

McGill Islamic Studies Institute & Department of History and Classical Studies

# Angelical Conjunctions

CROSSROADS OF MEDICINE & RELIGION, 1200-1800

In Conjunction with  
CREOR Medicine, Myth & Magic Graduate Student Conference

April 12-14, 2019  
Conference Program



## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONFERENCE

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*Angelical Conjunctions: The Intersection of Religion and Medicine 1200-1800* brings together twenty-five scholars who focus on the late medieval and early modern periods. The conference invites us to see the connection between religion and medicine not as an inconvenient deviance of past societies, let alone as a necessarily adversarial relationship, but as a key phenomenon that enlightens a given society's conceptions of the mind and the body, and how the society negotiates these competing conceptions. The connection between medical and spiritual practices took many forms over the centuries, from the pious provision of health care (in person or through endowed charity), to the archetypal figure of the healing prophet. Yet despite decades of specialized research, a coherent and analytical history of the "angelical conjunction" itself remains elusive.

Taking an inter-cultural and long-term perspective, *Angelical Conjunctions* investigates how Islamic, Christian, and Jewish traditions interpreted, produced, and shaped medical knowledge. We aim to develop methodological and theoretical perspectives on the "angelical conjunction(s)" of these two spheres.

*CREOR Graduate Student Conference: Medicine, Myth, and Magic* will investigate the complexities and diversity that arises at the crossroads of medicine and religion. We know that since Antiquity medical traditions in Greece, Babylon, Egypt, China and India were intrinsically intertwined with its religious practices. The observation and study of anatomical and mental ailments was not necessarily a distinct science, the lines between medicine, religion, and "magic" remained at times blurry. Myth and ritual were also used to connect the body to sacred spaces. Early modern, and especially post-Enlightenment, thinking sought to bring a clearer divide between medicine and religion. As science and technology progressed it provided the field of medicine with a diagnostic and prognosis system which was purely "rational" and devoid of spiritual beliefs. But the acceptance of this proposition has not been unanimous. Despite the extraordinary advances of post-Enlightenment medicine, both Western and Eastern, does the quest for scientific knowledge leave any room for religious beliefs, traditions and ethics to influence medical practice?

## ABOUT CREOR

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The principal goal of the Centre for Research on Religion (CREOR) is to study the world's religions in their constantly changing historical manifestations. The Centre's aim is to create a broad academic platform to coordinate and support research on the identities of the main religions of the world, their differences and their common grounds, and how they contribute to a better understanding of past and present-day culture, ethics and politics.

## ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS

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### Conference Co-Chairs:



**Aslihan Gürbüzel** is an assistant professor of Ottoman history at the McGill Institute of Islamic Studies in Montreal. She completed her PhD in History and Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University in 2016. Her research and teaching interest include History of the Ottoman Empire, Islamic Political Thought, Religious Movements to 1800, and Manuscript Studies. She is currently working on her first book based on her PhD dissertation entitled “Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan: Preachers and the Rise of a Political Public Sphere in Early Modern Istanbul (1600-1670).”

**Faith Wallis** is a historian of medieval Europe, specializing in the history of science and medicine. She has published translations and studies of medieval time-reckoning (computus) and medicine. Her current research focuses on medical education and the transmission of medical knowledge in the 12th century. She is preparing an edition of the earliest commentaries on the Articella, the first anthology of medical texts designed to support formal teaching to be created in Western Europe, for the "Edizione nazionale Scuola Medica Salernitana" (Florence). The Articella marks the birth of academic medicine, and these commentaries allow us to reconstruct the intellectual dynamics of this crucial event. Prof. Wallis teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in the history of medicine, ancient medicine, medieval medicine, and general medieval history.



