You are invited to a seminar given by Amanda Burritt (PhD candidate), on Theology, art and politics: David Roberts, David Wilkie, William Holman Hunt and Victorian Britain’s Holy Land, organized by the postgrad STaR Seminar for Theology and Religious Studies.

Venue: Seminar Room, Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, 8th floor, Building H, Caulfield Campus, Monash University.

Hosted by Prof Constant Mews and Dr. Scott Dunbar, Centre for Religious Studies, School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies, Monash University.

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Abstract:

During the reign of Queen Victoria there was a complex interrelationship between British Christianity, commerce, politics, and archaeology in the Near East. This paper considers the motivation for each of the British artists David Roberts, Sir David Wilkie, and William Holman Hunt to journey to the region to paint. They each produced work which provoked critical and popular response, leading to further engagement with contemporary questions around both Christology and the significance of the Holy Land for Britain. Underpinning the paper is the argument that the Holy Land, with Jerusalem at its heart, was simultaneously viewed in multiple ways. For the British Protestant in the nineteenth century, to walk where it was believed Jesus walked was an act of faith and was seen as a way of verifying the truth of the Bible. I argue that Roberts, Wilkie, and Hunt undertook their journeys believing in the primacy of reason and experience as essential for the integrity of their art and their Protestant faith. This paper will also highlight key differences in style and subject matter evident in their paintings.

Bio:

Amanda Burritt is a PhD candidate in the School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies at Monash University. Amanda is also a lecturer in the Graduate School of Education and the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne.