

## Leigh Penman

Monash Indigenous Studies Centre and the School of History at Monash University

*‘By his sword: Peace, violence, and prophecy in the life of Ludwig Friedrich’*

4pm Thursday 15 April (Melbourne)  
11pm Wednesday 14 April (Los Angeles)

To register: [MEMS.seminar@acu.edu.au](mailto:MEMS.seminar@acu.edu.au)



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### Abstract

In the middle decades of the seventeenth century, newspapers across Europe reported on the actions of an individual who identified himself as "a second King David." This man, it was rumoured, was in 1618 awoken by a divine vision to bring peace to a continent at war, and in subsequent years he petitioned rulers of several states in a quixotic attempt to secure enduring peace. While scholars have long known that this individual was Ludwig Friedrich Gifftheil (1595-1661), a barber surgeon from Wuerttemberg, the true origins and extent of his efforts to shape the course of the seventeenth century have remained unknown.

Based on extensive primary source research, this paper sheds new light on Gifftheil's extraordinary life, his influences and motivations. In addition to revealing the familial tragedy behind his turn to prophecy, it examines the sources of his thought, as well as his influence and the controversies provoked by his paradoxical attempts to secure peace in Europe by waging a holy war.

