2012 Harvard-Princeton Conference Abstracts

Alex Bevilacqua (Princeton)
"Translating Islam in the European Enlightenment"
By the end of the Enlightenment period, European knowledge of Islam had greatly increased. It became possible to write about the religion with explicit sympathy, and even to consider the Qur'ân a masterpiece of world literature. Moreover, thanks to an explosion in vernacular translations of the Qur'ân, the Word of God as dictated to Muhammad by the angel Gabriel was available to a greater number of Europeans than it ever had been. The purpose of this essay is to examine some key moments in this intellectual transition, beginning in Rome in the latter half of the 17th century and ending in London during the 1730s, and focusing on the efforts of Arabic scholars and Qur'ân translators.

Alex Bick (Princeton)
"Free Trade and African Slavery: the Politics of Monopoly in the Dutch Republic, 1636-38."
Shortly after the Dutch West India Company captured Recife and Olinda in northeastern Brazil in 1630, a conflict broke out over whether trade to the new colony should be left open to all citizens of the United Provinces or reserved exclusively for the company. This conflict pitted so-called "free traders" from Amsterdam against defenders of the company's monopoly based primarily in Zeeland, with each side articulating its arguments in widely circulated printed pamphlets. These pamphlets have been studied as an exceptional example of public discourse over commercial policy in the Dutch Republic and as a source for the subsequent development of a theory of free trade. The paper re-examines the debate in light of previously unexplored manuscript sources in the company archives, private minutes from the States of Holland, and secret reports generated by representatives of the States General. By looking at the give and take of practical negotiation, and at compromise rather than rhetoric, it shows how the company was convinced to abandon its monopoly over trade to Brazil in return for a new monopoly on the trade in slaves. This finding challenges the dominant explanation for Dutch entry into the slave trade and raises troubling questions about the relationship between free trade theory and the projection of Dutch power.

Frederic Clark (Princeton)
"*Nuda Nomina* and the "Injuries of Time": Visualizing Transmission in Late Humanist Scholarship"
Many traditional narratives of the Renaissance "discovery" of Greco-Roman antiquity detail the recovery of an increasingly singular past—a bounded world revivified through notions of *renovatio* and *ad fontes* and defined by an ever-narrowing literary canon. However, as more recent work has made clear, early modern classical scholars encountered antiquity as anything but monolithic: rather, they often imagined multiple antiquities defined by dialogue with one another, layered through numerous moments of late-classical and postclassical reception. Accordingly, this paper offers a brief survey of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century approaches to both the practical and theoretical problems raised by transmission, as it examines how scholars like Henri Estienne, Bonaventura Vulcanius, Pierre Daniel, Pierre Pithou and Isaac Casaubon turned to the oft-maligned corpus of late antique Latinity in search of fragments, echoes, or even mere references to earlier and otherwise lost authors and texts. In doing so, it traces how they

reanimated sources which, in Vulcanius' memorable formulation, were previously but *nuda nomina* or "naked names," thereby giving flesh to numerous pasts already valorized as "ancient" in the autumn of antiquity itself. In particular, this survey explores how the aforementioned scholars digested important "late" Latin authors – including Solinus, Servius, Macrobius, Priscian, and Isidore of Seville – whose compilatory projects had themselves preserved and unified the fragmentary relics of ancient literary culture. As argued here, their resultant theorization of transmission did not simply mark an important moment in the history of classical scholarship, but also played an oft-neglected role in the developing science of historical periodization, as early modern scholars began to visualize the movement of texts through time and divide *antiquitas* into distinctive moments of reception.

