

MIRRORS OF PRINCES IN ANTIQUITY AND THEIR RECEPTION

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
UNIVERSITY OF LEUVEN 2-3-4 DECEMBER 2015

CALL FOR PAPERS

Works largely corresponding to the genre later called 'mirrors of princes' were composed in Greece from the 4th century BC onwards. In these texts a philosopher or rhetorician addresses a king or a prince, expounds his ideal of kingship and demands that his advice be followed. Mirrors of princes flourished in Hellenistic times (e.g. Aristotle, Epicurus), and in Imperial times such works were written for the Emperor, using Hellenistic predecessors as examples (e.g. Dion of Prusa, Synesius). These classical Greek and Roman texts then served as sources of inspiration for similar writings in Byzantium, the Western Middle Ages and the Renaissance. In fact, the genre only came to an end in the 19th century.

Given the fact that surprisingly little research has been devoted to the specimens of the genre from classical antiquity, the focus of the conference will be on the works of Graeco-Roman antiquity. This lack of interest is all the more surprising as these mirrors of princes are of importance for historians of literature, history, ideas, philosophy and Christianity as well. A better understanding of the 'genre' (if there was such) in antiquity may also introduce new material to study such works from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Therefore papers on their reception until the end of Renaissance are also welcome.

The main aim of this conference is to provide, in an interdisciplinary effort, a major contribution to a better understanding of these works. Possible topics to be treated are (among many others):

* From a historical point of view: the reasons why, when and for whom (and for whom not) such works were written; their impact on the addressees; the aims of the authors; the interrelation between mirrors of princes and royal/imperial propaganda; the intended audience beyond the actual addressees

* From a philological point of view: the strategies of argument and *paraenesis* (approaches using the methods of New Testament studies are especially welcome here), intertextuality, implicit and explicit discussion of the works of predecessors, relations with other literary genres (e.g. philosophical dialogue, diatribe), the use and function of *topoi* and *exempla*.

* From a philosophical/theological point of view: the relations between the philosophical or theological doctrine of the authors and their adaption in the mirrors of princes, the use or absence of philosophical terminology, the role of the philosopher in politics and society.

With regard to the reception of the mirrors of princes in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, special attention may be paid to (besides the topics just mentioned) the later evolution of the genre (including the replacement by and inclusion in other genres), the various political languages and the private – public relation (along with the impact of the press).

Papers may be given in English, French or German and the presentation should take 25 minutes.

To **submit** a proposal, please send an abstract of approximately 300 words (along with your name, academic affiliation and contact information) to lectio@kuleuven.be by January 15, 2015. Notification of acceptance will be given by the end of March 2015.

The **publication** of selected papers is planned in a volume to be included in the peer-reviewed LECTIO Series (Brepols Publishers).

The **keynote lectures** will be delivered by
Oswyn Murray (Balliol College Oxford) and Jill Kraye (University of London, The Warburg Institute)

Venue of the Conference

The Leuven Institute for Ireland in Europe, Janseniusstraat 1, 3000 Leuven

Organizing committee

Erik De Bom, Geert Roskam, Stefan Schorn, Peter Van Deun, Gerd Van Riel, Marleen Reynders

Scientific committee

Erik De Bom, Jill Kraye, Oswyn Murray, Marco Formisano, Geert Roskam, Stefan Schorn, Peter Van Deun, Gerd Van Riel

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