UNIVERSITÉ DE FRIBOURG
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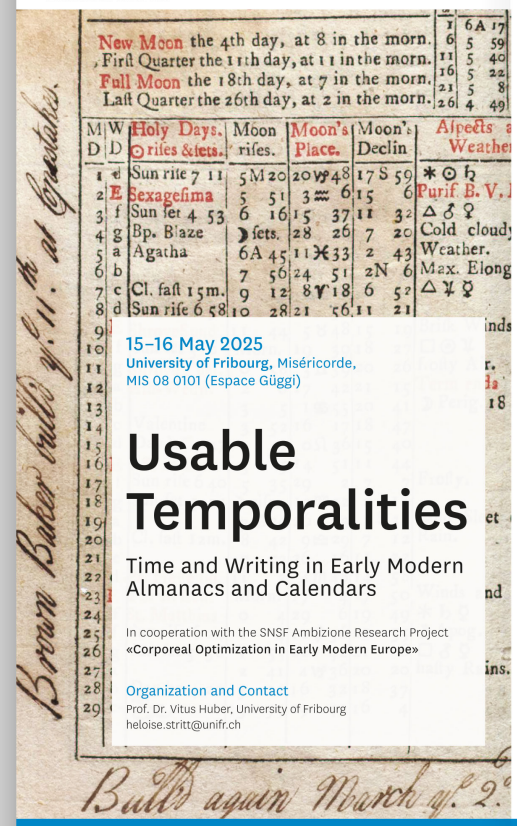


15–16 May 2025
University of Fribourg, Miséricorde,
MIS 08 0101 (Espace Güggi)

Usable Temporalities

Time and Writing in Early Modern Almanacs and Calendars

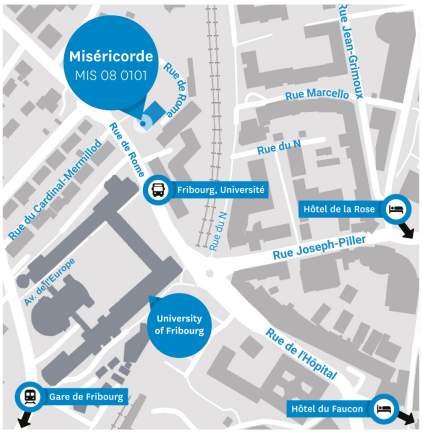
In cooperation with the SNSF Ambizione Research Project
«Corporeal Optimization in Early Modern Europe»

Organization and Contact
Prof. Dr. Vitus Huber, University of Fribourg
heloise.stritt@unifr.ch

FACULTÉ DES LETTRES ET DES SCIENCES HUMAINES
HISTOIRE MODERNE
AV. DE L'EUROPE 20, CH-1700 FRIBOURG

VENUE

University of Fribourg,
Miséricorde, MIS 08 0101 (Espace Güggi)



From Fribourg Train Station: 5-minute walk.

By Bus: Nr. 3 (direction Jura) or Nr. 5 (direction Torry, Bonnesfontaines) to "Fribourg, Université".

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Credits: John Wing, Almanack (1752).
Courtesy of Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

Swiss National Science Foundation

This workshop delves into the intersections of time and writing in early modern almanacs and calendars. It aims to analyze not only how these popular and ephemeral texts and chronographic media propagated particular temporal orders but also how they were used. Almanacs and calendars were not merely tools for projecting or tracking (feast) days and celestial events; they were dynamic media in which 'scientific' knowledge, practical advice, and cultural (self-)narratives converged. The event brings together interdisciplinary scholars to explore how visualizing and writing practices in these sources framed notions of temporality, and how they mediated personal and collective experiences of time.

Moreover, a central question will be how early modern people adapted and appropriated almanacs, calendars, and similar chronographic media for personal use. In the case of annotated almanacs and (writing-)calendars (Schreibkalender), special attention will be paid to the intertextuality between the printed temporal design and the handwritten notes. Examining this use together with the materiality, circulation, and (inter-)textuality or pictography of almanacs and calendars helps to assess their impact on writing routines and human engagements with time.

By situating these sources within broader early modern practices of timekeeping, record-keeping, and everyday writing, the workshop aims to foster new understandings of the variety of applications of almanacs and calendars as well as their interplay with personal notions of time and (life-)writing.

PROGRAM — THURSDAY, 15 May 2025

9:00–9:30 | Intersections of Early Modern Temporalities and Writing Systems: An Introduction
Vitus Huber, University of Fribourg

Session 1 – Mediality of Time
Chair: Michelle Aroney, University of Oxford

9:30–10:15 | The Landgrafen of Hessen-Darmstadt: Calendars and Clocks in the 17th century
Helga Meise, University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne

10:15–11:00 | "In all matters, time has its zenith:" On the Variety of Time Marking Practices in Calendar Annotations in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569–1795)
Jakub Ochocinski, EUI Florence

Coffee Break

11:15–12:00 | Calculation and Instruction: Astronomical and Astrological Time in Seventeenth-Century Schreibkalender
Kelly M. Smith, University of Alabama in Huntsville

Lunch

Session 2 – Time and Narratives
Chair: Claire Gantet, University of Fribourg

13:45–14:30 | Temporality and Storytelling in Writing Calendars
Sylvia Brockstieger, Heidelberg University

THURSDAY, 15 May 2025

14:30–15:15 | "Here lies the east:" Fragmentary Time in Early Modern Almanacs
Katherine Walker, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Coffee Break

Session 3 – Almanacs in the Americas
Chair: Thomas Hunkeler, University of Fribourg

15:45–16:30 | Notions of Time and Divination in the Colonial Calendrical Almanacs of the Maya of Guatemala
Alejandro J. Garay Herrera, University of Bonn

16:30–17:15 | Almanacs for a New World: *Iberian-American repertorios de los tiempos*
Sergio Orozco-Echeverri, University of Antioquia

Coffee Break

Keynote
Chair: Thomas Lau, University of Fribourg

18:00–19:30 | Time Recorded and Time Constructed: The Personal and the National in English Almanacs
Bernard Capp, University of Warwick

Dinner

FRIDAY, 16 May 2025

Session 4 – Plurality of Annotations
Chair: Claude Bourqui, University of Fribourg

9:00–9:45 | Annotating Almanacs: Time, Subjectivities, and Writing Routines in Seventeenth-Century England
Vitus Huber, University of Fribourg

9:45–10:30 | Annotations of Care: Two Early Modern Almanac-Keepers Seen Through Their Marginalia 1668–1701
Ada Arendt, University of Oslo

Coffee Break

Session 5 – Transformations
Chair: Kilian Schindler, University of Fribourg

10:50–11:35 | The 'New Style' of Calendar: From Almanac to Pocket Diary in Eighteenth-Century Britain
Holly Day, University of York

11:35–12:20 | The Changing Use and Changing Forms of the Almanac in the 16th–19th Centuries in the Netherlands
Rudolf Dekker, University of Amsterdam

12:20–13:00 | Final Discussion

Lunch