists of prophetesses do not include Eve's name; and the Christian depiction of Eve as carrying the main responsibility for the Original Sin and the Fall of humanity makes her identification as a prophetess almost inconceivable.

Muslim tradition, while well aware of this Judaeo-Christian depiction of Eve, nevertheless portrays her in a far more complex way, as a result of combining these earlier trends with other, inner-Islamic, perspectives and concepts, such as Islamic prophetology, the chronological precedence of Islam over other monotheisms and Muhammad's prophetic lineage.

This talk will discuss the characterisation of prophets and prophetesses in Islam; the construction of Eve's figure in the Qur'ān and Muslim tradition; and examine how this construction enables and possibly paves the way into the presentation of Eve as a prophetic figure.

Dr Zohar Hadromi-Allouche is a lecturer in Islamic Studies in the department of Divinity and Religious Studies at the University of Aberdeen. Her research applies a literary approach to the Islamic religious sources (such as the Qur'an, Hadith, the biography of the Prophet Muhammad and tales of the prophets). It is aimed at tracking down literary paradigms and motifs, as well as inter-cultural transitions and transformations, in Islamic religious literature. Dr. Hadromi-Allouche's recent works deal with prophecy and science, Islamic demonology and Islamic fall stories. She is currently focusing on the image of Eve and its various aspects in the Muslim tradition. Email: zohar@abdn.ac.uk

John Hamilton (Physician, Nova Scotia, Canada)

Archie Dan Mac Lellan and the Social Constraints of Second Sight

Archibald Daniel Mac Lellan (Archie Dan) was a woodsman, farmer, and bachelor in Broad Cove Chapel, Inverness County, Cape Breton. He came from a family descended from North Morar, which was noted for its Gaelic. A bachelor, over the years he worked in the lumber camps of the Cape Breton Highlands and on his farm where he lived with his unmarried sisters. The reporter is a physician who had the opportunity to discuss many issues with Archie Dan over a 15-year period and was privileged to be given insight into the social inhibitions, which Archie felt the “gift” of second sight imposed on him. There was an elaborate social framework about how visions could be transmitted to the subjects of his ability to see the future and this will be discussed within the social context of that community.

All societies have unique mores. In this situation it is interesting to observe and report how the ability to have “Second Sight” had a considerable impact on Mr. Mac Lellan’s life and set him apart in his own traditional society. The author is of the opinion that these inhibitions may be part of an older set of traditional manners and may be indicative of a vestigial portion of a sort of priesthood in aspects of traditional Gaelic society.

***John Rosborough Hamilton, B.Sc. (Hons.), M.D. , FRCS (C)** is a native of Nova Scotia who has lived in Cape Breton, Scotland, France and Nova Scotia. Educated at Dalhousie University initially with a degree in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry and subsequently in Medicine also at Dalhousie and has a specialist certification in Ophthalmic Surgery. He has been privileged to be a consultant ophthalmic surgeon at Saint Martha's Regional Hospital in Antigonish, Nova Scotia since 1982. One of the benefits of the position has been to meet many Gaels from Cape Breton and Eastern Nova Scotia. He has been an active local historian and has been historian of the Antigonish Highland Society since 1990. Email: c4dzow@hotmail.com*

Dr. Gregory A. Hillis (University of California Santa Barbara, CA, USA)

Prophetic Bodies and Temporal Displacement of the Self

Since the time of indigenous pre-Buddhist animistic/shamanistic practices and beliefs, mediumship (i.e., channelling oracular spirits) has been widespread and influential in Himalayan Buddhist countries.

No less a personage than Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, is known to officially consult with such medium/oracles. Besides the "State Oracle" (gnas chung sku rten), it is also common for Buddhists from all social strata in the Himalayan region to consult lesser mediums, shamans, and oracles. As in other traditions in which channelling is practiced, such as Candomblé (Brazil), Santería (Cuba), Voodoo (Haiti), and even certain New Age movements, the question of what becomes of the usual identity of the medium during the trance period is the subject of intense speculation - where does the oracle's "self" go when his/her body is "possessed"? This question is particularly vexing in the context of the unique blend of scholastic and tantric Buddhism that dominates the Tibetan cultural region. The present paper will endeavour to analyze the temporary displacement of the oracle's identity by utilizing such traditional concepts as the standard Buddhist critique of person (skandhas), the philosophical doctrine of "emptiness" (sunyata) and the tantric ritual theory. In the case of a full possession of the body of a person by a spirit, allowing him to serve as an oracle and giving voice to the spirit that was not able to communicate clearly in other ways; what happens with the consciousness of the person who is being possessed? What kind of training is required to make a body fit for these possessions? Are those trainings intrinsically related with the ?quality? of the Oracle, the spirits and the accuracy and dimension of their predictions? To answer these questions we will primarily focus on the Nechung Oracle and from this point we will try to investigate possible differences from other types of possession. Key-words: Oracle, Consciousness, Buddhism.

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Michael Hunter (Emeritus Professor of History, Birkbeck, University of London)

Boyle's Legacy: Second Sight in English and Scottish Thought in the Long Eighteenth Century

Initially, this paper will reconsider the discovery of second sight by English intellectuals in the late seventeenth century, and particularly the role in this of Robert Boyle. Boyle's investigation of the topic will be placed in the context of his wide-ranging curiosity and his enthusiasm for collecting information from far-flung locations, both of which typified his eclectic and insightful approach to the study of nature; his apologetic motives in collecting information about 'supernatural' phenomena will also be examined. Then, attention will be paid to the way in which the information on second sight that Boyle obtained in a letter from George MacKenzie, Lord Tarbat, was scribally transmitted, and particularly the significance that it had for John Beaumont, who was responsible for the first published version of it in 1705. We will then consider developments during the eighteenth century. In part, the Boylean approach continued, as exemplified in connection with second sight by Henry Baker, Samuel Johnson and others. But it came under increasing challenge from more reductionist forms of natural philosophy that flourished in the context of the Enlightenment. An early instance of this is to be seen in a fascinating critique of Beaumont's belief that he had intercourse with spiritual beings by Sir Hans Sloane, written in 1740 and published for the first time in 2011 (see http://www.bbk.ac.uk/boyle/researchers/other_publications.html). Similarly dismissive attitudes were expressed in relation to second sight in various publications of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and these will be examined and their intellectual rationale assessed. This will provide the opportunity for broader reflections on the way in which the character of science changed in the century following Boyle and the effect that this had in redefining the milieu in which a belief in second sight subsisted.

