

CONTACT INFORMATION

CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

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In and Around Tuscaloosa

visittuscaloosa.com
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Giotto, Pope Innocent III approving Rule of St. Francis. Basilica di San Francesco, Assisi (1296).

CONFERENCE THEME AND GOALS

For a thousand years and more, from the sixth to the sixteenth century and beyond, monks, nuns, canons, friars, and others under religious vows stood at the pinnacle of Western European society. For their learning, piety, and expertise, and for their embodiment of Christian ideals and values, they were accorded positions of power and influence, and a wide range of legal, financial and social privileges. This international and interdisciplinary conference seeks to explore the phenomenon of medieval cultural elites through the lives and experiences of these men and women. Its participants seek to uncover the essential markers of religious life's elite status, and how those under vows claimed and manifested that status in complex spiritual, temporal, and social combinations. We seek also to explore the workings of elite status from day to day, across region and locale—who earned it and how, whether through specific achievements or the deployment of specific capacities; who recognized, conferred, or helped maintain elite status, how and why; how elite status could be redefined, contested or rejected. We seek also to understand how these European religious elites compared to those found in other cultures and settings, from Syria and South Asia to the early modern transatlantic world.



Uta presenting her codex to Mary and Child Munich, BSB Clm 13601 (c. 1002-1025).

SPONSORS

This conference has been made possible through the generous support of several institutions and partners in both Europe and the United States. Our American partners include the Office of the Vice President and the Graduate School of The University of Alabama, the Alabama Water Institute, the College of Arts and Sciences, and many of its departments (History; Modern Languages and Classics; English) and programs (University Museums; Medieval and Early Modern European Studies; the Hudson Strode Program in Renaissance Studies; Capstone International; the Summersell Center; Latin American Studies; Asian Studies; Religious Studies; Diversity Committee). We are also thankful for our many civic partners, which include the City of Tuscaloosa, the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa, and several private donors, including the members of the Emeriti Committee for International Strategic Studies. We are also most grateful for the support of our European partners, which include the Research Centre for the Comparative History of Religious Orders (FOVOG) of the University of Dresden, the Graduate School of Interreligious Studies of the University of Dresden, and the Saxon Academy of Sciences (Leipzig).



Fra Angelico, Coronation of the Virgin. Convent of San Marco, Florence (1439-43).

Religious Life, Elites, & Medieval Culture

An International Conference Hosted by The University of Alabama, in Partnership with the University of Dresden

October 17-20, 2018
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
Tuscaloosa, Alabama



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17

5:00-6:00 PM | REGISTRATION AND OPENING RECEPTION

6:00-6:15 PM | WELCOME

6:15-7:00 PM | OPENING ADDRESS

INTRODUCTION: DANIEL RICHES (ALABAMA)

GERT MELVILLE (DRESDEN)

What Do We Mean by “Elite”? Introductory Reflections on a Vague Concept

JAMES MIXSON (ALABAMA)

Religious Life, Elites, and Medieval Culture: An Outline of a Theme and its Possibilities

7:00-9:00 PM | DINNER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18

8:30-10:30 AM | FOUNDATIONAL IDEAS AND DYNAMICS: STRUCTURING, REFORMING, AND CRITIQUING ELITES (205 GORGAS LIBRARY)

CHAIR: JÖRG SONNTAG (DRESDEN)

STEVEN VANDERPUTTEN (GHENT)

From Elite Distinction to Distinct Elites: Ideals and Modalities of Monastic Reform in the Medieval West

EVA SCHLOTHEUBER (DÜSSELDORF)

The Role of the *sponsa Christi*, the “Bride of the Highest King,” in the Social and Sacral Hierarchy of Medieval Society: Assumptions, Potential, and Reinterpretations

KAI HERING (DRESDEN)

Deriding the Elite. Images of Monastic Life in Later Medieval Satirical Texts

10:45 AM-12:45 PM | FUNCTIONS AND FIELDS OF ACTIVITY: ELITES OF EDUCATION (205 GORGAS LIBRARY)

CHAIR: MIRKO BREITENSTEIN (DRESDEN)

SCOTT BRUCE (FORDHAM)

The Construction and Control of the Image of Mohammad by Monastic Elites of the Twelfth Century

MARTIN KINTZINGER (MÜNSTER)

Learned Clerics as Intellectuals: Educated Elite — University Party Supporters — Competent Powerbrokers

ROBIN VOSE (ST. THOMAS)

Books, Damned Books, and Heretics: Dominican Theological Elites and the Genesis of Book Censorship

1:00-2:30 PM | LUNCH

2:30-4:00 PM | FUNCTIONS AND FIELDS OF ACTIVITY: MONASTIC ELITES IN ECONOMY AND SOCIETY (205 GORGAS LIBRARY)

