Markets, Law, and Ethics, 1300-1850

This three-day conference is concerned with the culture of the market in the late medieval and early modern periods, conceived broadly as the norms, laws, customs and practices of exchange, including (but not limited to) buying and selling and lending and borrowing in 1400-1850. In recent years, influential studies have combined the study of everyday social life with the contextualist approach to intellectual history. Legal historians have looked beyond institutions and traditions to the plurality and practice of law in diverse contexts. Economic historians have revised the focus and scope of their studies to encompass the originating context of political, religious, and legal discourse, emphasizing the need for a socio-cultural history of markets. These and related scholarly trends have made the case for distinctively late medieval/early modern instantiations of social and economic life, for example as "competence and competition" (Vickers) a "competitive household economy" (Muldrew) or a "baroque economy" (Ago). These are useful formulations and have moved our thinking beyond earlier notions of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft, moral and (implied) amoral economies, and ultimately unsatisfying debates about the character and timing of "transitions". But what is next? This conference offers an opportunity for scholars from diverse historiographical backgrounds to come together and compare and contrast findings and thoughts across conventional chronologies and geographies, to reflect on the implications of supra-imperial and global approaches, and ponder possible future interpretations of late medieval/early modern market culture. Our approach is construed broadly as 'from below', in that it emphasizes popular understandings of markets and law embedded in practice rather than theoretical abstraction. Invited speakers whose work has established and continues to drive our inquiries provide the focus for a three-day meeting to be held at the University of Sheffield 22 June -- 24 June, 2012.

Friday, June 22, 2012

8:00 A.M. — Registration opens

8.45-9:00 — Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Welcome ●

Introductory Remarks ● Simon Middleton, James Shaw

9:00–11:00 — **Session I: Markets and Legal Instruments**

Chair:

New liquidity and provincial credit in early-modern England
Dave Postles, independent Scholar

The Lifeblood of Commerce: The Concept of Circulation in Early American Currency Debates
Jeffrey Sklansky, University of Illinois at Chicago

Merchant bankruptcies in sixteenth-century Antwerp in theory and practice

Jeroen Puttevils, University of Antwerp

Eighteenth-century Merchant Magic: Some Reflections on the Merchant Path to Wealth
Pierre Gervais, Université Paris 8

11.00–11:15 Break

11:15 –1.00 **Session II: Informal Markets**

Chair:

Markets "Outside the Law": Commercial Practices Across Colonial North American Borderlands
Robert DuPlessis, Swarthmore College

Ad-hoc markets, Booty, and Regulations of Warfare Economies, ca. 1400-1550
Michael Jucker, Universität Luzern

The Creation of a Public Sphere: An Alpine Peddler during the Absolutist Age
Kristine Wirts, University of Texas, Pan American

1:00–2:00 Lunch

2:00–4:00 **Session III: Market Regulation**

Chair:

"All products must be delivered to and sold in open markets": the paradox of market regulation in commercial cities of northern Europe, ca. 1300-1600
Martha Howell, Columbia University

Market regulation and the household economy in the late middle ages. Northwest Europe and the Islamic world compared
Peter Stabel, University of Antwerp

Moral norms and pragmatism in the late medieval English marketplace
James Davis, Queen's University Belfast

4:00–4:15 Break

4:15–6:00 **Session IV: Markets and Networks**

Chair:

Markets as Value-Driven Networks: The Case of Credit in the North Sea Zone, 1715-1763
Douglas Catterall, Cameron University

The Political Economy of Market Knowledge in the Early Modern Iberian Atlantic: Information and the Portobelo Trade Fair, 1580s-1620s
Patrick Funiciello, George Washington University

Commission trading in sixteenth-century Europe: How firms ensured business relations among each other
Nadia Matringe, European University Institute

6:00–6:30 Reception and buffet.

Saturday, March 23, 2012

9:00–10:45 **Session V: Microeconomics of Credit**

Chair:

Parasols and Poverty: production and reproduction in a changing economy
Julie Hardwick, University of Texas at Austin

The Social Life of Debt: Village Micro-credit and Taxation in Seventeenth-Century Auvergne
Daphne Bonar, Lakehead University

Trust and the rural credit market in eighteenth-century France
Elise Dermineur, Umeå University

10:45–11:00 Break

11:00–1:00 **Session VI: Land and Credit**

Chair:

Urban property during the French Revolution: liberté, égalité, spéculer
Allan Potofsky, Université Paris-Diderot

The relationship between the process of testate succession and the credit system in Sardinia during the end of the 18th and the 19th centuries
Monica Miscali, University of Bath

Local Legal and Economic Cultures and Professionalized Law in Rural New York, 1740-1775
Sung Yup Kim, Stony Brook University

Soldiers, statesmen, and stockjobbers: finance and land in post-revolutionary America
Tom Cutterham, Oxford University

1:00–2:00 Lunch

2:00–3.45 **Session VII: Shopping**

Chair:

Visiting the Store in New England: The View from Customers' Diaries: shopping practices from the consumer side
Daniel Vickers, University of British Columbia

The Power of Women's Words: Gossip, Insult, and the Micro-Politics of the Early Modern English Marketplace
David Pennington, Webster University

Jack-of-all-trades mercers or specialised sellers? Four case-studies in fifteenth-century Florence
Alessia Meneghin, St Andrews

3:45–4:00 Break

4:00–6:00 **Session VIII: Credit, Gender, and Reputation**

Chair:

Calculating credit in early modern England
Alexandra Shepherd, Glasgow University

Women and Young People in London's Markets
Merridee Bailey, Australian National University

Women, honesty and credit in the market-places of London, 1550-1700
Tim Reinke-Williams, University of Northampton

*Male credit, punishment and the debtor's prison in eighteenth-*century *Britain*
Tawny Paul, Edinburgh University

7:30 Conference Dinner

Sunday, June 24, 2012

9:00–11:00 **Session IX: Law and Markets**

Chair:

The rule of law and the market economies of medieval Europe
James Masschaele, Rutgers University

Bringing civil law to commercial practice: legal culture fuelling merchants' practices in Antwerp, 1550-1650
Dave De ruysscher, University of Antwerp

The Economy of Conventions as a Means of Analysing Mercantile Disputes before the Courts in Early Modern Basque Country
Hanna Sonkajärvi, Universität Duisburg-Essen

11:00–11:15 Break

11:15–1:00 **Session X: Market Ethics**

Chair:

Demonic Ambiguities: Enchantment and Disenchantment in Nathaniel Turner's Virginia
Christopher Tomlins, University of California Irvine

Norms and conventions in the eighteenth-century textile markets
Philippe Minard, Université Paris 8 and EHESS

"To winne them by fayre meanes":The Ethics of Exchange and the Natural Law in the Making of the Early English Atlantic
David Harris Sacks, Reed College

1:00 – 1.30 Wind-up and next steps.

1.30. Conference adjourns.