Michael Hunter is Emeritus Professor of History at Birkbeck College, University of London. He is the principal editor of the Works, Correspondence and workdiaries of Robert Boyle (1999-2001) and author of Boyle: Between God and Science (2009) as well as many other books on the intellectual history of early modern England. One of these, The Occult Laboratory: Magic, Science and Second Sight in Late Seventeenth-century Scotland (2001), presented a scholarly edition of the key early texts concerning second sight with a commentary. More recently, he has been working on changing attitudes in the long eighteenth century towards ostensibly 'supernatural' phenomena. Email: m.hunter@mail.bbk.ac.uk

Maggie Hyde (University of Kent)

William Lilly and the Philosopher's Stone

William Lilly's magnum opus, *Christian Astrology* is the key text in the English speaking astrological tradition, especially for horary astrology - the use of a horoscope to answer a specific question put to the astrologer. Lilly's text distils the astrological tradition from Greek, Arabic and Latin sources in a practical manual, and insists in its frontispiece that astrology is *non cogunt*, not fated.

I will look in detail at a horary chart from *Christian Astrology*, Lilly's judgment of a question put to him by an alchemist in 1647, "if he should ever receive the Philosopher's Stone?" This text addresses us from within the doctrine of correspondences embedded in the medieval and late Renaissance worldviews, thereby revealing a pre-enlightenment cosmos and enabling us to hear a symbolic language that speaks from a different era. By the time of the question in 1647 astrology was in its last flowering; the seeds of its downfall had been sown as the classical and medieval Christian cosmos that supported it began to weaken under the new scientific discoveries of the enlightenment. Yet despite astrology's collapse, its language of an ontotheological "one world" is lucidly expressed in Lilly's work, and it continues to be spoken by its practitioners today. Although astrology's tradition and methods have been adapted for modern times, astrologers today use essentially the same vocabulary as their counterparts in antiquity. Both they and Lilly reveal a cosmic order on which astrological prediction is based, an order that has otherwise been lost to the modern age.

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Dr Jay Johnston (University of Sydney and University of New South Wales, Australia)

Of Stone and Site: Second Sight and its Material Culture in the Highlands and Islands

This paper will consider the long tradition of sacred and 'magical' stones in the Highlands and Islands, and in particular their use in facilitating the second sight and enabling divination and prophecy. It will focus — via methodologies and theories recently developed in religious aesthetics — on the materiality and ontology of both the visions produced by second sight and of the 'tools' employed to produce them (stone objects or specific 'sacred' locations). This includes considering stone amulets as 'vehicles' for the second sight: like those attributed to the 'Brahan Seer' Coinneach Odhar Fiosaiche and the beliefs that supported (and developed) traditions about this figure.

In addition, this paper considers the role of stone — from standing stones to portable rocks — in the apprehension of the 'Good People' and related beings (including fairies, elves, fins, trows, magical cattle). Communicating with the betwixt beings was often considered a distinct capacity of those with the second sight, and these beings have long been associated with landscapes and structures dominated or distinctly marked by stone. Examples will be especially drawn from the Highlands, Orkney and Shetland with the aim to foreground in discussion the relationship between Gaelic and Norse traditions.

*Jay Johnston (PhD) is Senior Lecturer (Studies in Religion), University of Sydney and Senior Lecturer (Art History and Art Education), COFA, University of New South Wales, Australia. She has researched in the area of divination and alternative epistemologies for many years and is currently completing a new monograph *Stag and Stone: Archaeology, Religion and Esoteric Aesthetics*, which examines ontological concepts of image agency and material culture. Previous publications include *Angels of Desire: Esoteric Bodies, Aesthetics and Ethics* (Equinox 2008). She indulges her fascination with Gaelic and Norse culture as a graduate student of the Centre for Nordic Studies, UHI. Email: jay.johnston@sydney.edu.au*

Vincent R Jones & Leida K Mae & (Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Canada)

**Queer Seeing: The use of dreams, visioning and Ancestral guidance as research praxis
by queer Indigenous students at Lakehead University**

Joint paper: for abstract see under Leida K Mae

Vincent Jones has his Bachelors of Fine Art, Education and is currently working on his Masters of education. Growing up Queer has taught him to see the world with different lens and has expanded his wisdom to include dreams, tarot, masculine and feminine energies. This has resulted in his Bi-epistemological understanding which is expressed through in narratives through Indigenous fine arts. He feels a holistic approach to research would be beneficial to academia. Email: vincentr.jones@gmail.com

Dr. Eugene Kuzmin (Independent Researcher, Israel)

Divinations in the *Sefer Raziel HaMalakh* and Christian Magic

Sefer Raziel HaMalakh is a celebrated Jewish magic book, first published in Amsterdam in 1701. It is often confused with another, independent treatise, called *Sefer Raziel* and known through various manuscripts, such as Sloane MS 3826; MS 3846; Vat., Reg. Lat 1300; and MS Halle, cod. 14 B 36. While both texts have something in common, for instance, an account of the book's acquisition by Adam, their structure and most of their content are quite different.

Sefer Raziel HaMalakh is a compilation comprising autonomous treatises on various topics, written in different styles, some in pure Hebrew, some in a mix of Hebrew and Aramaic. Since its various sections are products of diverse epochs, the book can hardly be studied as one continuous whole. However, as one of the most well-known magic books in history, it deserves research for the place it holds in transmitting ancient and medieval magic traditions into the modern era. The book is vital for understanding the development of magic texts not only in Jewish, but also in European Christian, culture.

This paper will deal with one intriguing topic in *Sefer Raziel HaMalakh* – the divination practices. These practices are all very impressive and deserve much scholarly attention. One of them, appearing at the very beginning of the book, is a divination ritual that includes the sacrifice of doves, after which the magus is able to see an angel in a dream, who provides answers to all his questions. This ritual was discussed by L. Goldmerstein in his article "Magical Sacrifice in the Jewish Kabbala" (*Folklore* 7:2 (1896):202-204). Goldmerstein shows that while the ritual has some parallels in Jewish texts, it is fundamentally not a Jewish rite and, in some cases, openly contradicts Jewish custom. The author, however, does not search for parallels in Christian texts. In this study, I intend to show that at least some parallels are to be found in the *Grimorium Verum*, a famous Christian magic book, written in the 19th century (according to Arthur Edward Waits), and in Czech folklore. I will argue that this ritual found in a Jewish source, became known among Christians and influenced the Christian tradition of magic.

