

COMPETITION PROGRAMME 2023

TEYLERS TWEEDE GENOOTSCHAP

HAARLEM

In keeping with the *Teylers Stichting's* 200-year-old tradition of promoting academic research, the Directors of this foundation *Teylers Stichting*, together with the members of the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap* (Teyler's Second Society), have decided to hold a competition for the year 2023 on a subject that touches upon various academic fields as well as many social developments.

SUBJECT

We invite a study of how the Middle Ages and/or the Golden Age have been represented in the literature and culture of the Low Countries since 1800.

FURTHER INFORMATION

During the Romantic period, interest in the Middle Ages grew in our surrounding countries, both scientifically and in terms of literature and culture. The Middle Ages never completely disappeared in the Early Modern period, but from around 1800 there was clearly a growing interest in the medieval past. The Netherlands and Flanders also joined in with this new fascination with the past. In the Netherlands in particular, there was not only an increase in interest in the Middle Ages, but also a growing nationalist interest in the Golden Age. The term 'Golden Age' was coined in the early nineteenth century.

This was not just an academic issue. In her book *Historiezuucht* (2013), Marita Mathijsen states that knowledge of the past became democratized in the nineteenth century. Literary writers regularly opted for a historical setting to familiarize a rapidly expanding readership with earlier phases of national history. Furthermore, other artists and social institutions also responded to this growing interest in history.

The lack of such positive interest in the past in our time provides a stark contrast. Although both periods are still referred to in Dutch and Flemish literature and culture, it should be noted that the term 'Golden Age' is now considered undesirable by many, under the influence of the postcolonial debate. We live in a time when there is a discussion about whether or not some statues should be allowed to remain in public spaces, and yet the VOC (Dutch East India Company) mentality is otherwise promoted in the House of Representatives. In comparison, the Middle Ages are problematic in a different way, because this period is considered by many as 'backward', 'uncivilized' and 'violent,' and the word is sometimes used as a derogatory label ('medieval conditions') to characterize other groups and cultures. On the other hand, the younger generation is devoted to fantasy and computer games that are often inspired by the medieval past.

In short, the past affects everyone, young and old. But what are these historical references that surround us and how do we relate to them? What are the backgrounds, ideas and assumptions of the (changing) negotiations with the medieval and seventeenth-century past, and how are they expressed in the literature and culture of the Low Countries? With this research we propose to shed new light on both periods and their representation.

Main question: How did the representation of the Middle Ages and/or the Golden Age in Dutch and/or Flemish literature and culture change over the past two hundred years and which shifting ideas and assumptions underlie this change?

The proposal focuses on Dutch and/or Flemish literary and cultural representations of the Middle Ages and/or the Golden Age in the period from 1800 to the present. The attention paid to both periods may be discussed separately, but preferably in combination. Dutch and Flemish literature and culture do not exist in a vacuum and therefore deserve to be linked to phenomena in various media, as well as to the international context or to cultural products from elsewhere that are present in Dutch and Flemish

culture. Rather than formulating abstract generalisations, consideration is given to the elaboration of a few cases, which go beyond the purely descriptive by working from a theoretical or comparative approach.

FORM OF CONTRIBUTION

Contributions should consist of:

1. **An extended study in the form of a text ready for publication. If a dissertation is part of the submission, the date of promotion is the date of publication. Or:**
2. **One or more publications (the majority of which have been published within the last three years before 1 January 2026 and of which the entrant is the author or one of the principal authors), accompanied by an unpublished text, written specifically for the competition, in which the earlier publications are placed in a broader academic context.**

PROCEDURE

In order to qualify for the competition, candidates should submit four copies of their contribution to the Directors of the *Teylers Stichting* (Spaarne 16, 2011 CH Haarlem) by 1 January 2026 at the latest. Contributions received after that date will not be considered. The texts may be submitted in either Dutch, French, German or English.

In accordance with the provisions of Pieter Teyler van de Hulst's will, the author's name may not appear on the unpublished texts. Instead, they should be submitted anonymously, identifiable only by a motto. Submissions should be accompanied by a sealed envelope, marked with the motto that identifies the entry and containing the author's name and address.

