The Architecture of Conversion in Early Modern Europe

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Plenary:
Martyrs, Relics and the Conversion of Medieval Mosques in Early Modern Spain
Antonio Urquízar-Herrera (UNED Madrid)

This paper explores the conversion of medieval mosques into churches in Early Modern Spain. Particularly, it examines how architectural spaces were redefined through religious narratives connected to the memory of the pre-Islamic Christian martyrs, as well as the emergence of a certain understanding of the buildings as relics of that pre-Islamic Christianity in Córdoba, Seville and Granada. The discussion combines historical, religious and literary sources such as Ambrosio de Morales, Andrés Morgado, Francisco Bermúdez de Pedraza, Pablo de Céspedes, Pedro Díaz de Ribas and Martín de Roa's writings. Ultimately, the paper reveals the deep entanglement of history and architecture in shaping local and national identity in the religious crossroads of Early Modern Spain.

The Architecture of Conversion in London, 1530-1600

John Schofield, City of London Archaeology Trust

This paper is about some of the architectural changes to monastic sites in and around the City of London in the period 1530 to 1600, following the dissolution of monasteries in England and the Reformation of parish churches (1532-50). Since London had at least 23 monastic houses and over 100 parish churches, I must be very selective. The paper is about one sub-group of former monastic houses, those which were each turned into a mixture of a grand house and smaller housing which generated income. At two sites, the grand house included a gallery of royal proportions, and there may have been other noble architectural touches; we can call them urban palaces. From the 1570s there was a new idea of laying out of whole streets within the former religious precinct; sometimes one street, or in one case several parallel streets. Each site was different, but all were constrained by the previous medieval monastic topography.

Storms and steeples in Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

Stewart Mottram, University of Hull

King Lear has been called a 'godless' play. However, when Lear, in act 3.2, calls on the storm to 'spout | Till you have drenched our steeples', Lear's words echo a long tradition of disaster pamphlets that discern the actions of an angered God behind the drenching or damaging of steeples by storms in Shakespeare's day. Most early modern preachers and pamphleteers interpreted storm-damaged steeples as a clarion call for Shakespeare's contemporaries to amend their sinful lives. Yet there was significant disagreement over whose sins were to blame for the floods, winds, and lightening that drenched, toppled, and burned church steeples in Shakespeare's lifetime. From the 1560s onwards, the storm-damaged steeple became a site of inter-confessional contestation, a space for writers to project their views on the justness (or otherwise) of reformation. This paper explores the polemical significance of

the storm-damaged steeple in both early modern disaster pamphlets and King Lear, arguing that a new attentiveness to storms and steeples in Shakespeare's England can help shape a new understanding of Lear's storm, and of the role of God within Shakespeare's 'godless' play.

'Raised out of the Ruins': Converted Religious Houses in Reformation England
Harriet Lyon, University of Cambridge

There has long been a focus on monastic ruins in historical scholarship on the architectural legacies of the dissolution of the monasteries in England and Wales (1536–40). However, as many as half of all former religious houses were converted for new private or public uses after the dissolution. This paper explores the cultural significance of these converted properties in light of an ongoing Reformation. It finds traces of the nostalgic melancholy usually associated with ruins, but ultimately argues that conversions offer a glimpse into some of the altogether more complex ways in which contemporaries interacted with the remains of medieval Catholic architecture. In particular, it explores how converted monasteries prompted thinking about not only the past but also the future, both of the Reformation and of the individual, families, and communities who lived within and beyond their walls.

The Theatre and Curtain, Sybil Newdigate, and the End of Holywell Priory
Callan Davies, University of Southampton

This paper considers the origins of early modern playhouse sites from the perspective of the last keepers of religious houses in the years around England's dissolution of the monasteries. I begin playfully following the footsteps of Dame Sybil Newdigate, final prioress of the Augustinian Priory of St John the Baptist, Holywell, in Shoreditch, to consider the parcelling of commercial land that shaped the Curtain district and Theatre sites (so crucial to London's later entertainment industry and playhouses). In doing so, I show how a nascent entertainment hub developed from property transfers, architectural conversions, and urbanisation of the landscape.

