Session at RSA (St. Louis, 15-17 Jun 20)

St. Louis, MO, USA, Jun 15–17, 2020
Deadline: Nov 15, 2019

Achim Timmermann, Ann Arbor

Symposium on Medieval and Renaissance Studies
Sacri Monti and Beyond: Holy Land Simulacra and Monumental Stational Programs across Europe, c. 1400-1600

Over the past two decades a plethora of scholarship has been published on the replication of Jerusalem and other Holy Land places in the physical landscapes of late medieval and early modern Europe. Much of this research is concerned with questions surrounding the process of implementation of such topographical “translations”, their urban and monastic patronage, and their roles in rituals of “virtual pilgrimage.” Despite its conceptually quite rich nature, a good portion of the debate has been limited insofar as it has predominantly tended to focus on a narrow range of sites and monuments, the Sacri Monti of northern Italy being chief among them.

Our panel builds on and expands from this state of research. We are of course still interested in the Sacri Monti, but we also invite papers on other types of “European Jerusalems”, such as the Stations of the Cross, northern European Passion Parks like that at Görlitz, the calvaires of Brittany, and stational imagery of the Seven Falls of Christ. We equally welcome proposals for papers that investigate urban or rural environments in which sequentially-placed image stations immersed the viewer into the life of the Virgin Mary (e.g. her Seven Joys, her Seven Sorrows, etc.) or into the vitae of select saints, such as St. Francis at Orta and St. Mary Magdalen at the Sainte-Baume. Finally, while this session will naturally focus on European ensembles, we will also consider proposals that examine Holy Land simulacra and other kinds of stational cycles in the nascent overseas empires of Spain and Portugal (potential speakers should bear in mind though that our cut-off date is c. 1600).

We particularly invite papers that propose new and more diverse approaches to these various types of simulacra. Topics that could be addressed include, but are by no means limited to: claims and chains of authenticity; topomimesis and hierophanization; anachronisms and anatopisms; viewer experiences, somatic and otherwise; or the late medieval and early modern city as a simulacrum of Jerusalem and other spatially and temporally distant holy places (and vice versa).

If you are interested in contributing to this session, please send a 250-word abstract and a short CV to Professors Pamela Stewart (Eastern Michigan University; pstewa13@emich.edu) and Achim Timmermann (University of Michigan; achimtim@umich.edu) by 15 November 2019.

Reference:

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