



Voces 2023. Latin Middle Ages through Key Words

Expressing and Performing Emotions

Workshop – 5th October 2023

Medieval society is inseparable from both the written and spoken words that brought it to life. It is through those words that the people of the Middle Ages shared their beliefs, their ideas and their experiences. Words were used to share knowledge, spread the Gospel, but also to stigmatize the Other, exclude heterodoxy, and call for war. Controlling word senses was one of the major means to sustain power, to take possession of goods and to control access to knowledge. That could lead to verbal jousting or even real conflicts.

Modern scholars that are trying to reconstruct the meaning of medieval words in their relationship with historical, social or psychological reality, are facing multiple problems. Firstly, they have to handle the inherent vagueness and ambiguity of the Latin language that prevent them from pinpointing the exact meaning of most frequent words. Secondly, they have to measure the pragmatic functions of those terms, which served not only to talk about objects but also to *make things*. Finally, they have to establish the link between words and cultural, social or political reality.

The conference *Voces. Latin Middle Ages through Key Words*, co-organised by the IRHT (CNRS) and the Institute of Polish Language (PAS) aims to take a closer look at Latin words that have played an important role in the medieval culture. Every two years we propose to focus on a different major medieval concept and its linguistic expressions.

The conference aims to bring together historians, linguists, philosophers and philologists coming from various theoretical backgrounds (historical semantics, *Begriffsgeschichte*, cognitive semantics, *histoire des mentalités* etc.) and employing a wide range of methods (corpus studies, lexical analysis etc.). Papers dealing with medieval key words or concepts in a broad context of social, political and religious life are particularly encouraged.

Voces 2023. Expressing and Performing Emotions

In recent years, medieval emotions have become the subject of intense research (Boquet and Nagy 2015). A number of studies showed that they were not the domain of a purely individual experience, but instead they were deeply influenced by the emotive styles, norms and conventions that were adopted in different communities (Rosenwein 2006). Attitudes towards the expression of emotions in the social sphere should also be seen in their historical dynamics, as they are a reflection of the constantly evolving relationship between individuals, society and its institutions (Nagy 2000).

Although voices calling for a more systematic analysis have been heard for years, we are still far from having a comprehensive account of how emotions were linguistically expressed and conceptualised in the Middle Ages (Rosenwein 2008). This may come as a surprise, given that current linguistics offers both a rich theoretical reflection and a rigorous descriptive framework, as well as a wealth of in-depth studies of terms and concepts related to emotions.

Selected references

Boquet, Damien, and Nagy, Piroska. 2015. *Sensible Moyen Âge: Histoire des émotions dans l'Occident Médiéval*. Le Seuil.

Nagy, Piroska. 2000. *Le Don Des Larmes Au Moyen Âge: Un Instrument Spirituel En Quête d'institution*, A. Michel.
Rosenwein, Barbara H. 2006. *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*. Cornell University Press.
Rosenwein, Barbara H. 'Emotion Words'. 2008. *Le Sujet des émotions au moyen âge*, ed. by Piroska Nagy and Damien Boquet, Beauchesne.

Suggested topics

We invite papers that discuss both single words or concepts and entire lexical fields or conceptual domains. Particularly welcome are interdisciplinary contributions that combine linguistic and historical (sociological, anthropological etc.) analysis, or provide cross-cultural and cross-linguistic perspective.

- Expressing and talking about emotions in the Middle Ages: private and public affects; authenticity and convention; theorizing about emotions
- Emotion words: Latin vs. vernacular terms; Biblical emotions in translation; affects and metaphor; universality of medieval emotions; culture-determined expressions
- Theories and methods (how to research medieval emotions?): emotional turn in Medieval Studies; cognitive linguistics and medieval emotions; Latin vocabulary and categories of medieval thought (a simple link?); lexical borrowing and semantic change (new words = new worlds?); medieval Latin and individuals: cognition, experience, emotions; scientific vs. folk knowledge

Submission Guidelines

We welcome two forms of submissions:

- **Long papers** (20 minutes, 10 minutes discussion), that go beyond a single text or author, and provide either wider (historical, social, cultural etc.) context for the discussion or pose important theoretical and methodological questions (historical change, methodological issues etc.);
- **Short papers** (10 minutes, 5 minutes discussion), which are more limited in scope, but still bring forward links between vocabulary, conceptualization and socio-cultural reality of the Middle Ages.

Conference languages: English, French, German, Italian, Spanish.

Abstracts should be submitted via EasyChair (<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=voces2023>) by **20 June 2023** (23:59 CEST):

- long papers: up to 500 words (without references)
- short papers: up to 250 words (without references)

Submissions should clearly state the paper topic, briefly discuss existing research and explain why the analysis of the suggested term or field is important to our understanding of medieval culture.

Organizing Committee: Renaud ALEXANDRE, Bruno BON, Anita GUERREAU-JALABERT, Sébastien HAMEL et Nathalie PICQUE (IRHT-CNRS), Krzysztof NOWAK (IJP-PAN).

Program Committee: François BOUGARD (IRHT-CNRS), Carmen CARDELLE DE HARTMANN (Seminar für Griechische und Lateinische Philologie – Univ. Zürich), François DOLBEAU (EPHE), Helena LEITHE-JASPER (Mittellateinisches Wörterbuch, Bayerische Akad. der Wissenschaften), Maria SELIG (Institut für Romanistik – Univ. Regensburg), Anne-Marie TURCAN-VERKERK (EPHE-PSL).



Important dates

submission: by 20 June 2023
acceptance notice: 31 July 2023
registration: from 1st September 2023
conference date: 5th October 2023



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