

# Providence, Propaganda, and Profit in the Early Modern English World

(Updated 3 September 2025)

## ORGANISERS

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## CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Appeals to providence can restrain unbridled ambition, but the same belief and accompanying rhetoric can also enable political enterprise, economic speculation, and personal advancement. This conference invites historians of religion, politics, and economic culture to engage in interdisciplinary dialogues and to examine how providential ideas and language encouraged, constrained, justified, or even glorified profit-making across the British Isles and the English (and later British) diaspora from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.

We aim to explore the notion of "profit" in its broadest sense, whether it be political favour, reputation-building, or financial gain. There is no constraint on the geographical scope, but proposals must address the religious experiences of individuals and communities across the British Isles or in the wider English and British imperial world. We are particularly interested in papers that interrogate established narratives of post-reformation religious politics and economic culture, such as the thesis of England's transformation from reformation to improvement in the long seventeenth century.

## ILLUSTRATIVE THEMES

- Providence, puritan politics and the English reformation(s)
- Religious rhetoric in projecting, financial policy, and commercial ventures
- English trade, imperial aspirations, and national identity
- Theological literacy, popular culture, public opinion, and ideological polarisation
- Hypocrisy, dissimulation, and contested meanings of divine favour
- English reformations and the culture of trust and distrust
- Interfaith and cross-cultural encounters and English colonial expansion
- Providence, religious manipulation, and narratives of disenchantment
- Providence, English monarchy, and revolutions

## KEYWORDS

Providence; Puritanism; Laudianism; Early modern England; English Protestantism; English reformation and post-reformation; Projecting; Improvement; Trust and Distrust; Disenchantment; Moral economy; Religious politics

## VENUES

- Kojima Conference Room, 2F, The Economics Research Annex (Kojima Hall)  
The University of Tokyo, 7 Chome-3 Hongo, Bunkyo City, Tokyo 113-0033  
<https://www.cirje.e.u-tokyo.ac.jp/about/04aboutcirje04access.html> (No.3 on the map)
- Ryoutei House, Kiyosumi Gardens, 3 Chome-3-9 Kiyosumi, Koto City, Tokyo 135-0024

## PROGRAMME

Thursday 4 September 2025	
12:00–13:30	Registration and Refreshments @ Kojima Hall
13:30–13:50	Welcome and Introduction to the Conference @ Kojima Hall
13:50–15:00	<b>Keynote Lecture 1: ‘What must become of all the distressed Subjects and Seamen there?’ –The Repatriation of the Shipwrecked British Mariners in the Long Eighteenth Century</b> <i>KANAZAWA, Shusaku, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan</i>
15:00–17:00	Travel and Optional Self-Guided Visit to Kiyosumi Gardens (last entry 16:30)
17:00–18:30	Drinks and Research Exchange @ Ryoutei House, Kiyosumi Gardens
18:30–20:30	Dinner @ Ryoutei House, Kiyosumi Gardens
Friday 5 September 2025	
8:30–9:00	Refreshments
9:00–10:30	<b>Session 1: The Idea of Profit</b> (Chair: Catherine Chou)  (1) To Unleash and Tame Profit: Thomas Hobbes’s Task <i>SHERIFF, Tyus, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA, and the University of Cambridge, England</i>  (2) Profit in James Harrington’s <i>The Commonwealth of Oceana</i> <i>ASHBY, Thomas, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan</i>  (3) Adam Smith’s Religious Thought Reconsidered <i>NOHARA, Shinji, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan</i>
10:30–10:50	Coffee Break

10:50–12:20	<p><b>Session 2: Anti-Popery, Religious Legitimacy, and the English Monarchy</b> (Chair: Paul Lay)</p> <p>(1) ‘A New Josiah’ or ‘Woe to Thee’: Rhetorics of Edward VI’s Minority, 1547–49 <i>NITTA, Sanako, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan</i></p> <p>(2) The Peter Smart Affair and the Formation of Anti-Laudianism in the Early Seventeenth Century <i>NASU, Kei, International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan</i></p> <p>(3) ‘The Root of All Evil’: Catholic Money and the Metaphysics of Anti-Popery in Caroline England <i>GILLET, Christopher, Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, New York, NY, USA</i></p>
12:20–13:50	Lunch @ Kojima Hall
13:50–15:00	<p><b>Keynote Lecture 2: Puritanism and the Values of the Market—Some Contemporary Views</b></p> <p><i>LAKE, Peter, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, USA</i></p>
15:00–15:20	Coffee Break
15:20–16:50	<p><b>Session 3: Providential Politics and Representation of Power</b> (Chair: Tyus Sheriff)</p> <p>(1) The Dutch Revolt and the Late Elizabethan Succession Question: The Profits and Perils of Anglo-Dutch Alliance or Union <i>CHOU, Catherine, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan</i></p> <p>(2) Fight for Confession or Profits?: Naval Shipbuilding Contracts in the Late-Seventeenth-Century English Maritime State <i>FUGETSU, Shoya, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan</i></p> <p>(3) Thornhill’s Hand, Queen Mary’s Fases, and the Triumph of the Navy: Power, Profit and Rhetorical Representation in the Painted Hall at Greenwich <i>RALPH, Barnaby, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan</i></p>
16:50–17:10	Coffee Break
17:10–18:20	<p><b>Keynote Lecture 3: The Losers United: The Formation of the Big Family Networks of Commonwealth Politicians, Dissenting Ministers and their Followers after the Civil War</b></p> <p><i>KAWAWAKE, Keiko, Kyoto Prefectural University, Kyoto, Japan</i></p>