### Event Organizers:

**Amanda Rosini** is the CREOR Liaison Officer and a PhD Candidate in Biblical Studies at McGill University.

**Naznin Patel** is a CREOR member and a PhD Candidate in Religious Studies at McGill University.

**Courtney Krolikoski** is a PhD Candidate in History and Classical Studies at McGill University.

**Jacob Westermann** is a M.A. Candidate in Islamic Studies at McGill University.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, APRIL 12 <sup>TH</sup> MCGILL UNIVERSITY	
CREOR – Graduate Student Conference – Medicine, Myth & Magic	
Registration: 8:30-9:00	
Opening Address: 9:00-9:15	
Session 1 – 9:15-10:55	
Birks 100	Grad Panel 1: Healing Traditions in South Asia
Birks Chapel	Grad Panel 2: Intuition and Healing: Combining Modern
Break: 10:55-11:00	
Session 2 – 11:00-12:40	
Birks 100	Grad Panel 3: Pagan Mythology and Christian Healing Practices
Birks Chapel	Grad Panel 4: Islamic Theology and Medicology
Lunch: 12:45-13:30	
Session 3 – 13:30-14:45	
Birks 100	Grad Panel 5: Christian Healing Practices in America
Birks Chapel	Grad Panel 6: Medicinal Folk/Myth/Magic and Medicine
Break: 14:45-15:00	
Session 4 – 15:00-16:15	
Birks 100	Grad Panel 7: Buddhism
Birks Chapel	Grad Panel 8: Modern Cults and Folklore
Keynote Lecture – 16:30-19:00	
Rare Books Collection, Osler Library	<b>‘Universal Medicine’: Lessons from Seventeenth Century England</b> Lauren Kassel, Professor, University of Cambridge
End of Day 1	

# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SATURDAY, APRIL 13 <sup>TH</sup> MCGILL UNIVERSITY	
Registration: 8:30-9:00	
<b>Panel 1 – Healing in Esoteric Traditions 9:00-10:30</b>	
Birks 100	<b>Aslhhan Gürbüz</b> ( <i>McGill University</i> ) - Caring Recipes: The Circulation of Medical Recipes in Ottoman Sufi Circles
	<b>Assaf Tamari</b> ( <i>Van Leer Jerusalem Institute</i> ) - Asia Kartinah and His Book: The Secrets of the Torah as Medicines, and the Medical Discourse of Late Medieval Kabbalah
	<b>Justin Stearns</b> ( <i>New York University Abu Dhabi</i> ) - Treating the Body in a Sufi Lodge in Seventeenth Century Morocco
Break: 10:30-10:40	
<b>Panel 2 – Conceptions of the Soul in Religio-Medical Traditions 10:40-11:50</b>	
Birks 100	<b>Naama Cohen-Hanegbi</b> ( <i>Tel Aviv University</i> ) - Seeing the Soul in Castilian Pastoral and Medical Literature, 1360-1450
	<b>Jeremy Phillip Brown</b> ( <i>McGill University</i> ) - The Penitential Discourse of Healing in Medieval Iberian Kabbalah
	<b>Tiffany Hoffman</b> ( <i>Independent</i> ) - Lovesickness: The Early Modern Spiritualization of a Secular Pathology
Lunch: 12:00-13:00	
<b>Panel 3 – Visual Representations of Health and the Body 13:00-14:30</b>	
Birks 100	<b>Faith Wallis</b> ( <i>McGill University</i> ) - “ <i>Medici ministri Dei</i> : Reflections on a Miniature from a Fourteenth-Century Manuscript of the <i>Canon</i> of Avicenna (Paris, BnF lat. 14023).”
	<b>Maja Dujakovic</b> ( <i>University of Maryland University College</i> ) - Between Torment and Regulation: Medicine, Religion and the Body in the Early Editions of the Shepherd’s Calendar
	<b>Cecilio Cooper</b> ( <i>Northwestern University</i> ) - The Miracle of the Black Leg: Blackness, Amputation, and Production of Medical Knowledge
Break: 14:30-14:40	
<b>Panel 4 – Medicine and Authority, Medicine as Authority 14:40-16:10</b>	
Birks 100	<b>Claire Elisabeth Preston</b> ( <i>Queen Mary University of London</i> ) - Thomas Browne’s <i>Retreat to Earth</i>
	<b>Lucy Hennings</b> ( <i>Exeter College, Oxford</i> ) - From Poison to Bewitchment: Mysterious Maladies and Maleficium in Later Medieval English Politics
	<b>Jacqueline Holler</b> ( <i>University of Northern British Columbia</i> ) - Border Skirmishes and Contact Zones: Inquisitors, Women, and Medical Knowledge in New Spain (1530—1650)
Break: 16:10-16:20	
<b>Panel 5 – Medicine and Charity 16:20-17:50</b>	
Birks 100	<b>Mary-Hague Yearl</b> ( <i>McGill University</i> ) - Give Blood and Receive the Spirit: The Incorporation of Bloodletting into Bloodletting
	<b>Mark Waddell</b> ( <i>Michigan State University</i> ) - “O Agent Beyond all Agents!” Innovation, Impiety, and the Weapon Salve in the Seventeenth Century
	<b>Kelly McGuire</b> ( <i>Trent University</i> ) - The Inoculated Body: Reading Providence in Eighteenth-Century Inoculation Debates
End of Day 2	

