



THE POLITICS OF CONVERSION: MARTIN LUTHER TO MUHAMMAD ALI

*A conference co-presented by The Center for Renaissance Studies at the Newberry Library
and The Early Modern Conversions Project*

Newberry Library, September 14-16 2017

Conference Hashtag: #EMCNL17

Keynote presentations

Glen Coulthard, First Nations and Indigenous Studies Program, University of British Columbia

Peter Marshall, History, University of Warwick

Regina Schwartz, English and Religious Studies, Northwestern University

U.S. premier performance of *Shakeshafte*, a new play by Rowan Williams,
presented by The Shakespeare Project of Chicago

Religious conversion is a highly personal phenomenon—Augustine in the garden has the company of the voices of children and a found biblical verse, Luther spends days in solitary conversation with Paul’s Letter to the Romans, Cassius Clay is in dialogue with one or two sympathetic interlocutors. Yet conversion, as personal as it often is, can also ramify outward into the world with great force, galvanizing new communities, breaking old ones, and changing the political world utterly. Early modernity sees conversion come into full flower as a sublime instrument of imperial power—a way for sovereigns to exercise control over their subjects’ souls as well as their bodies, whether those subjects are Iberian Jews or Muslims, French Protestants, English Catholics, or the First Nations peoples of the Americas. Conversion also becomes in the period a surprisingly potent instrument of resistance to the power of the State or the Church, a way for subjects such as Bartolomé de las Casas, Anne Askew, or Luther himself to stand out against the powerful and even to begin to create new conversional publics. The year 2017 is the 500th anniversary of the nailing of the 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. To mark this momentous event in the long history of the politics of conversion, the Center for Renaissance Studies at the Newberry Library and the Early Modern Conversions Project at McGill University are proud to announce a major conference, “The Politics of Conversion—Martin Luther to Muhammad Ali,” and are pleased to invite scholars across the disciplines and with historical focuses especially in the period of the Reconquista and the Reformation and/or in the 20th and 21st centuries to join us for two full days of lively, intellectual and creative exchange. The conference will coincide with the opening of a major gallery exhibition at the Newberry—“Religious Change and Print, 1450-1700.”



THURSDAY, SEPT. 14

3:30 - 5:00	Roundtable : “Conversions across history” – by invitation only (2-West)	Lee Wandel, Nabil Matar, Rebecca Davis, Benjamin Schmidt (moderator: Paul Yachnin)
5:30 - 6:30	Keynote: “Martin Luther and the Invention of the Reformation” (Ruggles Hall)	Peter Marshall (intro by Torrance Kirby)
6:30 - 7:30	Reception (Ruggles Hall) Exhibition tour: “Religious Change and Print, 1450-1700”	Christopher Fletcher

FRIDAY, SEPT. 15

9:00 - 9:30	Coffee (Ruggles Hall)	
9:30 - 10:30	Keynote: “Ethical Conversion: ‘I have ta'en too little care of this’” (Ruggles Hall)	Regina Schwartz (intro by Carla Zecher)
11:00 - 2:30	Session 1A (Ruggles Hall)	Chair: Stephanie Cavanaugh
	“Renaissance Conversion as an Inside and Outside Event”	Judith Anderson
	“The Volta and Religious Conversion in Elizabethan England”	Rachel Lacy Boersma,
	“When the Personal is Political: Conversions in George Herbert’s Devotional Verse”	Amrita Dhar
	“Ideas about Conversion in the Aragonese Crown in Altarpieces by Bartolomé Bermejo, Martín Bernat and Miguel Ximénez”	Maria Vittoria Spissu
	Session 1B (Towner Fellows’ Lounge)	Chair: Lee Wandel
	“Letting Yourself Be Skinned Alive: World Conversion and the Desire for Martyrdom in the Spanish Empire”	Alejandro Cañeque
	“Shakespeare’s Epistemologies of Deconversion”	Randall Martin
	“Death, Heresy, and Conversion in Jan David, S.J.’s <i>Veridicus Christianus</i> ”	Walter Melion
	“Conversion, Confessional Politics, and Violence in the Final Stages of the French Wars of Religion, 1598-1629”	Brian Sandberg
12:30 - 1:30	Lunch (Ruggles Hall)	
1:30 - 3:00	Session 2A (Ruggles Hall)	Chair: Timothy Harrison
	“Making the Morisco nation: declarations of incommensurability in early modern Spain”	Stephanie Cavanaugh
	“Saint Elizabeth Seton’s Many Conversions”	Catherine O’Donnell
	“Brainwashing the King of the World: Muhammad Ali and the Nation of Islam”	Rebecca Davis
	“Eden’s End: Geography and the Humanization of Space, 1550-1650”	Michael Sauter
	Session 2B (Towner Fellows’ Lounge)	Chair: Marie-Claude Felton
	“I Am America: Muhammad Ali’s Late Style and Conversion’s Problematic Afterlives”	Cooper Harriss
	“Watomika’s Conversion to Fr. James Bouchard, SJ: from Lenni Lenape to Frenchman to Indian”	Sean O’Neill
	“Heads on Stakes: Conversion and Resistance according to Montaigne and the Mountain Maidu”	David Posner
	“Constructing the Other: 1960s Militant Black Nationalist (Re)Definitions of the Uncle Tom Trope”	Matthew Sautman
3:00 - 3:30	Break	

FRIDAY, SEPT. 15 (continued)

3:30 - 5:00	Session 3A (Ruggles Hall)	Chair: Amrita Dhar
	“The Conversions of George Sand: The Practice of Religious Liberty in Post-Revolutionary France”	Thomas Kselman
	“Resisting Christian Conversion: A Muslim Captive in Malta”	Nabil Matar
	“Converted Muslims in Chile: ‘Social Capital’ in a changing reality”	Hagai Rubinstein
	“Political conversions of conscience in Henry VIII’s England”	Jade Standing
	Session 3B (Towner Fellows’ Lounge)	Chair: Larry Silver
	“Missionary Catholicism and its Competing Political Agendas in late Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Egypt”	Robert Clines
	“Aztec Idolator Kings and Philip II: Rulers and Religious History in the Codex Durán Paintings”	Kristopher Driggers
	“Machiavellian Conversions”	Jose-Juan Lopez-Portillo
	“ <i>With heav’nly transport: Moving People with Phillis Wheatley</i> ”	Elizabeth Weckhurst
5:00 - 6:15	Break Exhibition tours: “Religious Change and Print, 1450-1700”	Christopher Fletcher
6:15 – 7:15	Keynote : “Conversion or Cross-Fertilization? Third and Fourth World Solidarity and the Cultural Politics of Decolonization” (Ruggles Hall)	Glen Coulthard (intro by Stephen Wittek)

SATURDAY, SEPT. 16 (Ruggles Hall)

9:45-10	Introduction	Peter Garino (dramaturge)
10-12:15	U.S. premier performance of <i>Shakeshafte</i> , a new play by Rowan Williams	The Shakespeare Project of Chicago
12:15-12:30	Break	
12:30-2	Respondent panel (roundtable)	Benjamin Schmidt (chair), Paul Yachnin, Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Simon Goldhill

See abstracts and biographies following.

The organizers for Politics of Conversion are Andrew Epps, Lia Markey, Marie-Claude Felton, Stephen Wittek, and Paul Yachnin.

