Jerusalem as Narrative Space (Florence, Dec 07)

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Jerusalem as Narrative Space (4th-15th Century)

Interdisciplinary Colloquium, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut

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Jerusalem is a site of historical events and eschatological expectation. It could be experienced in its 'real' place, but it was also handed down through collective memory and belief, or 'merely' imagined. Over the centuries, in its central role for the Jewish, Christian and Islamic cultures, Jerusalem became the setting or motif of oral, written and pictorial narratives. These narratives range from the Bible and Apocryphal legends, historiographical texts and novels to 'real', fictional or spiritual pilgrim's reports. Jerusalem thus became a narrated space as well as a 'narrating' space, or a continuous origin of narratives.

The terms 'narrative' and 'space' are in themselves multi-layered and their conflation built a highly complex concept. The colloquium will look at the latter not only in the sense of the Bakhtinian chronotopos, but also by inviting a broader approach to the study of narrative space. Basic questions that could be addressed are: How and on what levels has Jerusalem been transformed into a narrative space? What correlations can be observed between narrative and iconic dimensions regarding the holy place(s)? What role do different media (text and image), authors/artists and the public play, and what are their dynamics? How do pictorial and textual narratives contribute to the construction and transmission of an image of Jerusalem? How is Jerusalem portrayed in narrative pictures (scenes of the Passion, for example) and in illustrated books such as the Bible and the Haggadah? How are places specified in and by the narrative? How does the narrative become associated with places? How does the narrative create and/or transfer places? In the colloquium, the study of the ?translocation¹ of Jerusalem (in texts, images, architecture, landscape or relics) will try to overcome the isolated notion of a ?copy¹ or topographical resemblance.

We look forward to receiving contributions from all medieval sections of art history, literary studies, history, theology, Jewish and Islamic

studies, as well as related disciplines.

Please send your contribution suggestions (1 page) by 10 May 2007 to:

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