The comparative study of *Sefer Raziel HaMalakh* with Christian magic texts may serve to clarify the impact of Jewish magical traditions on Christian ones and thus throw light on the overall influence of Jewish culture on Christian Europe.

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Neil Lanham (independent scholar and folklorist, UK)

The Double Vision of 'Natural' Man

Walter Ong, George Ewart Evans, Walter Benjamin and others have said words to the effect that the modern mind now only sees things literally and materially and has lost the metaphoric vision of old. Metaphor still exists but, as important as it is, in the hands of literal minded thinkers, is usually thought of merely as a tool for occasional use. In the prior oral culture, however, the metaphoric vision encompassed everything seen, heard, felt, smelt, tasted, thought and spoken of. It was not just constantly taking measurement from experiences stored in parallel understandings in the back brain but part of its demand for understanding and truth was by the projected use of imagination. Such metaphoric extensions into imagination produce visions of understanding, for example, of the intangible – a grasp upon that which we cannot see. The ways of rural life and the dominance of the oral tradition in the middle ages continued with 'natural' man more or less the same in extremely remote parts of the UK until probably the late 1950s and early 1960s and there is a residue still. Using a lifetime's internal study of oral culture from this period onwards the paper will show that vernacular indigenous oral people had an inherited second sight and it will be argued that it is this highly imaginative thought pattern from 'natural' man that leads to esoteric belief.

Northrop Frye, through studying the metaphoric nature of the Bible, recognised in the early 19th century English poet William Blake, a completely metaphoric mind which he called The Double Vision. Blake said, 'I can see the past, the present and the future at the same time.' This is among the various interrelated themes that will be explored in the paper.

Neil Lanham is an independent researcher who has absorbed, observed and recorded the indigenous, vernacular, oral culture within his native county of Suffolk in England for all of his seventy five years. He has had published a number of academic papers read at International conferences, edited two books from oral culture and has made over one hundred DVDs and CDs from his recordings which are available from his web site www.oraltraditions.co.uk. He still records the people from the community that he lives in and can be contacted at The Swallows, The Street, Botesdale, Suffolk IP22 1BP Tel 01379 890568 or traditionsofsuffolk@gmail.com

Sharon Paice MacLeod (Senchas Celtic Religious Studies Association, Canada)

The Hazel of Immortality: Mythic Symbolism and Entheogens in the Irish Literary Tradition

Early Irish literature, particularly that associated with mythological imagery, frequently refers to a number of traditional symbols associated with sacred landscapes and the pursuit of divine knowledge. These include the underworld Well of Wisdom, salmon, hazel trees and their nuts, as well as fire and water, poets and sages, and prophetic or divine knowledge. The literature frequently refers to the ingestion of red coloured fruits or flesh (apples, berries, salmon, animals) which results in the acquisition of *imbas* ('Great Knowledge') or *aí* ('Poetic Inspiration'; cognate with *awen* in Middle Welsh). This paper will explore these literary and mythic scenarios and suggest the possible use of coded language for the knowledge of – and ingestion of - entheogenic substances. These are recorded in many other cultural settings where they are connected with the quest for, and acquisition of, sacred wisdom and prophetic ability.

Sharon Paice MacLeod trained in Celtic Studies through Harvard University where she specialized in early Irish literature, native religious symbolism, and Scottish and Irish folk traditions. She has taught Celtic literature and mythology at university level, published numerous academic articles, and is the author of *Celtic Myth and Religion: A Study of Traditional Belief* (McFarland). A professional musician and Gaelic singer, she is the founder of Senchas: Celtic Religious Studies Association. She is currently working on a grant-funded research project documenting indigenous Celtic religious practices, with a focus on ritualized speech, song and ceremony and aspects of shamanic practice. Email: macleod_eolas@yahoo.com

Leida K Mae & Vincent R Jones (Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Canada)

Queer Seeing: The use of dreams, visioning and Ancestral guidance as research praxis by queer Indigenous students at Lakehead University

Pathwalking, or ‘Walking between worlds’ is the description which Raven Kaldera gives for the spiritual practice in which Northern Tradition pagan Shamans are able to manipulate objects and energies in both the spiritual and physical worlds by being present in both simultaneously.

Vincent: growing up multicultural allowed me to understand two epistemologies, western and Filipino. The Filipino side has cultivated a spiritual understanding that is a part of who I am. The importance of dreams and spiritual wellbeing has affected my life and has shaped the world around me. For queer Indigenous people, this “walking with one foot in each world” liminality is familiar when moving between Western and Indigenous epistemologies, and between queer and straight communities.

LK: Learning to perform in the Western educational system, and to isolate my ‘Logical mind’ from my Estonian “knowing” self produced a very dedicated student, but one with the implicit understanding that Indigeneity was neither welcome nor valued.

When the epistemological disconnects become too overwhelming, indigenous students learn to leave their “spirit” outside the classroom early on as a form of self-protection against the Colonial and Dispassionate nature of Western academia.

The epistemological disconnect between Western and Indigenous knowledge systems is particularly evident in the ways in which researchers identify the impetus for their research. We talk about being “drawn to” or “led to” research; refer to research as “important to us”, and we situate ourselves intersectionally) or ethnoculturally but without being able to talk about the spiritual drive behind our research: there is still something missing.

Indigenous research methodologies which include, recognize, and validate dreams, visions, and divination as ways of knowing and of gaining insight into research problems are like coming home. Being spirit-led, Ancestor-led is not the only reason why we research, but when it is it is powerfully validating to be able to say so.