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### SUNDAY, APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup> MCGILL UNIVERSITY

#### Panel 1 – Medical Charity in Practice 10:30-12:30

Birks 100	<b>Peter Murray Jones</b> ( <i>Cambridge University, King's College</i> ) - English Friars: Shaping Medical Knowledge and Practice
	<b>Mattia Cipriani</b> ( <i>Freie Universitaet Berlin</i> ) - Between Preaching and Medicine - A Practical Medical Education for Friars: The Case of Thomas de Cantimpré's <i>Liber de Natura Rerum</i>
	<b>Justin Rivest</b> ( <i>University of Cambridge</i> ) - The Priest as Physician: The Distribution of Drugs as a Form of Pastoral Care in Seventeenth Century France
	<b>Cory Andrew Labrecque</b> ( <i>University of Laval</i> ) - Hospes venit, Christus venit: The Ministry

Lunch: 12:30-13:30

#### Panel 2 – Responding to Shifting Medical Theories 13:30-15:00

Birks 100	<b>Abigail Agresta</b> ( <i>Queen's University</i> ) - Medicine and Religion in Late Medieval Valencian Plague Response
	<b>Julia Reed</b> ( <i>Harvard University</i> ) - Catholic Cooking in and for Mechanical Bodies: Religio-Medical Vegetarianism in Eighteenth Century France
	<b>Akif Yerlioğlu</b> ( <i>Harvard University</i> ) - Medicine and Alchemy in the Early Modern Ottoman World

Closing Address by Co-Chairs: 15:00

End of Day 3

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## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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**LAUREN KASSELL**, Professor of History of Science and Medicine at Cambridge University



Her books and articles have explored the importance of occult knowledge in the making of scientific knowledge in Elizabethan England. Her work has garnered widespread admiration for its profound mastery of medical, astronomical, and magical traditions. In this talk, she will discuss the relationship between medicine and religion through case studies from early modern England. The talk contrasts Robert Fludd's philosophical writings with the daily practices of Richard Napier, the astrologer-physician and Anglican clergyman, to think about recurring themes in the histories of medicine and religion: relations between spiritual and material bodies, alignments between theory and practice, shared and competing understandings between patients and practitioners. Through the English examples, and their particular inflection of what we might call medical demonology, it considers broader lessons for histories where religion and medicine meet.

*Keynote Event April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019*

*'Universal Medicine': Lessons from Seventeenth Century England*

*McGill Department of Rare Books & Special Collections  
McLennan Library Building 4th Floor - 3459 McTavish Street  
Event Time: 4:30pm to 7:00pm*

*The keynote lecture will be followed by an exhibition of rare books from the collection of the Osler Library of the History of Medicine*

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## CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

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**NAAMA COHEN-HANEGBI**, Professor of History, Tel Aviv University

*Seeing the Soul in Castilian Pastoral and Medical Literature, 1360-1450*

The working of the mind occupied the work of scholars of medicine, theology and natural philosophy of the late medieval period. Their shared interest in cognitive faculties, impact of imagination, memory and emotions on the mental capacities has been well documented (Haskell 2011, Carruthers 2008, Knuttilla 2004). These and other studies illuminated the inter-reliance of the disciplines and showed points of divergence and disciplinary singularity, with regard to both aim and theory. Thus far, most scholarly attention was given to the influential scholars of the era, those who worked in the leading academic centers. This paper draws attention to the ways this shared interest emerged in a relatively peripheral intellectual culture of Castile. Examining pastoral treatises alongside medical works produced mainly in Castilian, I look at visualizations and metaphors used to describe the soul and its faculties. These allow me to ask how disciplinary boundaries were maintained outside of the university milieu; To what extent regional contexts influenced modes of thinking about the soul; And finally, to what degree was there a specific regional interpretation to the relationship between medicine and religion?