'Strain[ing] [...] through Heaven's Gate': Depictions of Architectural Conversion in Andrew Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House' (1651)
Ella Alton, University of Sheffield

After the dissolution of the monasteries a great deal of ecclesiastical property was gifted by Henry VIII to aristocratic families old and new. Former convents and monasteries were converted into residential estates. Appleton House or 'Nunappleton' – the subject of Andrew Marvell's 1651 estate poem 'Upon Appleton House' – was one such case; it was a Cistercian priory until 1542, when it entered the Fairfax family in the wake of the dissolution. And yet, like many aspects of the Reformation, this succession was messier and more protracted than Henrician narratives of history suggest. These transactions – termed 'impropriation' – incurred suspicion and even accusations of sacrilege from surrounding communities. In 'Upon Appleton House', Marvell moves through space and time in Nunappleton's grounds. He recasts its acquisition from the Catholic church as a Protestant spiritual victory (paving the way for 'true' religion and family life), before reasoning with Fairfax's retirement from

the public sphere and ending on the family's hopes for the marriage and prosperity of the sole heir and daughter, Mary ('Maria') Fairfax, to whom Marvell was tutor. This paper examines Marvell's depiction of architectural conversion in Reformation England. Critics have struggled to interpret the first section of the poem, in which Marvell revisits the nuns who formerly inhabited the estate for a lengthy twenty-five stanzas. Marvell's nuns disrupt linear time, and motifs of their worship and recreation such as embroidered saints and Christ's briars leak out into his descriptions of the present-day estate; overall, I argue that Marvell struggles to assimilate Nunappleton's Catholic history into the literary ideal of the productive and forward-moving Protestant estate.

Profane Topography: The Architecture of Conversion and Early Modern Drama
Abigail Shinn, University of London

From the foundations of the Theatre to the rehearsal space at the priory of St John and the indoor playhouse carved out of Blackfriars, early modern play was often steeped in the memory of post-Reformation reuse. This paper will argue that dramatists in the 1590s and 1610s often drew attention to play's use of converted architecture when considering the performativity of religious change and the legacy of the dissolution. I will use the drama *Arden of Faversham* as a case study, focusing on the play's use of material hauntings and agentive matter when depicting the murder of Thomas Arden in his home, a building which was formerly Faversham Abbey's guesthouse.

Synagogue, Church, Temple: St Sauveur, Orléans and Reformed Worship, c. 1563–69
Andrew Spicer, Oxford Brookes

The increasing militancy of the Reformed movement in France during the late 1550s and early 1560s led their adherents to seize Catholic places of worship for their services. In some instances, the Reformed negotiated to take over little used churches or parts of religious buildings. There were even instances where the Reformed proposed and did share a place of worship. Elsewhere, the violent seizure of churches was accompanied with outbursts of iconoclasm as the buildings were adapted for Reformed services. The first part of the paper will explore this broader context of the takeover and adaptation of Catholic spaces for Reformed worship. After the first religious war, the edict of Amboise (1563) appointed royal commissioners to determine appropriate locations for worship. The second part of the paper will focus on the chapel of St Sauveur, Orléans. The building had formerly been a synagogue and was located close to where a ritual murder had taken place in c. 1182. With papal approval the synagogue was converted into a chapel in 1193 but in 1563 was assigned to the Reformed as one of their places of worship in the city. Although the archival record is fragmentary, the example of St Sauveur illustrates the architecture of conversion and religious memory.

Buckland Abbey and the Conversion of Architecture
Lee Morrissey, Clemson University

Buckland Abbey, today a National Trust property in Yelverton, England, is a vector, a place where extant, gathering sixteenth-century forces coalesced and spun outwards from England, repeatedly. As I will review in my proposed illustrated presentation, some of those developments are visible in the remarkable conversions performed on the Abbey building itself. In its long-inaccurate name, Buckland Abbey records one of the biggest changes of sixteenth-century England, Henry VII's Reformation of the English state—its conversion into a splintering Protestant, reformed faith. Two years after its 1539 dissolution as a monastery, Buckland Abbey was sold to Sir Richard Grenville. Roger, a son of the new owner, moved in immediately, but he died in a 1645 naval battle, commanding the *Mary Rose* (a warship lifted in 1982 from the silt into which she sank in the Solent). In 1550, on the death of Richard, Buckland Abbey passed to his grandson, Roger's son, Richard, then seven years old.

In the early 1570s, Richard Grenville the younger returned to Buckland Abbey and converted the Abbey into a home. Grenville removed the transepts, walled in the space under the former church's exposed arches, and inserted floors in the tower that stood at the midpoint of the intersection of the abandoned church's transept and nave.