Cover image: Diego Valadés, *Rhetorica christiana ad concionandi et orandi vsvm accommodata...*, 1579.
Newberry call numbers: Wing ZP 535 .P447 / Ayer 657 .V2 1579

SPONSORS & CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

Early Modern Conversions

www.earlymodernconversions.com

The five-year, \$2.3 million project, “Early Modern Conversions,” is based in the Department of English at McGill University’s and is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), with additional support from artistic and academic partner institutions in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. With the goal of developing a better understanding of the diverse range of conversional activity that spread across Europe and the New World from approximately 1400-1700, the project has brought together an international, interdisciplinary team of scholars in Art History, Architecture, Literature, Music, Theatre, Religion, History of Cognition, and Digital Humanities.

The Newberry Center for Renaissance Studies

www.newberry.org/center-renaissance-studies

A world-renowned independent research library in Chicago, the Newberry Library offers readers an extensive non-circulating collection of rare books, maps, music, manuscripts, and other printed material spanning eight centuries. The Newberry is dedicated to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge, especially in the humanities. It promotes and provides for their effective use, fostering research, teaching, publication, and lifelong learning. In service to its diverse community, the Newberry encourages intellectual pursuit in an atmosphere of free inquiry and sustains the highest standards of collection preservation, bibliographic access, and reader services.

The Center for Renaissance Studies promotes the use of the Newberry collection by graduate students and postgraduate scholars in the fields of late medieval, Renaissance, and early modern studies (ca. 1300 – ca. 1750), making available programs that may not be feasible for individual institutions to mount alone. Founded in 1979, the Center works with an international consortium of universities in North America, the United Kingdom, and Europe. It offers a wide range of scholarly programs and digital and print publications based in the Newberry collections, and provides a locus for a community of scholars who come from all over the world to use the library’s early manuscripts, printed books, and other materials.

The Shakespeare Project of Chicago

www.shakespeareprojectchicago.org

Now in its 23rd year, The Shakespeare Project of Chicago provides free theatrical readings by professional actors of Shakespeare’s plays and his contemporaries at its six-Chicago area venues. Performances are funded in part by individual donors who support The Shakespeare Project’s mission of making our greatest dramatist’s plays accessible to all regardless of economic means. The Shakespeare Project also has an education outreach program that produces workshops and abridged performances of Shakespeare’s plays in local schools with the goal of making students’ first experience with Shakespeare positive. By placing an enhanced emphasis on the text in its readings, The Shakespeare Project helps illuminate the play’s key themes and characters. In addition to The Project’s

home base at the Newberry Library in Chicago, performances are given at public libraries in Niles, Wilmette, Highland Park, Lincolnshire, and Mount Prospect, Illinois.

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

Anderson, Judith (presenter)
anders@indiana.edu

“Renaissance Conversion as an Inside and Outside Event”

Conversion means a turning, as does *trope*, another common word in the Renaissance. *Trope* indicates a figure of speech, such as metaphor. Like a trope (or turn), a conversion (or turn), involves a change, a shift, a movement from one thing to another. The most familiar sense of *conversion* is religious. Not surprisingly, given this background, controversies about the Eucharist are at the very heart of religious conversion in the sixteenth century in England and on the Continent. The interpretation of figurative words was fundamental to these life-and-death Eucharistic controversies and to others concerning faith, realm, and church governance.

Judith H. Anderson is Chancellor’s Professor Emeritus in Indiana University and author of seven books: most recently, *Translating Investments: Metaphor and the Dynamic of Cultural Change in Tudor-Stuart England* (2005), *Reading the Allegorical Intertext: Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton* (2008), *Light and Death: Figuration in Spenser, Kepler, Donne, Milton* (2017), and *The Narrative Figuration of Women in Spenser’s “Faerie Queene”* (forthcoming). She is also co-editor of five books, including *Go Figure: Energies, Forms, and Institutions in the Early Modern World* (2011) and *Shakespeare and Donne: Generic Hybrids and the Cultural Imaginary* (2013).

Boersma, Rachel Lacy (presenter)
racheljlacy@gmail.com

“The Volta and Religious Conversion in Elizabethan England”

This paper examines Elizabeth I’s performance of the volta at the 1580’s French court in terms of her political projects of religious conversion. With reference to sixteenth century orchesographic treatises, this paper explores how the steps and spatial orientations of volta dancers emblemized the overturning of Marian Catholicism and a return to political peace. Elizabeth I’s whirling, dancing body mimicked the revolution of stars in formation, illustrating England’s realignment with cosmic order. Thus, this paper extends existing scholarship on performances of power in Elizabethan England to a study of choreography as an emblem of civic philosophies linking political economy with celestial harmony.

Rachel Lacy Boersma is a PhD candidate in the University of British Columbia Department of English. She specializes in late medieval and early modern English drama, with particular interest in material theology and trans-Reformation stages. Her dissertation will examine the change in dramatic functions of onstage props, gestures, sights, and sounds in light of English theological conversions from an expansive Catholic sacramentalism to a pared-down Anglican one.

Cañeque, Alejandro (presenter)
acaneque@umd.edu

“Letting Yourself Be Skinned Alive: World Conversion and the Desire for Martyrdom in the Spanish Empire”

This paper explores the close connection that existed between conversion, martyrdom, and empire in the early modern Spanish world. It complicates the traditional religious approach to the study of early modern martyrdom by situating it within the history of European imperialism and colonialism. It argues that the evangelizing zeal of the Spanish Empire's inhabitants brought about the formation of four frontiers of martyrdom: England, as the frontier of heresy; North Africa, as the frontier of infidelity; Japan, as the frontier of civilized paganism; and the New World, as the frontier of savage paganism.

Alejandro Cañeque is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Maryland, College Park. He is a specialist in the history of colonial Latin America, early modern Spain, and the Spanish Empire. He is the author of *The King's Living Image: The Culture and Politics of Viceregal Power in Colonial Mexico* (2004), a study of the transatlantic political culture that developed in New Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He has also published a number of articles and essays on the political culture of the Spanish Empire, including studies on the role of images and emotions in the establishment of imperial authority in the New World. He is currently completing a book-length study of the historical significance of the propagation of stories and images of martyrdom around the Spanish Empire from the late sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries.

Cavanaugh, Stephanie (presenter)
stephanie.cavanaugh@mail.mcgill.ca

“Making the Morisco nation: declarations of incommensurability in early modern Spain”

Were the Moriscos natives of the kingdoms of Spain or a foreign nation within its borders? This question was central to the debates surrounding their expulsion from those kingdoms in 1609-1614. Royal policies and Morisco petitions made throughout the sixteenth century reflect categories of legal difference among Moriscos, and there was real social, linguistic, and cultural diversity among Moriscos of different regions. Yet in order to argue for their complete removal from the Spanish kingdoms, many secular and religious leaders insisted that the Moriscos were a homogenous group of secret Muslims as well as enemies of God, the king, and the nation of Spain. In their quest for religious purity — sometimes framed as a long-awaited finale of the reconquista of Spain — many officers of Church and State asserted the incommensurability of the Moriscos and Spanish Catholic society by insisting that the Moriscos were foreign, heretical, and disloyal. The idea of a Morisco nation (*nación*) as a separate race (*raza*) of people was employed against the possibility of their sincere conversion to Catholicism and incorporation into Old Christian society. After a century of assimilationist policies, the Crown decided to solve the Morisco problem with their expulsion. I consider how we read arguments made by premodern advocates for the expulsion of the Moriscos from our vantage point in the post-9/11 era of rising Islamophobia and the contested Muslim ban in the USA, itself a declaration of incommensurability between Islam and the West. In this way, I aim to generate a conversation about the complex ways in which political projects of conversion in the early modern era were formative in the organization of societies and the states.