Will Deringer (Princeton)
""Calculated for the Publick Good": The Balance of Trade, Partisan Politics, and Economic Epistemology in 1713"
In the first issue of the polemical newspaper *Mercator* in May 1713, its author, political arithmetician Charles Davenant, set out to defend the British government's recent efforts to establish freer trade with France in the aftermath of the War of Spanish Succession. The *Mercator* explained that there was "not *a Negotiation entred into,* not *an Article concluded*, but carries with it the Demonstration of it being calculated for the Publick Good." In 1713, both Tory supporters and Whig critics of the pending Anglo-French commercial treaty marshaled numerical calculations as they debated what trade policy was best for the nation. These computational combatants called upon new sources of empirical data, developed new computational strategies for analyzing it, and, most importantly, contemplated new standards for what made legitimate knowledge about trade. These numerical arguments became a site for working out the social and epistemic anxieties that Britons had about who and what to trust in making judgments about the public good, especially in an increasingly complex, diversified, and international economy. Computations about the nation's "balance of trade" became political and epistemological balancing acts. Different political parties, social classes, commercial interest groups—not only did they carry different economic agendas, they also brought different attitudes about how the operations of the national and global economy ought to be understood. Was international trade policy, for example, a matter for expert analysis or mercantile common sense? My paper will explore the critical intersection between political controversy and practical epistemology, examining how British people in 1713 thought about their own needs and abilities to understand the world economy. It will especially trace how the different epistemological positions adopted by the Whig and Tory parties both motivated an interest in specifically *numerical* knowledge, though for different reasons. In doing so, I will suggest how attendance to the historical problems of economic knowledge-making may help us rethink both the nature of party politics in post-1688 Britain, and the "mercantilism" that undergirded Britain's Atlantic empire in the eighteenth century.

Jens Eriksson (Harvard)
"Print Errors in the Enlightenment Public Communication and Print Quality in Germany during the Eighteenth-Century"
This paper examines quarrels in eighteenth century Germany between print shop workers, readers, booksellers and authors over the declining quality of books printed in the Holy Roman Empire. The list of signs which participants in the communications circuit of Enlightenment

Germany identified as symptoms of national deterioration included all aspects of the book in its material objectivity. The experience of national print quality decay found its perhaps most memorable expression in Christian Täubel's comparison between readers of German books and guests invited to an extravagant and nutritious dinner in a luxurious palace that turns out to be "a dark, small and dirty hut". The thrust of Täubel's depressing metaphor points out that experiences of imminent decay took place in a perceived gap between expectations on and the realities of a book market that published "spiritually elevated works" with substandard typography, paper quality, and print error correction. Insufficient resources for print error correction seem to have been especially vexing of these shortcomings. A perusal of the reviews section in German eighteenth century journals yields countless examples of complaints arguing that books printed in Germany contained more confusing print errors than books manufactured in other countries. The perhaps most notable figure to make this claim was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In an 1789 essay, "Schreib-, Hör- und Druckfehler," Goethe argues that "Germany lags far behind every other nation" in terms of print error correction. The cultural history of print error in Enlightenment Germany remains, like Goethe's now forgotten print error essay, to be fully contextualized. In this presentation, I depart from the scattered remarks that do exist to situate the topic as a potentially fruitful avenue for examining issues related to public communication, printing processes and knowledge circulation. My task will be to show that the cultural history of print error in Germany during the eighteenth century offers an exciting opportunity to update our growing understanding of the sociability of print media with new information regarding the cultural embeddedness of communications media in Enlightenment Germany.

Valeria Escauriaza-Lopez (Princeton)
"Francisco Hernandez and Dionysius the Areopagite"
The writings of the Christian Neo-Platonist philosopher known as Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite- dismissed as the creations of a "forger" by Lorenzo Valla in 1457, John Grocyn in 1501, and Erasmus in 1504- left a profound imprint on the meditations of some of the most important figures of sixteenth-century Spanish mysticism, precisely at a time of heightened Erasmianism. The influence of the Areopagite, however, seems to have stretched beyond the raptures of Teresa of Ávila or the poetry of John of the Cross. The botanist and doctor Francisco Hernández, better known for his translations and editions of the Pliny the Elder and for his massive compendium of New World plants, produced what was perhaps the first complete Spanish translation of the mystic's writings. Though it remained unpublished, the work survives as a folio volume and raises questions about the relationship between the Areopagite's theories of names, the limits of knowledge, as well as the doctor's own inquiries into the properties of plants and natural history in general.