**CLAIRE ELISABETH PRESTON**, Professor of Renaissance Literature, Queen Mary, University of London

*Thomas Browne's retreat to earth*

In *Urne-Buriall* (1658) Thomas Browne's comprehensive survey of mortuary custom through time and place, he comments repeatedly on the state of mortal remains in cremation, inhumation, and a variety of other styles of internment and disposal of bodies. Specifically, he is interested (as a natural philosopher and as a moralist) in what survives (teeth, skulls and certain bones, grave-wax, funeral offerings and accoutrements) and what does not (facial features, hair, skin, cause of death, and of course identity). In a very different essay, *A Letter to a Friend* (of unknown date but possibly coeval with *Urne-Buriall*), he addresses the same post-mortem evidence from the opposite position: his patient, who died of consumption, is memorialized in character as well as in body; and the nature of the disease itself is central to Browne's anatomy of the case. The *marasmus* or wasting associated with tuberculosis, as well as its febrile symptoms, suggest to Browne the living body as a grave in preparation, the dying patient in what he calls 'a retreat to earth', where the earth itself practices upon the human subject. This essay will consider the two works in confluence, as general and specific studies of the grave that feed and call forth a blend of medical, anatomical, anthropological, and historical evidence; it will suggest, among other contiguities, that the two works should be read almost as companion pieces composed within the same year or two when Browne was at the height of his powers.

**CORY ANDREW LABRECQUE**, Professor Theological Ethics, University of Laval

*Hospes venit, Christus venit The Ministry of Hospitality in the Xenodochium of Santa Maria della Scala*

For almost a thousand years (1090-1990), Santa Maria della Scala in Siena – arguably one of the oldest surviving hospitals in the world – opened its doors to pilgrims, travelers, the sick, the poor, and the *gittati* (little ones who were “cast off” and left on its steps). Making manifest the traditional adage of hospitality, undoubtedly inspired by the Rule of Benedict, here all guests who presented themselves were to be welcomed as Christ (chapter 53).

In this paper, I explore the relationship between religion and healing over the long history of Santa Maria della Scala, with special attention given to its central ministry of hospitality. The medieval complex was also known for its important commitment to the arts, the therapeutic benefit of which has largely been neglected by contemporary medicine. Accordingly, I will make reference to the mid-fifteenth century fresco cycle in the *Pellegrinaio* of Santa Maria della Scala that bears witness to its celebrated functions (sometimes a promotional manifesto, to be sure) and speaks to how and by whom these were carried out.



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**JEREMY PHILIP BROWN**, Postdoctoral Fellow, McGill University

*The Penitential Discourse of Healing in Medieval Iberian Kabbalah*

The canonical gospels furnish some of the most well-known illustrations of how religious thought has framed illness as a divine punishment for human sin, and concomitantly, how it has represented healing as a sign of forgiveness. Indeed, even in our day, the entrenched intertwining of moral and medical discourses owes its complexity to this facet of Judeo-Christian cultural heritage. In this paper, I explore various ways in which the medieval Iberian kabbalah, and in particular the literature of the Zohar, contributed to the broader cultural project of pathologizing sin and framing its removal in therapeutic terms. The paper will present examples of the penitential discourse of healing from medieval kabbalistic texts in four areas of esoteric speculation: (1) angelology (especially lore concerning the archangel Rafael and his appointed task in relation to the repentance of Israel); physiognomy (concerning the appearance of facial blemishes as marks of sin and their disappearance through repentance); eschatology (on the expiatory role of the messiah in removing the infirmities brought upon Israel for their transgressions), and theosophy (the injuries caused to the limbs of the divine body, and their healing through penitential acts). In discussing these moralizing representations of infirmity in the medieval kabbalistic sources, I aim to demonstrate how they both play upon and in some instances subvert discursive patterns known from medieval Christian theology.

**LUCY HENNINGS**, Digital Fellow in the Humanities, Exert College, Oxford University

*From Poison to Bewitchment: Mysterious Maladies and Maleficium in Later Medieval English Politics*

While the importance of accusations of sorcery in late medieval politics has long been recognized, along with the connection between medical theories and magic in the construction of witchcraft, the link between these later cases and the earlier discourse of poisoning have yet to be explored. It is this dynamic that this paper seeks to explore. Poisoning by its very nature shared a number of significant characteristics with magic, it was a hidden crime, and one that could easily be accused, but could not readily be diagnosed. On a more practical level, they were also acts that made use of potions and concoctions. In these political contexts, they both referred to corruption and malevolence. Why then, did the poisoner of the thirteenth century come to be replaced by the witch of the fourteenth? To explore this question, this paper will compare accounts of poisonings and bewitchments from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries and consider them from three methodological perspectives. The first is the intellectual tradition: how did medical practitioners and theologians view these crimes and maladies? The second is the question of gender: to what extent were these accusations framed in terms of the identity and sex of the accused? The third strand is political: did these different crimes serve the same rhetorical purpose, and if so, did changing political contexts underlay the shifting patterns of accusation?