LK Mae is a Maausulane/Northern Pagan studying Education and Women’s Studies at the Master’s level. My interests revolve around liminal identity research, traditional art/craft, and the ways in which queer Indigenous identities can be supported spiritually through community and cultural praxis. Personally, I am an avid kayaker, and skier, and live fully, despite the setbacks of CNS-involved Lupus. Email: lkmae@lakeheadu.ca

Christel Mattheeuws (University of Aberdeen)

Reading the Future in the landscape: Astrology in Central East Madagascar

It is in the life paths of human beings that villages, tombs, fields and other human places appear, disappear and change in the landscape. In Central East Madagascar they emerge, not as nature that has been conquered, but as the result of fruitful relationships with the land that ‘gives’ and of which the dead become part. Astrological politics used in the foundation of places during the rituals of blessing weave the invisible texture of the land that people inhabit. The astrological paths that form the texture can be read as the formative gestures of this land, not only indicating the movements of rooting and growth, but also their direction and intention. Growing in the Malagasy language (*maniry*) means literally, searching for the future, seeking to become (something else). The study of astrological practice reveals the texture of the world as a relational meshwork. Nothing happens randomly since whatever moves also pulls and pushes. The art of living is about learning what to do in such a world in order to make one’s movements and actions life-generative. Astrological practice is all about giving direction, of becoming or keeping life-generative. By following the life-paths of people that have directions, we can learn what is life-generative in their view and in their actions, and we can also learn all the possibilities, eventualities and choices that are part of the perpetual search for good directions, so that whatever is pulled or pushed into motion in one’s movements end up in a tightening of the meshwork. In the presentation I will read people’s future in the landscape by explaining into which direction their past and present creations of tombs, villages, ritual centres and rice fields pull and push their history.

Dr. Christel Mattheeuws graduated from Aberdeen in 2008. Her main fields of interests are spirituality, astrology, intangible knowledge, development and ecology (with a strong attraction for islands and mountainous regions) that she gradually explored in her academic choices (travelling in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Taiwan, Kenya, Guinea Conakry and Madagascar) and by visits to development projects, through international contacts and practical trainings in both developmental and biological agriculture. Her present direction is much influenced by Tim Ingold’s work, Goethean Science and her experiences in Madagascar. While trained in a body-centred phenomenology of human beings, her new visions have become life-centric, exploring the “organic” relationships between human beings and all other worldly manifestations. She focuses on the relationship between perception, form-giving processes of both the material world and less substantial phenomena and different kinds of knowledge. Email: christel.mattheeuws@abdn.ac.uk

Michael T Miller (University of Nottingham)

Enoch-Metatron and the Active Intellect in thirteenth-century Kabbalah

From his roots in the Enoch literature of Second Temple Judaism, the archangel Metatron has cut a unique and curious figure through the history of Jewish mythology. This paper will examine his later manifestation in the thought of thirteenth century kabbalist Abraham Abulafia. Abulafia is famous for his ecstatic-linguistic mysticism, which provided a pathway to the divine through the manipulation of letters, most notably the letters of the Name of God. However, there is a strong neoplatonic element to Abulafia's thought, one which suggests that the power of prophecy is accessed through that primal oneness which is the initial manifestation of divine actuality. Known variously as the Active Intellect, Metatron and the Name of God, as well as being identified with the Torah, this root or world-soul promises the mystic the dissolution of self, into the prime reality which transcends space, time and individuation. Just as in kabbalistic thought the nature of objects or people are revealed in their names, so the Name of God reveals the truths of reality, including even access to the future. And so, in accessing the form which stands behind all forms, the mystic becomes the mouthpiece of God, from which divine wisdom of past and future pours. Because Metatron stands halfway between human and God, being the heavenly translation of the patriarch Enoch who is also the "little YHWH", he also transcends the whole of history, having witnessed creation and apocalypse. The mystic in following his footsteps accesses that font of reality which generates the objects and events of the world.

Thus we see how the patriarch Enoch, who was lifted into heaven and initiated into the secrets of the world, its history and future, secrets that even the angels didn't know, comes to represent for the kabbalists the epistemological possibility of prophecy. In the curious appropriation of the Aristotelean motif that posits the identity of knowledge, the knower, and the act of knowing, Metatron and the mystic who follows after him, become identical with the process of unfolding which constitutes history.

Michael T Miller is a final year doctoral student in Jewish Studies at the University of Nottingham. His research focuses on Jewish thought from the Second Temple Period to the medieval Kabbalah, as well as modern philosophy. His doctoral thesis examines Jewish traditions regarding the Name of God in parallel with modern philosophy of language. He has previously spoken at the Enoch Graduate Seminar (Budapest) and the Shalem Center's Philosophical Investigations of the Hebrew Scriptures conference (Jerusalem). His other academic interests include new African-American religious movements, and Speculative Realism. Email: atxmm@nottingham.ac.uk

Marina Montesano (Università di Messina, Italy)

The Political Use of Prophecy in Late Medieval Italy

The late Middle Ages saw a conspicuous interest in prophecy, along with a fear of it. In the early centuries of Christianity, the Fathers had tried to define the meaning of prophecy. According to the last prophet, John the Baptist (as made clear by Luke, 1-3), all the ancient revelations had found their accomplishment in Jesus Christ. The age of Revelation was closed, giving way to that of exegesis. An interesting part of the discussion was about the etymology of "prophet": did it come from *phainō*, "to bring into in the light", with the significance of revealing something that is still to happen? Or from *phēmi*, "declaring", as if speaking for somebody else? The prophecies of pagans responded to the second meaning, as the demons concealed as Gods were speaking through their false prophets. But later on Christianity experienced again the gifts of prophecies: from Hildegard of Bingen to Catherine of Siena to less known cases. They were recognized as belonging to the first category, the one proceeding from *phainō*, but at the same time the second case also seemed to proliferate, along with a growing demonic obsession that has been detailed in many studies. Throughout Italy, where the wars between the *Comuni* flared alongside conflicts opposing the Papacy of the Emperor Frederick II (and later his heir Manfredi) and his allies, chroniclers such as Salimbene de Adam, Rolandino and Giovanni Villani show how this double level of intending prophecy was still in place, creating a grey area where political interests could work their way and prophecy could become, or be used as, an instrument of propaganda.

Marina Montesano is Associate Professor of Medieval History at the University of Messina and Milan (Vita-Salute San Raffaele) - Italy. She graduated from the University of Bari in 1990 and completed her PhD in Florence in 1995; she received a fellowship from the Accademia della Crusca in Florence in 1996 and another one from Villa I Tatti – Florence-Harvard University in 1998-99. She is a member of the International Society of Cultural History. Among her latest publications are; *Da Figline a Gerusalemme. Viaggio del prete Michele in Egitto e in Terrasanta (1489-90)*, Viella, Roma, 2010 and *Caccia alle streghe*, Salerno Editrice, Roma, 2012. Email: mmontesano@unime.it

Nicola Moss (artist, UK)



Útiseta

An exhibition of artwork supports the conference. It is available on a ‘drop-in’ basis throughout the weekend but a guided tour by the artist, Nicola Moss, will form an integral part of the programme. Útiseta means sitting out for wisdom and is associated with an ancient Nordic practice of divining knowledge. Nicola’s works are inspired by sitting out in the Scottish landscape and seeing numinous images in her mind’s eye.

