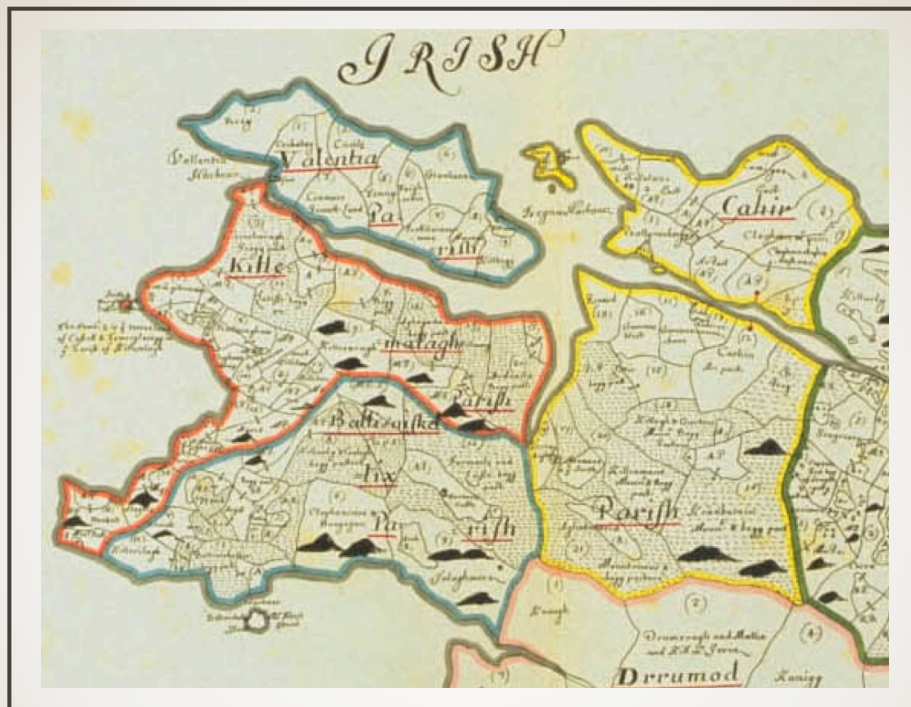


Department of History/GHSA Research Wednesdays  
**GOVERNMENT AS CALCULATION  
IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY IRELAND**

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**1 October 2014, 1-2pm, LB-1014**



**ABSTRACT**

This paper examines Samuel Foley's "Computatio Universalis" (1684), a Church of Ireland bishop's peculiar attempt to solve the problems of Ireland's governing Protestant elite by using geometry to plan happy and useful lives. It argues that Foley's mathematical ethics reflected a more widespread application of quantification to problems of government, and was one of many instances in which new forms of natural philosophy associated with the Scientific Revolution promised to facilitate the English colonization of Ireland. At the same time, Foley addressed long-standing English anxieties about the tendency of colonists to "degenerate" into Irish. The "Computatio" thus represents both a tradition of English thought about Ireland and a novel episode in the history of science and empire.