Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl and the Teaching of Theology at the University of Vienna

There is a general tendency when writing the history of medieval universities to describe them simply in institutional terms. When historians deal with universities, their approach is usually based on diplomatic sources, that is, documents like statutes, cartularies, rotuli, lists of students, biographical portraits of masters, and so on, in order to depict how the institutions functioned. This presentation will adopt a different perspective. A compelling way to discover the early history of the University of Vienna is to emphasize its highest intellectual production, the writings of the bachelors and masters of the Faculty of Theology, the premier unit of graduate studies in medieval universities. I propose to focus on a specific genre, commentary on the Sentences, the text that linked professors and students in that advanced bachelors produced them. The University of Vienna ended up with a standard commentary, the first version of which was compiled by Nicholas of Dinkelsbühl around 1400, as contained in his autograph in manuscript 269 (274) from the Schottenstift Library in Vienna. Therefore, I would like to focus my presentation on different aspects of the commentary of Nicholaus of Dinkelsbühl in order to better understand the practice of teaching theology at the new University of Vienna. First, I will focus on the material aspect of his commentary, more exactly how the material status of a document can inform us about the academic exercise in Vienna. Second, I will offer some case studies illustrating Dinkelsbühl’s methodology. Third, I will present how he deals with doctrinal issues in order to familiarize you with the intellectual interest of students and professors in Vienna.

Monica Brinzei is currently an associate researcher at the Institut de recherche et d’histoire des textes, CNRS, in Paris where she is the principal investigator of the ERC-THESIS project. Her research is based on an interdisciplinary approach that combines paleography, codicology, the history of texts and the interpretation of medieval doctrine in commentaries on the Sentences produced in medieval universities (Paris, Vienna, Prague, Cologne, Bologna) after 1350. Her publications contribute to give more visibility to unknown texts and authors that marked the history of medieval universities.

Moderation: Christian Lackner

Thomas Winkelbauer
Institutsdirektor

Gäste sind herzlich willkommen!