

Religious Connectivity in Urban Communities

Reading, Worshipping, and Connecting in the Continuum of Sacred and Secular (1400-1600)

Symposium organized by Dr Suzan Folkerts
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Current research on religious literature of the period 1400-1600 increasingly focuses on processes of transmission and appropriation, on readers, users, and their social networks, and on “communities of interpretation”. In social history, on the other hand, religious activities and religious identities are more and more considered as part of social life in civic societies. This symposium is organized around a theme where both research traditions meet, namely, religious connectivity in urban communities.

Taking into account that “sacred” or “religious” and “secular” or “profane” should not be understood as opposites, but rather as a continuum, we wish to investigate **how religious connectivity was established in late medieval urban communities** and **how producers and consumers of religious literature, artefacts, and rituals were engaged in the creation of social cohesion**. By focusing on religious connectivity, we wish to explore the socio-religious domain between civic religion and private devotion, and between religious communities and more varied communities of interpretation.

Call for papers

We welcome papers on religious reading (including the production and use of manuscripts and printed books), worshipping (through rituals, theatre, sermons, processions, etc.), and other connective religious activities in urban communities as a whole and in smaller communities, such as households, parishes, confraternities, and religious communities. Papers should preferably reflect on methodological approaches for the study of religious connectivity.

Topics or questions which could be addressed, include:

- civic religion vs. private devotion
- religious connectivity in fraternities and guilds
- socio-historical approaches to religion
- how to study communities of interpretation
- re-evaluation of boundaries between clergy/religious and laity
- transmission of religious texts into new communities of readers

Please send a paper proposal (20-25 minutes), including your name, affiliation, paper title, and an abstract of c. 300 words to Suzan Folkerts (s.a.folkerts@rug.nl) before 15 May 2015.

This symposium is organized within the context of the NWO Veni project ‘From monastery to market place. Towards a new history of New Testament translations and urban religious culture in the Low Countries (c. 1450-1540)’.