

# **Netherlandish Culture of the Sixteenth Century Interdisciplinary Conference**

October 19-20, 2012, Toronto

Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies  
Victoria University in the University of Toronto

## **KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:**

Herman Roodenburg, Head of the Department of Dutch Ethnology at the Meertens Institute; Chair of Historical Anthropology of Europe at the Free University of Amsterdam.

Peter Arnade, Professor of History, Chair, Department of History, California State University San Marcos

Whereas much attention has been paid to the Burgundian Low Countries of the fifteenth century and the so-called Golden Age of the seventeenth, the culture of the Netherlands in the century in between has long been neglected. Yet the past two decades have witnessed significant research on Netherlandish art, literature, and society of the sixteenth century. The period was famously marked by the twin flashpoints of iconoclasm and revolt, but it witnessed throughout a significant development in artistic, political, and literary culture. Among the issues that might be examined are the following:

### **Representations of cities, city life, and urbanism in art and literature**

Low Countries society was first and foremost an urban society. Urban identity manifested itself in rituals, chronicles, literary texts, and images. We invite papers on the representations of cities and city life in literature and art with special attention to the messages and ambiguities they contain and to their complex relation to social reality.

### **Public ritual, civic religion and political culture**

Recent studies on the Burgundian-Habsburg period have developed the notion of a 'theatre state': political communication between court and subjects often took a very public and ritualized form. The key example is that of the joyous entry. Who took the initiative in the organisation of these civic rituals? Who contributed intellectually and artistically?

### **The arts as a chief cultural product**

The Low Countries continued to be one of Europe's principal artistic regions in the sixteenth century, though now with significantly greater communication and exchange with other lands. Antwerp rose to an unparalleled position as a center of both religious and secular painting and of prints. Haarlem emerged with an important artistic culture at the century's end. Nor was success limited to the pictorial arts. Netherlandish carved altarpieces offered new aids in religious devotion, while classicizing tombs and epitaphs imprinted the presence of the nobility on the communal space of church and chapel. We welcome papers that examine the development of the arts and architecture during this period.

### **The construction of religious identities**

The Reformation had a huge impact on Low Countries society, reaching the area early and spreading quickly. The political turmoil that led to the Dutch Revolt only enhanced this process. We invite papers on how religious identities were constructed in the Low Countries, on the impact of different media (printing press, preachers, theatre, etc.), and on the growing confessionalization that led eventually to a sharp cultural divide between the Spanish Low Countries and the Dutch Republic.

### **Other topics of interest include the following:**

Court Culture

Commercial culture, local and international

Iconoclasm

Erasmus, his Netherlandish circle, and his importance for the Low Countries

Media, communication, and the diffusion of knowledge

Netherlanders abroad: international relations and professional circuits

Humanism, education, and the diffusion of knowledge

Geography and travel

Antiquity and its resonances

Those interested in participating should send an abstract of 150 words and a cv (maximum one page) to Ethan Matt Kavalier ([matt.kavalier@utoronto.ca](mailto:matt.kavalier@utoronto.ca)) and Anne-Laure Van Bruaene ([AnneLaure.VanBruaene@UGent.be](mailto:AnneLaure.VanBruaene@UGent.be)) by November 29, 2011.