Nicola Moss, born in 1960, has long been an inspiring and engaging artist. Unafraid to enter unconscious realms, and largely driven by the mythopoetic rhythms and realities of the dream world, her work can strike the sort of resonant note which recalls the potency and power of much prehistoric art. A similar spirit, the great Scottish painter and printmaker Alan Davie, has called Moss “a true artist”, engaging with those deep-running creative currents that have long exercised the questing heart and mind. And for all the archetypal power of the work, a refreshing quality of open-mindedness lies at the core of Moss’s imagery. Here is a poetics that bodies forth an art to dream by, an art to nourish the soul. Email: nicolamoss@hotmail.com

Samantha Newington (University of Aberdeen)

Magic and prophecy in Homer's *Odyssey* and beyond

With Homer's *Odyssey* at hand, this paper will examine how magic and prophecy are central features of the narrative sequence. Beyond too this paper's text-based approach there will be a secondary consideration to demonstrate that the fantasia of magic and prophecy in the Homeric corpus is, in fact, reflective of ancient Greek beliefs more generally. In order to determine the latter, particular focus will be given to ancient Greek defixiones. So often Homeric scholarship has concentrated on themes such as heroic code, homecoming, female archetype and individual characters (to cite a few), to the almost omission of the significance of magic and prophecy. What this paper intends, then, is to redress that imbalance with firm focalisation on books 5, 7, 10 and 11. Within these books, there is a clear highlight showing how peripheral deities form an important space within the 'other' world of magic and, seeming, hocus pocus. But, what will more fundamentally emerge is that magic and prophecy in the *Odyssey* is more than mythical fantasy, but a complex articulation of the human condition and related ritual responses. The aspect of 'ritual' response will be picked up in the paper's discussion of ancient Greek defixiones. Here, the attempt to translate both the text and ritual context of the defixiones will bring to the fore methodological considerations. Such considerations may be to what extent text and archaeology can interface to provide an understanding about ancient Greek attitudes towards both magic and prophecy. However, what will be surely concluded is that the Homeric text may offer insights into how to tackle the defixiones and vice versa.

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Aideen M. O'Leary (University of Aberdeen)

Prophesising Unity? The 'Great Prophecy of Britain' and the Two Messiahs

In this paper I explore the roles and significance of the two messiah-princes of mediaeval Wales, Cynan and Cadwaladr. I hope to build on the work of M.E. Griffiths,¹ no detailed account of the two characters has been published to date.² I shall first interrogate the earliest known (and separate) references to each of the two; later they travelled together -- and were especially prominent -- in the poem *Armes Prydein Vawr*,³ 'The Great Prophecy of Britain', which appears to describe tenth-century historical events. The main part of my paper will focus on an analysis of their roles here. Perhaps the two princes represented separate areas of the Celtic world, which are here prophesied to unite in an effort to repel the English:⁴ I shall discuss this idea further. In particular, I hope to show that the term *cymot*, used here probably to denote concord or reconciliation, carries heavy implications of past events and indicates the political responsibility placed on both Cynan and Cadwaladr.

Further questions on the poem will include the ambiguous use of tenses, the importance of their armies/supporters to the two 'saviours', and why Cynan and Cadwaladr were here preferred to other 'messiahs', e.g. Arthur.

Dr Aideen O'Leary has taught in the School of Language & Literature at the University of Aberdeen since 2006. She teaches a range of courses in the Celtic programme, including Brittonic Language (Middle Welsh), Old Gaelic language, Arthurian literature, Gaelic Ireland 1700 to the present, and Religion and the Celts 400-1200. She is co-ordinator of the M.Litt. programme in Celtic Studies. Her research interests include: mediaeval Irish literature, Celtic-Latin literature, New Testament apocrypha. Email: a.oleary@abdn.ac.uk

¹ M.E. Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh* (Cardiff, 1937).

² Most of the research on the topic was undertaken in the first half of the twentieth century, with occasional articles since then: see n. 4, below.

³ Sir I. Williams, ed. and trans., *Armes Prydein Vawr* (Dublin, 1972).

⁴ D.N. Dumville, 'Brittany and *Armes Prydein Vawr*', *Études celtiques* 20 (1983), 145-59.

Éva Pócs (Professor Emeritus, University of Pécs, Hungary)

Divination and Sacrifice: Archaic Methods of Divination in Central Eastern Europe

There are two dates in the contemporary calendar which are associated in Eastern European popular religion with the varied magic and ritual traditions of the winter solstice and the beginning of the new year: December 13th - the day of St. Lucy (this used to be the day of the winter solstice before the Gregorian calendar was introduced); and the period between Christmas and Epiphany. Traditions of the dead visiting the earth periodically and of non-Christian demonic beings/goddesses are also associated with these dates, such as the Croatian/Slovenian/Hungarian/Slovakian/Moravian Lucy and the figure of Piatnitsa/St. Paraskeva from South Eastern Europe. What these mythical beings have in common is their connection with the fertility of women and domestic animals, the taboos and sanctions related to women's work, particularly to spinning and bread-baking, and the sacrifice and divination rites (hemp, wool, cereals) related to their figures and to the dead visiting the earth. In my paper I analyse these rites particularly from the point of view of the connections between divination and sacrifice.

