

Nella Pelle Into the Skin

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Dr William Purkis (</staff/profiles/history/purkis-william.aspx>) has just returned from the international and multi-disciplinary conference ***Into the Skin*** (<http://www.intotheskin.eu/>), which was held in Vatican City on 5–6 December 2011. The conference, which was organised by the Israeli ambassador to the Holy See, Mordechai Lewy, and the **Anastasis Association** (<http://www.associazioneanastasis.org/>), brought together scholars working on the history and symbolism of permanent body-marking (tattooing, branding and scarification) and focused in particular on how such practices might be understood as expressions of identity.

The conference has generated considerable **international media interest** (<http://news.google.co.uk/news/story?gl=uk&pz=1&cf=all&ned=uk&hl=en&q=%22into+the+skin%22&ncl=d1A0oLQ3Dg4tyaMomYqPYVaD14CXM&cf=all&scoring=d>). To date, reports have appeared in more than 100 newspapers and news websites, including ABC, **CBS** (http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-501714_162-57337874/vatican-university-hosts-unusual-tattoo-conference/), **The China Post** (<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/art/arts/2011/12/08/325234/Vatican-university.htm>) and **The Washington Post** (http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/vatican-u-hosts-unusual-tattoo-conference-israels-holy-see-ambassador-an-unlikely-expert/2011/12/06/glQAl1nOaO_story.html). Dr Purkis's contribution to the conference, which considered the significance of medieval crusaders marking their bodies with the sign of the cross as a form of religious stigmatism, was discussed further in a report posted by the **Catholic News Service** (<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1104794.htm>).