



FRONTIERS OF HUMANITY AND BEYOND

TOWARDS NEW CRITICAL
UNDERSTANDINGS OF BORDERS

P09 - CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS BORDERS: UNDERSTANDING INTERACTIONS AND CONFLICTS BETWEEN FAITHS IN PREINDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES.

ORGANISER

Esther Pascua Echegaray (Spain)
Madrid Open University

ABSTRACT

One of the factors that divide current human societies is religion, a powerful generator of identity discourses, capable of uniting collectives beyond national borders and triggering warlike conflicts. Given the current perplexity in the face of the emergence of phenomena and attitudes that were considered to be confined to the private sphere or to primitive societies, it seems appropriate to respond by offering comparisons with past realities. The world has not become multicultural; it has always been. This panel aims to explore the foundations and contexts behind the changes between moments of peaceful interaction and violent confrontation in multicultural societies. The aim is to focus the papers mainly on the transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern Age, 15th and 16th centuries, in the Iberian Peninsula. However, the chronology and geography is deliberately broad.

Therefore, we would like to invite colleagues working in other time periods and in other latitudes to compare their cases and engage in a discussion around 3 questions and combining 3 approaches. How are the contours of a religious group defined that end up determining who stays outside or inside the political body and by whom? What role does the constitution of state powers play in defining religious and cultural boundaries or in standardizing groups with diverse idiosyncrasies? How do juxtaposed identities operate and reproduce? We want to deepen the scenarios in which the religious sphere is placed at the center of political conflict and social divides. To do so, we propose to analyze these moments from the relationship that is established between 7 elements: habits, appearance, customs, beliefs, race, political position and language. Papers that address these issues from literature or art will also be very welcome.

Esther Pascua Echegaray is currently a lecturer at the Madrid Open University (Spain). PhD in Medieval History, her research interests range from 12th-century European constitutional history to common land, livestock, natural resources and landscapes in the Middle Ages in 13th-16th centuries. Current research focuses on processes of inclusion/exclusion in 15th-Century Castilian towns, with special attention on the role of religion in the interaction, recognition and creation of boundaries between groups within multicultural societies. Author of the books: *Guerra y Pacto en el siglo XII* (Madrid, 1996), *Beyond the Market* (with 3 more authors, Brill, 2002), and *Señores del paisaje* (Valencia, 2011).