19:00~	Conference Dinner @ Kadoya Sanjo Tei (B1F, Sanjō Conference Hall) (東京大学本郷キャンパス内 山上会館 地下 1 階)
<b>Saturday 6 September 2025</b>	
9:00–10:30	<p><b>Session 4: Providence and Pragmatism in English Global Expansion</b> (Chair: Shinji Nohara)</p> <p>(1) Forging English Supremacy in Early Edo Japan <i>WANG, Christy, The University of Tokyo, Japan</i></p> <p>(2) From Providence to Penitence: Thomas Gage, Architect of the Western Design <i>LAY, Paul, University of St Andrews, Scotland; University of Buckingham, England</i></p> <p>(3) The Pragmatism of Providence: The Reformation Psalter Heritage of the Massachusetts Bay Colony <i>OTOMO, Ayako, Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan</i></p>
10:30–10:50	Coffee Break
10:50–12:20	<p><b>Session 5: History Writing, Memory, and Propaganda</b> (Chair: Kei Nasu)</p> <p>(1) Rethinking John Knox's <i>Historie of the Reformation</i> <i>KOBAYASHI, Maiko, National Defense Academy of Japan, Yokosuka, Kanagawa, Japan</i></p> <p>(2) <i>Eikon Basilike</i> and the Cult of King Charles the Martyr: From a Tyrant to a Martyr, or the Power of Propaganda <i>CHAISE-BRUN, Vanessa, Université de Reims, Reims, France</i></p> <p>(3) God's Grace in Catholic Civil War Memory in Restoration Ireland <i>MAKINO, Sho, University of Dublin, Dublin, Ireland</i></p>
12:20–13:50	Lunch @ Kojima Hall
13:50–15:00	<p><b>Keynote Lecture 4 'Daily make up your accounts between God and your own soul': Presbyterianism, Profit and Political Activism in the English Revolution</b> <i>HUGHES, Ann, University of Keele, England, Emerita</i></p>
15:00–15:30	Closing Remarks

## PAPER ABSTRACTS

### KEYNOTE LECTURE 1

#### **‘What must become of all the distressed Subjects and Seamen there?’ –The Repatriation of the Shipwrecked British Mariners in the Long Eighteenth Century**

*KANAZAWA, Shusaku, Kyoto University*

The emergence of maritime Britain in the early modern period was accompanied by a significant number of shipwrecks. The seafaring men (and women on board) generally accepted the harsh fate of disaster at sea as an unpredictable act of providence. At the same time, however, shipping interests sought to mitigate the risk through the medium of marine insurance, crystallising around the Lloyd's of London. The ocean was both a springboard for British economic and imperial development and a graveyard for vessels and seamen —the very sinews of power. Even if God ordained the overseas expansion and shipwrecks were deemed inevitable, the British state and society were obliged to address the preservation and repatriation of those maritime workers who survived the disaster, only to be washed ashore on unfamiliar lands. What measures were adopted by the government and the benevolent public, when and why were they conceived, and how were they carried out with what effect in the long eighteenth-century Britain? Drawing upon a hitherto unexplored set of sources and referring to the contemporary East Asian ‘international’ order that functioned to repatriate foreign castaways, this paper will examine the distinctive structure of the repatriation of shipwrecked British mariners in detail.

## SESSION 1 THE IDEA OF PROFIT

### **To Unleash and Tame Profit: Thomas Hobbes's Task**

SHERIFF, Tynus, *University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA, and the University of Cambridge, England*

As a member of the Virginia Company, Hobbes was confronted with two opposing arguments about the role of “profit.” One view, articulated by John Donne, held that the adventurers’ goal should be the proselytization of the New World, not “present profit.” The other view maintained that the pursuit of profit was itself a way of serving God—that the opportunity for profit was providentially ordained.

Hobbes responded to this debate by shifting its terms. From his 1629 translation of Thucydides through to his mature writings, he characterized the pursuit of profit as a fundamental feature of human nature. For Hobbes, then, it was pointless to ask whether one ought to seek profit, since all humans inevitably will. Instead, the real problem was that, when each individual became his or her own judge of what is profitable, conflict was bound to arise. The relevant question, then, was who should judge what is “profitable and unprofitable.”

