

**Tuesday Oct 25, 2011  
17:00 – 19:00**

**Dr. Paul Shore**

(Brandon, Manitoba / Canada)

*“Insana Machometis Daeliria”:*

## **Islam through the Lens of Baroque Habsburg Catholicism**

To Central Europeans of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Muslim world was essentially an Ottoman one, meaning that the religious challenge of Islamic beliefs could not be separated from the existential threat of Ottoman and Tatar military power. The visual arts reinforced this distancing: a baroque world in which the human body was constantly re-imagined in expressions of Catholic piety confronted a religious tradition that prized aesthetics but largely rejected representations of that body.

When imagining the Muslim Other, Habsburg Catholics resorted to the tropes of the vanquished, prostrate and top-knotted Turkish soldier, the effete and dangerous sexual deviant, and even the reckless drunkard. In addition, Jesuit chroniclers occasionally identified the Moor, the Rom, the vulnerable child and the virtuous woman in the Muslim population. While controversialists refuted (supposed) Qu’rānic teachings, Catholics, including clergy, valued products of Muslim cultures, such as carpets and manuscripts. Recent research also shows that a few Jesuit missionaries also had some command of spoken Turkish.

This paper investigates the degree to which Catholic knowledge of the Qu’rān was mediated through third parties, the role of the ransom culture of the Habsburg-Ottoman frontier in shaping perceptions of Islam, and way in which tensions between the dogmatic and imagistic modes of religion that existed within baroque Catholicism affected documentation of the encounter between Catholic and Muslim in the eastern Habsburg domains.



**Dr. Paul Shore** is a senior research fellow at the Long Room Hub at Trinity College Dublin.

He has held posts at Saint Louis University, Harvard Divinity School, and the University of Edinburgh. His publications include: *The Eagle and the Cross: Jesuits in Baroque Prague*; *Jesuits and the Politics of Religious Pluralism in Eighteenth-Century Transylvania: Culture, Politics, and Religion, 1693-1773*; and the forthcoming *Narratives of Adversity: The Experience of Jesuits on the Eastern Periphery of the Habsburg Realms (1640-1773)*.

**Venue:** Trinity College Dublin:  
Long Room Hub, Lecture Theatre

**Booking and Information:**  
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*Islam and Christianity in Southeast Europe Focus*