
CALL FOR PAPERS

**Horizontal Learning
within High Medieval Religious Communities**

Brussels, September 1st and 2nd, 2016

This conference will center on the medieval practices of learning within a community, understood as a body of people who practice communal living and share an understanding of what binds them together, even though this understanding is constantly being renegotiated.

Our aim is to focus on the ways in which co-habiting peers learned from one another. This “horizontal learning” has received much less attention than the vertical master/student approach, and yet it emerges as an important part of the learning experience, especially as we are interested in “learning” in a broad sense: not only acquiring factual knowledge or skills, but also developing ideas and beliefs and adapting to behavioral patterns. In short, everything that could make a monk a better and more efficient member of the community.

Whereas other projects thematize the institutional history of learning, the transmission of propositional knowledge in formalized educational contexts, or the importance of networks of learning, this project distinguishes itself through its focus on day-to-day interactions by community members.

Our starting point is the investigation of communal learning in the practices of high medieval religious communities. Progressing beyond the old view that they were closed, homogeneous, and fairly stable social groups, we intend to approach these communities as the product of a continuous process of education and integration of new members. Contributions will investigate the way in which inter-personal exchanges of knowledge between peers concretely functioned, and what this teaches us about medieval learning within the context of a community.

The organizers invite proposals for both case studies and theoretical reflections on the subject. Proposals should be submitted to horizontal.learning@UGent.be by February 1th, 2016, and should consist of a title, a 400-word abstract and a CV.

Sponsors

Ghent University (UGent)
Research Unit 'Religion and Society in the Early and Central Middle Ages' (UGent)
FWO Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO)
The Henri Pirenne Institute for Medieval Studies
Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts
Lectio. Leuven Centre for the Study of the Transmission of Texts and Ideas in Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance

Organizing committee

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