Having reframed the debate in these terms, Hobbes argued that the sovereign must decide for the people what is profitable. It may appear, therefore, that Hobbes’s innovation lay in removing religion and providence from discourse over the place of profit in human life. Yet this is not entirely the case. As I will argue, Hobbes still recognized the need for the sovereign to appeal to scripture, revelation, and religion when justifying to the people its determination of what is profitable. In other words, while Hobbes’s philosophy did not rely on scriptural arguments to justify the pursuit of profit, he nevertheless imagined that, in practice, the commonwealth’s leaders would need to invoke providence as a rhetorical device. For Hobbes, then, the problem of harmonizing providence and profit was not a theological, but a rhetorical, one.

### **Profit in James Harrington's *The Commonwealth of Oceana***

ASHBY, Thomas, *The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan*

In this presentation I will analyse ‘profit’ and ‘profitability’ in *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656) by the English republican writer James Harrington (1611-1677). Core to *Oceana* is a discussion on wealth, land ownership, public revenue, and the material foundations of civil society – incidentally, this includes trading companies, ‘the roots of the whole government of the city’. To counter the instability and corruption engendered by extremes of private wealth, Harrington proposed, via the example of his imagined and eponymous Oceana, a controversial agrarian law to ensure a balance of property, fostering stability and good government. Curiously, within the context of this thinking, Harrington utilises ‘profit’ almost entirely in a positive manner as making ‘good profit to the commonwealth’ and in a way closely related to not only the common good and its government, but public revenue. ‘The wisdom of the few may be the light of mankind’, he notes, ‘but the interest of the few is not the profit of mankind, nor of a commonwealth’. Furthermore, when speaking on sports and theatres, he urges that such activities, governed well, ‘are pleasing for private diversion and profitable unto the public’. This praise – and public provision – for theatre stands in stark contrast to many other republicans, who not only morally lambasted theatres, but commonly utilised the term ‘profit’ in a critical way, associating ‘vain pleasures and profits’ with parasitic interests and ‘tyranny [which] refers all to its own profit’, to quote Algernon Sidney. By comparing Harrington’s use of ‘profit’ to its appearance in works by Sidney and other godly republicans, such as John Milton and Henry Vane, I will suggest that his use of ‘profit’ within the

arguments of *Oceana* is subtly distinctive – and nuanced by theological debates – something that had implications for the long historiography of republicanism in Britain, America, and beyond.

### **Adam Smith's Religious Thought Reconsidered**

*NOHARA, Shinji, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan*

Adam Smith has traditionally been regarded as a secular political economist. However, recent scholarship, particularly by Paul Oslington, has drawn attention to the religious dimensions of Smith's thought. Despite this, little attention has been paid to how Smith, from a religious perspective, engaged critically with earlier religious doctrines. In particular, Smith's religious thought was grounded in his role as a moral philosopher. As a moralist critically examining human nature and secular desires, he investigated economic motives and the pursuit of profit — yet did not simply endorse them. His moral philosophy rested on two key foundations.

First, Smith developed his moral framework by distinguishing among different types of moralists and explicitly rejecting certain figures, such as Blaise Pascal, along with elements of Scottish Presbyterian theology. In doing so, he clarified both the religious positions he opposed and those he accepted. Despite his critique of these earlier moralists, their influence persisted in his thought, and Smith himself ultimately remained a moralist. It is therefore essential to consider this moralist perspective to fully understand his religious position.

Second, Smith's moral philosophy was also shaped by a form of theodicy. While scholars have commonly interpreted Smith's moral theory as centered on sympathy, such an account presumes the pre-existence of moral distinctions prior to the sympathetic sharing of sentiments. Sympathy, in Smith's view, accounts for how morality is communicated, but not how it is originally constituted. Without an account of the origin of moral right and wrong, the very concept of morality would be incoherent. Smith addressed this foundational issue by appealing to the nature of the Deity.

This presentation argues that Smith's conception of morality cannot be adequately understood without recognizing the theodicy implicit in his moral philosophy. His vindication of divine attributes in the face of moral evil formed an essential component of his account of the origins of moral distinctions.

## SESSION 2

### ANTI-POPERY, RELIGIOUS LEGITIMACY, AND THE ENGLISH MONARCHY

#### **‘A New Josiah’ or ‘Woe to Thee’: Rhetorics of Edward VI’s Minority, 1547–49**

*NITTA, Sanako, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan*

During the brief reign of the boy-king Edward VI (1547-53), England experienced a radical evangelical reformation. Historians generally foreground Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury; Edward Seymour, duke of Somerset and Lord Protector; and other prominent preachers and clergy, while Edward’s role has not been thoroughly explored because of his youth. However, it was he who justified and authorised his subjects’ actions. This paper explores the political advantage of his minority for both proponents and opponents of religious change, which was also applied to wider policies.