To avoid a long wait before hearing the result of the evaluation, in case an award has not been made, authors are requested to send together with the sealed envelope an open envelope containing the name and full address of a person with whom the Directors of Teylers Stichting may enter into correspondence confidentially.

JUDGING

Judging will be carried out by the members of the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap*, who will submit their recommendation to the Directors of the Teyler Foundation within four months of the closing date for submissions. The Directors' decision, which will be made within one month, will be final. All candidates will be notified as soon as a decision is made.

PRIZE

The prize consists of a gold medal struck from the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap's* dies. The medal will be awarded to the winner(s) at a special ceremony in the *Teylers Museum*. Professional journals and the press, and possibly other interested parties and institutions, will receive ample advance notice of the award ceremony.

PUBLICATION

Responsibility for publication rests with the author of the winning contribution, although the *Teylers Stichting* and the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap* may consider lending assistance. On publication, reference should be made to the fact that the text has received an award from the *Teylers Stichting*.

INFORMATION

Further information may be obtained from the secretary of the society (see below). Journal editors and others who wish to draw the attention of their readership to the competition, but who do not wish to print the competition details in full, are urged to advise intending candidates to consult the programme for full details of the competition. The application form can be found on www.teylersstichting.nl.

For more information about Pieter Teyler van der Hulst, the *Teylers Stichting* and its related institutions, such as the two learned societies, the museum and the almshouse, please consult *Teyler 1778-1978* (Haarlem 1978), *De idealen van Pieter Teyler. Een erfenis uit de Verlichting* (Haarlem 2006) and www.teylersstichting.nl.

CURRENT COMPETITIONS

- Competition 2022 (History): a study on the tension between crisis management and crisis experience, applied to a topic from Dutch history (Middle Ages to the present). (deadline before 1 January 2025). For full details of this competition please contact the secretary or visit www.teylersstichting.nl

SECRETARY

Prof. dr. Y.L. Bleyerveld: bleyerveld@rkd.nl

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions should have reached the Directors of the *Teylers Stichting* (Spaarne 16, 2011 CH Haarlem) before 1 January 2026. (Spaarne 16, 2011 CH Haarlem).

MEMBERS OF *TEYLERS TWEEDE GENOOTSCHAP*

Prof. dr. W. van Anrooij, Professor of Dutch Literature before Romanticism, Leiden University

Prof. dr. Y.L. Bleyerveld, Senior Curator Drawings and Prints c. 1500-1800, RKD – Netherlandish Institute for Art History, The Hague / Professor by special appointment Leiden University

Prof. dr. B.A. de Graaf, Professor of History of International Relations & Global Governance

Prof. dr. F.H. van Lunteren, Professor of History of Natural Sciences at Leiden University

Drs. A. Pol, former Curator of Medieval and Modern Numismatics, Geldmuseum, Utrecht

Prof. dr. ir. W. van Saarloos, Professor of Theoretical Physics, Leiden University and former director KNAW

Prof. dr. L.E.M. Vet, former director of the Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO) and emeritus professor of Evolutionary Ecology at Wageningen University



Medal of the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap* (gold, 72 mm, c. 120 g, 14 carat); dies by J.G. Holtzhey, 1778:

- beneath the radiant all-seeing eye of Providence are Physics with her globe and compass, Poetry with her lyre, History with her book, Drawing with her brush and palette, and Numismatics bearing a tray of medals; OMNES ARTES QVAE AD HVMANITATEM PERTINENT HABENT QVODDAM COMMVNE VINCVLVM (all arts and sciences relating to human civilisation share a common bond)

- in a laurel wreath DOCTRINAE PRAEMIVM EX TESTAMENTO PETRI TEYLER V D HVLST HARLEMENSIS NATI DIE XXV MARTII MDCCII DEFVNCTI DIE VIII APRILIS MDCCCLXXVIII (prize for scholarly achievement in accordance with the last will and testament of Pieter Teyler van der Hulst of Haarlem, born 25 March 1702, died 8 April 1778).