Aslihan Gurbuzel (Harvard)
"Authorship and Textual Transmission in Islamic Mysticism: The Case of Ismail Ankaravi (d. 1631)"
In Islamic mysticism, textual authority was derived through connection with a "classical" mystical text. Whether it was a commentary or an independent text that was written, the writer claimed that he had access to 'the ultimate esoteric meaning' of a canonical text beyond its wording. It was the claim to this inexpressible meaning that enabled any textual alteration, or the production of new texts. Yet such claims were sidelined or contested at times, making it possible

to glean various assumptions that the learned community held about authorship and authority. In my paper, I will examine the specific case of Ismail Ankaravi (d.1631), an Ottoman mystic who is known for his commentary on Rumi (d.1273)'s canonical work, the Mathnawi. His attempt at expanding the Mathnawi to include a theretofore unacknowledged volume -most probably written in the fifteenth century- divided his contemporaries on the question of whether a sheikh (the head of a mystical order) could exercise such authority on the canon. I intend to show how the claim of Ankaravi and his proponents was based on a well-developed Sufi hermeneutics. In this scheme, since the ultimate truth was always only partially revealed in language, the expressible portion of it was bound to be re-articulated in different forms as history unfolded. The new re-articulations, if expressed by an authorized individual, would have the same textual authority as the canonical works. Through an analysis of Ankaravi's writings I aim to show the ways in which this hermeneutics was on the one hand defended and utilized, and on the other hand circumscribed. It was defended as the theoretical basis upon which the canon could be adapted to changing circumstances, such as new religious debates. But the flexibility had to be kept under control. Such control was maintained through an emphasis on literacy in a specific sense: having studied with a sheikh, which implied a combination of textual and oral literacy.

Heidi Hausse (Princeton)
"Repairing the Body: Prosthetics and Orthopedics in Early Modern Germany"
This paper will serve as a preliminary discussion of treating bodily injury and physical defects from the perspective of surgical treatises and field manuals from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Of special concern is the process of making the body whole through artificial means: attaching a prosthetic to replace a missing limb, or attaching an orthotic device designed to restore the strength and to correct the alignment of a limb. Treating a damaged body was not simply a matter of technical acts, but also required a surgeon's attention to the psychological well-being of patients. I plan to explore this connection between a patient's mental outlook and physical health in surgical manuals through references to an individual's experience of pain, and in courses of treatment inclusive of a patient's cosmetic concerns, particularly in cases of scar tissue.

Noah McCormack (Harvard)
"Was There a Whig Party in the 1690s? Religion, Party and the Division Between Early Modern and Modern in England"
For two generations scholars have thought that by the 1690s England was suffering from the "rage of parties", a novel form of social organization in which religion and status-power, while far from disappearing, became elements in political conflicts of Whig and Tory rather than the organizing forces themselves. It has been said that this politics was one "that stretched forward into the future", as opposed to the traditional "system that stretched back into the past". Recently, this has been challenged, with the assertion that scholars are committing a nominalist fallacy by accepting new names for what were really old religious conflicts, separating the late seventeenth century from its early modern context and implicitly or explicitly attaching it modernity. This paper will explore this debate, and demonstrate that there was a novel form of partisan politics in the 1690s, and that it is useful in delineating what it means to study "early modern" history.

Monica Poole (Harvard)
The Viral Pulpit: Multimedia, Social Media, and Early Modern English Sermons

The 17th century sermon was an early multimedia and social media experience. Using categories of analysis borrowed from contemporary media studies, this paper will discover and explain how 17th century sermons stimulated listeners on multiple sensory fronts in the moment when the sermon was spoken (hearing, seeing, reading, writing), how audience members created a "backchannel" of actions and conversations during the sermon, how sermons endured in recitations and conversations after the fact, how they were recapped and reinvented for a print readership, and how this unusual (for its time) multiplicity of media might have contributed to the centrality and power of the sermon in the 17th century English speaking world.