The first part sketches the Edwardian Reformation, then analyses the writings of leading conservatives, including Stephen Gardiner, the bishop of Winchester, and Princess Mary, as well as state papers drafted with their objections in mind. These documents insist that no doctrinal innovation could be valid until the king reached majority. The next part turns to reformist portrayals. Edward’s coronation, the first in recognisably Protestant form, cast him as a new Josiah. The regime produced multiple documents describing Edward as supplied by God after the removal of alternative male heirs and praising his precocious learning, mental maturity and boundless promise. They tried to present youth not as a limitation but as a divine guarantee of future progress. Next, the paper traces how both rhetorics surfaced during the 1549 uprisings, which were referred to as the ‘commotion time’. While some rebels invoked conservative arguments to demand a return to traditional agrarian practice, others adopted reformist language in appeals for positive negotiation with the regime. A brief epilogue considers the latter half of Edward’s reign. As the king entered his mid-teens, he became an actor rather than a symbol, and his personal convictions increasingly shaped doctrinal policy.

#### **The Peter Smart Affair and the Formation of Anti-Laudianism in the Early Seventeenth Century**

*NASU, Kei, International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan*

This paper examines the polemical campaign initiated by Peter Smart, a disgruntled prebendary of Durham Cathedral, against John Cosin, a young Arminian and future bishop of Durham, and discusses its impact on the anti-Laudian politics of the 1640s. In July 1628, Smart, having held his prestigious position in the chapter for nearly twenty years, engaged in a dramatic confrontation with Cosin and his colleagues at the cathedral. In his sermon, he criticized their fondness for elaborate ceremonies, church ornaments and music, which he denounced as popish. Smart was immediately suspended, and following a series of High Commission trials, he was imprisoned until 1641, when the Long Parliament released him.

Although Cosin’s role in seventeenth-century English history as a protégé of William Laud and Richard Neile is well recognized by scholars, Smart is often dismissed as a failed whistleblower who did not become part of the anti-episcopalian movement that preceded the English Civil War. However, a close examination of his publications, the network of his supporters, and his strategic appeals to secular authority reveals that Smart was well connected with influential lay elites in both Durham and London. His ordeal was frequently cited by those opposed to the Laudian church policies. This paper argues that

Smart played a significant role in shaping the Parliamentary Reformation of the 1640s, which was not only anti-ceremonialist but also distinctly ‘Erastian’.

### **‘The Root of All Evil’: Catholic Money and the Metaphysics of Anti-Popery in Caroline England**

*GILLET, Christopher, Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, New York, NY, USA*

During the reign of Charles I, English Protestant anxieties about Catholicism frequently merged metaphysical fears with political critique. One potent example emerged in 1641, when the Scottish cleric and former Catholic, John Browne, provided testimony to Parliament that fused practical intelligence about Catholic activity with broader anti-popish metanarratives. Browne’s revelations centered on Captain John Reade, a Scottish Catholic allegedly tasked with distributing papal pensions to prominent figures in the King’s household. These claims suggested not only political subversion but also the infiltration of Charles’s inner circle by agents of a metaphysically charged Catholic threat.

This paper explores how Browne’s depiction of an improvised yet effective Catholic financial system informed Protestant understandings of the Catholic threat as both systemic and supernatural. The idea that papal money corrupted not just policy but souls positioned Catholic finance as a diabolical force—seductive, hidden, and powerful. While the metaphysical danger was immense, Browne’s testimony offered Protestants a practical countermeasure: cutting off Catholic funding channels. This action, unlike confronting abstract evil, was tangible, achievable, and empowering.

Yet denying funds to Catholic operatives was only part of the solution. Those who had accepted such money were themselves seen as compromised—politically and spiritually. The logic of Browne’s testimony thus extended into calls for the removal of royal advisors suspected of popish sympathies. This dynamic underpinned Parliamentary efforts to constrain the King’s authority over court appointments and to purify his inner circle.

By focusing on Browne’s testimony, this paper demonstrates how early Stuart Protestants fused the metaphysical with the material, shaping political action through theological interpretation. It provides new insight into how fears of Catholic infiltration were not merely reactionary or symbolic, but instrumental in motivating concrete Parliamentary strategies against Charles I’s regime.

