

## CALL FOR PAPERS: Extended Deadline

### HERAKLES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CHURCH: FROM THE FIRST APOLOGISTS TO THE END OF THE QUATTROCENTO

An International, Interdisciplinary Conference to be held at the University of Otago,  
Dunedin, New Zealand, 23-26 June 2015

The study of the reception of classical figures into Christianity is a recently renewed scholarly trend which overcomes decades of isolation between classicists and medievalists, while drawing attention to an often overlooked fact: the early Christian masses were none other than the recently converted, dissatisfied pagan citizens of the faltering Roman Empire. In those early days, Christian theologians zealously took up the task of debating and defining the self-projections of their flocks against the backdrop of pagan outrage typically embodied by the Roman emperors. However, in addressing their followers, early Christian theologians could not ignore the wealth of classical literature and philosophy as points of reference, recognizable by their audiences and powerful enough to warrant modification. Indeed, the majority of early Christian writers were themselves products of the pagan educational system and hence, well versed in pagan traditions. Their handling of Heracles, the most quintessential pagan hero known for his strength, his twelve labours, and his civilizing efforts as well as for his quick temper, lust, and frenzied violence, the hero idealized by emperors such as Nero, Commodus and Maximian, is indicative of the urgency to reform pagan models in the Christian context, but, also, of the affinities between pagan and early Christian intellectual debates. Centuries later, while the Church was proclaiming the death of paganism, it was continuing to appropriate many pagan gods and heroes, including Heracles, into its service.

Our conference seeks papers on any aspect of the adoption/adaptation of Heracles from Late Antiquity to the end of the Quattrocento, including the use of his image in Christian and non-Christian context, and the use of his mythology in Christian and non-Christian literature (poetry, prose, didactic, polemic, libretti, etc.). Panel proposals would be welcome.

For individual papers please send an abstract of 300 words with tentative title by August 22, 2014, to both:

Arlene Allan ([arlene.allan@otago.ac.nz](mailto:arlene.allan@otago.ac.nz))  
and Evangelina Anagnostou-Laoutides ([eva.anagnostoulaoutides@monash.edu](mailto:eva.anagnostoulaoutides@monash.edu))

For panels proposals, we would request that the panel leader first collect the 300-word abstracts and then submit them as a group with a proposed panel name to the above email addresses by 22 August, 2014.