

## CALL FOR PAPERS

*Writing practices in Cistercian abbeys (12th-mid-16th centuries)*  
*Producing, exchanging, supervising, preserving*

### International symposium

**Troyes (Centre de congrès) – Clairvaux Abbey**  
**28-30 October 2015**

#### Announcement

The vitality of research on Cistercian history has not diminished in recent decades. Although works focussing on the institutions, art, architecture and economy have continued to enrich our knowledge, new perspectives have opened up; for example on the occasion of the ninth centenary celebrations of the founding of Cîteaux, on the tension between unanimity and diversity in the Order and its components. Moreover, specialists of the Cistercian world have been aware of the dynamism of the theme of 'the written', as attest the numerous monographs, finished or in progress, of Cistercian archive muniments (Cîteaux, Clairvaux, Fontfroide, Morimond, Pontigny, Reigny, Vaucelles, etc., to limit ourselves to a few French examples), or else the attention given to monastic pancartas, documents long reputed to be a Cistercian speciality, or the fruitful research creating a dialogue between deeds and library manuscripts, such as the meeting organized in November 2012 by the Médiathèque du Grand Troyes ('*Cistercians and the Transmission of Texts, 12th-18th Centuries*').

In this context, the celebration in 2015 of the 900th anniversary of the founding of Clairvaux provides the occasion for submitting the diversity of the Cistercian world to the prism of its writing productions by tightening the study on 'pragmatic' writing. This symposium will focus on diplomatic, administrative and management writing, without excluding incursions into the accounting, epistolary or liturgical fields. The perimeter of the study will encompass the men's and women's Cistercian monasteries throughout the Occident between the 12th and mid-16th centuries.

Three main lines of reflection are being proposed, in the form of questions likely to steer interested researchers.

#### **Main line No. 1: *Producing (production centres)***

Cistercian abbeys are generally considered places of writing production. But did they all have a writing workshop? Did they delegate part of the production outside the establishment (to another monastery or an uncontested ecclesiastical authority)? Did they produce for others? When it existed, what was the writing workshop used for? Solely producing manuscripts (liturgical and commemorative, theological, historical, etc.)? Or else also charters, administrative, accounting and property documents? Or only documents of pragmatic writing? In evaluating this activity, it would be interesting to study the dividing-up of tasks between the monks (author of charters, cartularist, manuscript copyist, accountant), their training, the evolution of their skills and techniques as their production progressed.

Did the women's abbeys have the same means as the men's as concerns the production of writings? Did they have the same goals? What relations might have existed between the

women's and men's abbeys in this domain? What institutions and referents (members of chapters, priests, etc.) were capable of providing them with practical and specialized advice?

**Main line No. 2:** *Training, supervising and exchanging (norms and usages of writing)*

One will wonder about the existence of norms internal to the Order in terms of writing. Can styles or usages peculiar to a writing centre or filiation be discerned? Have forms (of letters, deeds, contracts, etc.) been observed within the Order or a given establishment? Did deeds or other archive documents serve as references and examples?

Cistercian writing exerted and underwent influences within and outside the Order. How did usages develop? How were influences exerted? What about heritages (for example, in case of an abbey being taken over by the Order of Cîteaux)? To what degree was the singularity of diplomatic production linked to its local or regional environment?

What was, depending on the period, the weight of the environment and the major producers of deeds (popes, bishops, chapters, notaries)? What relations did the Cistercians maintain with the authors of seigniorial writings? What role did the Order's conflicts with laymen, secular clergymen or other abbeys play in the evolution of Cistercian production?

**Main line No. 3:** *Supervising and preserving (handling and memory tools)*

Is the Cistercian memory under the influence of founding legends? Is it under control? Is there a need to recreate the past? What discrepancies are to be found between the practices of the mother-abbeys and those of abbeys founded later? How did documentary writing absorb the narratives of the origins, the memory of the founders and donors? Conversely, what use do the Cistercian chronicles and commemoration books make of the charters? Did this use of documentary memory have repercussions on the preservation of the archive muniment?

Do usages, practices and preservation of writing succeed in forging the identity of an establishment or even of the whole Order?

What is the place of the manipulated writing and the 'false' Cistercian?

What interest is focussed on the archives? What is the impact of reforms on the production and preservation of archives? Are there favoured forms of compilation: series of papal bulls, pancartas, *libri traditionum*, cartularies, inventories? Can the portion of the archive muniment eliminated or transcribed in collections be known or evaluated?

Approaches involving diversified Cistercian sources or those of varied provenance will be evaluated, as will comparisons between Cistercian document productions and those of their nearby surroundings. Studies focussing on writing practices other than those targeted by the symposium will be excluded, as will, generally speaking, any topic not directly related to the problem of documentary and management writing.

An international symposium organized by the Aube Departmental Council on the occasion of the 900th anniversary celebrations of the founding of Clairvaux Abbey (1115-2015), in

partnership with the University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne/Centre d'études et de recherche en histoire culturelle (Centre for Research in Cultural History, CERHiC) and the École Pratique des Hautes Etudes.

### **Practical clauses/forms**

It is imperative that proposals for papers (a half-page) be sent before Wednesday 15 January 2014 to:

**Marie-Hélène MORELL**, Research engineer, CERHiC,  
Bâtiment Recherche  
UFR des Lettres et Sciences Humaines  
57, Rue Pierre Taittinger  
51096 Reims Cedex  
Tel./Fax: (33) 3.26.91.36.75  
E-mail: [mh.morell@univ-reims.fr](mailto:mh.morell@univ-reims.fr)

Duration of speeches: 30 minutes

### **Organizing committee**

- Direction des Archives et du Patrimoine de l'Aube (Aube Department of Archives and Heritage): **Arnaud BAUDIN, Nicolas DOHRMANN, Claudie ODILLE**
- University of Reims-Champagne-Ardenne/CERHiC: **Marie-Hélène MORELL**

### **Scientific committee**

- **Laurent MORELLE**, president of the scientific committee, director of studies at the École Pratique des Hautes Etudes
- **Arnaud BAUDIN**, doctor in history, assistant director of the Aube Archives and Heritage
- **Ghislain BRUNEL**, head curator of Heritage at the National Archives (Paris, Middle Ages and Ancien Régime department)
- **Patrick DEMOUY**, professor of mediaeval history at the University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne
- **Marlène HÉLIAS-BARON**, doctor in history, professor of history, junior lecturer at the University of Dijon
- **Jean-François NIEUS**, qualified researcher at the National Scientific Research Collection (F.R.S.-FNRS, Belgium) and professor at the University of Namur (Academy of Louvain)
- **Michel PARISSÉ**, professor emeritus of the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne
- **Dominique STUTZMANN**, researcher at the Research and History of Texts Institute (CNRS)
- **Laurent VEYSSIÈRE**, general curator of Heritage, head of the Cultural Heritages Delegation at the Department of Memory, Heritage and Archives (Ministry of Defence)

The symposium's proceedings will be published in 2016.

**Keywords**

Order of Cîteaux – Diplomatic – Occident – Scriptorium – Writing – Production –  
Supervision – Preservation