Stephanie M. Cavanaugh is a historian and a Postdoctoral Fellow with the Early Modern Conversions Project at McGill University. She earned her PhD and MA degrees in History from the University of Toronto and a BA in History and English from the University of New Brunswick. Her research interests include religious conversion and colonial encounters in the early modern Spanish world. Her book project, tentatively titled “The Morisco problem and the politics of conversion,” is a study of ideas of difference and belonging in early modern Castile through an analysis of the transformations in political, juridical, and communal identities that formed part of the processes of religious conversion.

Clines, Robert (presenter)

rjclines@email.wcu.edu

“Missionary Catholicism and its Competing Political Agendas in late Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Egypt”

In 1582, Henry III of France backed a Jesuit mission to the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt to augment his claim to the title of Most Christian King. However, the Jesuits abandoned Henry once they felt he could not help them convert the Copts. In turn, Henry’s agents convinced the Ottoman authorities that the Jesuits tried to foment a Coptic rebellion. They were arrested and expelled from Egypt. The course of this mission demonstrates that monarchs, missionaries, and diplomats used missionary activity to promote their own political agendas, and that conversion was an avenue for expressing loyalty or challenging authority.

Robert John Clines is Assistant Professor of History at Western Carolina University. He is an alumnus of the Early Modern Conversions Project. His current book project, *A Jewish Jesuit’s Mediterranean: Giovanni Battista Eliano and the Early Modern Culture of Conversion*, uses the life of the only Jewish-born member of the Society of Jesus, Giovanni Battista Eliano, to unpack the myriad ways in which religious conversion manifested itself in early modern Mediterranean religious culture. Clines has published in a variety of scholarly journals such as *Mediterranean Historical Review*, *Renaissance Studies*, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, and *The Journal of Early Modern History*.

Coulthard, Glen (keynote)
glen.coulthard@ubc.ca

“Conversion or Cross-Fertilization? Third and Fourth World Solidarity and the Cultural Politics of Decolonization”

In my presentation I explore the historical cross-fertilizations between Third and Fourth World theory, with a particular but not exclusive emphasis on the work of Frantz Fanon, to sketch out a "theoretically promiscuous" view of Indigenous decolonization (to borrow Audra Simpson's and Andrea Smith's provocative phrase), one that historically has been self-consciously open yet critical about its political and theoretical influences. In doing so, however, I intend to challenge the idea that this openness to outside theoretical resources and struggles suggests a conversion or assimilation of sorts, and thus represents and/or serves in the discursive erasure of Indigenous thought and intellectual traditions. Instead I argue that resurgence - i.e., the attempted individual and collective decolonization of Indigenous nations through acts of militant cultural self-actualization - has always been an intellectually polymorphous project informed but not straightjacketed by the grounded normativities of land, place and culture.

Glen Coulthard (PhD – University of Victoria) is a member of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and an associate professor in the First Nations and Indigenous Studies Program and the Department of Political Science. Glen has written and published numerous articles and chapters in the areas of Indigenous thought and politics, contemporary political theory, and radical social and political thought. He lives in Vancouver, Coast Salish Territories. Glen’s book, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (University of Minnesota Press), was released in August 2014 to critical acclaim. His co-edited book, *Recognition versus Self-Determination: Dilemmas of Emancipatory Politics*, was released in spring 2014 by UBC Press. He and Dr. Dory Nason were also featured contributors to the groundbreaking anthology, *The Winter We Danced: Voices from the Past, the Future, and the Idle No More Movement* (ARP Books), which was released to great acclaim in March 2014.

Davis, Rebecca (presenter)

rldavis@udel.edu

“Brainwashing the King of the World: Muhammad Ali and the Nation of Islam”

Soon after Cassius Clay announced his conversion to the Nation of Islam in February 1964, his father told reporters that the leadership of the Nation had been “hammering at him and brainwashing” the younger Clay ever since he won the heavyweight title at the 1960 Olympic games at the age of 18. Major white and African American newspapers circulated this story widely. This image of Clay (who declared that his new name was Muhammad Ali) as a confused or “brainwashed” dupe of the Nation of Islam was amplified when he failed his Army induction test a few weeks later and by articles that emphasized his intense bonds with Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X. This paper examines skepticism about Ali’s conversion and places it in the context of two decades of intensive public interest in religious conversions, self-transformation, and free will.

Rebecca L. Davis is an associate professor of history at the University of Delaware, where she holds a joint appointment in the Department of Women and Gender Studies. From 2006 to 2007 she was a postdoctoral fellow at the Center for the Study of Religion at Princeton University, and she returned as a Visiting Fellow in 2016-2017. Her first book, *More Perfect Unions: The American Search for Marital Bliss* (Harvard University Press, 2010), examined how religions and secular marriage counselors and their clients helped construct the history of heterosexuality. Her second book, *American Converts*, examines religious conversion and identity in the United States since World War II. She is the co-editor of *Heterosexual Histories*, a forthcoming volume of original essays.

Dhar, Amrita (presenter)

amritad@umich.edu

“When the Personal is Political: Conversions in George Herbert’s Devotional Verse”

Laying out the conversional powers of Herbert’s verse, my paper will demonstrate the essential continuity of Herbert’s political thinking through his personal poetic exercises. I shall show that Herbert’s decision to “remove” himself to Bemerton towards the end of his life—away from London, the court, and the universities—was in fact a deeply felt political decision: a strategically moderate response to the religious climate of his time, and a profound reconciliation of personal and political aims. Finally, I shall show how the contents of *The Temple* themselves carry a charge that would transform how Herbert came to be remembered through and after the Civil War.

Amrita Dhar was educated at Jadavpur and Cambridge universities before coming to the University of Michigan for her doctoral studies. Her dissertation on “Writing Sight and Blindness in Early Modern England” uses disability studies and current scholarship on the senses to argue a particular space for poetic language as a generative link between disability and creativity. She is also an active traveller of mountains and writes on world mountaineering literatures.

Driggers, Kristopher (presenter)

driggers@uchicago.edu

“Aztec Idolator Kings and Philip II: Rulers and Religious History in the Codex Durán Paintings”

Painted in Colonial New Spain, the Codex Durán illustrations craft a visual history of Aztec religion as it evolved over time. Yet this paper considers whether these images of native religious history in fact reflect contemporary political tensions over indigenous conversion. Drawing upon iconographic, stylistic, and textual evidence, the paper places these images of pre-Hispanic religion in context in order

to ask how the paintings reflect embattled relations between mendicant missionaries and the Spanish crown at the time they were produced. In this light, I propose that a Colonial political struggle around Christian conversion may have shaped a key source on the Aztec past.

Kristopher Driggers is a Ph.D. candidate in Art History at the University of Chicago, where he specializes in the art of pre-Columbian Mexico. His dissertation, titled “History and Idolatry in the Codex Durán Paintings,” studies the painted illustrations in a key colonial source on Aztec life before the Spanish conquest. His work has been supported by a Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship, an Erasmus Dissertation Research Fellowship for Spain, and FLAS grants for study of Nahuatl and Yucatec Mayan languages.