## KEYNOTE LECTURE 2

### **Puritanism and the Values of the Market—Some Contemporary Views**

*LAKE, Peter, Vanderbilt University*

The paper will start by placing puritanism within the socio-economic conditions of later sixteenth century England. The basic claim is that puritanism—defined both as a view of church government and a distinctive style of piety—was necessarily in competition with a variety of other forms of recreation and conspicuous consumption for the disposable income and time available in certain sections of society. The paper will emphasize the competition between the theatre and the puritan pulpit, between various sorts of cheap print and sermons and godly tracts. Next the paper will turn to a series of attempts by the enemies of the godly—conformist defenders of the ecclesiastical status quo, playwrights and pamphleteers—to type puritanism as in itself a commercial enterprise—in effect a scam, an entirely hypocritical attempt to increase the wealth and status of the puritan clergy and legitimate the covetousness and social ambition of the leading puritan laity. These critics saw puritanism as an attempt to part people from their time and money, and thus to carve out an admiring audience and source of popular support for the puritan style and those selling it in the pulpit and the press. The paper will organize itself around different conceits of puritan hypocrisy and popularity. The analysis will start with the reaction against the Elizabethan puritan movement, which culminated in the Martin Marprelate affair and the pamphlet wars of the wars of the 1590s. Then the paper will continue through the early Stuart period, taking in the popular stage and the works of writers like Ben Jonson, before examining the Laudian assault on puritanism of the 1630s.

### **Session 3: Providential Politics and Representation of Power**

#### **The Dutch Revolt and the Late Elizabethan Succession Question: The Profits and Perils of Anglo-Dutch Alliance or Union**

*CHOU, Catherine, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan*

This paper explores how a second English succession question arose in the 1580s when the Low Countries revolted against Spanish rule and made an offer of their allegiance to Elizabeth I. The Elizabethan Protestant elite mulled a future in which Elizabeth's sovereignty in England could be founded on different grounds (hereditary right) than her rule in other territories (election by parliament). They also attempted to solve their own succession crisis in England at this juncture by giving the Dutch States General the right to veto any heir to Elizabeth in both England and the Low Countries. This providential trans-nationalisation of the Elizabethan succession crisis, in other words, opened new possibilities for collaboration between two polities fighting against Habsburg hegemony and for the tasks that a newly sovereign States General might undertake both in and out of the United Provinces.

Histories of this period generally gloss over the States General's offers to make Elizabeth their prince. They pleaded, she demurred; the interesting and significant action, therefore, lay elsewhere, such as Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester's military governor-generalship from 1585-87. And yet the possibility of Elizabethan oversight or even a more capacious form of sovereignty in the Low Countries, even or especially at the point when the queen was past childbearing age, could not be so easily set aside, for all that it portended about the (ir)resolution of the succession in England and the longevity of the English protestant state in an era of Spanish hegemony.

To reconfigure this stage of the Eighty Years' War (1580-1590) as a second Elizabethan succession crisis is to recapture what made it seem to the queen's advisors to be so fraught with danger and also so full of potential economic, geopolitical, and religious profit. At this juncture, the succession crisis was not singular, nor was it merely English and Irish in nature. What the overtures of the Dutch revealed was that the crisis might develop new and unforeseen international fronts at any moment.

#### **Fight for Confession or Profits?: Naval Shipbuilding Contracts in the Late-Seventeenth-Century English Maritime State**

*FUGETSU, Shoya, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan*

This paper examines the rapid expansion of naval shipbuilding contracts in the late seventeenth century, particularly during the Nine Years' War (English participation: 1689-1697), situating them within the broader ideological and material justifications for England's military engagements. While the Glorious Revolution (1688) and the wars against France were framed through the languages of Protestant providence and parliamentary liberty, this paper argues that the expansion of maritime infrastructure—especially through private shipbuilding contracts—followed a parallel logic of profit and protection, vital to England's growing maritime ambitions.

Drawing on newly analyzed archival material—namely, private contractors' letters to the Navy held at the National Archives at Kew, and records related to private yards at the British Library—this study shows how the Navy Board's contracting system enabled the construction of hundreds of vessels through partnerships with private shipbuilders. These contracts were not merely logistical necessities of war; they

operated as state-sponsored mechanisms for channeling public resources into private enterprise, stabilizing the shipbuilding industry during wartime, and reinforcing commercial activity dependent on maritime security.

This paper reframes the Navy's wartime expansion not solely as a manifestation of military organization or political ideology, but also as an instrument of economic influence—a performance of imperial reach through shipbuilding production. The Navy's procurement strategies reveal how the state functioned not only as a military and political authority but also as a facilitator of profit for maritime interests. In doing so, this paper contributes to scholarship that positions war-making and contract economies at the center of English state formation. By highlighting the interplay between the naval administration, private shipbuilding industry, and parliamentary power, it offers a more comprehensive understanding of how England justified and conducted its wars—how naval contracts became a convergence point of its profit-making and war-making efforts.