*Éva Pócs is professor emeritus at the University of Pécs, Hungary. The crucial areas of her research are: general concepts and phenomena of religious anthropology (such as the cult of the dead, divination, supernatural communication, shamanism, witchcraft and the fairy cult); the comprehensive analysis of modern folk religion and folk beliefs; and witchcraft and demonology in the early modern and modern periods. She is author of 10 books (including *Fairies and Witches at the Boundary of South-Eastern and Central Europe*, 1989, and *Between the Living and the Dead: a Perspective on Witches and Seers in the Early Modern Age*, 1998). Email: pocse@chello.hu*

Dr Mary Pryor (University of Aberdeen)

Sibyls as Signifiers in Seventeenth-Century Scotland

By the end of the Middle Ages, the western Church had adopted the Sibyls of antiquity as foretellers of the Christian story and accepted twelve of them as pagan counterparts of the Old Testament prophets. Subsequently, painted and engraved images of Sibyls were manifold in Europe and were also to be found in post-Reformation Scotland. This paper will examine the significance of the arrival, in 1641, of a painted set of twelve Sibyls (ten of which still survive) in King's College, University of Aberdeen, originally established in 1495 as a Catholic foundation. It will argue that the donor, Dr William Guild, the new Principal but also Chaplain to the King, Charles I, consciously used these images to make a codified but powerful statement about the contemporary religious crises in Scotland.

It will be shown that such was the enduring significance of *The Sibyls* to the College that they were still on display there a century later and had to be restored in 1761. Through radiographic investigations, research has revealed that the original seventeenth-century faces of Sibyls Aegyptiaca and Europaea were consciously refashioned by the artist, which revealed more of their provenance and also refreshed their original message.

Dr Mary Pryor is Senior Teaching Fellow in History of Art at the University of Aberdeen. Recent publications in the field of Scottish art include 'John and Cosmo Alexander: Of Recusancy, Jacobites and Aberdeen Junctures' (Recusant History, A. Dillon [ed.] The Catholic Record Society, vol. 31, No. 2, October 2012) and 'Picturing the Divisiveness of Union' (Forging the State, A. Mackillop & M. Ó Siochrú [eds] Dundee University Press, 2009). She is currently working on 'The King's Paintings: Preaching to the Times' with J. Morrison (King's College Chapel, Aberdeen, J. Geddes [ed.] Northern Universities Press, 2014). Email: m.pryor@abdn.ac.uk

Dr Syrithe Pugh (University of Aberdeen)

The Twin Gates: Echoes of Virgil's Ambiguous Prophecy in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*

The prophecy of Rome's future greatness which provides the teleological structure of Virgil's *Aeneid* receives its fullest expression in Aeneas' visit to the Underworld in Book VI. At the conclusion of the episode we are told 'There are twin gates of Sleep'—one of horn, an easy exit for 'true shades', and one of ivory, through which the spirits send 'false dreams' to the world above—and Virgil's hero returns to the upper world, bearing the prophecy, through the ivory gate. The lines have been a crux for interpreters ever since Servius in the C4th remarked 'Virgil wishes us to understand everything he has said is false'. Virgil is imitating Penelope's coda to her prophetic dream of Odysseus' homecoming in *Odyssey* 19. Among the suggestive ironies of the allusion is the fact that, where Homer's prophecy heralds the reunion of the married couple, Virgil's imperial prophecy has been the cause of Aeneas' separation from his lover (and, she would say, wife) Dido, whose angry ghost he encounters among the shades, and whose unjust fate he laments. What is at stake here is the way in which the *Aeneid* posits a divine providence unhesitant in its sacrifice of the individual to political destiny. In the prophetic dream of Alcyone in *Metamorphoses* XI, Ovid amplifies the doubt over the validity of this transaction sounded in Virgil's echo of the *Odyssey*, presenting a sceptical vision in which even true prophecy is merely a sign of divine indifference to humanity. Book I of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* is a *contaminatio* of all these intertexts, subordinating the political telos of the *Aeneid* to the personal loyalties celebrated by Homer and Ovid, reflecting a conception of providence and supernatural vision which upholds faithful married love.

Syrithe Pugh is a Lecturer in English at the University of Aberdeen. She gained her D. Phil. from Oxford Her research centres on the imitation of classical literature in English Renaissance poetry, and her publications include the monographs *Spenser and Ovid* (2005) and *Herrick, Fanshawe and the Politics of Intertextuality: Classical Literature and Seventeenth-Century Royalism* (2010), as well as numerous articles. A corresponding editor of the *Spenser Review*, she is currently working on *Spenser's relation to Virgil and on the seventeenth-century reception of Lucan*. Email: s.m.pugh@abdn.ac.uk

Sabine Reichart (University of Regensburg, Denmark)

Miracula Sancti Liudgeri. Visions and prophecies in high medieval hagiography

Medieval hagiographic texts are full of visionary acts. By taking a closer look, two main aspects become apparent. First, the prophetic skills of the saint himself; in direct contact to the Lord he knows about his own destiny, including his death. He dreams of his martyrdom or is warned by an epiphany. Of course he ignores the warnings and accepts his destiny. His acting stands in opposition to the behaviour of the laity in those hagiographic texts. Lay people have dreams in which the saint appears but very often they don't understand them. It is the cleric counsel which makes them understand the meaning of the vision. In my point of view we can state here a clerical jurisdiction over the interpretation of the visions which is somehow similar to the treatment of religious men and women and their visionary skills. This paper will deal with various examples and will discuss the different aspects of prophecies and visionary skills in hagiographic texts, especially the role of female laics and their role under the influence of lay society and clerical jurisdiction.

Sabine Reichert studied Medieval History, Historical Auxiliary Sciences and Cultural Anthropology at the university of Münster/Westfalia. She gained her Magister Artium with a thesis on the role of medieval hagiography in urban politics. From 2007 to 2013 she worked as an assistant teacher for medieval history at the University of Mainz and since 2013 is an academic coordinator for a joint research project at the university of Regensburg. Her Ph.D. thesis on late medieval cathedral towns (Die Kathedrale der Bürger. Zum Verhältnis von Stadt und Kirche in mittelalterlichen Kathedralstädten) was accepted in 2012 and is going to be published in 2013. Email: sabine.reichert@geschichte.uni-regensburg.de

Lee Joseph Rooney (University of Liverpool)

Prophecy and the ‘Decentred Universe’ of Henry IV

Graham Holderness notes that many critics have seen in *Richard II* ‘the traditional “providential” ideas [...] giving way to a new “political” understanding of history: the breakdown of an order reposing on providence and the emergence of a new regime deploying a flexible political pragmatism’ (*Shakespeare Recycled*). Whilst he admits that this widely-perceived distinction between the Ricardian England of *Richard II* and the post-Ricardian England of *1* and *2 Henry IV* has ‘considerable value’, he is wary of the notion of a smooth transition from providentialism to humanism. Holderness is, I argue, right to be sceptical: what occurs between *Richard II* and the *Henry IV* plays is not so much a transition as a break, and, as with many breaks, it results in a degree of trauma.