Epps, Andrew (organizer)
eppsa@newberry.org

Andrew Epps is the Program Manager in the Center for Renaissance Studies at the Newberry Library, where he has been since 2015. His research interests encompass early modern printing, historical geography, and cultural landscapes. He earned a BA in history from Beloit College.

Felton, Marie-Claude (organizer)
marie-claude.felton@mcgill.ca

Marie-Claude Felton is currently a research associate and the project manager for the Early Conversions Project at McGill University. She recently completed a Banting postdoctoral fellowship at McGill where she started a comparative study of self-publishing in Europe in the early modern period. She also completed a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard University where she studied the publishing ventures of marginal *savants* and their quest for authority during the Enlightenment. Her recent book, which explores self-publishing and authorship in 18th-century Paris, entitled *Maîtres de leurs ouvrages. L'Édition à compte d'auteur à Paris au XVIIIe siècle*, was published by Oxford University Studies in the Enlightenment, Voltaire Foundation (2014).

Fletcher, Christopher (presenter)
fletcher@newberry.org

“Exhibition tour: — *Religious Change and Print, 1450-1700*”

In *Religious Change and Print, 1450-1700*, visitors will see the Reformation through the eyes of the people who experienced the transformations it spread across Europe and the Americas: preachers and teachers, travelers and traders, writers and printers. Featuring more than 150 objects from the Newberry’s collection—from Bibles, tracts, and poems to maps, music, and art—*Religious Change and Print* will show how the intertwining of religion and print led to realignments of power that even revolutionaries had trouble keeping up with.

Christopher Fletcher currently acts as Program Assistant in the Newberry Center for Renaissance Studies. As 2016-2017 Mellon Major Projects Fellow at the Newberry Library, he served as coordinator and lead content developer for the major project on Religious Change, 1450-1700 and the co-curator for “Religious Change and Print, 1450-1700.” He earned his PhD in medieval history from the University of Chicago in 2015. His research focuses on the relationship between religious thought and public communication technologies. He has published an article on the letter form and the religious thought of Peter Damian, and is currently working on a book project on letters and the development of the medieval public.

Goldhill, Simon (roundtable presenter)

sdg1001@cam.ac.uk

Simon Goldhill is Professor of Greek at Cambridge University and Director of the Cambridge Victorian Studies Group. He is best known as a scholar of Greek tragedy where he has published widely over the last thirty years, including *Reading Greek Tragedy*, and *Sophocles and the Language of Tragedy*. He has also published on Victorian studies, and his book *Victorian Culture and Classical Antiquity* won the Robert Lowry Patten award from the Society of English Literature for the best book on Victorian Studies in 2010-11. He currently is the director of a project on ‘The Bible and Antiquity in 19th-century Culture’ at the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) at the University of Cambridge.

Harrison, Timothy (participant)

harrisont@uchicago.edu

Timothy Harrison is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English and in the College at the University of Chicago, a position he took up after completing a PhD at the University of Toronto in 2014. At the moment, he is completing a book manuscript entitled *Impossible Experience: Consciousness and Natality in Early Modern England*, which is about the role played by imaginative literature in the seventeenth-century development of the concept of consciousness. He has published articles on Montaigne, Donne, and Milton in *Modern Philology*, *ELH*, and *Milton Studies*.

Harriss, Cooper (presenter)

charriss@indiana.edu

“I Am America: Muhammad Ali’s Late Style and Conversion’s Problematic Afterlives”

Muhammad Ali’s 1964 conversion to Islam works with his religious refusal of military induction as a kind of “exception-taking” to postwar American exceptionalism. Another conversion proves more elusive: from “fighter who wouldn’t fight” to patriot and exceptional American in the last decades of his life. This paper considers the religious terms of Ali’s “other” conversion—how it responds to his Islamic identity, his decolonial persona as a global celebrity, and the affect generated by his disability from Parkinson’s Disease as a mitigating factor facilitating this later transformation of a once powerful and dangerous black man, himself under state surveillance, to a literal and figurative agent of this same state.

M. Cooper Harriss is an assistant professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Indiana University, in Bloomington, where he teaches courses in American religion, literature, and culture. He is the author of *Ralph Ellison’s Invisible Theology* (NYU 2017) and at work on a new book titles *Muhammad Ali and the Irony of American Religion*.

Kirby, Torrance (participant)

torrance.kirby@mcgill.ca

Torrance Kirby is Professor of Ecclesiastical History at McGill. He received a DPhil degree in Modern History from Oxford University in 1988. He is a life member of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge and has been a member of the Princeton Centre of Theological Inquiry since 1996. Recent books include *Persuasion and Conversion: Religion, Politics and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (2013), *The Zurich Connection and Tudor Political Theology* (2007), and *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist* (2005). He is also the editor of *A Companion to Richard Hooker* (2008), and co-editor of *Paul’s Cross and the Culture of Persuasion, 1520-1640* (2014). Kirby is general editor of an edition of

selected *Paul's Cross Sermons, 1521-1642* scheduled for publication by Oxford University Press in April this year.

Kselman, Thomas (presenter)
Thomas.A.Kselman.1@nd.edu

“The Conversions of George Sand: The Practice of Religious Liberty in Post-Revolutionary France”

This paper will deal with the religious choices made by George Sand (1804-1876), whose several conversions allow us see how religious liberty and social radicalism intersected in the aftermath of the French Revolution. Sand was converted to devout Catholicism as a Catholic school girl, but as a young woman turned to the social gospel as preached by Félicité Lamennais, and then to her own version of the religion of humanitarianism, which included an impassioned defense of the rights of women. Sand's conversions reveal both a compelling personal story and the possibilities for religious and political choices in the post-revolutionary world.

Thomas Kselman is Professor Emeritus in the History Department at the University of Notre Dame, where he began his career in 1979 after receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. He is the author of *Miracles and Prophecies in Nineteenth-Century France* (Rutgers, 1983), *Death and the Afterlife in Modern France* (Princeton, 1993), and *Conscience and Conversion: Religious Liberty in Post-Revolutionary France* (Yale, 2018). He has been awarded two NEH Research Fellowships and a Guggenheim Fellowship, and served as the president of the American Catholic Historical Society in 2006.

Lopez-Portillo, Jose-Juan (presenter)
jose.lopez@cide.edu

“Machiavellian Conversions”

Niccoló Machiavelli's ideas were not as uncharacteristic of his time as historians once supposed. Recent studies have shown that his writings about politics and society were in dialogue not only with fashionable humanistic interests in classical literature and rhetoric, but also with innovative ideas about religion: particularly those related to the Franciscan's techniques for engaging with society and curiosity about Judaism and Islam. Machiavelli's posthumous infamy was a sign of their often disguised popularity and suggests the relevance of his ideas to contemporary preoccupations, especially those that dealt with his explicit subject of practical politics. I hope to argue that 'conversional thinking' was essential, if often implicit, in Machiavelli's approach to practical politics: the classics offered exempla he wished his contemporaries would adopt; rhetoric is the art of persuasion or changing people's minds; Franciscans were primarily interested in converting society to a more authentic faith; while Moses and Mohammed offered examples of prophets who had converted their people into an armed and dedicated community capable of achieving greatness. Many of these strands of Machiavelli's conversional thinking are most evident in his famous exhortatio at the end of *Il Principe*. Machiavelli was an early and eloquent proponent of the application of conversional thinking and its techniques to contemporary politics and society, but that he was not unique. His work crystallized contemporary notions of conversion that we can find, either through his direct influence or independently, in political texts and practices of the succeeding centuries. He offers a stark example of the influence of conversion on politics in the sixteenth century and a way of understanding why this influence can be regarded as 'modern'.