### **Thornhill's Hand, Queen Mary's Fases, and the Triumph of the Navy: Power, Profit and Rhetorical Representation in the Painted Hall at Greenwich**

RALPH, Barnaby, *The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan*

The Painted Hall in the Old Royal Naval College at Greenwich has long been regarded as one of the finest examples of eighteenth-century interior decoration in England. Completed under the direction of Sir James Thornhill between 1707 and 1726, it offers numerous patriotically-inspired representations of British power through baroque imagery, including classical allegorical references freely mixed with idealised depictions of historical events. This was a period in which the use of overt structural rhetoric was undergoing transition in the British tradition in particular, but the "plain style" had not yet taken irrevocable hold. Thornhill's use of the twinned techniques of *chironomia* and *chirologia*, or gesticulatory oratory and the language of the hand, follows the functionality of figural rhetoric. Additionally, his design employs unifying narrative forms in combination with contrastive elements to outline the broader plan of the overall work (or, more properly, connected works), along with various other features that underpin a fundamentally propagandic message, functioning in the roles of tropes and schemes, in much the same way as the gestural components. This paper discusses several instances of such visual rhetoric and the manner in which its use by Thornhill can be argued to support key themes such as fidelity, victory, the realisation of political goals, and, in one particularly amusing case, a plea for further compensation.

## KEYNOTE LECTURE 3

### **The Losers United: The Formation of the Big Family Networks of Commonwealth Politicians, Dissenting Ministers and their Followers after the Civil War.**

*KAWAWAKE, Keiko, Kyoto Prefectural University*

Before and during the Civil War, the middle-class citizens supporting for the parliamentary cause and holding the Puritan faith married each other and made the close kinship. But after 1660, they were united even more strongly. After the Civil War, they lost their political and religious cause and secluded themselves from the society. The politicians of the Commonwealth or the Protectorate exiled themselves abroad or retreated to the home country. The Presbyterian and Congregational clergies were ejected or silenced and were forced to have secret meetings with their loyal followers out of the Parish churches.

Thus, they were isolated and persecuted, but they never abandoned their political cause nor religious faith. It is very natural that they were much more united and made the stronger kinship than ever. Among them there were well-off merchants and gentries who financially helped the destituted ministers and politicians. They went to and prayed in the same secret meetings, met frequently each other, with younger generations falling in love to get married. They made their pressure group to negotiate the government and fought on common front to improve their social, political and religious status. They made the funds to grant the scholarship to nonconformist students who couldn't go to Oxbridge any more to study theology. They also discussed again and again about how to keep their chapels, whom to invite as their ministers and how to establish and manage dissenting academies for their children. Surely, they shared providence, profit and propaganda in every-day life within their confined and committed network.

The union of the people holding parliamentary and puritan causes after the Civil War has been very known and researched. But the information is limited to renowned families and doesn't extend well into the eighteenth century. In this report, I will show a kinship network including less famous but more numerous families, which continued from 1660s to the early nineteenth century.

The research of the puritan network after the Civil War is important not only for the religious history but for the political history. Because the people belonging to the network were the political dissents as well as the religious dissents. Before the Glorious Revolution, the Presbyterians expected to be comprehended to the established church, but after it only the tolerance protected them and the Congregationalists alike. These dissenters had no choice but to support the whig party whose policy was the freedom of conscience. As a result, the dissenters became very steady and consistent supporters of the whig party. The Whig party, which understood the situation, kept in touch with the dissenters' pressure group and sometimes employed their propaganda for itself.

The puritan network in the early modern British world is also important for the economic and colonial history. It included lots of overseas traders whose grandparents were the first generation of the American colonization in pursuit of providence in the new world. Their posterity continued to commit the colonies and pursued the profit rather than providence but kept the ancestral ideal for a long time.

I think it important to demonstrate how big the puritan network formed after 1660 was and how long it continued. Because the bigger and the longer it was, the more significantly it effected the British history.

In this lecture, I will show a family network story, starting from several London merchant families and extending to the nonconformist ministers and gentries, including the Cromwell family. At the end of the story, I will also show how the network broke down and transformed into the ordinary Anglican middle class in the course of the nineteenth century.

## SESSION 4

### PROVIDENCE AND PRAGMATISM IN ENGLISH GLOBAL EXPANSION

#### **Forging English Supremacy in Early Edo Japan**

*WANG, Christy, The University of Tokyo, Japan*

Secondary literature on English trade in early Edo Japan has long emphasised the absence of evangelical zeal and the predominance of commercial pragmatism, underscoring the adaptability of religious governance within the English overseas world. Whilst evangelism was never a priority, this paper argues that English merchants in Japan nevertheless mobilised providential rhetoric and religious polemic in three key ways.

First, they deployed anti-Catholic tropes—invoking the Gunpowder Plot, denouncing Jesuit treachery, and even circulating polemical imagery—to portray Catholic traders as seditious and destabilising, thereby presenting England as the safer and more politically compatible Christian trading partner. Second, in rivalry with the Dutch, Richard Cocks and his colleagues boasted of England's status as the greatest Christian monarchy, framing Dutch competition as deceit and ingratitude against their former protector. Third, in correspondence with patrons in London, Cocks repurposed the same providential and polemical language to stir anti-Dutch sentiment and encourage a rethinking of English collaboration with the Dutch in Asia, suggesting that Company policy itself required adjustment.

