

## Living and aging away from the world, preservation strategies of the monastic orders.

This research project focuses on female and male religious catholic orders in French-speaking Switzerland and in Bourgogne/Franche-Comté. The members of these religious orders define themselves first and foremost by their traditional historical missions: prayer, work and hospitality. This is because, unlike the apostolic congregations, they have never had to hold positions in teaching, care or education and then leave these functions. Aging seems so to be a temporary impediment part of an ancient history rather than belonging to a primary collective identity. However, the aging of members of certain communities is a well-established fact. The ways they adapt (to this fact) diverge depending on whether - they are monks or nuns - they follow a certain obedience - they are in possession of some capital - or on the porous or sealed nature of the enclosure - be it real, symbolic or virtual.

Nowadays, the specificity of these religious orders attract women and men, seeking self-sustaining community life, rigorous spirituality, form of withdrawal from the world, etc. Although the community ideal is based on stability - each wants to be able to live and die among their own - getting older may lead to changes in these expectations. What strategies do the religious orders adopt facing the aging of their members? Are they making internal changes or constrained alliances with the outside world? Which situations in everyday life are everlasting and which are transitory? This project, which will run for 4 years, aims to answer the above questions.

The research will be conducted with an ethnographic approach, the researchers immersing themselves in the communities. Interviews, analyses of documents (archives, rules, conventions, etc.) and photographs will complete our in situ observations.

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### Research team

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### Funding

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### Duration

48 months