José-Juan López-Portillo is a professor of history at the *Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas* (CIDE) in Mexico City. He was a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the IPLAI's 'Early Modern Conversions' project from 2013-2015. He works on the Spanish monarchy in the Early Modern Period, concentrating on the role of 'cultural intermediaries' in making the global interactions that facilitated conversion in the Spanish Empire. He will expose some of his findings in a chapter for the EMC's first publication entitled *Performing Conversion: Urbanism, Theatre, and the Transformation of the Early Modern World*. José-Juan read Ancient and Modern History at New College in the University of Oxford and graduated with a first class degree. In 2012 he was awarded a PhD from Queen Mary, University of London with a dissertation entitled: 'Another Jerusalem': Political Legitimacy and Courtly Government in the Kingdom of New Spain 1535-1568', which will be published in 2016. He has edited and wrote an introduction for a volume in the VARIORUM/ASHGATE series *The Expansion of Latin Europe, 1000-1500*, which was published in 2014. He has also been commissioned to write a general History of the Spanish Empire for I.B. Tauri. José-Juan has teaching experience in the UK, USA, Canada and Mexico and he maintains a long-standing involvement in Global History.

Markey, Lia (organizer)
markeyl@newberry.org

Lia Markey is the Director of the Center for Renaissance Studies at the Newberry Library. She has taught at the University of Pennsylvania and at Princeton University and held post-doctoral fellowships at the Folger Library, the Warburg Institute, Harvard's Villa I Tatti, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her research explores cross-cultural exchange between Italy and the Americas in the sixteenth century, collecting history, and early modern prints and drawings. Her book *Imagining the Americas in Medici Florence* has recently been published with Penn State University Press.

Marshall, Peter (keynote)
P.Marshall@warwick.ac.uk

"Martin Luther and the Invention of the Reformation"

Luther's posting of the 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church is among the most famous events of history. It has for centuries served as a symbol for freedom of conscience, and of righteous protest against abuse of power. It stands as a kind of conversional moment for Western civilization as a whole. Yet Luther's theses-posting is a myth, and probably did not happen. How did a 'non-event' become an iconic episode of the historical imagination, as well as the defining moment of what has come to be known as 'the Reformation'? Marshall explores what Luther's theses-posting has meant across five centuries, and the wide variety of purposes to which it has been put.

Peter Marshall is Professor of History at the University of Warwick and a co-editor of *The English Historical Review*. He is a winner of the Harold J. Grimm Prize for Reformation History, and his books include *The Reformation: A Very Short Introduction* (2009), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Reformation* (2015), and *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* (2017). His latest work, *1517: Martin Luther and the Invention of the Reformation*, will be published by Oxford University Press later this year.

Martin, Randall (presenter)
rmartin@unb.ca

"Shakespeare's Epistemologies of Deconversion"

This paper will examine Shakespearian typologies of metaphysical and political

deconversion. In the field of psychology of religion, deconversion most commonly refers to rejection of religious belief. Thomas Kyd's testimony about Christopher Marlowe's alleged atheism, which Kyd reports while mentioning his own plans to write about St Paul's conversion, is an example of this. It was produced just after the first performances of *Richard III*, in which Richard swears six times by St Paul. These discursive relationships point to Richard as Shakespeare's first study in deconversion, which represents the "crisis" model traceable to Paul's interior conversion (and partial deconversion) on the road to Damascus. Shakespeare reshapes this model as a mode of audience address used by Vicevillain deconverts such as Richard or Edmund, or comic ones such as Parolles and Falstaff. Collectively they show deconversion diversifying into political and cultural epistemologies other than anti-Christian atheism. Othello's jealousy represents a second model of deconversion: an articulated process of doubt, critique, and violent repudiation, in which Othello rejects his marital and spiritual faith by murdering Desdemona and re-embracing his former Islamic identity. But Shakespeare further complicates deconversion modelling by showing Othello responding to Iago's deceptions in both crisis and process modes, and by positioning Iago as the agent and object of these energies. Shakespeare's spectrum of deconversion thus serves as a heuristic for exploring the event's instrumental and political proliferations today. It reveals that the power relations between conversion and deconversion are not merely linear and asymmetrical but dialogic. This model decentres assumptions of a dominant ideology that determines whether normative values are betrayed.

Randall Martin's research interests are Shakespeare and early modern drama and culture, ecology and environmentalism, adaptation and performance, and textual studies. His most recent book is *Shakespeare and Ecology* (Oxford University Press, 2015). Before that he wrote *Women, Murder, and Equity in Early Modern England*, a book about the effects of seventeenth-century crime journalism on the trials of accused women murderers (Routledge, 2007; SSHRC funded). He has also edited *Henry VI Part Three* for the Oxford Shakespeare (2001; SSHRC funded) and *Every Man Out of His Humour* for the *Cambridge Complete Works of Ben Jonson* (CUP, 2011), and he is co-editing *Antony and Cleopatra* for the Internet Shakespeare Editions (ise@uvic.ca) with Jonathon Macfarlane. He has also co-edited *Shakespeare/Adaptation/Modern Drama: Essays in Honour of Jill L. Levenson* (University of Toronto Press, 2011) with Katherine Scheil. At the moment he is working on a SSHRC-supported book about Shakespeare's dramatic and cultural relationships with St Paul, and researching a project on Shakespeare and Darwin.

Matar, Nabil (presenter)
matar010@umn.edu

"Resisting Christian Conversion: A Muslim Captive in Malta"

This paper examines the unique writings of a captive in Morocco in the first part of the seventeenth century. A jurist, Ahmad al-Zawwawi, was held in Malta and forced by his master to copy Arabic Christian treatises that were to be used in converting his coreligionists. As he copied the treatises, he inserted passages of resistance, warning the readers against errors. The master evidently never read what al-Zawwawi wrote and the latter's treatises remained in manuscript at the Franciscan monastery in Valletta, demonstrating how one Muslim man tried to confront Christian conversion.

Nabil Matar is Presidential Professor of English at the University of Minnesota and a member of the History Department and the Religious Studies Program. His most recent book was a study and translation of the writings of *An Arab Ambassador in the Mediterranean World (1779-1787)* (Routledge, 2015). His forthcoming book is on *Arab Impressions of America, 1876-1914* (Edinburgh UP). The conference paper is part of an ongoing book project on "Religious Encounters in the Early Modern Mediterranean World: the Arabic Archives."

