



Crosscurrents

in Illustrated Religious Texts in the North of Europe, 1500-1800

Call for Papers

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January 12-13, 2012

In the last few decades it has been repeatedly argued that the Reformation did not hamper or stop the development of visual culture in the north of Europe (North-Western Europe and Scandinavia). It has indeed been stressed that various reformatory movements gave a new impetus to the production, diffusion and reception of visual culture in both Catholic and Protestant milieus. It is the primary goal of our conference to apply this understanding not to visual culture in its broadest sense but rather to the specific development of the production, diffusion and reception of illustrated religious texts within various religious denominations. We hope to (begin to) chart the delta constituted by crosscurrents of exchange within and beyond confessional and national borders. Case studies together with theoretical contributions will shed more light on the way illustrated religious books functioned in evolving societies, by analyzing the use, re-use and sharing of illustrated religious texts in England, France, the Low Countries, the German States, Scandinavia and Switzerland, among other countries.

We invite papers dealing with tensions, collaborations, and encounters in the production of illustrated religious texts. We hope to explore the role of authors, engravers, publishers, printers, booksellers, readers and collectors who have made, traded in, and treasured illustrated religious texts. We invite papers that explore bookmaking from a variety of perspectives, and consider how illustrated religious texts were the products not only of authors, engravers and publishers, who worked in a field combining the textual and visual arts, but were also formed and shaped by theological debates and confessional traditions and acted as instruments of change. We also invite papers that explore the issue of changing literacies on a conceptual level, exploring how textual and visual media were used in new ways to shape the relationship between individual citizens and cultural practices and to demarcate social, generational and cultural differences.

Some of the questions we would like to address are: how have workshops and small presses contributed to the spread of illustrated religious texts? What do the surviving copies of illustrated religious texts say about the experiences and aspirations of their makers and readers? How were illustrated religious texts designed to convey information and confessional orientation? What problems arose for those who produced and distributed these texts? In short, how can we understand early modern religious culture from the perspective of the production of illustrated religious texts, in which people were able to cross confessional boundaries and to mingle the literary and artistic traditions which constituted these boundaries?

Topics that focus on transnational developments are particularly welcome. In order to gain a broader, comparative perspective, we also invite contributions that shed light on the

production, diffusion and reception of illustrated religious texts from one continent to another. Last but not least we would welcome contributions that cross the boundaries of such disciplines as literary studies, book history, theology, religious studies, Neo-Latin studies and art history.

Presentations should be 20 minutes in length. An abstract of not more than 350 words, should be sent to Feike Dietz, f.m.dietz@uu.nl before 1 July 2011. Some selected papers will be considered for publication in a conference volume.

The conference will be organised by the Universities of Utrecht and Leuven, in cooperation with the Utrecht Changing Literacies project, part of the Utrecht University research Area Cultures&Identities, and will be held on 12-13 January 2012 in Utrecht.

Plenary lectures: Ralph Dekoninck (Louvain-la-Neuve), Walter Melion (Emory), Mia Mochizuki (Berkeley), Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge), Lee Palmer Wandel (Wisconsin).

Conference organisers: Feike Dietz and Els Stronks (Utrecht), Toon Van Houdt, Lien Roggen and Marc Van Vaeck (Leuven).

Scientific committee: Ralph Dekoninck (Louvain-la-Neuve), Walter Melion (Atlanta), Karel Porteman (Leuven), Maarten Prak (Utrecht).