

Press release – Düsseldorf, 1 July 2016

40 Years Gerda Henkel Foundation | 10 Years Gerda Henkel Prize

## **Australian-British historian Lyndal Roper receives the Gerda Henkel Prize 2016**

The Gerda Henkel Prize 2016 goes to Oxford-based historian Prof. Lyndal Roper. The Gerda Henkel Foundation is honouring Lyndal Roper for her outstanding achievements in the field of Early Modern History. Lyndal Roper holds the prestigious post of Regius Professor of History at Oriel College at the University of Oxford. The prize will be bestowed on her at a special ceremony on 7 November 2016 in Düsseldorf. The Gerda Henkel Prize is worth 100,000 euros. This year's prize coincides with a jubilee year at the Gerda Henkel Foundation, which in 2016 is celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its existence. Since 2006 every two years the Foundation has bestowed the international research prize, which is open to scholars worldwide.

Gerda Henkel Foundation's Board of Trustees was unanimous in awarding the Prize to Prof. Lyndal Roper, following the suggestion by the jury's nomination, which consists of members of the Foundation's Academic Advisory Committee and independent persons. The jury gave the following reasons for its recommendation: "Australian-British historian Lyndal Roper, Regius Professor of History at the University of Oxford, is one of the world's most renowned historians of Early Modern times. She has authored trailblazing studies on social, gender, and psychological history as well as the history of the body; they stand out for their theoretical acumen, masterful command of an impressive wealth of source materials, and their superb prose. In her research on the Age of the Reformation, Lyndal Roper has developed a completely new way of conceptualizing the relations between religions and the social order. Her studies on witchcraft and the persecution of witches mark the emphatic transition in the history of research from women's history to gender history. Her most recent studies on Martin Luther's biography, which are driven by a history of physicality, will no doubt strongly influence debates on the Reformation leader in Luther Year 2017. Lyndal Roper, whose work impacts well beyond thinking on the Early Modern epoch, is one of the towering figures in international historiography."

**Lyndal Anne Roper**, born in 1956, studied History with Philosophy at the University of Melbourne. In 1985 she was awarded a Ph.D. at King's College, University of London. After stages at the University of London, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin and the Max Planck Institute for History in Göttingen she was a Reader in History at the

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Royal Holloway College, University of London. In 2002 she moved to Balliol College, University of Oxford. Since 2011 she has been the first female “Regius” Professor at Oriel College, University of Oxford. June 2016 saw publication of her biography “Martin Luther. Renegade and Prophet” (German edition: “Der Mensch Martin Luther. Die Biographie,” to appear in September 2016).

The **Gerda Henkel Prize** is awarded to excellent and internationally acclaimed researchers who have demonstrated outstanding scholarly achievement in the disciplines and funding areas supported by the Foundation and can be expected to continue to do so. The selection process for the Gerda Henkel Prize 2016 involved 123 nominators in 34 different countries, with 112 different nominations received. Past Prize winners include art historian Prof. Martin Warnke, sociologist and cultural historian Prof. Richard Sennett, Islam studies expert Prof. Gudrun Krämer, historian Prof. Jürgen Osterhammel and Egyptologist Prof. Stephan Seidlmayer ([www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/prize](http://www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/prize)).

The **Gerda Henkel Foundation** was established in June 1976 by Lisa Maskell in memory of her mother Gerda Henkel as a private, non-profit grant making organization. The Foundation has its headquarters in Düsseldorf. The sole object of the Foundation is to promote science at universities and research institutes, primarily by supporting specific projects in the field of the humanities that have a specialist scope and are limited in time. The Gerda Henkel Foundation concentrates its support on the historical humanities, mainly on history, archaeology, the history of art and other disciplines with a historical component. For a number of years, the Foundation has also increasingly addressed issues of great relevance to contemporary life and the future, above all as part of its special programmes “Islam, the Modern Nation State and Transnational Movements” and “Security, Society and the State”. As part of the Lisa Maskell Fellowships, the Foundation supports young scholars in the humanities in both Africa and Southeast Asia. With its “Patrimonies” funding initiative the Foundation has focused more strongly on the preservation of cultural heritage, specifically in regions experiencing crisis. The Gerda Henkel Foundation is active both inside and outside Germany. In the 40 years since it was established it has supported some 6,400 research projects the world over, providing funding in excess of 140 million euros ([www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de](http://www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de)).

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