By reassessing Cocks' diaries and letters, this paper demonstrates how providence, propaganda, and polemic intersected in Japan. English merchants neither preached nor proselytised, but instead performed a politically compatible Protestant identity. In Edo Japan, providential discourse became a diplomatic and rhetorical currency—one that sought to secure favour with Tokugawa officials, discredit rivals, and mobilise strategic shifts at home.

#### **From Providence to Penitence: Thomas Gage, Architect of the Western Design**

*LAY, Paul, University of St Andrews, Scotland; University of Buckingham, England*

Thomas Gage, a former Catholic priest, Habsburg subject, and surveyor of the Spanish New World, became, on his return to England, an unlikely, but zealous ally of Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell, playing a crucial role in the creation of what was to become Britain's Caribbean empire. Yet it did not appear so at the time, and he would never realise his impact, for his unlikely encounters with Cromwell led to his own death and would deal a lingering, mortal blow to the Protectorate regime, when the project he had seeded – the Western Design, Cromwell's attempt to take the Spanish Caribbean island of Hispaniola – ended in catastrophe, humiliation and recrimination – with the compensation, unheralded at the time, of the capture of Jamaica. When in October 1655 news had reached Cromwell of the failure of the project he owed to Gage, the Protector turned penitent before his God: 'We have provoked the Lord and it is good for us to know so, and to be abased for the same ... we should ... lay our mouths ... in the dust,' he said. God was punishing England, His chosen people, for their sinfulness, their hubris, a people, in Cromwell's memorably uncomfortable line, 'circumcised, but raw'. The English were on their way to the promised land, but they were not there yet. A moral reformation would be enforced and sinfulness punished, by Cromwell's Major-Generals, who divided England and Wales between them in order to enforce the crackdown. In doing so, the seeds of the regime's downfall were sown. Thomas Gage proved to be a man of unintended and profound consequence.

## **The Pragmatism of Providence: The Reformation Psalter Heritage of the Massachusetts Bay Colony**

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The Massachusetts Bay Colony was a community consisting initially of non-separatist Puritans whom the Anglican bishop William Laud had persecuted in England, treating their beliefs as a heresy which departed from mainstream Anglicanism. The community was influenced by the religious ideology and practices of Jean Calvin of the Continental Reformation. Amongst these was psalmody based on vernacular translations of the psalter. It was part of a process of seeking salvation as the providence of God, but also employed a pragmatic usage of elements familiar to a wider audience.

The practice of psalmody in the vernacular language of the seventeenth-century Anglo-Atlantic community of English non-conformist reformers had been a part of wider English Protestantism since at least the sixteenth century. This is evidenced in the *Whole Booke of Psalmes* (1549) in Geneva, influenced by the “Genevan Psalter,” *Aulcuns Pseaulmes et cantiques mys en chant* (1539), through to the “Bay Psalme Booke” or *The Whole Booke of Psalmes: Faithfully Translated into English Metre* (1640). This psalmody tradition employed linguistic aspects such as verse meter being adapted to styles familiar to lay people, including the English ballad form. As well as words, the musical component of the psalters adopted accessible contemporary folk melodies in order to increase popularity through familiarity.

This paper examines such traceable pragmatism within the practice of the psalter and psalmody across the Atlantic, seeing it as an extension of the traditions already begun in English reformist Protestantism.

SESSION 5  
HISTORY WRITING, MEMORY, AND PROPAGANDA

**Rethinking John Knox's *Historie of the Reformation***

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In 1560, Scotland underwent a significant transformation as the Reformation Parliament embraced the Protestant faith, rejecting Catholic practices and the authority of the Pope. John Knox, a prominent figure among the Scottish reformers, regarded this pivotal decision as an act of divine providence. However, Richard Kyle argued that Knox's doctrine of divine providence was 'implicit rather than explicit,' revealing itself inconsistently throughout his writings.

As the Protestant movement gained momentum, some of its followers began to write their Reformation history. They sought justification for their movement and aimed to prove that their Protestant Church was the true one, distinguishing it from traditional Catholic narratives. During this period, historical writing from a Protestant perspective adopted new methodologies that emphasized the use of documents rather than relying solely on divine providence. Johann Sleidan, often regarded as the 'father of the Reformation,' attempted to produce a reliable history based on documents, presenting an accurate and impartial account, which enhanced the credibility of historical writing.

Knox also began composing his *Historie of the Reformation* around 1560, although a complete edition was not published during his lifetime. He wrote and revised the first four books, with a continuator completing the fifth book for publication in 1644. This work has often been regarded as both 'a form of autobiography' and a justification of contemporary events, reflecting Knox's sentiments against Catholicism. Hitherto-research has often undervalued Knox's *Historie* due to its 'inaccuracies, misconceptions and even deception.' However, recent scholarship has re-evaluated the text, acknowledging its literary merit and suggesting it is less autobiographical than previously believed.

