



Organisation:

Prof. Dr. Martin Mulsow | Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt
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Conference of the Research group “Religious individualization in historical perspective”

Foto (© private): Ludovico Antonio Muratori, 1672-1750. Monument in Modena

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UNIVERSITÄT ERFURT

Creating Religion(s) by Historiography

International Conference 10 - 12 June 2015
Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt

Venue: Augustinerkloster Erfurt

To narrate one's past is one of the most important tools to define one's identity. This holds true for individuals in genealogies or conversion narratives as well as for groups and nations, bolstering their coherence and claims by national histories. Religious groups use similar tools as recent research has stressed. Given the lack or rudimentary state of religious organization, the lack of membership concepts, the contested character of orthodoxy and heresy, phenomena of 'civil religion' or widely shared practices and beliefs in many regions and epochs, the definition of the subject of a history is of paramount importance. It is by the very narrating of origins, conflicts, exclusions and alliances that the identity of the narratives' subjects, their characteristics and boundaries are defined. This is as crucial in separating believers and non-believers as in dressing the balance between religion as a collective enterprise ('religions') and religion as an individual practice ('spirituality'). If this seems typical of emic historical narratives, a closer look betrays that etic, scientific historiography usually follow these frameworks and divisions. This is our point of departure.

The conference addresses the following questions: How instrumental is historiography of religion – emic and etic – in creating religions and the concept of a plural of religions as accountable social units with a history of its own? What are the terminological tools (religions, confessions, schools, sects)? What are the narrative tools (stories of oaths and treaties, of deviance, of contenders ...)? What are compositional decisions to that purpose (ingroup-outgroup changes of perspectives, comparison, successions as organising principle, definition and treatment of epochs)? Are individual or institutional historiographers reacting to or shaping processes of group formation? Are they empowering or censoring individuals?

The conference will bring together expertise on the history of research on "religion(s)" and specialists on different historiographical traditions.

Programme

Wednesday, 10 June 2015

13:30 | Welcome Coffee and Tea

Introduction

14:00 | Martin Mulsow: Welcome

14:15 | Jörg Rüpke: The Historiographical Construction of Religious Traditions

Mediterranean Antiquity

15:00 | Daniel Boyarin: Uninventing Judaism by Historiography: Josephus Without Religion

15:45 | Cliff Ando: Histories of Historical Thinking, Greek and Roman

16:30 | Coffee Break

17:00 | Eve-Marie Becker: Re-defining 'Master Narratives': Acts 7:2ff. as test case

19:15 | Dinner

Thursday, 11 June 2015

Middle Ages

09:00 | Shahzad Bashir: Ideologies of the Past: Adjudicating Normativity in Islamic Historiography

09:45 | Günter Stemberger: Exodus-Interpretations in the Rabbinic Period

10:30 | Coffee Break

11:00 | Sabine Schmolinsky: Historicising Religious Movements in the Middle Ages

Founding Figures

11:45 | Reinhard Kratz: Moses: Creating a Founding Figure

12:30 | Lunch

14:00 | Suzanne Marchand: The Making of Zoroastrian 'Monotheism' in the 19th Century

"Religion" in the Early Modern Period

14:45 | Nicola Denzey-Lewis: The Early Modern Invention of Roman Christian Late Antiquity

15:30 | Cristiana Facchini: Reconstructing Judaism in the Early Modern Period

16:15 | Coffee break

16:45 | Karenina Kollmar-Paulenz: The Creation of Gelugpa Buddhism in Mongolian Historiography

Historicism and Post-Historicist Historiography

17:30 | Annelies Lannoy: From Paganism to ›Religion of Humanity‹, through ›Christianity‹: Evolutionary Frameworks in ›Positivist‹ History of Religions of the XIX-XX Centuries

19:15 | Dinner

Friday, 12 June 2015

09:00 | Martin Fuchs: Competing Constructions of Indic Religions in Modern India

09:45 | Angelika Malinar: The (Re-)Creation of Visnuism as a 'Hindu' Religion and the Historiography of Hinduism

10:30 | Coffee Break

11:00 | Bernd Otto: Historicizing 'Western Learned Magic': A Comparison of Insider and Outsider Narratives

11:45 | Final discussion

12:30 | Lunch