On the newly installed, converted ground floor of Buckland Abbey, Grenville made a surprising Renaissance insertion (and assertion) in the former medieval Church building. In my presentation, I will review features of this early entrant in English Renaissance interior design.

The Great Hall at Buckland Abbey features extraordinary plaster friezes above the fireplace (the date 1576, etched in plaster, indicates the date of the work, which survives to this day). The new room, a kind of map room, imagines the rest of the world, and casts it as plaster illustrations inside a converted church. It enacts, I argue in my larger project, a set of fantasies informing English plantation processes: the hope of representing the world, maybe even of containing it through representations; the understandable belief that trade will connect the world, represented in Buckland's Great Hall by the lines crisscrossing the ceiling connecting the across the room; and of course, the conviction that Catholic structures could be reformed—converted—into Protestant and maybe Renaissance ones. Part of the fantasy then, involves an ambiguous temporality: reforming, renovating, and converting, but also medievalist (a combination we can see in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*). At Buckland, sold to Sir Frances Drake not long after its conversion for the Great Hall, the Renaissance and the modern emerge in the interstices of the medieval, by then a remnant discarded by a state intent on modernizing through Reformation, or a kind of conversion.

The Dissolution Years: Local Society, Augmentations, and the Negotiation of Monastic Legacy in Urban Environments
Isla Dixon Dawson, Bristol University

The Dissolution of the Monasteries in England and Wales between 1536-1539 has been characterised by the destruction of great churches and domestic architecture. It has been forgotten in most histories of the subject that the early years of Dissolution also saw a significant movement to reuse the buildings and precincts of monasteries that had been embedded in towns and cities for centuries. This paper examines the ways in which communities surrounding dissolved monasteries re-occupied and reused monastic sites, legitimately and with the cooperation of the Court of Augmentations. It focuses on the dynamic between these parties, drawing out the agency that individuals and institutions in local societies had in negotiating the use of space after the Dissolution, and emphasising that Augmentations both expected monastic sites to be reused and was willing to be lead by those who were more familiar with them. These examples also expand attention on late medieval

monasteries beyond their internal religious lives, to extend our understanding of their roles in the social and economic existence of the localities they were embedded in and thus our understanding of the impact of Dissolution on localities across the country. The sum of these conclusions will also open questions on periodisation, re-figuring the Dissolution as a process rather than an event, drawing out courses of action by which the effects of the Dissolution were dealt with, and in doing so, expanding the periodisation of the Dissolution as a historic moment.

Lacock Abbey
Sophie Anderson, Cambridge University

Following both acts of dissolution, the problem of what to do with the former monasteries was answered via many routes. Many of these large, often rural, structures were purchased for their building or lands, or granted by the King to those in his favour. The architectural adaptation of around 210 former monasteries into houses in the years following the Reformation provide interesting insight to the complexity of the period. The case of Lacock Abbey in Wiltshire especially illustrates complexity through its first lay owner, Sir William Sharington. The style which Sharington chose for his renovations and additions, and the stonemason who carried out Sharington's renovations, John Chapman, contribute to the intrigue of adjusting a sacred space following the Reformation.

Sir William Sharington embezzled funds from the Bristol Mint while he was treasurer and got caught up in a plot to overthrow Edward Seymour as Lord Protectorate of Edward VI. Sharington was part of an influential group that is considered to have brought Italianate architecture to England that included John Dudley with Dudley Castle, John Thynne with Longleat, Thomas Seymour's Sudeley Castle, and Edward Seymour's Somerset House. The unique stonemason used by Sharington was also commissioned as master mason at both Dudley and Sudeley Castles. The primary sources indicate Chapman was hired for his skill in crafting their style of choice: the Italianate. All of these archival layers are compounded by the architectural findings of design decisions made by Sharington in his selective employment of the Italianate style, the return to a vernacular architectural style in some scenarios, and Sharington's distinct choices in demolishing and adding to the former monastery.

Arche-textures – the legacy of Erfurt's *Altesynagoge*. Reconfiguration and Reformation Thought in Early Modern Thuringia.
Adam Blitz, Technical Evaluation Mission Expert, International Council on Monuments and Sites

This paper draws upon a technical evaluation by the International Council on Monuments and Sites as part of the State Party's submission for World Heritage inscription. It explores the relationship between the architecture and urban geography of Erfurt's mediaeval synagogue. First, this paper chronicles 550 years and seven phases of repurposing. Second, it considers the legacy of the synagogue's 16 Hebrew manuscripts. This research affirms the importance of this structure, its intactness and unique location.