This paper seeks to explore the nature of this break by examining a prophecy that survives it: Richard II’s prediction of the discord between Bolingbroke and Northumberland. This prophecy is originally uttered in *Richard II*, a play that interrogates closely the notion of divine kingship, but is revived by Henry IV in the supposedly more pragmatic universe of *2 Henry IV*. This recontextualisation transforms the prophecy’s meaning in strange and unexpected ways, and forces Henry to reconsider his understanding of past, present, and future. This dilemma, which begins and ends with the problem of predicting the future, might be seen to challenge the traditional providential/humanist distinction between the Englands of *Richard II* and *Henry IV*.

Lee Rooney is a doctoral researcher in English Literature at the University of Liverpool. He is currently in the third year of his research, which focuses on prophecy in William Shakespeare’s chronicle history plays. Email: L.J.Rooney@liverpool.ac.uk

Stephen Sayers (writer and broadcaster, UK)

The Union of Past, Present & Future in the Eternal Moment

Meister Eckhart, the thirteenth century Thuringian theologian, metaphysician and mystic, has given the modern world a compelling model of the relationship between time and eternity. This can be used to provide an indicative account of the past and the future being assimilated to the present in such a way that reunion and prophecy become explicable.

The model also provides the possibility of interpreting the relationship between time and eternity in terms of the dialectics between unconsciousness and consciousness and the subsequent emergence of those altered states of consciousness that can be collectively described as experiences of eternal life. As such, the model can be used to suggest an ontological link between the unconscious and eternity and its expression as myth, as well as between consciousness and time and its expression as history.

Seen in this way, the 'eternal moment' becomes characterised as a transient state of awareness that is informed by both unconscious and conscious elements and which offers its subjects miraculous opportunities.

Stephen Sayers was, until September 2011, Reader in Social Psychology and Head of the School of Social Sciences at Leeds Metropolitan University. He has taught at the Psychiatric Teaching Division, York Hospital and at the Universities of York, Hull and the Open University. For many years, he has studied the psychology of folklore and has explored spirituality using psychological and theological analyses. Publications include: 'The Powers of Light and Darkness', Friends Quarterly, Issue 1, 2010; 'Breaking the Chains,' Friends Quarterly, Issue 2. 2011; 'Flowers of Light', Transpersonal Psychology Review, Vol. 14, No 2, Summer, 2011. He is a Quaker, writer and broadcaster. E-mail: s.sayers@hotmail.com

Robert Segal (University of Aberdeen)

Cognitive Dissonance as Rational

Back in the 1956, the American social psychologist Leon Festinger and two colleagues published a book that has become a classic; *When Prophecy Fails*. Applying Festinger's pioneering work on cognitive dissonance, they argued that when predictions by a group do not come true, the group responds not by abandoning the belief, let alone dissolving itself, but by seeking converts. The larger the group that accepts the belief, the more plausible the belief. The cogency of the belief is secondary. "Strength in numbers" is primary. Festinger is not arguing that in the face of falsification, the belief is revised. He bypasses revision, which is a rational response, and limits himself to proselytizing, which for him is not. But surely rationalizing is also required. And at the same time the larger the number of persons who accept a belief, the more persuasive the belief. I will consider the case of the reaction of Jesus' followers to the Crucifixion.

*Robert Segal is Sixth Century Chair in Religious Studies, University of Aberdeen. Previously, he taught at Lancaster University. His field is modern theories of myth and of religion. Among the books that he has written or edited are *The Poimandres as Myth, Religion and the Social Sciences, Explaining and Interpreting Religion, Joseph Campbell, The Gnostic Jung, The Myth and Ritual Theory, Jung on Mythology, Hero Myths, Theorizing about Myth, Myth: A Very Short Introduction, The Blackwell Companion to The Study of Religion, and 30-Second Mythology. Email: r.segal@abdn.ac.uk**

Jane-Anne Shaw (University of Aberdeen)

Orpheus in the Overworld

Prophetic visions with particular reference to Orpheus and the Orphic *corpus* are the main focus of this paper, and how its themes are meta-filtered into a Science Fiction narrative. This paper will assess an ancient Greek paradigm against a modern Science Fiction construct, and discuss in analytical detail Orphic concepts as these appear in a SF connection. The paper will compare, contrast and create a model for analysis and define the iconography of prophet bards and seers. There was a close link between poetry and divine knowledge.⁵ It is reasonable to speculate, if the Greeks of the Classical period believed an actual Orpheus preceded Homer and Hesiod, we should place him in the Bronze Age, the Second millennium BC, and therefore pre- the Olympian pantheon. Orpheus, mortal, twice-born in the extension of his 'life' in music and prophecy, has been hi-jacked in the arts world as a lovelorn pretty-boy, but there are other character modifications. Neil Gaiman's modern 'take', the *soi-disant* graphic novel 'Sandman special: 'Song of Orpheus' (1991, DC Comics), emphasises or privileges the loss and attempted rescue of Eurydike, but Patricia McKillip's literary SF, *Fool's Run* (Orbit, 1987) also foregrounds Orpheus' much darker chthonic Apollonian aspects in the shape of the Magician. These are not the only connections, but are selected for the re-workings of the concepts and echoes of a Greek mytheme.

Hesiod's 'divine voice' echoed The *Iliad*'s description of the seer Calchas who guided the Achaeans' ships to Troy by virtue of the gift of prophecy given to him by Apollo (*Il.*, 1.69-72). This perception of future and past found an embodiment in the figure of Orpheus and, as if to underline the heritage, when the Greeks furnished Homer with a genealogy they traced his forebears back ten generations, exactly to the Thracian (Finley, 1956 [1954] 48). Also, when Odysseus praises Demodocus the bard, the singer's awareness of the fate of the Achaeans (*Od.*, 8.487-71) is explained by his earlier assertion that Apollo had told him in prophecy (*ibid.*, 8.79).

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⁵ derived from the Greek ποιησις (*poiesis*) a 'making' or 'creating', poetry is, for us, an art form in which language is employed for aesthetic purposes as well as, or instead of, notional and semantic content.

