



The Language of Reform

Renaissance Society of America
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Panel Sponsored by
Centre for Reformation and
Renaissance Studies

Call for Papers

Five hundred years ago, when Martin Luther drafted his ninety-five theses in Wittenberg, he disputed with Johan Tetzel in Latin.

Almost immediately, however, Luther's work of reformation leaped into vernacular German, helping, by some accounts, to standardize that language.

Disputes and exhortations in the European age of reformation moved back and forth across linguistic barriers: from Latin into the

vernaculars; from vernaculars into Latin; from one vernacular into another, with or without Latin mediation; and so on.

The kinds of language used in reformation mattered: learned theological disputes in erudite academic registers jostled with popularizations and satirical and scatological jokes. Other kinds of languages were used and experienced pressures and transformations in response to reformation as well. The ways of making meaning in music underwent significant changes. Old iconographic "languages" were thrown out and replaced by new programmes of visual language or were revived and transformed in the service of the Catholic reformation. 2017 seems an appropriate time to reconsider the language of reform

from many angles. The sessions that the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies will sponsor in at the 2017 meeting of the RSA in Chicago will create a broad, interdisciplinary umbrella under which to gather papers that take up “language” and “reform,” broadly conceived.

The organizers of these sessions solicit proposals for papers from every discipline represented at the Renaissance Society of America. Scholars of history, literature, art history, translation, musicology, church history, and others are invited to submit 500-word abstracts for 20-minute papers that take up the question, “What is the language of reform?” At least five interdisciplinary sessions will be organized around this question. The organizers hope that the discussions that arise from putting these papers in dialogue will create continued opportunities for considering the languages of reformation in the early modern period. By bringing together experts from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, our understanding of the many different kinds of languages used in early modern reform will be enhanced. Historians will learn from musicologists; art historians will learn from translators; literary historians will learn from ecclesiastical historians. Papers accepted for these sessions will be considered for inclusion in a special topics issue of the journal *Reformation*. The organizers hope to prepare another set of essays for a special topic in a second journal as well.

Please submit abstracts to Andrew Fleck (ajfleck@utep.edu) and Mark Rankin (rankinmc@jmu.edu) by April 22, 2016. Authors whose papers are selected for inclusion will hear from the organizers by May 16, 2016. Those not selected for inclusion will be encouraged to submit their proposals to the RSA for open sessions of the Chicago meeting of the conference.

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