

# LECTURES, TALKS and CONFERENCES

# PUSEY HOUSE OXFORD

## T R I N I T Y T E R M 2 0 2 4

### RECOLLECTION LECTURES

*Held at 4.00pm in the Ursell Room (tea & coffee served 3.15–3.45pm in the Hood Room).*

**Wednesday 17th April** *The Gospel Against Slavery: The Jesus Tradition in the 19th Century Abolition Debates*

Esau McCauley (Professor of New Testament, Wheaton College).

Many people know about the role Paul's Epistles played in the abolitionist/slavery debates of the 19th century. Less attention has been paid to the function of the Jesus tradition in the slavery debates. What might the use of the teachings and life of Jesus by abolitionists reveal about the role of empathy, imagination, and canonical interpretation in theological debate?



**Wednesday 24th April** *The Meaning of Mourning*

Mikolaj Slawkowski-Rode (Research Fellow, Blackfriars Hall).

Over the past hundred years, traditional mourning practices have fallen out of favour in the West. Wearing black for extended periods, keeping the anniversary, or remembering the dead at family celebrations all helped mourners 'carry the weight' of their grief by making a place for the dead in individual and community life. This is now being displaced by one that focuses on liberating the bereaved from the burden of bonds to the deceased. This lecture argues that there is a rarely acknowledged problem with this development, which can have severely detrimental effects on both communities and individual lives.



**Tuesday 30th April** *Christening Donne*

Peter McCullough (Fellow in Renaissance English Literature, Lincoln College).

This lecture will offer some introductory reflections on this new presentation of Donne's greatest prose works, and on the sermons' claims to the attention of both literary scholars and ecclesiastical historians. It will then turn in more detail to Donne's sermons preached at christenings—a body of work long neglected but containing vital evidence of his sacramental theology, and of his responses to Calvinist and Roman Catholic thought.



**Wednesday 8th May** *The Peter Toon Memorial Lecture: Modernity, Disenchantment, and the Mediaeval Discovery of Nature*

Hans Boersma (Professor in Ascetical Theology, Nashotah House).

Marie-Dominique Chenu famously located the "discovery of nature"—and the source of modern disenchantment—in the twelfth century. This lecture picks up Chenu's argument by tracing the separation of nature and the supernatural beyond the late Middle Ages to the theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas. In light of the theological changes introduced by Aquinas, we should sympathetically reappraise the traditionalist Bishop Stephen's condemnations issued in 1277. In short, the secularism of modernity requires that we read creation not primarily as substance but as relationship: the harmonious chant of the love that is God.



### Wednesday 22nd May *Is a Universal History Possible?*

David Engels (Chair for Roman History, University of Brussels; Research Professor, Instytut Zachodni, Poznań).

Must a systematic comparison of civilisations automatically lead to a historical relativism where truth becomes a mere matter of style? Or is it possible to identify, behind the uncompromising workings of history, a subliminal metaphysical sense that is neither a Eurocentric variation of the history of salvation, nor a vulgar theory of accumulation and process?



### Wednesday 29th May *Piety vs. Polemic: The Paradox of Elizabethan Satire*

Jane Cooper (Examination Fellow, All Souls College).

In 1597 Joseph Hall—later a Bishop—declared himself England's first satirist, writing in the manner of Juvenal and Horace in his satire *Virgidemiarum*. His declared purpose was to attack impiety in contemporary English society out of a sense of unavoidable moral duty (in Juvenal's words, *difficile est saturam nōn scribere*). The Bishops' Ban of popular satire (1599) shows satire's vituperative style and personal attacks were considered too rancorous, licentious, and even seditious for the Christian public. How did satirists respond to this tension between Christian piety and Roman-style rancour? With pseudonymous personae, whose opinions matched the satirist's, but whose heightened style the satirist could disown.



### Wednesday 12th June *The Public Authority of the Church of England: Its Theological Foundations*

Joan Lockwood O'Donovan (Honorary Reader at the School of Divinity, St Andrews).

The talk examines the exception presented by the legally established Church of England to the restraints placed by secular liberal pluralism on the church's 'public authority,' understanding 'public authority' as both 'the power to influence' and 'the moral power to rule.' It considers the theological understanding of the Church's dual authority of proclamation and jurisdiction contained in the foundational Reformation formularies of the Book of Common Prayer and Ordinal, and the Thirty-Nine Articles.



## CONFERENCES

Monday 10th June 2024, 9.30am – 5.00pm.

*The McDonald Centre for Theology, Ethics and Public Life Annual Conference: The Public Legitimacy of the Church of England*

**Tom Holland** (Author and Broadcaster), **Eleanor Sanderson** (Bishop of Hull), **Andrew Rumsey** (Bishop of Ramsbury), **Graham Tomlin** (Director, Centre for Cultural Witness), **Jonathan Chaplin** (Cambridge) **Joshua Hordern** (Oxford), **Archbishop Angaelos** (Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London), **David Fergusson** (Cambridge), **Daniel Greenberg** (Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards), **Catherine Pepinster** (Former Editor of *The Tablet*), **Maria Power** (Oxford), **John Ritzema** (Oxford).