Dr Norman Shaw (University of Dundee)

Nemeton - Tickets to the Otherworld: Voluntary Second Sight in Scotland

A 'nemeton' (from the Gaelic *neimheadh*) is a sacred place, a threshold between one state and another. The Nemeton project, conducted as part of the 'Window to the West' research project, featured a collaborative artists' tour of various nemeton sites around the Highlands. Many of these sites facilitate a kind of voluntary second sight.

This paper will explore aspects of this project, with particular focus on evidence of this voluntary second sight as a means of accessing the Otherworld of the Gaels.

The realm of the fairies, or the Otherworld of the Gaels could be seen as a kind of 'quantum reality', or parallel dimension congruent with alternative realities accessed by divines, mystics, seers and psychonauts throughout history and across all cultures.

Entry into this Otherworld and encounters with its denizens appears to happen involuntarily to those said to have Second Sight. We can distinguish between these encounters with the fairies which are involuntary, or unsought, and those which are deliberately sought by various means. For instance, in the late seventeenth century, the Rev. Robert Kirk of Aberfoyle appears to have found a means by which he could access these realms at will.

Research conducted as part of the Nemeton project has uncovered evidence from premodern times that some people knew about certain substances that could facilitate entry into this parallel reality.

Over the last few decades there has been a rapidly expanding field of research into the prehistoric and historical use of psychoactives in religious and medicinal contexts. There is an oral history of their use of by ancient Celtic peoples such as the Druids and Seers. This paper focuses on written accounts of the use of these substances in the context of the Scottish Highlands.

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Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart (Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, University of the Highlands and Islands)

The Functions of the Future in the Past: Martin Martin and Second Sight

The observations and statements of the Skye-born traveller and author Martin Martin (c. 1665–1718) concerning second sight in the Hebrides represent perhaps the foundational text for this complex, contentious, and diverse array of phenomena. Of particular significance is his 36-page ‘Account of the *Second-Sight*, in Irish call’d *Taish*’, an appendix to his *Description of the Western Isles of Scotland* (1703). Martin was well aware of the vulnerability of his position as an indigenous believer, devoting six pages to countering potential objections and defending the credentials and credibility of himself and his informants. Little good would this do him.

In this brief paper I intend to offer an outline contextual analysis of Martin’s treatment of the second sight. I shall begin with a background sketch of the compilation of Martin’s *Description*, drawing upon his manuscripts and those of his contemporaries, before going on to examine the status and circumstances of the informants who supplied Martin with anecdotal memorates. Drawing on contemporary sources, manuscript and print, such as Kirk, Frazer, and Theophilus Insulanus, as well as the profusion of later ethnographical sources – particularly the folklore collections of Alexander Carmichael, Robert Craig Maclagan, John Lorne Campbell, and the School of Scottish Studies Archives – I will situate Martin’s observations in the wider context of the second sight (among other terms, *fiosaidheachd*, *fiosachd*, *tàisearachd*, *taibhsearachd*, or *an dà shealladh*) and other traditional methods of augury and divination in Scottish Gaelic culture. Finally, I will touch upon various possible social and political meanings behind reports of second sight, omens, visions, dreams, portents, and prophecy in Martin’s times, an era of unprecedented change and upheaval not just in the Gàidhealtachdan of both Scotland and Ireland, but among the other English and Welsh-speaking culture-zones of the North Atlantic archipelago.

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Dr. Liv Helene Willumsen (University of Tromsø, Norway)

Anders Poulsen – a Shaman from the High North

This presentation examines an extraordinary witchcraft trial from the late 17th century, the process against the old Sami shaman Anders Poulsen in 1692, in Finnmark, Northern Norway. He was brought before the court because he was a shaman, playing the rune drum. His rune drum was taken from him, he was interrogated about his drum, and his confession was recorded. This confession gives an extraordinary glimpse of the ideas of a Sami shaman of the time, as Anders Poulsen explained in detail all the symbols on his drum as well as the way in which he performed his art.

This trial is different in several respects to the witchcraft trials in Finnmark which took place earlier in the 17th century. The only accusation against Anders Poulsen was that he had used the rune drum and thereby practised the ‘ungodly art of witchcraft’. He had neither been denounced by another person, nor accused of having entered a pact with the Devil, nor accused of any participation at a witches’ meeting, nor accused of the deaths of humans or animals, nor accused of taking part in plots against the regional governor, nor accused of causing shipwrecks or being responsible for local disasters like chasing the fish from the shores or destroying the harvest. His art was an individual one, practised according to his personal knowledge of using the rune drum.

The courtroom discourse during the trial offers a possibility to study the inter-relations between the accused and the judicial officials, a discourse characterised by the context of a criminal trial. Through listening to and analysing the different voices we hear; the voice of the law, the voices of the witnesses, the voice of the accused, and the voice of the scribe, the presentation will discuss the interplay between the various actors entering the stage during the trial. Questions related to traditional sorcery will be addressed, as well as the targeting of a male Sami shaman at the very end of the witch-hunt in Northern Norway.

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Sandy Wood, (Acting Collections Curator, Royal Scottish Academy of Art & Architecture, Edinburgh)

Between the Late and Early: the Cult of the Visionary Artist

Artists demonstrate the capacity to transport themselves and their audiences into imaginative realms between worlds. Throughout time the role of these artists has changed and adapted within the social, political, spiritual and cultural contexts and boundaries of their age. The action of the visionary artist releases psychosomatic potential while providing an avenue for tangibly engaging the population with its latent imagination, its hopes and fears; an imagination which connects us with our ancestors and is a universal gift that inspires and guides great minds. In this paper I will discuss how visionary art and artists might shape a 'cult of the imagination', that has developed through political and poetic avenues and can influence behaviour and psychological development. Past efforts have looked at artists in their own time and there is scope to widen this focus to examine art across temporal and cultural boundaries. By examining the work of past artists like William Blake and James Giles and relating their work to offerings in the present from the likes of Eddie Summerton the rituals of the cult of the imagination will be considered with a particular nod to the Scottish context.

The inspiration for this paper is the 2013 Annual Exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy. It is being curated by Eddie Summerton RSA and will be on display from 25th May to 2nd July. Titled *Between the Late and Early*, it gathers fantastical objects and work from invited contemporary artists with the Royal Scottish Academy collections to shed light on art that inhabits the realms of mythology, prophecy, mysticism and other-worldliness.

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