



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

INSTITUT D'HISTOIRE
DE LA RÉFORMATION

Institut d'histoire de la Réformation



SUMMER COURSE 2019

From 11 to 15 June

God in History

**Writing the past in the Reformed culture, between factual narrative and
sacred history**

University of Geneva

Institut d'histoire de la Réformation

5 rue De-Candolle, CH – 1211 Genève 4

The Institut d'histoire de la Réformation is an interdisciplinary research centre at the University of Geneva specialising in the history of the Reformation era broadly understood. Research fields of its members range from the history of Biblical exegesis and of philosophy to socio-cultural and political history.

As well as its own library, the Institute houses the book and manuscript collections of the Musée Historique de la Réformation (16,000 volumes) and is in close proximity to the University Library (over 1,5 million volumes of printed books and manuscripts) and the Geneva State Archives.

Located in the historic core of the University, the Institute provides excellent conditions for research in the above-mentioned subjects. Since 1999 it has been running an annual summer course for graduate students or recent post-docs in the fields of History, Philosophy, Literature and Theology.

Course description and aims

The aim of the course is to deepen students' knowledge of a particular topic and to enable them to consider its wider implications via access to primary sources and working tools that are less readily available elsewhere. Particular attention will be paid to methods of studying intellectual history.

Throughout the course, students will have direct contact with faculty members. A certificate of successful completion will be issued on request, if there is clear evidence of active participation in the afternoon seminars and of careful reading of assigned texts. Students in a Master's program may receive a certain number of credits. These could be conditional on extra assignments, depending on the requirements of their own university.

Applicants can combine, if possible, attending the course with a longer stay devoted to their own research. The Institute may offer financial assistance for those whose own resources or university programs do not permit them to pay for a longer stay in Geneva, of course only to the extent that such a stay is necessary for their research. For more details regarding financial aspects, please see below.

Summer Course 2019

God in History

Writing the past in the Reformed culture, between factual narrative and sacred history

June 11-15, 2019

Instructors: Daniela Solfaroli Camillocci, Paul-Alexis Mellet, Ueli Zahnd

In the context of the twentieth anniversary of the Summer courses of the IHR, the theme “God in History” questions the different ways of writing the past in the Reformation era and during the first part of the 17th century. How is divine intervention represented in the course of history? What means of action (providence) are attributed to God?

First of all, the aim of the course is to understand how the link between sacred and secular history is considered in the first narratives of the origins of the Reformation. What is the specific relationship between the actors-witnesses/historiographers and their subject of investigation? How do the narrative devices, which are meant to remain as neutral as possible, reveal to the reader an act of divine providence, and present it in the most “objective” way, so that it can then be considered as “real”? Which scriptural passages and examples are used in the historiographies published during and immediately after the religious conflicts in Europe, in order to justify these armed conflicts or debates of ideas? How do the various historiographies of martyrs and of church persecutions inspire family/personal memories, by identifying traces of God’s providence for his people/believers?

Finally, this course aims to interrogate through the questions raised by these historical accounts, the problematic of the time itself, i.e. the relation of the present (and its transcription) to a constantly redefined past. From this point of view, the comparison between Catholic and Protestant narratives is meaningful. Catholic writings refer to the tradition (temporal continuity) and Protestant writings refer to the Church of the origins (temporal anteriority). By focusing on diverse writers-actors' methodological questions, as well as on the different literary genres which allow committed writing practices, this course will underline the theological, political, social and philosophical aims of these accounts and help to better understand their circulation and dissemination in the European Reformed culture.

Programme

Tuesday 11 June : Introduction – “God in History”

(Daniela Solfaroli Camillocci, Paul-Alexis Mellet and Ueli Zahnd).

➤ Seminar — Study of selection of relevant texts.

Wednesday 12 June : Providential history, objective history: the Reformed historiography in Switzerland (Ueli Zahnd).

➤ Seminar — Study of selection of relevant texts.

Thursday 13 June :

➤ Presentation of the participants’ work.

Friday 14 June : The politics of the past and the construction of a Reformed historical discourse (Paul-Alexis Mellet).

➤ Seminar — Study of selection of relevant texts.

Saturday 15 June : founding memory / making history: Reformed accounts of the persecutions, between personal testimony and collective past-present (end of the 16th – beginning of the 17th century) (Daniela Solfaroli Camillocci).

➤ Seminar — Study of selection of relevant texts.

Linguistic requirements

Instruction will take place in French and English. All candidates are required to have sufficient competence in both languages to follow lectures. They may take part in discussion in either language. Working knowledge of Latin may also be required for some modules. Those who feel uncertain about their level of linguistic competence should contact one of the faculty members before applying.

Funding

Instruction is free of charge. The Institute will provide and pay for half-board (lunch and breakfast during the course days) and lodging, but **will not be able to contribute towards the travel costs of applicants.**

Application

A duly application form must be completed on our Web page <https://www.unige.ch/ihr/fr/presentation1/coursete/> by **4 March 2019**. Please note that the following documents must be attached to the online formular:

- a brief statement indicating your reasons for applying for the course,
- a curriculum vitae,
- a brief outline of the doctoral dissertation or post-doctoral research work whenever relevant,
- and two signed recommendation letters (PDF).

All applications will be reviewed, and candidates will be notified of their acceptance or rejection of the program by **30 March 2019**. Nota bene: students who have completed an Institute summer course in the past, do not need to provide recommendation letters but they do need to complete the online application form on our website.

Instructors

Daniela Solfaroli Camillocci, Bachelor of Letters (Pisa), PhD degree in early modern history (Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa), MAS in Reformed studies (Geneva). Professor at the Institut d'histoire de la Réformation. Main areas of research: cultural history of early modern religious practices, history of Christian spirituality, women's and gender history, 16th and 17th centuries.

Paul-Alexis Mellet, Bachelor, Master I and II in Philosophy (Sorbonne-Paris IV), *agrégation* in History (Sorbonne-Paris I), PhD degree in History (Tours-CESR), accreditation to supervise research (Sorbonne-Paris IV). Professor at the Institut d'histoire de la Réformation. Areas of expertise: early modernity in the fields of theological-political history, the history of the book and the history of religious practices.

Ueli Zahnd, studies in Theology and Philosophy (Bern and Paris), MAS in Reformed studies (Geneva), PhD degree in medieval philosophy (Freiburg im Breisgau). Professor at the Institut d'histoire de la Réformation. Areas of expertise: the intellectual history of the 15th and 16th centuries, their traditions of thought and the continuity between the late Middle Ages and the Reformation. Apart from the traditional methods of intellectual history, UZ explores the approaches of digital humanities.