Meredith Quinn (Harvard)
"Books and Their Readers in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul"
The intellectual history of early modern Ottoman society has enjoyed a recent revival, but historians cannot understand the penetration of various intellectual currents or the significance of the texts we read unless we understand the material and social context of their circulation. This proposed dissertation project aims to offer a comprehensive portrait of Istanbul's manuscript culture in the seventeenth century. By analyzing who knew how to read, which audiences existed for various types of books, and how manuscripts were read, I will present a historically rooted context for Ottoman manuscript sources. This research will also contribute to the broader field of book history by depicting a flourishing early modern book culture based entirely on manuscript technology.

Margaret Schotte (Princeton)
""Good medium speed": Estimating Velocity on the High Seas"
The ability to estimate a vessel's speed, which enabled the navigator to compute the total distance of a day's journey, and consequently its current coordinates, was widely considered one of the most challenging conceptual skills on board an early modern ship. Drawing upon a variety of 17th- and 18th-century French, English and Dutch textbooks, this paper explores strategies for helping new navigators master this elusive yet essential competence, which could otherwise take years to learn. Some instructors offered instrumental solutions to this problem, while others felt that only repeated practice could develop the required intuition. Highlighting the complex interplay between human skills and technological solutions, this case study of technical pedagogy explores to what extent books could truly provide shortcuts to experience.

Tristan Stein (Harvard)
"Mutiny and Authority in the English Colony of Tangier"
This paper examines the persistent and fierce rivalry between civilian and military authorities that shaped the development of the English colony at Tangier between 1661 and 1684. Clashes between Tangier's civilian and military governments reveal that colonial mutinies and rebellions were more than the product of local tensions or contests between local and metropolitan authority. Instead, mutinies also functioned as sites of empire-building where imperial sovereignty was affirmed over colonies. Following the incorporation of the city of Tangier in 1668, tensions within the colony came to a head when Tangier's first mayor was chased out of town by the commander of the city's garrison and lieutenant governor. In the process, each side accused the other of seeking to overthrow legal authority in the city. This contest over dominance within Tangier did not rest on the opposition of central authority to peripheral power-holders; instead, both civilian and military officials claimed to be the legitimate representatives

of the Crown. Mutual accusations of mutinous behavior reveal the extent to which the political organization of the seventeenth-century English empire was fiercely contested. However, these disputes also reaffirmed royal sovereignty over colonies and highlighted the imperial context in which colonies developed.

Michael Tworek, (Harvard)
"In Search of *bonae artes*: Study Abroad and Climbing the Career Ladder from Poland to Italy and Back Again"
My paper will examine the role that education abroad played in the careers of two prominent Polish noblemen. I will use Jan Zamoyski (1542-1605) and Wawrzyniec Goślicki (1538-1607) as the main protagonists and their respective treatises, *De Senatu Romano* (1563) and *De optimo senatore* (1568) to unpack how their studies abroad influenced their social position, careers, and membership in local and European intellectual communities. I will argue that their studies abroad shaped their shared conviction that the *bonae artes*, namely a humanistic education, were the key to cultivation and maintenance of political success for the individual and a *res publica*. Written before their respective returns to Poland-Lithuania, the intellectual prowess Zamoyski and Goślicki displayed in these works, their *bonae artes*, enabled them to enter Polish-Lithuanian political life far higher up the career ladder than their origins as middling noblemen might have indicated. Study abroad also allowed them to create and maintain a rather particular community within Poland-Lithuania that relied upon study abroad and an intimate understanding of the PL political context. Furthermore, education facilitated their entry into and participation in a vast network of overlapping communities of humanists at home and abroad that in turn enabled them to have the ears of kings and princes, popes and reformers. Drawing on their works, I will illustrate how their Italian educations placed them within humanist networks and facilitated their subsequent careers as senators. Zamoyski later became the royal grand chancellor and one of the wealthiest magnates in Europe while Goślicki ended his career as an important bishop and diplomat. Although their political outlooks and opinions often differed, the two men found a common language through reference to their shared past of studying abroad. The example of Zamoyski and Goślicki will reveal the type of communities, at least one part of a larger web, that could be formed through a common interest in Renaissance humanism and suggest what intellectual, cultural, and social impact study abroad could have upon them and their society.