

TEXT, SPACE AND RITUAL
DUTCH POEMS POSTED IN CATHOLIC PLACES OF WORSHIP
(1400-1600)

Postdoctoral Research Project
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This project wants to find out how the late medieval and early modern custom of posting poems in public spaces affected the meaning and function of these texts and of the spaces in which they were exhibited. This will be done through the analysis of one particular, little-studied, example of this practice, the vernacular religious poem that was hung on walls and pillars of Catholic places of worship in the Netherlands and its evolution from the beginning of the fifteenth century through the early Reformation (1600).

To gain a better view of the interaction between the Catholic text panels and the religious spaces in which they were displayed, the project will first of all consider the texts and their presentation on the panels, as well as the people involved in posting them and the temporal and geographic distribution of the phenomenon. It will then look at connections between the panels, the spaces in which they were put up and other objects in those spaces, such as paintings, relics and the Eucharist. Finally, it will analyze the devotional function of these objects, in particular their place within acts and rituals in the churches and chapels and the way and degree in which they have functioned as objects of devotion.

Since the proposed research is both text- and object-based, it will not only use insights and theories from literary studies but also from the study of art history and of history.