

Time Zones

14h00 EDT Eastern Daylight Time (Montreal)
= 19h00 British Summer Time (Cambridge)
= 20h00 Central European Summer Time (Munich)

11h00 EDT Eastern Daylight Time (Montreal)
= 16h00 British Summer Time (Cambridge)
= 17h00 Central European Summer Time (Munich)

10h00 EDT Eastern Daylight Time (Montreal)
= 15h00 British Summer Time (Cambridge)
= 16h00 Central European Summer Time (Munich)

PROGRAMME

SATURDAY, 19 JUNE

- 14h00 (EDT)** **First Session** **Platonism and the German Theology**
Chair: Garth Green
McConnell Professor of the Philosophy of Religion,
McGill University
- 14h00 14h25 **James Bryson**, Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich
Receiving the Reception: Franz von Baader's Anglophilia
- 14h25 14h50 **Douglas Hedley** (Clare College, Cambridge University)
The Cambridge Platonists and the German Theology
- 14h50 15h15 **Torrance Kirby** (McGill University)

MONDAY, 21 JUNE

**10h00 (EDT) Fourth Session German Mysticism in Cambridge
Platonism and American Puritanism**

Chair: Torrance Kirby

Professor of Ecclesiastical History, McGill University

10h00 10h25 **Simon Burton** (New College, University of Edinburgh)

*Cusan Astronomical Mysticism in the Samuel Hartlib Circle and
its Periphery*

10h25 10h50 **Joshua Hollmann** (Concordia College, New York)

*Image and invisibility: God, Christ and Creature in Nicholas
of Cusa's De visione Dei and Anne sa n*

The Reception of German Mysticism in Early Modern England funded by a SSHRC Insight Grant

Research Précis

The project consists in establishing the fundamental influence of German or Rhenish mysticism on English religious thought, chiefly in the 17th-century. The English reception of such German mystical authors as Meister Eckhart (c. 1260-1328), the anonymous author of *Theologia Germanica*, Johannes Tauler (c. 1300-1361), Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464), Sebastian Franck (c. 1499-1542), Hans Denck (1500-1527), Valentin Weigel (1533-1588), and Jakob Böhme (1575-1624), to mention just the most significant representatives of this tradition, has been hitherto little studied, or not studied at all. There are some notable exceptions, particularly the research of Douglas Hedley on the exceptional role of the Cambridge Platonists, especially of Henry More, in the dissemination of German mysticism in England in the seventeenth century, and Nigel *Perfection Proclaimed* (Oxford, 1989). This project will not only reconstruct for the first time the wide-ranging reception of these German thinkers in Early Modern England, but also show that it was through this reception that the influential tradition of 'German mysticism' was first created. For instance, while in 17th-century Germany the writings of the main figure of this tradition, Jakob Böhme, went underground because of accusations of heresy, in England they were keenly translated, commented upon, and considered in relation to other German writers who had also been translated at the same time, specifically Sebastian Franck and Valentin Weigel. Through their work, the English readers thus established a lineage that connected these thinkers, and that at the same time created a philosophical bridge between England and Germany. The project will highlight the international legacy of these authors by adopting the perspective of historico-philosophical engagement with the sources, placing them also in the theological milieu of their time.

Research and Conference Steering Committee

Garth Green
Douglas Hedley
Torrance Kirby

Paracelsus

Robert Fludd

Johannes Kepler

John Sparrow

ABSTRACTS

James Bryson, Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich

Living through the emergence and flowering of German Idealism, Franz von Baader (1765-1841) was one of the great scholars and interpreters of the late

ignorantia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In this paper I will examine aspects of this reception relating to both Puritans and Platonists in England and New England.

While the circle of intellectuals and reformers gathered around the Anglo-German intelligencer Samuel Hartlib is well known for its Neo-Platonic and hermetic interests, it is only relatively recently that the influence of Cusa on their thought has begun to be explored. By drawing attention to an astronomical MS written by the Silesian mystic Abraham von Franckenberg and conveyed to Hartlib this paper will highlight an important possible conduit for the reception of Cusan ideas. It

to his critical engagement with Copernicanism but also his mystical reconceptualising of the cosmos. Notably this not only invokes Cusa and his coincidence of opposites, but also Tauler, Bruno and Boehme. The paper will then

English and American Puritans on the periphery of both the Hartlib circle and Cambridge Platonism. Building on the recent work of Howard Hotson, Ariel Hessayon and others, it will thus aim to show the role of the Hartlib circle and wider Puritan networks in mediating German mysticism and Neo-Platonism to seventeenth-century England.