CHAIR: JUAN PONCE-VÁZQUEZ (ALABAMA)

JENS RÖHRKASTEN (BIRMINGHAM)

Monastic Elites between the Struggle for Religious Perfection and the Management of Economic Affairs

DEEANA KLEPPER (BOSTON)

The Monastery and the Market: The Augustinian Canons Regular of Diessen as Social, Economic, and Religious Elites

6:00 PM | PLENARY RECEPTION AND DINNER (SMITH HALL GALLERY)

8:00 PM | PLENARY ADDRESS (SMITH HALL GALLERY)

JOHN VAN ENGEN (NOTRE DAME)

Privilege and Paradox: Positioning Monks and Nuns in Medieval Society

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19

8:30-10:30 AM | MANIFESTATIONS OF ELITE STATUS: RELIGIOUS AND LAY ELITES BETWEEN CLOISTER AND WORLD (205 GORGAS LIBRARY)

CHAIR: LUCY KAUFMAN (ALABAMA)

ALBRECHT DIEM (SYRACUSE)

The Second Ascetic Invasion: Lay Aristocrats and Columbanian Monasticism

JONATHAN LYON (CHICAGO)

Religious Life and the Upper Nobility in Twelfth-Century Germany

DANIEL BORNSTEIN (WASHINGTON)

Cultivating Patronage in Late-Medieval Tuscany

10:45 AM-12:45 PM | MANIFESTATIONS OF ELITE STATUS: POWER, GOVERNMENT, AND SERVICE (205 GORGAS LIBRARY)

CHAIR: THEODORE TROST (ALABAMA)

JÜRGEN SARNOWSKY (HAMBURG)

Military Orders and Their Members as Elites

SEAN FIELD (VERMONT)

Elite Perspectives on Female Franciscan Governance

HANS-JOACHIM SCHMIDT (FRIBOURG)

Power through Poverty. Mendicant Friars at the Imperial Courts in the 14th Century

1:00-2:30 PM | LUNCH SPONSORED BY THE GRADUATE SCHOOL AND THE CAPSTONE INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA (HOTEL CAPSTONE, MURPHY/GAYLE ROOM)

2:30-4:30 PM | MARKING ELITE STATUS: READING TEXT AND IMAGE (HOTEL CAPSTONE, BAGBY/FITZPATRICK ROOM)

CHAIR: JENNIFER M. FELTMAN (ALABAMA)

DAVID MICHELSON (VANDERBILT)

Diligent Readers: Contemplative Reading Skill as Elite Demarcation in East Syrian Monasticism of the Sixth and Seventh Centuries

ELIZA GARRISON (MIDDLEBURY)

The Golden Spaces of the Uta Codex

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20

8:30-10:30 AM | MANIFESTATIONS OF ELITE STATUS: VALUES, SANCTITY, AND CULTURE (HOTEL CAPSTONE, BAGBY/FITZPATRICK ROOM)

CHAIR: JAMES MIXSON (ALABAMA)

PIERANTONIO PIATTI (ROME)

Ecce novi confessoris insignia mundo prodeunt. Monastic Sanctity in the Middle Ages between Charisma and Ecclesiastical Recognition

NICOLANGELO D’ACUNTO (BRESCIA)

The Hermits of Medieval Italy: An Otherworldly Elite (XI-XIII centuries)

TIMOTHY JOHNSON (FLAGLER)

Franciscans as “Therapists of Commitment”: Reflections on Philip Rief’s Theory of Cultural Elites and Pre-Modern Religious Life

10:45 AM-12:45 PM | RELIGIOUS LIFE AND ELITES IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE (HOTEL CAPSTONE, BAGBY/FITZPATRICK ROOM)

CHAIR: STEVEN RAMEY (ALABAMA)

KLAUS-DIETER MATHES (VIENNA)

Elites of Tibetan Buddhism — With a Particular Focus on the Role of Tantric Masters

KARIN PREISENDANZ (VIENNA)

Forest-Dwelling Hermits as a Brahminical Elite in Ancient South Asian Imagination

GUILLERMO WILDE (BUENOS AIRES)

Forging the Catholic Monarchy. Religious Orders as Elites in the Iberian Transatlantic World (16th century)

1:00-2:30 PM | LUNCH (HOTEL CAPSTONE, MURPHY/GAYLE ROOM)

2:30-4:00 PM | ROUNDTABLE AND CONCLUDING DISCUSSION (HOTEL CAPSTONE, BAGBY/FITZPATRICK ROOM)



Sano di Pietro, St. Bernardino Preaching in the Campo (detail). Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena (1445).