*For further details and for tickets please visit: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/pusey-house> or email [pusey.society@stx.ox.ac.uk](mailto:pusey.society@stx.ox.ac.uk).*

## COLLOQUIA

**Wednesday 1st May–Friday 3rd May.**

*Why Middle-Sized Matters to Science, Theology and Metaphysics*

In partnership with the Civitas Institute of the University of Texas at Austin. Held at Pusey House and All Souls College.

Wednesday 1st May 3.00pm–5.20pm, Public Lectures at Pusey House:

*How the Science of the Middle-Sized Restores Purpose* George Ellis (Cape Town).

Professor George Ellis will discuss how the universe can seem a purposeless and amoral place if one looks at it exclusively on very large or small scales. Indeed, many scientific specialists of the very large or very small have claimed that there is no purpose in the universe. Paradoxically, however, they are ignoring the nature of their own lives on the middle-sized scale at which they exist; more specifically, how their existence within the physical world as ‘open systems’ enables purpose, meaning, and ethics to be effective in causing physical outcomes. The middle-sized scale is particularly important for biology where meaning and function are often denied due to focussing on the molecular scale alone.

*Is Aristotle’s Philosophy of Nature Scientifically Obsolete?* Robert Koons (UT Austin).

Aristotle’s philosophy of nature dominated much of the world’s science from late antiquity until the 17th century and beyond. In this Aristotelian world, human beings and the middle-sized objects that we perceive and manipulate were among the first-class citizens of nature, imbued with real causal powers and potentialities. The period of ‘classical’ physics (from Galileo to Rutherford) seemed to eliminate the need for key elements of Aristotle’s scheme, including substantial forms for composite objects, natural powers and potentialities, and teleology. I argue that the Quantum Revolution has altered the epistemic landscape in ways that re-open questions of natural philosophy that have long been taken to be settled, laying the foundation for a neo-Aristotelian or ‘hylomorphic’ interpretation of quantum theory. This interpretation successfully bridges the gap between the domain of quantum entities and the world of actual experiments and observations, and, as a further bonus, reconciles what Wilfred Sellars called the manifest image of ordinary human life with our best scientific image of nature.

*Followed by discussion with Jonathan Price and Q&A.*

Thursday 2nd - Friday 3rd May. Colloquium at All Souls and Pusey House

George Ellis (Cape Town), Robert Koons (UT Austin), Timothy O’Connor (Indiana), Javier Sánchez Cañizares (Navarra), Vera Hoffmann-Kolss (Bern), Alyssa Ney (UC Davis), Mark Harris (Harris Manchester), Daniel De Haan (Blackfriars & Champion Hall), William Simpson (Pusey House & UT Austin), John Pemberton (Durham & LSE), Philip Goff (Durham), Aaron Cotnoir (St Andrews), Christopher Oldfield (Cambridge), Robert Verrill (Blackfriars, Cambridge), Jonathan Price (Pusey House & St Cross), and Emily Qureshi-Hurst (Pembroke).

*Participants of the Colloquium should be familiar with physics and metaphysics. Applications by graduate students and academics welcome at [pusey.conference@stx.ox.ac.uk](mailto:pusey.conference@stx.ox.ac.uk).*

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**Wednesday 15th May. Liberty & Natural Law**

In collaboration with Revue de Philosophie de Droit.

Clemente Recabarren (St John’s), Sébastien Neuville (Toulouse), Henri Torrione (Fribourg), Jonathan Price (Pusey House & St Cross), Nathan Helms (Oriol), Dominic Burbidge (Regent’s Park), Arnaud de Solminihac (Paris II Panthéon-Assas), Conor Casey (Surrey).

*This one-day Colloquium especially for students and researchers in Law, Philosophy, and Theology, considers liberty in light of natural law. Email: [pusey.conference@stx.ox.ac.uk](mailto:pusey.conference@stx.ox.ac.uk).*

The Centre for Theology, Law, and Culture is an academic institute dedicated to enriching contemporary intellectual and cultural life by a rigorous engagement with Theology and related academic disciplines.

Based at Pusey House, the Centre draws upon Oxford's longstanding and exceptional scholarship in Law and the Humanities, and in particular upon the Catholic tradition as received in the Church of England. The Centre hosts colloquia, lectures, and seminars, and supports scholars and scholarship in the pursuit of truth within the academy, and for the renewal of the Church within a pluralistic civic society.

CENTRE FOR  
THEOLOGY, LAW  
& CULTURE



# PUSEY HOUSE

Founded in 1884, Pusey House was established to be a centre of Catholic worship, teaching, and practice, and a place of scholarship and learning, in the University of Oxford and for the wider Church. Today, we continue that vital work of preaching the Gospel and the handing down of the Catholic Faith within the Church of England, through the daily and weekly offerings of worship and through the pastoral care of all who seek our help. We endeavour to build a community where thoughtful and robust faith is nourished by rich worship; so that those who find a home at Pusey House are formed and enlivened in Christ for service in the Church and in the world.

The Library is open to all, Monday–Friday from 9.30am–5.25pm, as a study space, and for referencing open-shelf books. Confession and Spiritual Direction is a regular and important part of the ministry of the house. You are welcome to discuss this with the Principal or the Chaplain. They are available to hear confessions by appointment.

## THE CHAPTER OF PUSEY HOUSE

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