INTENSITY AND THE GRADES OF NATURE
Heat, Colour, & Sound in the Ordering of Pre-Modern Cosmos 1200-1600

This summer school will explore how heat, colour & sound have been conceptualised and graded in the pre-modern cosmos shaping both disciplines of knowledge and everyday life. Central to the various cosmologies that developed throughout the period 1200-1600 was the idea that phenomena are subject to a variation in intensity. Intensity determined why objects were of higher or lesser temperature, speed, brightness, purity or density, texture, pitch, and so forth. And yet, intensity also had wider metaphysical, theological, political and cultural implications. It was instrumental to justify the order of the cosmos, the necessity of evil, and the need for hierarchies to maintain social peace, with shades of colour especially used to mark social status, both in garments and buildings.

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