

Henri Pirenne Lecture 2014

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November 1414: Literary Cultures, Nationalism, and the Future of Europe

David Wallace (University of Pennsylvania)



The Flemish Medievalist Association is pleased to invite you to the Annual Pirenne Lecture. The Pirenne Lecture this year will be held on **Thursday 20 november 2014** by the renowned American literary historian David Wallace (University of Pennsylvania) in the beautiful venue of the Royal Academy of Dutch-language Linguistics and Literature in Ghent. An abstract of the lecture is given to the right. Afterwards, the Association offers you a free reception. There is no participation fee, but everybody kindly is asked to register via email:

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- ▶ Thursday 20 november 2014
- ▶ Koningstraat 18, 9000 Ghent
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November 1414: Literary Cultures, Nationalism, and the Future of Europe

In 1378 western Christendom split between popes of Avignon and Rome. Efforts to resolve matters in 1409 made things worse: there were now three rival popes. In November 1414 European nations were summoned to Konstanz; thousands of clerics, literary men, thus gathered at this lakeside town, between the Danube and the Rhine. First they addressed nationhood: what is a nation, and who might speak for it? Their chief working asset was literary language, as crafted in sermons, orations, treatises, chronicles, and diaries. Latin was *lingua franca*; Latin manuscripts were discovered in regional libraries, and there was a new vogue for Greek. Italian humanists taught eager northerners and inspired Jean Gerson, chancellor of Paris, to emulation. Oswald von Wolkenstein wrote songs in macaronic German; Italian and English bishops studied Dante; Poggio Bracciolini made brilliant discoveries and admired Jerome of Prague. Realignment of western nations at Konstanz had long-term effects, extending to the Reformation. Gregory Tsamblak, metropolitan of Kiev, arrived in 1418, hoping that the end of the western schism might inspire rapprochement with the Orthodox East.

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