This paper aims to contextualize Knox's *Historie* within the emerging field of Protestant historiography and to explore how the Reformation can be understood in light of God's providence within a specific historical setting.

***Eikon Basilike* and the Cult of King Charles the Martyr: From a Tyrant to a Martyr, or the Power of Propaganda**

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In 1648, Charles I was one of the most hated monarchs in England, leading to the Civil War and his execution. A year after, he became one of the most important martyrs of the English protestant church. This paper aims at exploring this transformation by analyzing the power of the royalist propaganda through *Eikon Basilike*. *Eikon Basilike*'s strength lies in the use of religion and providence to change the portrait/image of the king: he became a man and a christian more than a king, a man close to his subjects, using providential ideas to transform into a protestant model guiding his people in faith, and at the same time restoring his reputation, changing forever the game of royal representation. Public opinion definitely played an important role in this transformation, since king Charles I entered into popular culture and into the domestic sphere. Readers, probably more than authors, shaped the new image of Charles. This book not only changed the way people saw the king, but also changed the way monarchy worked in England,

people being now involved in public sphere. If providence was also a key theme used by Cromwell at the same time, it was much more successful for the king, probably because the royalist knew they had to create something different, to touch the people's heart and be sure that the king's name and memory would never die.

### **God's Grace in Catholic Civil War Memory in Restoration Ireland**

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This paper investigates how a Restoration Catholic polemical account of the Irish civil wars in the 1640s invoked God's grace to explain the author's and his allies' past actions, thereby counterarguing their contemporary criticisms from Catholic opponents in the Restoration politics. Historians of early modern Irish Catholicism have analysed providentialism within the context of confessional politics between Catholics and Protestants in the Catholic Reformation. Scholars of Catholic interpretations of the civil wars have observed that religious intellectuals appealed to divine punishment of Protestant heretics to argue that the wars were a holy war. In addition, Irish social historians have shown that tales of the gruesome deaths of greedy Protestant landowners circulated in both popular Catholic folk culture and print.

Compared with the inter-confessional religious politics, however, less attention has been paid to how providential ideas and language were employed within Catholic internal conflicts. In fact, the Restoration land settlement of the 1660s created decisive divisions among Catholic elites (laity and the clergy alike). In short, Catholics split into the 'possessed' and the 'dispossessed' in the period. Accordingly, by analysing the polemical work *The History of the Late Warre in Ireland* (1674) written by a Catholic landowning gentleman Richard Bellings (1604–1677), this study will argue that Bellings deployed providential language to vindicate his past actions during the civil wars in order to respond to his political opponents who criticised political and economic profit Bellings realised through the land settlement in the 1660s.

By doing so, this analysis reveals how Catholic landowning laity employed ideas of God's grace to criticise the collapse of social order and to condemn unruly papal intervention in state politics. This study further suggests that providential language was central to the religio-political thinking of the laity in their criticism of the papacy during the Catholic Reformation.

## KEYNOTE LECTURE 4

### **‘Daily make up your accounts between God and your own soul’: Presbyterianism, Profit and Political Activism in the English Revolution**

*HUGHES, Ann, University of Keele, England, Emerita*

This plenary uses a biographical case study or ‘micro-history’– of the London Presbyterian Walter Boothby (1600-1669) – to address the rich scholarship on zealous Protestantism and economic change derived ultimately from Max Weber, and the specific arguments of Robert Brenner on mercantile alignments during the English Revolution.

Walter Boothby was a member of the Haberdasher’s Company and a Merchant Adventurer, and so, in Brenner’s terms, an ‘old merchant’. He was a Common Councilman in the City of London from 1642-9; a supporter of parliament’s war effort, notably as a member of a Presbyterian-sympathising syndicate of Customs Commissioners between 1645-9. He has also left two remarkable volumes of religious writing, largely of sermon notes from a life-time of attending and recording godly Puritan preaching. I will use this material, supplemented by surviving correspondence, to explore the implications of Boothby’s religious culture for his family life and for his activity as a public man in his company, his parish, the city of London and in the parliamentary war effort. Boothby’s own writings suggest that all aspects of his life were suffused by his Calvinist piety: he cautioned his son, that ‘your faithfulness and diligence in your place and calling will be a buckler to you against all storms whatsoever, my mother had wont to say to me, be honest, and though poor you need not fear, or be ashamed to look any in the face’.

On this basis, I will consider how the Boothby example complicates Brenner’s account of how London merchants divided over religion and the measures to fight the war against the king; and what it can tell us about the tensions between spiritual zeal, political engagement and economic advantage. Finally, I will return to the still thought-provoking work by Max Weber on the relationships between Calvinist divinity and ‘worldly asceticism’, a matter which clearly exercised Boothby himself.