

HISTORY OF UNIVERSITIES SEMINAR | 7 JUNE 2023

SHOULD WE OR SHOULD WE NOT SPEAK OF MEDIEVAL “INTELLECTUALS”?

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Historians and philosophers in Europe have repeatedly spoken of “intellectuals” even when pre-modern cultures were concerned. However, they often did not make it entirely clear what they referred to by this term. In order to clarify the range of usages, recent authors distinguished between a broad and a narrow use of this term. In fact, even a random sample of secondary literature shows that the term is often used in a broad and unspecific sense, as a synonym for “scholars,” “schoolmasters,” “gens de savoir,” “bearers of higher knowledge”. In my talk I will raise the question if it is reasonable to use the narrower concept of the “intellectual” we are referring to when we talk about modern “public” intellectuals to the pre-modern era, especially to the European Middle Ages.

History of Universities Seminar

Convened by Miles Taylor (Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany), Ku-ming (Kevin) Chang (Academia Sinica, Taiwan), Heike Jöns (Loughborough University, United Kingdom) and Tamson Pietsch (University of Technology Sydney, Australia). Hosted by the Humboldt University of Berlin on Zoom: <https://www.histgeog-uni.net/history-of-universities-seminar-2/>.