

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Religious Difference and Conflict Conference

Stranmillis University College, Belfast: 5-7 September 2012

September 2012 marks the centenary of the signing of the Ulster Covenant, a dramatic political gesture rooted in the distinctive religious culture of the province, which has had profound implications for the subsequent history of the island of Ireland. The extent and the ways in which the Northern Ireland conflict has been 'religious' continue to be extensively debated in both academic and practitioner circles. This discussion has entered a significant new phase in the last decade, as a consequence of the restoration of relative peace to Northern Ireland at the very time that, on a wider global canvas in the wake of 9/11, religious difference has loomed much larger as a perceived source of conflict and insecurity.

This conference is the culminating event in a research project 'Protestant-Catholic Conflict: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Realities', funded under the Research Councils UK 'Global Uncertainties' programme. It will include the presentation of research from the project itself – including particularly work on attitudes to religion in contemporary Northern Ireland; on the diverse histories of religious division in English cities; and on anti-Catholicism in international perspective. The conference programme will be designed to set this work in a wider context, both of Ireland itself, and of comparisons with Protestant-Catholic conflict and other kinds of division in which religion is implicated elsewhere in the UK and in other parts of the world. It is hoped that by enhancing understanding of the roots of 'religious' conflict, the conference will contribute to the development of strategies for reconciliation. Contributions from practitioners in conflict resolution as well as from academics would be warmly welcome.

Plenary speakers will be as follows:

Prof John Wolffe (The Open University): 'Protestant-Catholic conflict: Outdated prejudice or enduring reality?'

Prof Sean Connolly (Queens University Belfast): 'Will we ever understand Irish religious violence?'

Dr Gladys Ganiel (Trinity College Dublin/Irish School of Ecumenics):  
title to be confirmed

Prof David Herbert (Aagard University, Norway): 'Rioting, religion and violence in comparative European perspective'

Prof Humayun Ansari (Royal Holloway, University of London): 'The multiculturalism backlash and the mainstreaming of Islamophobia in Britain post 9/11'

Dr Philip Lewis (University of Bradford/Bradford Churches for Dialogue and Diversity): Muslims in Britain: a case-study in applying research to religious and ethnic conflict in the post-secular city  
Dr Duncan Morrow (University of Ulster/ formerly Chief Executive Northern Ireland Community Relations Council): Violence and religion in Northern Ireland: churches and the ideology and structure of antagonism.

Papers should address one or more of the following themes:

- The history and/or contemporary experience of religious difference in Ireland
- Protestant-Catholic conflict in historical and international perspective
- Understanding and addressing religious tensions in the contemporary UK, continental Europe or North America (papers can be concerned with any significant religious group(s))
- Case studies of religion, conflict and conflict resolution around the world (for example in Israel/Palestine, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia).

Enquiries and proposals for papers (up to 300 words) should be submitted by email to [Arts-Prot-RC-Project@open.ac.uk](mailto:Arts-Prot-RC-Project@open.ac.uk) by 19 March 2012. Decisions on proposals will be communicated during April and the deadline for registration will be 31 May 2012. Thanks to the generosity of the AHRC and ESRC, who are funding the project, the conference fee (inclusive of meals and accommodation for the nights of 5 and 6 September) will be waived for participants with papers accepted for presentation.

Stranmillis University College is situated in pleasant parkland two miles south of the centre of Belfast. There are numerous cheap flights to Belfast from airports in England and Scotland.