



## Transforming Early Modern Religions, Societies, & Cultures

An international and interdisciplinary conference

**27-30 September 2017**

hosted by  
**The Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies**  
Victoria College  
University of Toronto

What is Reformation, and where? Who does it impact, and how? This conference invites a sustained, comparative, and interdisciplinary exploration of religious transformations in the early modern world. Scholars who once confidently framed the Reformation as a sixteenth-century European Protestant phenomenon now look expansively across different confessions, faiths, time periods, and geographical areas. We are particularly interested in exploring global developments and tracking the many ways in which Reformation movements, broadly conceived, shaped relations of Christians with other Christians, and also with Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, aboriginal groups, and animistic religions. How did interfaith and cross-confessional encounters shift under the impact of the religio-political changes that swept rapidly across Europe and beyond from the fifteenth into the eighteenth centuries? In particular, how did these dynamics redraw borders and overturn long-established institutions? How did they interrogate and overturn traditional definitions of centres and peripheries?

The early modern world saw a great increase in contacts between religious traditions and their believers. Many meetings were fraught with the tensions of alterity. All contacts generated new forms of accommodation, exclusion, communication, exchange, and transformation. Our interdisciplinary conference will explore the resulting cultural, historical, art historical, literary, and intellectual disruptions and convergences. We will probe the inter-actions that developed across confessional lines, and the

unanticipated consequences that ripple out across the globe from the religious schisms in Europe. Many of these inter-faith contacts are driven by dynamics arising directly from the Reformation, and this is the theme we plan to explore in the conference.

We aim to bring together scholars researching art, architecture, theatre, music, literature, religion, book history, print culture, as well as intellectual and social history. Together we will explore how the transmission and translation of material, textual, and cultural practices create identity and cross-cultural identifications in contexts that are animated by the effort to reform, purify, or convert others.

*The conference will be interdisciplinary and cross cultural. Possible themes include:*

*Imagination & Identity:*

the construction of religious identity and the representation of theology through visual, literary, and musical forms; cultural forms in theologies; metaphors of exile and migration in reform movements; visualizing encounter in art and theatre.

*Co-existence, conversion, convergence:*

how knowledge of other religious traditions and communities spreads; rhetorics of reform and the realities of encounter; the interweaving of tolerance and intolerance; the plasticity and cultural representations of conversion; the dynamics of inclusion, exclusion, and hybridity.

*Space & Sense:*

how sites of encounter and exchange emerge and function; how exchanges take place in ritual spaces, in segregated zones (ghettos or neighbourhoods), or in art and literature; how boundaries are built and crossed; how different traditions assess sense, motion, and space in others; how groups use or transform each-other's spaces.

*Reversions, Inversions & Aversions:*

how traditions and believers view, imagine, and assess others; how they are either drawn towards or away from concerns over reform; ritual, visual, musical, or architectural borrowings or rejections; how the presence of diasporic groups shape and reshape host societies.

*Cultural channeling of encounters:*

authority structures (social, legal, institutional, intellectual, familial) that shape the experience of encounter, co-existence, and exchange; the convergence of legal, religious, and political cultures; relations of church, synagogue, mosque, shrine; confessionalism as a cultural form; inter-confessional, cross-cultural, or cross-religious relationships.

*Networks & Communities:*

human relations (familial/familiar) across religious or confessional boundaries; impacts on life-cycles and on natural and social kinship; charity as a way to build, bridge, or protect communities.

## **Deadline for Proposals: 31 May 2016**

For further information and to submit a proposal (no more than 150 words, together with a brief biography and contact information):

[crs.ca/globalreformatioans](http://crs.ca/globalreformatioans)