**ASSAF TAMARI**, Research Fellow, The Polonsky Academy for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences, The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute

*'Asia Kartinah and his book: The Secrets of the Torah as Medicines, and the Medical Discourse of Late Medieval Kabbalah*

Despite over a century of academic study of the Kabbalah – one of the key spiritual and social phenomena of Judaism in the high and late middle ages and up to our days – almost no account at all has been given to the place of medical knowledge and practice in its literature. This is especially surprising, as the kabbalists were particularly famous for their highly anthropomorphic theosophy on the one hand, and, on the other, for their deep interest in theurgy, i.e. rectifying this divine body, practiced in a highly embodied manner, relying first and foremost on the *Mitzvot*, the Jewish practical precepts. Moreover, not only were many of the early kabbalists physicians, in accordance with the prevalence of those among elite Jewish intellectuals, the medical metaphor was quite common among their Christian counterparts in south-western Europe. Indeed, when reading kabbalistic materials composed in the period, in

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Provence and the Iberian Peninsula, one finds ample evidence of medical knowledge and considerations. My proposed paper will discuss some aspects of the place medical discourse holds in the Zoharic literature, the quintessential composition of classical Kabbalah, composed, at least in its lion's share, in Castile during the last decades of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. I will begin by exploring some different uses of medical terminology and knowledge in various parts of this composition, asking about their rhetorical status within the homiletical nature of this literature. The main focus of my paper, however, will be on the possibility of a kabbalistic medical practice. I will analyze one Zoharic narrative, depicting a miraculous ideal physician, 'Asia Kartinah, and his book, containing medical secrets based on the Kabbalah, and the way this narrative is utilized to discuss the ideal kabbalist, in his practice, as no less than the healer of the *Shekhinah*, the exiled and fragile feminine aspect of the Godhead.

**JUSTIN RIVEST**, Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellow, Cambridge University

*The Priest as Physician: The Distribution of Drugs as a Form of Pastoral Care in Seventeenth-Century France*  
My talk will explore the role of parish priests in both organizing and providing basic medical care to the sick poor in rural villages in seventeenth-century France, focusing particularly on the charitable distribution of medicinal drugs. The role of priests in handing out drugs to the sick poor of their parish originated as local initiatives. Eventually, the 1670 French Assembly of the Clergy mandated a centralized distribution network to cover the whole of France. A mixture of local charity and royal subsidies financed the production and distribution of drugs, allowing them to be compounded in massive quantities (hundreds of thousands of individually packaged doses) and shipped annually to local parish priests, to be dispensed at their discretion. The expansion of this charitable provision relied on a network of local elites, women religious, and bishops who published dozens of circulars to rally awareness, financial support, and participation. These texts explicitly argued that the priestly vocation necessarily included a dimension of basic medical care. My talk will explore the theological and historical underpinnings of this view of pastoral care and the priestly vocation in these texts. I will explore the ways in which they appropriated and deployed examples of pastoral behavior ranging from the Church Fathers to recent Catholic Reformation saints and the close ties between healing bodies and saving souls (particularly those of Protestants). Most interestingly, I will explore how some authors sought to place miraculous and natural healing on the same footing by arguing that the success of every drug ingested by a patient depended not only upon its inherent natural properties, but also upon a small miracle or a manifestation of the grace of God, allowing priests to imitate the healing ministry of the original apostles.

**JUSTIN STEARNS**, Associate Professor of Arab Crossroads Studies, New York University of Abu Dhabi

*Treating the Body in a Sufi lodge in Seventeenth Century Morocco*

This paper will explore the nature and status of medicine in seventeenth century Morocco and its relationship with the religious sciences of the period. It argues for Morocco's vibrant intellectual life being deeply integrated into Sufi networks of study and transmission. Scholars of the natural sciences in Early Modern Europe have long been attentively critical of the teleological retroprojection of the science/religion binary into the pre-modern period and have carefully described the ways in which medical and religious discourses were at times mutually constitutive. Precisely because of the narratives of Middle Eastern decline that achieved dominance in both Europe and the Middle East in the nineteenth century, research into the history of the natural sciences (including medicine) there has been largely directed towards the so-called Golden Age of Islamic science that subsequently influenced European thought through a series of translation movements. This paper argues that a renewed focus on the complexities of the productive relationship between medicine and religious discourses in Early Modern Morocco will not only deepen our understanding of the period's intellectual landscape but helps revise of overall understanding of the intellectual history of the pre-modern Middle East.