Dendrochronological dating posits a date of 1094 for the inception of Jewish existence until the Black Death pogrom (1349). Thereafter the site was converted into a storehouse while the manuscripts were requisitioned by the City Council. A vaulted cellar

destroyed the synagogue's *bema*. The Torah ark was obliterated by a portal for carts. After this phase, the building operated as ballroom, skittles alley and restaurant.

The earliest modern reference dates from 1861. However, the synagogue was not recognisable within the dense cityscape. The monument was thus spared the fate of other sites during *Kristallnacht.*

The manuscripts survived a second time when the scholar Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522) petitioned the university to contest the 'Padua Mandate' which sought the destruction of all Jewish books except the Bible. In 1680 the Orientalist Matthias Friedrich Beck produced a Latin translation from the corpus. Later, a major development occurred with the *Hebrew Bible* (1720) of Halle's Johannes Heinrich Michaelis and his examination of Erfurt codices. Similarly, the *Vesta Testamentum* of the English Hebraist Benjamin Kennicott (1776-1780), also cited the manuscripts.

Given the extraordinary preservation, the evidence for the pogrom within the fabric of the structure and the patrimony of the manuscripts, Erfurt's *Altesynagoge* is prime example of how *materiality* can illuminate shared and contested voices.

A "big, spacious, and beautiful church": Catholic clandestine churches in the eighteenth-century province of Holland
Jaap Geraerts, Mainz

At least theoretically, by and large religious minorities in the Dutch Republic were forced to practice their faith in the private sphere. Only the public practice of Reformed Protestantism was permitted and the Dutch Reformed Church zealously guarded the dominance it enjoyed. In reaction to this "religious regime," Dutch Catholics and other minorities started to establish their own religious infrastructure in the form of clandestine or house churches, established in buildings whose outward appearance did not betray their religious function. While this central architectural feature of clandestine churches is well known, other aspects including their size, number of windows, and location, have received less attention. On the basis of a unique corpus of sources – requests for obtaining permission to renovate or construct clandestine churches, which sometimes included drawing and ground plans – this paper investigates the architectural characteristics of Catholic clandestine churches in the province of Holland in the eighteenth century. Did their architectural features change over time and why? Were Catholics living in Holland able to mark their presence in the variegated religious landscape of the Dutch Republic through their clandestine churches? Based on ongoing research, this paper aims to provide (tentative) answers to these and related questions in order to shed more light on the architectural presence of Catholics living in the eighteenth-century province of Holland.

"Blessed be the Architect": Spatial Poetics in George Herbert's 'Church Floor'
Hannah Kirwan, UC Berkeley

The English Reformation was a cultural, architectural revolution, as well as a spiritual shift. The rich images and materials that filled the Catholic churches were thrown out and destroyed: in place of stained glass and painted statues, the Anglican church centred the word of God. Language became the richest kind of material, following this shift, and the poets who wrote in this time worked to build with it. Poets became *makers* in this period, fulfilling the promise in the etymology of their title: in place of broken stone and glass, the poem could stand as a new kind of devotional object.

Remembering and transmuting the physical space of the church, George Herbert's poems in *The Temple* are a superlative example of work that builds like this. In my paper, I will present a reading of Herbert's poem, 'The Church Floor', to illustrate my theory of the relationship between two kinds of space: the material space of the church, and the abstract space of the poem. I will examine how rhyme and metre, in Herbert's poem, function as architectural principles – mapping out the foundation he describes.

Roisin Watson, Open University
Consecration sermons and defining Lutheran church space

Once seen as a purely functional space for worship, the Lutheran parish church has increasingly been viewed as a site for building community, defining local power dynamics, establishing confessional hierarchies and challenging confessional competition. This paper considers how pastors used consecration sermons to define Lutheran church space in sixteenth and seventeenth century Germany. It steps away from debates about the sacrality of the parish church to explore the ways in which pastors understood the physical church to be a reflection of the structure of the spiritual church, rooted in its congregation and its rituals. The appearance and design of the church, although in many cases inherited from Catholic predecessors, became an important component in the way Lutheran communities presented themselves to both their peers and to their confessional opponents. The printed consecration sermon became an important tool in promoting these messages, particularly in the seventeenth century as pastors departed from the model left for them by Luther himself.