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Forgetting faith?: negotiating confessional conflict in Early modern europe

Edited by: Karremann, Isabel; Zwierlein, Cornel; Groote, Inga Mai

Abstract: Early modern Europe faced a host of confessional conflicts. The Reformation brought about struggles over religious rites and doctrines as well as the persecution of secret adherents and forbidden practices. So far, the issues of religious pluralisation and the divisions between Catholic and Protestant positions, among sectarian movements, or between the church and the state, have been debated mostly in terms of dissent and escalation. Yet despite the centrality of confessional conflict, it did not always erupt into hostilities. Rather, everyday life had to go on, people had to arrange themselves somehow with divided loyalties ? between the old faith and the new, between religious and secular interests or between officially sanctioned and privately held beliefs. The order of the day may have been, more often than not, to suspend confessional allegiances rather than enforce religious conflict, suggesting a pragmatic rather than polemical handling of religious plurality, in social practice as well as in textual and dramatic representations. This volume sets out to explore such a suggestion. The title "Forgetting Faith?" raises the question whether it was necessary or indeed possible to sidestep religious issues in specific contexts and for specific purposes.

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