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**PETER MURRAY JONES**, Postdoctoral Fellow and Librarian, King's College, University of Cambridge

*English friars: shaping medical knowledge and practice*

For more than three centuries English mendicants cultivated medical knowledge and practiced medicine on religious and lay patients. Books, archives and buildings were destroyed or lost as a result of the dissolution of the English friaries by 1538, obliterating much of the evidence for this interest in medicine. But enough fragments remain in scattered manuscripts and records for it to be possible to draw a surprisingly vivid picture of the medical culture of the friars. The prominent role they played as confessors to the great gave them the opportunity to minister to the bodies as well as souls of their patrons. The kind of medicine they cultivated and practiced was distinctive in its commitment to alchemy, astrology and experimental knowledge. Friars also played a major role in abridging and translating medical knowledge for lay consumption. This paper will not be able to do full justice to the friars' medical achievements in England but will argue that this intersection of religion and medicine has been unjustly neglected.

**MATTIA CIPRIANI**, Postdoctoral Fellow von Humboldt Foundation, Freie Universitaet Berlin

*Between Preaching and Medicine. A Practical Medical Education for Friars: The Case of Thomas de Cantimpré's Liber de Natura Rerum*

Between 1245 and 1255 / 1260 ca., the Flemish Dominican friar Thomas de Cantimpré (1201-1270 / 1271) wrote and expanded his Liber de natura rerum at least five times. This massive encyclopedia – widely used, for example, by Albert the Great and Vincent of Beauvais – was written with the double purpose of providing fellow Preachers with (1) preaching suggestions, and (2) a correct understanding – and, consequently, teaching – of the concrete, natural world (viz. man, animals, plants, stones, etc.). Starting from the Liber's "Third expansion" (1250 ca.), Thomas' additions increased enormously, mainly regarding practical medical suggestions. To this end, the Dominican friar carefully selected and integrated a series of new technical sources, both from the "old", monastic medicine (viz. the anonymous' Physica Plinii, etc.) and the "modern", Salernitan School (viz. Bartholomaeus' Practica, etc.), but, curiously, he did not use the newest, most "contemporary" Arabic translations (viz. the Avicenna's Canon, etc.). In doing so, Thomas showed his intention to train the Dominicans to be more than just "pure" preachers, but rather first-aid doctors "in the field" as well. The paper aims to better understand one of the most influential texts from the European Middle Ages on Nature. Its objectives are three-fold: firstly, to discuss how the Flemish friar evolved his explanation about man's body from something merely religious and useful for preachers to something "truly" medical; secondly to show how he concretely did this, i.e. how he selected, copied, "pasted" and integrated his new sources into the expansions of his Liber; and thirdly, to investigate the Dominican, historical reasons behind Thomas' decision to render his text even more practical.

**TIFFANY HOFFMAN**, Independent Scholar

*Lovesickness: The Early Modern Spiritualization of a Secular Pathology*

The concept of lovesickness illuminates the early modern medical attempt to resituate the body—traditionally conceived of as the site of fleshly disease and corruption, a pathway to sin—as the spiritualized gateway to God. With reference to a range of seventeenth-century theological, biblical and Galenic-medical treatises, this paper traces the historical spiritualization of the secular pathology of lovesickness— detailing its origins in scripture, its links to the cognate states of love, desire and eroticism, its premodern medical and religious links to the body and its processes of the gut and bowels, its centrality to ideas about religious change in Reformation England, along with its overarching significance to Christian mysticism. From its focus on scatology, to its engagement with notions of ecstatic union, and provocative metaphorical treatment of hunger, eating and desire, Shakespeare's play *A*

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*Midsummer Night's Dream*, as I will show, comically evokes the medical history, religious language, and bodily imagery and sensations of lovesickness in its effort to motivate a spiritually transformative moment of mystical consciousness and conversion in the ass-like character, Bottom.

