Sessions at Int. Congress on Medieval Studies (Kalamazoo, 12–15 May 16)

University of Western Michigan, Kalamazoo, May 12–15, 2016
Deadline: Sep 15, 2015

H-ArtHist Redaktion

[1] Speculatio - Medieval and Modern

[2] Local Sanctity in the Global Middle Ages: The Material Promotion of New Saints c. 1000-1250

[3] Embodiment: Senses, Body, and Space in Medieval Art and Architecture

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[1] Speculatio - Medieval and Modern

Organizers:
Beate Fricke and Niklaus Largier, University of California, Berkeley
Sponsor: Material Collective (http://thematerialcollective.org/)

Medievalists regularly deal with fragmented or partially recorded material evidence, e.g., in the case of a mosaic or a manuscript where some parts are still visible and others are lost and hard to reconstruct. The published results of our research often reassemble such fragmentary evidence and provide only the convincing, conclusive arguments. We rarely elaborate further on the dead ends, the ambivalence of the evidence and the gaps in our knowledge, like missing or lost written records from archives. Thus, speculation comes into play in multiple ways and occurs on several levels – we imagine what the missing pieces might have been, we try to consider lost connections between bits of "hard evidence," we speculate about links among written, oral, visual, and material cultures and about networks in various parts of the medieval world. In doing so, our work often mirrors our own contemporary interests and agendas.
This panel takes the medieval connotations of "speculatio" (exploration, observation, spying out - contemplation, rethinking, speculation) seriously and brings light to the moments of decision-making in reading partial evidence, in interpreting ambivalence in the meaning of objects from the past, and in drawing conclusions from a scattered set of clues or contradictory materialities. The session highlights the recent rediscovery of the concept of speculation as it is articulated in the desire of "speculative realism" to produce a "wager on the possible returns from a renewed attention to reality itself" and to formulate a new program of discovery. Speakers will consider the relationship between such contemporary approaches and medieval notions of "speculatio" as a negotiation of the impossibility to know the absolute or the divine. Seen as a practice both of thought and of the production of artifacts, speculation can thus be seen a specific juncture where medieval culture (art, literature, sciences) and modern desires for and forms of understanding meet.
We would particularly like to encourage also speakers working from a non-Western perspective/part of the "medieval" world. Bringing together different disciplines and historiographies is one of the aims of our ses-

sion.

DEADLINE FOR PAPER PROPOSALS: 15 September 2015
Paper proposals should consist of the following:
1. Abstract of proposed paper (500 words maximum)
2. Completed Participant Information Form available at:
http://wmich.edu/medieval/congress/submissions/index.html…
3. CV with home and office mailing addresses, e-mail address, and phone number

ALL PROPOSALS AND INQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:
Beate Fricke (fricke@berkeley.edu) and Niklaus Largier (nlargier@berkeley.edu)

[2] Local Sanctity in the Global Middle Ages: The Material Promotion of New Saints c. 1000-1250

Saints' cults and canonizations had the potential to stimulate dynamic cultural and artistic turning points for their institutions. While such cults have been studied as separate phenomena for individual sites, shrines, and saints, or approached with more comprehensive questions of contemporary piety and religion, this session will address moments of artistic and material responses to the development of local saints. New saints or relics as well as revitalized cults had fundamental consequences for each place, seen in streams of pilgrims or rising revenues for local institutions, subsequent building campaigns and new furnishings for the churches. Canonizations or the recollection of ancient traditions and relics were also often the result of a spiritual flourishing (re)focusing on the history of individual institutions, cathedral chapters as well as monastic communities. There are numerous prominent examples of the promotion of local sanctity for the period from the 11th to the middle of the 13th century, including Bernward and Godehard of Hildesheim, Charlemagne in Aachen, or Elisabeth of Marburg.

The sessions will also seek to explore the tension between local and global concerns: What outside forces and developments were contributing to this turn inward to „hometown" saints? In the construction of the new, local saint, what material elements are included or referenced in books, shrines, and reliquaries to evoke a connection to Rome and the Holy Land? And to what degree do local artifacts come to stand for the site's holy past? More broadly, papers should discuss questions such as: What happened in the context of the canonization of a saint, the advent of relics, and their flourishing veneration in and around the medieval church? How was the development of a given cult marked by significant building campaigns, changes of liturgy or donations? What objects were donated and what do we know about their purpose and assignment?

One focus will be on manuscripts that can be related to a specific cult. How were references to previous relic cults embedded within the books' illuminated and liturgical programs? Another topic will address the way that shrines and reliquaries demonstrate the accretive process by which a new saint was promoted in a given institution. All lines of enquiry will include a consideration of the religious life at each site, the use and setting of the objects, the interplay of local and global concerns, and the intellectual and religious background of the donors and institutions that produced these objects.

Please send your proposal of up to one page with your Participant Information Form (PIF)
http://wmich.edu/medieval/congress/submissions/index.html#PIF
to the organizers:
Kristen Collins, J. Paul Getty Museum, KCollins@getty.edu

or Gerhard Lutz, Dommuseum Hildesheim, gerhard.lutz@dommuseum-hildesheim.de

[3] Embodiment: Senses, Body, and Space in Medieval Art and Architecture

This session explores the relationship created between the physical body of the viewer and art objects, paintings, or architecture. Topics might include the way in which a cycle of wall-paintings encourages the viewer's body to trace a certain path through space, the ways in which a manuscript miniature can evoke the senses of touch, hearing, taste or even smell, and the way a casket creates a physical relationship with its owner/beholder who touches and opens it. This topic draws upon recent scholarly emphases on materiality, materialism, thing theory, sensuality, and the embodied nature of experience. Western medieval, Byzantine, Islamic, or other medieval objects/sites may be considered. Traditional object-based and more recent theoretical examinations are welcome.

Please send paper proposals by Sept. 15, 2015, to Amanda Luyster, College of the Holy Cross, aluyster@holycross.edu

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Reference:
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