

Harvard University Early Modern World

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Conference ‘Rethinking Early Modern Confessionalism’

Date: Friday, April 12, 2024 (All day) to Saturday, April 13, 2024 (All day)
Location: History Department Conference Room, Robinson Hall, Room 125 (former lower library), registration required

Hosted by the Center for History & Economics at Harvard University; and supported by the Harvard Early Modern Workshop, the University of Birmingham, and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK)

Early modern Europeans were haunted by the problem of religious difference. Perhaps even more fundamentally, they were haunted by the question of how far religions were, in fact, different at all. Versions of this problem emerged in dealing with non-Christian populations in Europe; in imperial and missionary activities; and in navigating the fractured landscape of post-Reformation Christianity. The composition of ‘confessions’ is usually understood as an attempt to draw clear lines around belief and practice, clarifying who was in and who was out. But even these documents continued to be contested for decades after they were created, and efforts to distinguish religions or confessions from one another had to be regularly renewed. In this conference, leading scholars outline how early modern people understood and responded to the problems posed by religious difference.

Registration is free but space is limited. Please register here:
https://histecon.fas.harvard.edu/millstone_workshop.html

‘Rethinking Early Modern Confessionalism’ Schedule

Friday 12 April

9:30am-10:00am coffee/registration

10:am-10:15am: welcome

10:15-12:15pm: Panel 1

Chair: Brendan Kane (Connecticut)

Christine Kooi (Louisiana State University): ‘1572 and the Confessionalization of Europe’

Anthony Milton (Sheffield): ‘“Confessionalization creep”: 1590-1618’

12:15-13:30: Lunch

13:30-15:30: Panel 2

Chair: Hannah Marcus (Harvard)

Elena Bonora (Parma): ‘Facing Multidenominational Europe: Transformation of the Roman Catholic Perspective between the 16th and 17th Centuries.’

Anastazja Grudnicka (EUI): ‘A Prince of Strange Repute: Holy Roman Emperor Matthias I and the Making of Habsburg Catholicism’

15:30-15:45 coffee break

15:45-17:00: Panel 3

Chair: Noah Millstone (University of Birmingham and Princeton IAS)

Anthony Meyer (UCLA/Dumbarton Oaks Research Library) ‘To Stretch the Heart: The Flexible Contours of Confession in the Indigenous Church of New Spain.’

Saturday 13 April

10:00am-12pm: Panel 4

Chair: Ann Blair (Harvard)

Sarah Mortimer (Christ Church, Oxford): ‘Political society or mystical body? Rethinking the Church during the Short Peace.’

Stefano Villani (Maryland): ‘Mapping Irenicism: Edwin Sandys and *A Relation of the State of Religion* (1605).

12pm-1:15pm: Lunch

1:15pm-3:15pm: Panel 5

Chair: Malcolm Smuts (UMass Boston)

Spencer J. Weinreich (Harvard): ‘In the Hands of Two Leopards: Precarious Lives in Elizabethan London.’

David Smith (Wilfrid Laurier): ‘Confessional Identity and Divergence: The Logic of Corruption in English Reformation Polemics, 1590-1610.’

3:15pm-3:30pm: Coffee break

3:30pm-4:30pm: Closing Remarks (Noah Millstone, Birmingham/IAS) and roundtable

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