**MAJA DUJAKOVIC**, Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellow, Cambridge University

*Between Torment and Regulation: Medicine, Religion and the Body in the Early Editions of the Shepherd's Calendar*

Focusing on the early editions of the Calendar (up to 1520s), my paper will explore the divergent ways in which the body was represented in the book. In accordance with the late-medieval Christian doctrine, the Calendar emphasizes salvation and preservation of the soul, while the body, depicted through a striking image of the decomposing cadaver or portrayed in the harrowing scenes of corporeal torture and punishment in Hell, is identified as a source of sin and decay. Such a portrayal of the body, however, is at odds with anatomical illustrations in the book, which incorporate existing and emerging medical knowledge regarding human anatomy and remedial treatments. In images such as the Vein Man, a popular medieval representation of the so-called bloodletting figure, or the Human Skeleton, an anatomical illustration based on the late-fifteenth century teachings of the French physician Richard Helain, the body is scrutinized, carefully regulated and ultimately mended with medical treatment or with the aid of celestial objects. By closely analyzing a selection of images and discussing the overall layout of the book, my paper will consider how the Calendar traversed multiple meanings of the body that were converging at the turn of the fifteenth century

**ABIGAIL AGRESTA**, Marjorie McLean Oliver Post-Doctoral Fellow, Queens University

*Medicine and Religion in Late Medieval Valencian Plague Response*

Historians of medieval and early modern medicine have long acknowledged the importance of religion to an overall understanding of pre-modern public health efforts. Urban rituals like rogation processions, however, are still mostly studied in isolation from municipal public health initiatives. This paper examines how the city council of Valencia, Spain responded to plague from the fourteenth century to the early sixteenth. It shows how the city council's understanding of plague transformed over the course of this period from a focus on corruption to one on contagion, following the example of Italian cities several decades earlier. This shift is visible not only in the council's material responses to plague, but also in its religious ones. As the material focus shifted from street-cleaning to quarantine, the religious rituals the council organized came to emphasize protection rather than purification. This shift included the novel introduction of some elements that have long been considered primitive aspects of medieval piety, like processions dedicated to specific saints. In Valencia, therefore, the introduction of quarantine, long considered a milestone in the secularization and modernization of public health, was linked to the rise of what Carole Rawcliffe has called "talismanic" rituals to counteract the plague. Both together constituted a shift in the council's understanding of plague, from internal corruption to external threat.

**KELLY MCGUIRE**, Associate Professor of English, Trent University

*The Inoculated Body: Reading Providence in Eighteenth-Century Inoculation Debates*

This paper explores the role of the British clergy in popularizing the practice of inoculation in the first half of the eighteenth century. Contrary to expectation, as the practice gained support after several decades of experimentation, men of the clergy ventured so far as to call it a heaven-sent blessing. According to the (admittedly controversial) William Dodd who mounted the pulpit at the Anniversary Meeting of the Smallpox

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Hospitals in 1767 to extol the work of the institution and its donors, inoculating physicians were merely intervening at the behest of God. Where others saw irresolvable contradiction, clergymen like Dodd insisted that physicians also performed God's work and acted in accordance with his will: those who survived inoculation did so by divine grace as did those who ultimately succumbed to the disease. Focusing on Anniversary Sermons and the medical pamphlets that formed an integral part of the inoculation debates, this paper examines how variations on Mather's notion of "Angelical Conjunction" help produce an idea of an "inoculated body" that, far from perverse and unnatural, is sanctified by certain strains of religious discourse.

**MARK WADDELL**, Associate Professor of History, Michigan State University

*"O Agent Beyond all Agents!" Innovation, Impiety, and the Weapon Salve in the Seventeenth Century*  
In 1631, an obscure English clergyman named William Foster published a scathing attack against a wondrous but controversial medical remedy. The remedy in question, the weapon salve, was thought to heal wounds quickly and painlessly over distances of several miles when applied only to traces of the patient's blood. In an era of medical innovations and magnetic experiments the salve was merely one marvel among many, but Foster decried its mysterious efficacy as the devil's work and accused the salve's loudest proponent in England, the physician Robert Fludd, of dabbling in sorcery. Why did this particular remedy inspire such furious reactions? More critically, how do the religious responses to its purported cure help us understand wider issues of proof, plausibility, and piety in the first half of the seventeenth century? Foster's concerns about sorcery and diabolism overlapped with a more general anxiety about innovations in medicine and natural philosophy, and accusations of impiety were an effective way for traditionalists to reinforce long-held positions threatened by a changing intellectual landscape.