Fourth Session: German Mysticism in Cambridge Platonism and Anglo-American Puritanism

While Ernst Cassirer famously speculated on a connection between Cambridge

Douglas Hedley, Clare College, Cambridge University
The Cambridge Platonists and the German Theology

The influence of the anonymous late-medieval *Theologia Germanica* or *German Theology* upon the Cambridge Platonists is undeniable. Henry More refers explicitly to the formative influence of the *German Theology* upon his own development. Ralph Cudworth and John Smith refer to the central doctrine of the a key doctrine of the Eckhart school. Yet the nature of the influence of the *German Theology* upon the Cambridge Platonists remains opaque and puzzling. In this paper I attempt a sketch an account of the reception of the *German Theology* by the Cambridge Platonists.

Joshua Hollmann, Concordia College, New York

De visione Dei *Principia philosophiae antiquissimae et recentissimae de Deo, Christo et creatura id est de materia et spiritu in genere*

In *Anne Conway: A Women Philosopher*

Principia (1690) may have been influenced by the Christology of Nicholas of Cusa. Furthermore, Hutton notes that Conway had access to the writings of Nicholas of Cusa, notably his mystical masterpiece *De visione Dei* (1453).

De visione Dei *Principia*
through the nexus of image and invisibility as unfolded and enfolded in God,

and invisibility through the person and work of Christ in *De visione Dei* is discernable both in the structure of God, Christ and creature in the *Principia* and in the substance of the *Principia* on Christ as middle being between God and creatures. Both *De visione Dei* and the *Principia* themes of *complicatio-explicatio* and the *coincidentia oppositorum* in relation to Christ as middle being and communion of image and invisibility, matter and spirit.

focus on Christ as medium and image in the *Principia*

discussion of image and invisibility in Christ at the conclusion of *De visione Dei* (chapters 19-25), and the conception of Christ as the absolute and contracted maximum in his most famous work, *De docta ignorantia* (1440). Through comparing the perspectives of image and invisibility in the Christology of *De*

visione Dei and the Principia

Roman Church, in particular a treatise that takes as its starting point an icon? This paper suggests that the answer lies precisely in the use of the icon, focusing on *De Visione* was a missive to the monks of Tegernsee, and he included with it an icon meant for a spiritual exercise that would serve as introduction to the treatise. An omnivoyant image that seems to look back at the viewer no matter where one stands in relation to it, the icon inaugurates a radical equality and relation of experience and testimony among viewers. Each monk has the same singular relationship with the icon no matter where he stands, and can ask the others if they, too, see what he does. In this way, Cusa uses innovations in perspective to established a theology of unity and equality in difference that is highly attractive to an antinomian reformer.

Eric Parker

Boehme

In the remaining notebooks of Peter Sterry is a list of books that he kept in Chelsea during the year 1663 for the purpose of teaching a number of students there. Often numbered among the Cambridge Platonists, one modern author speculates that Sterry may have seen his educational work in Chelsea as a realization of a

Oliver Cromwell by Samuel Hartlib and John Dury to be established at Chelsea College. In the early 1640s Sterry was employed as chaplain to Lord Brooke, who was an early sponsor of Hartlib and Comenius in their visits to England. Among the books that Sterry kept in Chelsea were books that had also inspired Comenius:

Instauration as well as works by Plotinus, Proclus, Nicholas of Cusa, and

realities. To fully demonstrate how More addressed the latter point, this paper will

Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) and Jakob Böhme (1575-1624). Cusa shares with More a profound impetus to revitalize Platonic metaphysics for scientific

powerful ways. More learned from both Plotinus and Böhme in particular that embedded tropes in metaphysical thinking profoundly affect our conceptions of materiality. Cusa had faced this problem by pioneering a novel theory of Infinity to encapsulate the relationship between the transcendence of God and the immanence of the material world. Facing the new challenges of Baconian science and Spinozistic materialism, More achieved something quite remarkable by hybridizing Plotinian and Böhmenian insights to completely reframe the question

Marie-Élise Zovko, Institute of Philosophy, Zagreb

Individual Beings

bears important similarities to the philosophy of Platonism embodied in Plotinus and the Neoplatonist

Cartesian stance is generally also applied to Spinoza or Spinozism; but this generalization belies fundamental similarities between Spinoza and Conway, similarities rooted in their shared philosophica

tendencies emerged under the influence of Kabbalist doctrine contained in the *Kabbala denudata*, as mediated to her through her friend and physician, Francis Mercury van Helmont. What is less

Kabbalah, *Puerto del Cielo (Gate of Heaven)*.*

disciple Israel Sarug during his sojourn in Ragusa (present-day Dubrovnik) at the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century, was guided by his understanding

* *Porta coelorum*. Abridged Latin translation of *Sefer Ša'ar ha-Šamayin*, by Christian Knorr von Rosenroth, in *Kabbala denudata* (Sulzbach 1678)cf. Krabbenhoft, *Gate of Heaven*, xxi. Two manuscripts of *Puerto del Cielo* and one of *Casa de la divinidad* – from the hand of Samuel David Curiel, in 1675, and Samuel Abaz George

NOTES