

The Formation of Nation-States and the Remembrance of the Reformation. Interpretations and Instrumentalisations of Reformation and Catholic Reform in the 19th and 20th century Conference at the German Historical Institute in Paris, 14-16 March 2018

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The confessional divide between Protestantism and Catholicism was an important factor in the emergence of (language-based) national identities and the European nation-state. These nation-states had to be reconstituted after the Napoleonic wars: New state structures, among them also bi-confessional ones, emerged. The Nation as the ideal foundation of political constitution had to be defined also in relation to religious classifications. Religious legitimation of statehood was confirmed anew in 1815, but was also challenged by modern forms of justification of rule. In the context of the continued formation of national identities in the 19th and 20th centuries, the Reformation and the Catholic Reform played an important role. Prominent examples are Treitschke's 1883 speech on the occasion of Luther's 400th birthday and the celebration of the 1917 Luther anniversary during World War I. Protestantism was glorified as the "German Religion" and did not only impact in a lasting manner the self-perception of Germans, but also their perception from abroad. At the same time, the remembrance of catholic renewal and self-affirmation contributed to the creation of "new" nations such as Ireland and Poland. Such instrumentalisation was not limited to concrete historic events and their consequences. It also left a long-lasting mark on categories of perception by introducing concepts such as obedience, freedom, sense of duty, diligence and hard work, and so on.

The conference at the German Historical Institute in Paris (14-16 March 2018) aims to interrogate the role of scholarly and popular remembrance of Reformation and Catholic Reform and its cultural heritage in the conflict-rich process of the formation of nation-states in the 19th and 20th century. Five topics in particular should be explored:

1. The scholarly discourse in history and the humanities, in particular disputes about historical periods;
2. The artistic treatment of the subject, especially in history painting and music, but also in literature;
3. The culture of celebrations and remembrance, secular and religious;

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4. Processes of transmission and adoption in the diaspora and overseas communities.
5. The short-term political instrumentalisation in politics and the media.

Conference languages: German, French and English.

Please submit your proposal (2000 characters) before **1 august 2017** to the following mail-address:

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