**JULIA REED**, PhD Candidate & Lecturer, Harvard University

*Catholic cooking in and for mechanical bodies: religio-medical vegetarianism in 18th century France*  
In 1709 the Jansenist physician Philippe Hecquet lamented the lack of a "Catholic cook" in French cuisine. For Hecquet, "Catholic cooking" was necessary to France's physical, moral, and spiritual health, and promoted informed postlapsarian vegetarian diets as physical and spiritual exercises. France's Catholic population was becoming increasingly immoderate with the rise of secular cookbooks and urban gastronomy, Hecquet argued, and a Catholic cook would draw both from the theological authority of the confessor and the medical authority of the physician in order to prepare both physically and spiritually healthy foods. A proper Catholic diet was lean, vegetarian, and bland, moreover, because it was truly more nutritious, as it best approximated the prelapsarian diet in Eden and the mechanical basis of digestion. Hecquet's work, including the *Treatise on the Lenten Disputations* (1709) and his later *Theological Medicine* (1733), both made explicit 17th and early 18th century medical and theological debates about chemical and mechanical models of the living body and its proper nourishment. In the first part of the paper I will explore the changing understandings of digestion in 17th-century European medicine, before turning to Hecquet's approach to "theological medicine" and recommendations for a vegetarian postlapsarian diet as emerging from both his medical training and Jansenist piety.

**JAQUELINE HOLLER**, Associate Professor of History, University of Northern British Columbia

*Border Skirmishes and Contact Zones: Inquisitors, Women, and Medical Knowledge in New Spain (1530—1650)*

This paper considers the confluence of religion and medicine in inquisitorial encounters with women from the early sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth. It examines how, in interviews with women confessants, inquisitors positioned themselves as both theological and medical authorities. Nowhere was this more evident than

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## CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

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in the encounters of the Holy Office with scrupulous self-denouncers, whose distraught confessions demanded the parsing of confessants' spiritual and natural health. At the same time, inquisitors were called upon to assay women denounced as practitioners within the realm of women's healing, which often involved the use of birth charms, relic practices, and herbal remedies. These latter cases suggest both the activities of inquisitors as quasi-medical authorities and the limits of their powers in crossing into realms (particularly childbirth) construed as "women's matters." Thus, I argue here that while inquisitors often deployed and judged medical knowledge and a quasi-medical perspective on their confessants, their encounters with women's healing often faltered at the door of the birth chamber. The borders between medicine and religion were thus less evident, in this premodern context, than the boundaries between men and women.

**CECILIO M. COOPER**, PhD Candidate African American Studies, Northwestern University

*The Miracle of the Black Leg: Blackness, Amputation, and Production of Medical Knowledge*

Before an angelic audience, Cosmas and Damian amputated the limb of an Ethiopian (or a Moor) and transplanted it onto a Roman church official to replace his cancerous limb. The earliest iteration of this supernatural feat was documented in the medieval hagiography *The Golden Legend* (or *The Lives of Saints*). While early modern portrayals of the twin saints' activities abound in various mediums, this paper examines the subset of paintings that depict the Miracle of the Black Leg (or The Miracle of the Moor's Leg). Renderings by Spanish and Italian artists comprise the majority of MoBL imagery, which also include woodcuts, sculptures, and drawings. The images raise provocative questions at the intersection of medical ethics and spiritual belief. The black body is supernaturally invaded and fragmented in this case as an experiment to determine whether Roman and Ethiopian limbs could be seamlessly grafted together. How could early modern thinkers reconcile positivist assertions about innate biological difference with the compatibility of flesh for cross-racial transplantation? The MoBL not only anticipates medical advancements though the lens of miraculous healings but also exemplifies how European somatic integrity is imagined as constituted through African corporeal loss

**AKIF YERLIOGLU**, PhD Candidate Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University

*Medicine and Alchemy in the Early Modern Ottoman World*

Recent European contributions on al/chemical medicine to the Ottoman reading public. Deriving its tenets from alchemical philosophy and idiosyncratic interpretations of Christianity, al/chemical medicine has been among the most curious medical trends throughout history. Thanks to the followers of Swiss alchemist and physician Paracelsus (d. 1541), his fragmented and sometimes contradictory ideas were molded into a coherent medical theory that defied Galenic humoral medicine and attracted many scholars in Europe and beyond. According to the Paracelsians, from the creation of the universe to the workings of the human body, everything could be viewed as an alchemical process, just like their novel cures that relied on distillation and other al/chemical operations. These discussions inevitably influenced the Ottoman world as well, first via European physicians practicing in the Ottoman lands, then with the help of translations of some basic texts on al/chemical medicine, especially throughout the eighteenth century. In this project, I will demonstrate how their familiarity with alchemical tradition helped Ottoman physicians incorporate al/chemical medicine into their medical culture.

**MARY HAGUE-YEARL**, Osler Library of Medicine, McGill University

*Give Blood and Receive the Spirit: The Incorporation of Bloodletting into Bloodletting*

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