Melion, Walter (presenter)
wsmelio@emory.edu

“Death, Heresy, and Conversion in Jan David, S.J.’s *Veridicus Christianus*”

The *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp: Officina Plantiniana, 1601) qualifies as one of the Jesuit order’s first and most important emblem books. It offers a template for combatting deathly heresy and restoring the Low Countries as a Catholic commonwealth. The book commences with a series of fifteen emblems on heresy and idolatry, focusing in particular on Calvinist distortions of religious truth, and concludes with a subset of nineteen emblems on the inevitability of death, on the contingencies and uncertainties that beset the dying Christian, and on the prophylactic functions of emblematic image-making, which David adduces as the chief means whereby the spiritual death of heresy and apostasy may be averted. The chapters on heresy and death can be seen to epitomize David’s *doctrina imaginis* (image doctrine), systematically interwoven throughout the *Veridicus*, that construes sacred images as the chief means of fixing the votary’s mind, heart, and spirit on Christ, so indelibly that his soul is converted into the Lord’s likeness, on the model of a panel painting or copperplate fashioned *ad vivum*. Indeed, the emblems on death begin by restaging a master trope adapted from Augustine’s *Confessions*—the story of the future saint’s conversion, precipitated by his audition of a child’s voice mysteriously chanting the phrase ‘Take up [the book] and read’. David emblematically transforms this incident, substituting the image of Christ on the cross for the book, and close viewing of this deathly image for the action of scriptural reading. The clusters of emblems that open and close the *Veridicus* also explore other kinds of image—illustrative, parabolic, typological, specular, and allegorical—that David propounds as plenipotent instruments of anti-heretical conversion. They operate as a *machina conversionis* on which he grounds the Jesuits’ religio-political project of converting the Low Countries into a bastion of resurgent Catholicism, or, as one of his contemporaries put it, of restoring the sacred images toppled by the iconoclasts during the religious troubles of the previous century. My paper examines the internal processes of image-making that anchored this ambitious evangelical project.

Walter Melion is Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Art History at Emory University in Atlanta. He has published extensively on Dutch and Flemish art and art theory of the 16th and 17th centuries. In addition to monographs on Jerónimo Nadal’s *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (2003–2007) and on scriptural illustration in the 16th-century Low Countries (2009), his books include *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel van Mander’s ‘Schilder-Boeck’* (1991), *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print, 1550–1625* (2009), and sixteen edited volumes. He was elected Foreign Member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2010.

O’Donnell, Catherine (presenter)
codonnell@asu.edu

“Saint Elizabeth Seton’s Many Conversions”

Elizabeth Seton (1774-1821) converted from Episcopalianism to Catholicism and in 1775 became the first native-born American canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. Although she lived during neither the Reformation nor the contemporary era, her life and writings connect the two through the ferment of the Age of Revolutions in which she lived. This paper explores Seton’s changing thought and the community she founded (the American Sisters of Charity) in an effort to shed light on the role of choice, persuasion, and theological argument in conversion, proselytization, and religious benevolent work.

Catherine O’Donnell is Associate Professor of History at Arizona State University. She is the author of *Men of Letters in the Early Republic: Cultivating Forums of Citizenship* (Chapel Hill, 2008), as well as

articles appearing in the *William and Mary Quarterly*, the *Journal of the Early Republic*, *Early American Literature*, and the *US Catholic Historian*. Her biography of Elizabeth Seton is forthcoming from Cornell University Press in 2018.

O'Neill, Sean (presenter)
oneills@gvsu.edu

“Watomika’s Conversion to Fr. James Bouchard, SJ: from Lenni Lenape to Frenchman to Indian”

Watomika, aka James Chrysostom Bouchard, S.J., experienced several conversions with varying degrees of volition. Upon his father’s death in battle and his mother’s return to her Comanche family, he chose to attend an Indian school in Marietta, Ohio. Later, he went from the Presbyterian ministry to a Jesuit seminary in St. Louis. Midwestern parish work proved unhealthy, so the Jesuits sent him to San Francisco, where he preached to miners, ranchers, and immigrants throughout the West. His most interesting conversion occurred in California, where his French surname allowed him to become one among many immigrant priest and no one mentioned his Indian heritage. When he died, tributes said his family came from Louisiana. Only later did the Jesuits celebrate his native ancestry. This final conversion came after death, when he became an Indian again.

Sean O’Neill, a Professor of History at Grand Valley State University, received his M.A. and Ph.D. in History from the University of California, Santa Barbara. He teaches American History, Early American History, and American Indian History. In addition to studying the interaction between Indian peoples and Catholic missionaries in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, he has written about the American abolitionist Jonathan Walker. He has worked with future history and social studies teachers at Grand Valley State University since 1991 and is past president of the Historical Society of Michigan and the Michigan Council for History Education.

Posner, David (presenter)
dposner@luc.edu

“Heads on Stakes: Conversion and Resistance according to Montaigne and the Mountain Maidu”

Montaigne’s essay “Des Coches” describes an Amerindian town, besieged by Spanish *conquistadores*, the walls of which are decorated with severed human heads. This is for Montaigne a concrete (if ironic) image of the civilized order of Native society, whereby Montaigne both ridicules the Spaniards and suggests that knowledge of a civilized past provides a basis for future resistance. I will discuss Montaigne’s vision in parallel with a recent real-world example, that of the enforced conversion--and resistance--of the Mountain Maidu people of northeastern California. Present-day Maidu are reclaiming their identity, and lands, less on the basis of nostalgia than on the historical and legal foundation of their own culture.

David M. Posner teaches in the Dept. of Modern Languages and Literatures at Loyola University Chicago. He was educated at Stanford and Princeton, and is the author of *The Performance of Nobility in Early Modern European Literature* (Cambridge UP, 1999) and essays on Rabelais, Montaigne, Shakespeare, and Corneille. Research interests include the reception of Classical antiquity in the Renaissance and beyond, literature and opera, and the classical Chinese novel. He is a former fellow of Villa I Tatti.

Rubinstein, Hagai (presenter)
hagairu@gmail.com

“Converted Muslims in Chile: ‘Social Capital’ in a changing reality”

The Muslim community in Chile has had a long journey in the process of self-definition. In this process, the struggle between the different streams within the community, brought them to resort to the converted Muslims to gain strength. The Affiliation of converted Muslims to a defined stream in the community constructed them as “social capital”. By focusing on this notion I would like to discuss the nature of converted Muslims as “social capital” within the Muslim community; and to reflect the relationships between the different Chilean Muslim streams, as a byproduct due to involvement of new Muslims in the community.

Hagai Rubinstein studied my B.A. degree at the department of Anthropology and Middle East studies, at Ben-Gurion University. His M.A. thesis research, guided by Prof. Hurvitz, was based on ethnographic fieldwork at the Chilean Muslim community, focusing on the process of identity change that the community went through in the past century. His PhD research investigates the Pan-Arab Identity build up of the Arab collective at the beginning of the 20th century in South America.

Sandberg, Brian (presenter)

bsandberg@niu.edu

“Conversion, Confessional Politics, and Violence in the Final Stages of the French Wars of Religion, 1598-1629”

Although the famous Edict of Nantes of 1598 is frequently considered to have ended the French Wars of Religion, scholars have increasingly recognized the continuation of serious religious violence well into the seventeenth century. This paper will examine conversions to Catholicism and to Calvinism during the early seventeenth century in the areas of southern France that had the highest concentrations of Huguenots and that saw the most serious civil conflict in this period. Huguenots and Catholics often lived in close proximity to each other in the regions of Languedoc and Guyenne, and many religiously mixed communities existed there. Competing Protestant and Catholic preaching and missionary programs in the region heightened concerns over the religious status of communities. Sacred spaces and sites of religious activity represented sites of contestation and negotiation amidst a context of ongoing religious activism, conversion, and religious conflict. Considering conversion as a process forces us to consider how early seventeenth-century French Catholics and Calvinists conceived of holiness. In particular, French nobles’ conceptions of “sanctity honor” become critically important in understanding the connections between conversion, confessional politics, and religious violence, since nobles played key roles in organizing and directing religious warfare in the early seventeenth century. Examining conversion and violence in this period can, I hope, offer insights on the dynamics of religious violence and the processes of constructing confessional identities during religious conflicts.

