Territories of Faith (Leuven, 3-4 Jul 17)

Leuven, Jul 3–04, 2017
Deadline: Dec 23, 2016

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Territories of Faith. Religion, Urban Planning and Demographic Change in Post-War Europe, 1945 – 1975.

The research group Architectural Cultures of the Recent Past (ARP) of KU Leuven and KADOC, the Documentation and Research Centre on Religion, Culture and Society of KU Leuven, are organizing an international workshop on religion, urban planning and demographic change in post-war Europe as a prelude to an edited volume on this topic, to be published by an international academic press.

Scope and Aim
In earlier times, most settlements in Europe developed around the local parish church, the community's spatial and social nucleus. The processes of industrialization, urbanization and secularization have reversed this mechanism; already in the mid-20th century, the place of the church (both as a religious institution and as a building) was no longer self-evident. As a response, the various branches of Christian religion devised particular strategies to preserve the once-evident unity of ideology, territory and society. Many Catholic dioceses, for example, established consulting bodies for the strategic planning and financing of religious infrastructure in the newly urbanized areas. This workshop seeks to go beyond the traditional focus on liturgical renewal or modernist paradigms in the study of post-war church architecture. Rather, we propose to study the boom in religious infrastructure in Europe between 1945 - 1975 as the instrument and outcome of a particular interaction between religion, (urban) planning and demographic change.

We suggest following three possible lines of enquiry to explore this hypothesis:

1. What kind of expertise was developed in relation to pastoral challenges in (sub)urban areas? Who were the (institutional) actors in this research, what was their agency and from which perspective did they look at the issues at stake (sociology, architecture, urban planning, theology, anthropology and so forth)? To what networks did these actors belong and how did their ideas circulate?

2. A second set of questions is directed at a critical assessment of the body of knowledge referred to above. How was this knowledge put to use? To what extent did it have an impact on the religious zeal of the faithful? What was the impact of pastoral strategies, theological concepts or sociological theories on the architectural practise of parish infrastructure (e.g. the typology of the place for worship)? And, inversely, what lessons were learned through experiments in the field? Or, put more broadly: how did religious ideas and practices influence planning concepts or

policies?

3. A final perspective on these issues has to do with the reception, perception and assimilation of the ideas and practices mentioned under 1) and 2). How did religious leaders react to the impact of 'secular' ideas? How were new insights disseminated amongst the lower clergy? And finally, how did the local communities of faithful react to and deal with the transformation of their religious and social routines?

Addressing these issues in a transnational (European) and comparative perspective, this workshop aims to position the religious authorities in a field of tensions between planned strategic effort and pragmatic circumstantial adaptations on the one hand, and innovation and tradition on the other. This, in turn, will offer an insight in how organized religion manages and marks its presence within a given territory, a burning issue in the light of the ever growing religious diversity in the contemporary urban environment.

We call for chapter-length papers (between 5000 and 8000 words) that address (one of) the issues mentioned above on the base of one or more case studies. The workshop will focus on the initiatives of the Catholic Church, but we also encourage contributions dealing with other denominations or religions. Papers should be based on original research and be clear in structure, precise in focus and make clear statements about the various forms of agency at stake and their effect upon the material organization of religion.

Practical Information
Prospective authors are invited to send a short CV and an abstract of no more than 300 words, clearly outlining their take on the topic, until the 23th of December, 2016 to eva.weyns@kuleuven.be. A maximum of 10 authors will be selected by the scientific committee to take part in the workshop. In order to provide a solid workshop, draft papers are to be submitted one month in advance of the workshop (by 1 June 2017) and will be distributed amongst participants for feedback. During the two-day workshop, the discussion of each paper will be initiated by one invited respondent and two of the participating authors, and then opened to the entire group. Apart from the consistency of each paper in terms of argument, method and writing, its place within the overall scope of the volume will also constitute a major focus of attention. Participants are expected to take into account the comments made during the workshop in rewriting their papers and submit their final manuscripts within the deadlines set by the organizers. All final, revised manuscripts will then enter a peer-reviewing process in preparation for publication.

There is no fee for the workshop. Lunch and drinks will be provided. The workshop also includes a ½ day tour to some remarkable modern church buildings in the Leuven - Brussels area. For any inquiries, please contact eva.weyns@kuleuven.be.

Please visit the webpage of the full Call for Papers: http://www.arp-kuleuven.be/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/CFP_Territories_of_Faith_Workshop.pdf

Deadlines
23.12.2016 - submission of abstracts
16.01.2017 - notification of acceptance

01.06.2017 - submission of draft papers
03 - 04.07.2017 - workshop at KADOC KU Leuven
01.10.2017 (TBC) - submission of final manuscripts

Scientific committee
Sven Sterken (KU Leuven), Jan De Maeyer (KU Leuven), Olivier Chatelan (Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3), Robert Proctor (University of Bath), and Rajesh Heynickx (KU Leuven).

Reference:
CFP: Territories of Faith (Leuven, 3-4 Jul 17). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 24, 2016 (accessed Nov 17, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/14267>.