

Conference: “Academic culture of remembrance. The combination of university history, jubilees and academic heritage”

When: Wednesday 16 and Thursday 17 March 2011

Where: Ghent University Library

Information and registration: p.dhondt@ugent.be

Presentation

The aim of this two-day conference is to discuss the triangular relationship between scientific research, the opening up of academic heritage and the creation of a culture of remembrance. Two series of questions are at the centre of this symposium. (1) Firstly, we would like to examine, from a historiographical perspective, the relationship between university history, the culture of remembrance in general and university jubilees in particular. (2) Secondly, the place of academic heritage in the creation and communication of (historical) knowledge of universities and scientific practices will be considered. Through a combination of both central themes, the conference aspires to offer some innovative perspectives for writing contemporary university history.

A variety of questions can be elaborated through cases and ongoing research. What are specific challenges when writing a university history on the occasion of a jubilee and in which way these challenges can be taken up? How universities are dealing with their own past and which commemorative practices they are using in this process? In this respect we also want to pay attention to jubilees that were organised by universities for certain professors or to commemorate important historical events. We would like to invite explicitly those participants who present (part of) a project that is started on the occasion of an upcoming jubilee, to discuss the challenge to commemorate the glorious past of their own institution. Could a transnational perspective or a focus on the international circulation of knowledge encourage a more reflective approach? In addition to rather historiographical and methodological-theoretical contributions, we also would like to receive proposals that reflect on the place of academic heritage in this regard. All movable and immovable patrimony under the administration of the university, valuable from a scientific and/or historical perspective, is part of this heritage. In which way academic heritage was and is used for the public representation of the university as an historical entity? How universities were and are dealing with their historical collections and how can these be employed for historical research? The contact with academic heritage leads to questions about the relation between university history and the history of science, the history of institutions and the history of discipline formation.

To offer a forum to as many researchers as possible, projects can be presented in a classical lecture, as well as in a multimedia presentation or as a poster, which can be amplified during a reception. Particularly website- or archival projects, (virtual) university museum, databases of students and/or professors or (on line) bibliographies for the benefit of research in university history lend themselves to this kind of multimedia presentation.

Plenary keynote speakers

Prof. Dr. Sylvia Paletschek (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg) will present the status quaestionis with regard to university history in Germany. Among other topics, she will discuss the issue how the demands of a modern historiography can be reconciled with the expectations of university authorities when celebrating their institution on the occasion of a jubilee. **Dr. Emmanuelle Picard** (Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique, Paris) will give a similar lecture, applied to the situation in France, where on the one hand the tradition of jubilees does not exist as a result of the reforms of Napoleon, but on the other hand this does not prevent

current universities to reconstruct their history, going back to the middle ages. **Prof. Dr. Thomas Bremer** (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle), president of "Universeum. European Academic Heritage Network", will discuss from a historical perspective the topic of displaying research objects of the humanities in university collections.

Proposals for presentations or posters (approximately 400 words) should be submitted to the following e-mail address: p.dhondt@ugent.be, before the 1st of December 2010. Presentations must be no longer than 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes discussion time. Please indicate which kind of presentation seems the most appropriate. If necessary, the organising committee can propose to change the form of the presentation.

The conference is organised within the scope of the Vermeyleyyear by UGentMemorie and functions as the public start of this commission which is established to prepare the bicentenary of Ghent University in 2017. Partners in the organisation are the Department of History of Ghent University, the Department of the Foundations of Education of Ghent University, the Centre for History of Science of Ghent University, Gewina. Belgian-Dutch Society for the History of Universities and Science and the University Archives of the K.U.Leuven.

Organising committee: Fien Danniau, Pieter Dhondt, Ruben Mantels, Geert Vanpaemel en Christophe Verbruggen

Scientific committee: Hendrik Defoort, Pieter Dhondt, Leen Dorsman, Sven Dupré, Peter-Jan Knechtmans, Isabel Rotthier, Geert Vanpaemel, Christophe Verbruggen

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