Brian Sandberg’s research focuses on religion, violence, and political culture during the European Wars of Religion. He has authored a monograph entitled, *Warrior Pursuits: Noble Culture and Civil Conflict in Early Modern France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010). He has held fellowships from the Institut d’Études Avancées de Paris, the Fulbright Scholar Program, the Institute for Research in the Humanities (University of Wisconsin-Madison), the National Endowment for the Humanities (at the Medici Archive Project) and the European University Institute. He recently published an interpretive essay, *War and Conflict in the Early Modern World, 1500-1700* (Polity Press, 2016) and a collective volume, *The Grand Ducal Medici and their Archive (1537-1743)*, edited by Alessio Assonitis and Brian Sandberg (Brepols, 2016). He is currently serving as Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Affairs

in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at NIU, and he is working on several research projects, including a monograph on *A Virile Courage: Gender and Violence in the French Wars of Religion 1562-1629*.

Sauter, Michael (presenter)
michael.sauter@cide.edu

“Eden’s End: Geography and the Humanization of Space, 1550-1650”

In this paper I propose to explain how geography’s rise changed early modernity’s relationship to the Biblical past. Between 1550 and 1650 both advances in geographic knowledge and the concomitant transfer of this knowledge to print and material culture shifted humanity’s temporal origins, with the period prior to the Flood being distanced from geography’s conceptual foundations, before being declared entirely irrelevant to them. I will substantiate this argument through analyses of two works that are considered to be precursors to modern geography. The first is Sebastian Münster’s *Cosmographia* (Basel, 1544). This text prefaced its famous collection of maps with a discussion of a State of Nature that, so it held, appeared after the Flood, but before human civilization. It used the Flood, I will argue, to backstop mathematical representations of space. First, since the Earth had not changed since the Flood, its surface could be represented. Second, since the Earth had been wiped clean, a State of Nature had to be assumed. The second work, Bernhard Varenius’ *Geographia generalis* (Amsterdam, 1650) extended this spatial regularity backward in time by arguing, on mathematical grounds, that the Flood could not have happened. Thus, the Biblical past retreated in the face of space, while the State of Nature became civilization’s only philosophically justifiable precursor. Overall, I will show how by 1650 geography fatally undermined pre-Noachian history. In short, it “converted” the Biblical past by limiting it, initially, to the status of tenuous preface, before transmuting, finally, into an outright myth.

Michael J. Sauter is an associate professor of history at the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE) in Mexico City. He received his PhD in history from the University of California at Los Angeles in 2002. He is the author of *Visions of the Enlightenment: The Edict on Religion of 1788 and Political Reaction in Prussia*, *Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History*; vol. 177 (Leiden: Brill, 2009). The manuscript for his next book is under review and bears the title, *The Spatial Reformation: Euclidian Space Between Man, the Cosmos and God, 1350-1850*.

Sautman, Matthew (presenter)
mbsautman@gmail.com

“Constructing the Other: 1960s Militant Black Nationalist (Re)Definitions of the Uncle Tom Trope”

Although Harriet Beecher-Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is the source of the Uncle Tom trope, this essay explores how particular Black Nationalists like Malcolm X and Eldridge Cleaver repurpose this trope as a rhetorical device to convert African Americans from the margins of the Civil Rights Movement and other forms of Black Nationalism to the center of a militant Black Nationalism. In doing so, this essay analyzes the inherent “othering” that occurs within the Uncle Tom trope and probable historical motivations behind why particular Black Nationalists would have a vested interest in using the Uncle Tom trope to convert new members.

Matthew Sautman is a Graduate Fellow at SIUE pursuing his studies in Teaching of Writing and Literature. He is a contributor to *The Artifice* where his published articles include “A Hidden Racism in *American Horror Story: Roanoke*” and “The Art of Trolling: A Philosophical History of Rhetoric.” His paper, “She is *not* who They Think She is: the role of Palavar/Palava within the Context of Identity Construction and Black Feminist Diaspora,”

won him the A. Edwin Graham Memorial Award this past spring. In November, he will be presenting an essay for the Pop Culture panel about Christopher Priest's *Black Panther*.

Schmidt, Benjamin (participant)
schmidtb@u.washington.edu

Benjamin Schmidt is the Costigan Professor of History at the University of Washington in Seattle. He has published widely on early modern cultural history, including *Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the New World* (2001), which won the Renaissance Society of America's Gordan Prize and the Holland Society's Hendricks Prize; *Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: Practices, Objects, and Text* (2007; with P. Smith); *The Discovery of Guiana by Sir Walter Raleigh* (2008); and *Going Dutch: The Dutch Presence in America, 1609–2009* (2008; with A. Stott). His latest book, *Inventing Exoticism: Geography, Globalism, and Europe's Early Modern World* (2015), was recently selected as a finalist for the Kenshur Prize, awarded by the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies.

Schwartz, Regina (keynote)
regina-s@northwestern.edu

"I have ta'en too little care of this"

At the heart of Shakespeare's darkest tragedy, *King Lear* undergoes an awakening. What prompts this conversion from one view of himself and his place in the world to another quite different one? What moves him to consider care where he had never imagined it before. Often, we think of conversion as moving from one identity to another, one community to another, but the ethical conversion that enables a change in one's understanding of responsibility is also fundamental, and crosses the boundaries of these identity conversions. The Pauline paradigm of conversion as sudden need not limit the horizon of ethical conversions: incremental revelations, garnered from experience, can also school radical change in ethical sensibilities.

Regina Schwartz (Ph.D. University of Virginia) teaches seventeenth-century literature, especially Milton; Hebrew Bible; philosophy and literature, law and literature, and religion and literature. Her publications include *Remembering and Repeating: Biblical Creation in Paradise Lost* (1988), which won the James Holly Hanford prize for the best book on Milton; *The Book and the Text: The Bible and Literary Theory* (1990); *Desire in the Renaissance: Psychoanalysis and Literature* (1994); *The Postmodern Bible* (1995) and *Transcendence: Philosophy, Literature, and Theology Approach the Beyond* (2004). *The Curse of Cain: The Violent Legacy of Monotheism* (1997), a study of identity and violence in the Hebrew Bible, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. Her most recent book, *Sacramentality at the Dawn of Secularism: When God Left the World*, is published by Stanford in their series "Cultural Memory in the Present" (2007).

Spissu, Maria Vittoria (presenter)
mariavittoriaspissu@gmail.com

"Ideas about Conversion in the Aragonese Crown in Altarpieces by Bartolomé Bermejo, Martín Bernat and Miguel Ximénez"

Forced religious conversions created new social categorizations in a mixture of feelings ranging from fear to tolerance. This paper reflects on the impact of the Blesa Altarpiece (1485), since, firstly, it highlights the spiritual and social incorporation of a previous "alien", apparently also without the customary allusions to shame or infamy (and defamation). And secondly, it can reveal the Iberian view

about Conversion as a way to control the “others” and hold the Empire together, because it pictures not just a change of mind or regret, but a physical transformation, intended to signify (religious and moral) redemption.

Maria Vittoria Spissu is a Research Fellow at the University of Bologna. Her current research focuses on the altarpieces (*retablos*) painted within the Crown of Aragon and the Habsburg Empire, with a special focus on the connections between the Spanish Levante, Flemish painting and Southern Raphaelism. Her work is an elaboration of transnational comparisons covering and concentrating on the representation(s) of the “Infidel” in Europe between the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, paying particular attention to mobile boundaries and to the interchangeable and mutual characterizations involved in the fabrication of the “Enemy”.

