Conference Title: *Reassessing Canon Formation in Medieval Literature*

Organized by: University Pompeu Fabra Barcelona, in collaboration with the University of Geneva, Université Libre de Bruxelles, and University of Barcelona

Conference Dates: February 20-22, 2025

Location: UPF Barcelona

Submission Details: Participants are required to submit a title and a 150-word abstract.

Submission Deadline: July 15, 2024

Please submit your proposals via email to c7s.conference2025@gmail.com

Framework, expectations & questions

Set for 2025 at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF) in Barcelona, *Reassessing Canon Formation in Medieval Literature* emerges from a collaborative research project involving the University of Geneva and Université Libre de Bruxelles. It centrally features the Cycle des Sept Sages (C7S), a pivotal but underrecognized work of medieval French prose, based on the Roman des Sept Sages de Rome and its six prose continuations. These texts provide a unique window into the literary landscape of the late 13th century and serve as a focal point for our discussions on canon formation.

Our conference seeks to push beyond traditional literary analyses by adopting an interdisciplinary approach to reassess medieval literary canons. We aim to dissect the concept of 'canon' through comprehensive single-tradition studies and comparative analyses across different traditions. This exploration will critically evaluate the role of historical narratives and 19th-century scholarship in defining literary 'greatness'.

We invite attendees to contribute to our cross-disciplinary thematic axes, designed to provide an exploration of medieval literature's canon formation. Contributions that delve into intercultural exchanges between European medieval literatures and those from regions like the Islamic world, Byzantine Empire, and the Jewish diaspora are welcome. Such discussions will enhance our understanding of how cross-cultural interactions have historically shaped literary canons and influenced narrative structures and themes across and beyond Europe. Additionally, we seek to highlight the roles and representations of women and minority groups in medieval literature. By examining their contributions and visibility, we aim to foster a deeper understanding of their impact on canonical recognition and the broader narrative and cultural values of the period.

1. Defining the Canon: What factors and processes determine a work's canonical status in medieval literature? How do an author's cultural impact and adherence to cultural codes influence this status?

2. The Cycle des Sept Sages and Canon Formation: Explore the historical reception, thematic depth, and reasons behind the current (non-)canonical status of the C7S.

3. Construction and Structure of the Canon: Investigate how cultural, historical, and technological factors, including traditional and digital editing methods, have shaped the Medieval literary canon. Discussions should focus on the impact of these approaches on our understanding of the canon's structure and its evolution.

4. Language and its Role in Canon Formation: Examine how literary trends and linguistic standards intersect to influence the inclusion of works in the canon, particularly in diverse linguistic contexts.

5. Educational Impact and Cultural Contexts in Canon Formation: Discuss the implications of including specific medieval works in educational curricula and how these choices affect canon construction and cultural perceptions in various countries.

6. Comparative Analysis: Utilize comparative methods to deepen our understanding of the varied and dynamic processes of canon formation across medieval traditions.

7. Theoretical Approaches to Canon: Apply contemporary theoretical frameworks to analyse the canonical status of medieval works, especially those from so-called cultural epicenters.