

**Dominican Culture, Dominican Theology**  
**The Order of Preachers and Its Spheres of Action (1215 – c. 1600)**  
Annual Conference of the International Society for the Study of Medieval Theology (IGTM)

29 June – 2 July 2021  
Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

*NB: This call was originally published in 2019. Due to the ongoing pandemic, the conference was postponed from June 2020 to June/July 2021. The conference will now have a **hybrid format** (see below) All answers to the first publication remain valid. New answers, however, are most welcome.*

In the early 13th century, a novel concept of religious community overran the occidental world: the Dominican Order. Unlike earlier religious orders who confined monks to the purview of praying the liturgy and living a life of contemplative seclusion, the Dominicans, by means of preaching, focused on engaging with the broad community beyond the convent walls. The result was a hitherto unseen interpenetration of a religious order into the intellectual as well as cultural realities surrounding it. The Dominicans soon became a driving force in medieval culture and their influence can be found in the practical, intellectual, and material aspects of European culture, from art to philosophy, from politics to the economy.

Also with regard to medieval theology, the Dominican Order quickly acquired a towering influence. From the year 1220, the Dominicans established a pan-European network of institutions of education and learning, which existed well into Early Modernity. At every such institution Dominican theology was produced, debated, and, by way of interaction with other groups of intellectuals, other orders (e.g. the Franciscans), and currents of thought originating outside the Order (e.g. the Reformation), Dominican theology was also contested. Between 1215 and 1600, the Dominican Order thus became a distinct factor of premodern Europe.

Only a combined view of the cultural and intellectual history of the Order can help us understand this breadth of the Dominican importance. On the one hand, however, modern intellectual historians in particular have not yet taken into full account the variety of Dominican theology. Instead, modern scholarship too often focused somewhat narrowly on this intellectual tradition as expressed in the works of a few members of the Order, thus creating the often repeated cliché of Dominican theology as, for the most part, Thomism. On the other hand, historians sensible to the cultural turn in the humanities have started to conduct research on Dominican culture, thus shedding new light on education, the legal and institutional constitution of the Order, on liturgy, or on artistic production.

Yet, these research agendas still await to be conjoined with intellectual history. The conference “Dominican Culture, Dominican Theology” intends to bridge this gap, inviting researchers from various fields engaged with the cultural and intellectual history of premodern Europe to submit a proposal for it. Both core concepts are understood in a broad sense. In the perspective proposed here ‘Dominican theology’ denotes any reflection on and expression of reality in the light of the Christian religion as articulated by Dominicans or in the realm of the Order. While this definition refers, by its own nature, to doctrinal debates as discussed among historians of theology and philosophy, we also encourage historians of art, music, law, and other adjacent disciplines to engage in a truly interdisciplinary discussion that explicitly includes the legal, institutional, material, artistic, and devotional aspects of this concept of ‘Dominican theology’. The notion of ‘Dominican culture’ is thus equally comprehensive. It denotes a mode of producing Dominican theology, a setting of the Order’s activities, and an interface of communication both within and outside of the Order.

Both core concepts invite thus for contributions that transcend the divide between the material and the intellectual, between the practical and theoretical, and between the spiritual and institutional realms in the history of the Dominican Order.

In regard of the possible variety of topics, the conference will be organized in six sessions. Each session will consist of one keynote lecture and of sections with individual papers.

**A: Dominican Theology and its production** (e.g. theoretical aspects of Dominican theology and culture such as it was shaped in scholastic treatises, biblical commentaries, or mystical instructions).

Keynote: Prof. Isabel Iribarren (Strasbourg)

**B: Theology and culture of Dominican preaching** (e.g. Dominican culture and theology such as it was practiced in sermons and preaching, but also in a broader sense in Dominican spirituality and pastoral care).

Keynote: Prof. Carolyn Muessig (Bristol)

**C: The institutional and legal constitution of the Order** (e.g. contributions about the order's structure and legislation, about chapters, study houses, convents, and institutional reforms).

Keynote: N.N.

**D: The materiality of Dominican culture and theology** (e.g. Dominican art and architecture, manuscript culture, and music).

Keynote: Prof. Marika Räsänen (Turku)

**E: Dominicans in debate** (e.g. Renaissance and Humanism, Councils, the Reformation). Keynote: Prof. Volker Leppin (Tübingen)

**F: Dominicans and 'the other(s)'** (e.g. other orders, but also other religions). Keynote: Prof. Johnny G.G. Jakobsen (Copenhagen)

The public **opening lecture** will be given by Prof. M. Michèle Mulchahey (Toronto).

We invite scholars to submit proposals either for **individual papers** (20 minutes plus 10 minutes of Q&A), or for **panels of up to three papers** à 20 (+10) minutes, to be included in one of the six sessions. We encourage in particular early stage researchers to submit their proposals.

The development of the COVID-19 pandemic allowing, the conference will be hosted in a **hybrid format, i.e. both in-person and online**. In-person attendance is encouraged, while colleagues who cannot travel to Copenhagen, shall also have the opportunity to participate online. A definitive decision as to whether we can remain with the hybrid format or have to switch to an online only format will be communicated in April 2021.

Please submit your proposal (200 words for individual papers, 500 words for panels), indicating whether you, from your current perspective, will attend in person or online, to one of the three organizers of the conference:

Prof. Florian Wöller (University of Copenhagen): [flw@teol.ku.dk](mailto:flw@teol.ku.dk)

Prof. John T. Slotemaker (Fairfield University, USA): [jslotemaker@fairfield.edu](mailto:jslotemaker@fairfield.edu) Prof. Ueli Zahnd (University of Geneva, Switzerland): [ueli.zahnd@unige.ch](mailto:ueli.zahnd@unige.ch)

**The deadline for all submissions is 1 February 2021.** You will be informed about the acceptance of your submission by 15 February 2021.

The conference will be hosted by the Faculty of Theology at the University of Copenhagen. It is organized on behalf of the *International Society for the Study of Medieval Theology* (IGTM, [www.medievaltheology.org](http://www.medievaltheology.org)). As is usual for IGTM meetings, selected papers of the conference will lead to an edited volume in the peer-reviewed series *Archa Verbi. Subsidia* (Münster: Aschendorff).



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