Silver, Larry (participant)
lasilver@sas.upenn.edu

Larry Silver is Farquhar Professor of Art History at the University of Pennsylvania. He has authored or co-authored monographs on the following early modern artists: Rubens and Velázquez, Rembrandt's Faith, Bruegel, Bosch, and Dürer as well as a study of the imperial imagery of Emperor Maximilian I. He served as President of the Historians of Netherlandish Art and the College Art Association.

Standing, Jade (presenter)
jade.standing@live.com

“Political conversions of conscience in Henry VIII’s England”

This paper will argue that developments in the sixteenth century discourse of conscience – in particular the conversion of conscience into equity law - affected the literary representations of conscience in the period. The First Dialogue of Christopher St German’s *Doctor and Student* was printed in 1523 to instruct the laity of the ideal relationship between English law and conscience. St. German emphasizes that conscience can and should be scripted according to the agreed principles of the laws of England whilst also arguing that, occasionally, conscience must assert its own autonomy and overturn the precepts of the common law to fit its own standards of good. The problem with dissolving ‘conscience’ into legal theory is that it is philosophically indeterminate. St. German’s ingenious remedy to the perceived instability of conscience is to use the term interchangeably with the juristic principle of equity. This conversion of terms establishes conscience as a discontinuous legal entity that has a measurable, normative human dimension, but also reinforces the cultural anxiety to instill order on a recognizably unwieldy, inexplicably chaotic beast. St German’s defense of the precedence and authority of common law over canon law in the correct and good governance of every English person’s conscience was so timely that the Second Dialogue of 1530 was published, in English, by the King’s own printer. In the final section of this paper, I will show how these political conversions of conscience are reflected in prominent literary works of the ensuing period, including Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*.

Jade Standing is a PhD candidate in the Department of English at the University of British Columbia. Her current area of research is the conversion of Tudor drama from manuscript to print within the Tudor period, 1485-1603.

Sullivan, Winnifred Fallers (roundtable presenter)
wfsulliv@indiana.edu

Winnifred Fallers Sullivan (J.D., Ph.D., University of Chicago) is Professor of Religious Studies, and affiliated Professor of Law, Indiana University Bloomington. She studies the intersection of religion and law in the modern period, particularly the phenomenology of modern religion as it is shaped in its encounter with law. She is the author of *Paying the Words Extra: Religious Discourse in the Supreme Court of the United States* (Harvard 1994); *The Impossibility of Religious Freedom* (Princeton 2005), *Prison Religion: Faith-based Reform and the Constitution* (Princeton, 2009), and *A Ministry of Presence: Chaplaincy, Spiritual Care and the Law* (Chicago 2014).

Wandel, Lee Palmer (chair)
lpwandel@wisc.edu

Lee Palmer Wandel is the WARF Michael Baxandall and Linda and Stanley Sher Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Among her publications are *Voracious Idols and Violent Hands: Iconoclasm in Reformation Zurich, Strasbourg, and Basel*, *The Eucharist in the Reformation: Incarnation and Liturgy*, *The Reformation: Towards a New History*, and, most recently, *Reading Catechisms, Teaching Religion*. She is the editor of the Brill Companion to the Eucharist in the Reformation, and co-editor, with Walter Melion, of *Early Modern Eyes and Image and Incarnation: The Early Modern Doctrine of the Pictorial Image*.

Weckhurst, Elizabeth (presenter)
eweckhurst@fas.harvard.edu

“*With heav’nly transport: Moving People with Phillis Wheatley*”

The first African-American poet to publish her work was named after the *Phillis*, a slave ship that brought the future poet from the shores of West Africa to Boston in 1761. It would require another long trip across the Atlantic, this time on a ship owned by the Wheatley family, to find a publisher for Phillis Wheatley’s collection of poems. In exploring the relationship in Wheatley’s poetry between physical and spiritual transport – that is, between being moved and feeling moved – my papers explore the relationship between her conversion to Christianity and her production of poetic effects designed to convert others to the abolitionist cause.

Elizabeth Weckhurst is a PhD candidate in the English department at Harvard. She is working to complete a dissertation titled “Milton’s Causes,” which explores the complex interaction of Milton’s political, philosophical, and poetic investments, with special attention to how these inform his intervention in the epic tradition. Her interests include English Renaissance poetry and poetics, literature and philosophy, literature and religion, queer theory, and sound studies.

Wittek, Stephen (organizer)
stephen.wittek@mcgill.ca

Stephen Wittek is Assistant Professor of early modern English drama at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. He is also a Collaborator with the Early Modern Conversions project, which he managed from 2014 to 2017. His first book is entitled *The Media Players: Shakespeare, Middleton, Jonson, and the Idea of News* (University of Michigan Press, 2015). With the goal of establishing a more thorough understanding of the central, formative function of Shakespeare’s theatre in the news culture of early modern England, the book combines historical research with recent developments in public sphere theory, and argues that the unique discursive space created by commercial theatre helped to foster the conceptual framework that made a culture of news possible. In 2014, Dr. Wittek’s research was the subject of an hour-long episode of the CBC Radio One program *Ideas* (see <http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/episodes/2014/06/05/ideas-from-the-trenches-the-theatre-of-news/>). His

current monograph in-progress focuses on conversational thinking on the early modern English stage. Other projects include an edition of *The Merchant of Venice* for Internet Shakespeare Editions (with Janelle Jenstad), and a volume of essays for the Conversions project entitled *Performing Conversion: Urbanism, Theatre, and the Transformation of the Early Modern World* (co-edited with José R. Jouve-Martín).

Yachnin, Paul (organizer)
paul.yachnin@mcgill.ca

Paul Yachnin is Tomlinson Professor of Shakespeare Studies at McGill University. He has served as President of the Shakespeare Association of America (2009-2010). From 2005-2010, he directed the Making Publics (MaPs) project. He now directs the Early Modern Conversions project. Among his publications are the books, *Stage-Wrights* and *The Culture of Playgoing in Early Modern England* (with Anthony Dawson), editions of *Richard II* and *The Tempest*; and six edited books, including *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe* and *Forms of Association*. His book-in-progress, "Making Publics in Shakespeare's Playhouse," is under contract with Edinburgh University Press. With Bronwen Wilson, he is editing "Conversion Machines in Early Modern Europe: Apparatus, Artifice, Body," a volume from the Conversions project. His ideas and the ideas of his MaPs colleagues about the social life of art were featured on the CBC Radio IDEAS series, "The Origins of the Modern Public." A recent area of interest is higher education practice and policy, with publications in *Policy Options*, *University Affairs*, and *Humanities*, and projects, including the TRaCE Project, involving more than 25 Canadian universities.

Zecher, Carla (participant)
czecher@rsa.org

Carla Zecher is Executive Director of The Renaissance Society of America. She specializes in early modern French poetry, music, and travel writing. She is the author of *Sounding Objects: Musical Instruments, Poetry, and Art in Renaissance France* (2007), and a co-editor of Dumont de Montigny, *Regards sur le monde atlantique, 1715-1747* (2008) and *The Memoir of Lieutenant Dumont, 1715-1747: A Sojourner in the French Atlantic* (2012). In 2011-12 she held an NEH fellowship at the Huntington Library. She is presently writing a book tentatively titled "Music in the Saddlebag: Essays on Sound, Travel, and the Renaissance Ear."