

Discourses of Mirroring in the Middle Ages (Philadelphia, 6–7 Feb 09)

Kathryn Malczyk

Call for Papers

Per Speculum in Mediaevum: Discourses of Mirroring in the Middle Ages

Keynote Speaker: Marina Brownlee; Topic TBA

Medievalists @ Penn (M@P) invites submissions for the graduate conference in Medieval Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, February 6-7, 2009. All abstract submissions (max. 250-300 words) must be received by November 14th, 2008. All submissions to mapmirrors@gmail.com.

The figure captured in the Latin word *speculum*, meaning both 'mirror' and 'encyclopedia,' is central to medieval culture. From St. Paul's foundational "per speculum in aenigmate" to Ovid's version of the Narcissus myth to Jean de Meun's re-titling of the Romance of the Rose as *Le Miroer aus Amoreus*, the problematic of reflection cuts across medieval regional and discursive boundaries. This traveling topos pervades medieval cultural expression, from religious thought to the production of visual and textual artwork to music and philosophy. The implicit or explicit articulation of this fascinating figure nevertheless differs as it enters (or is re-evaluated within) varying discourses. This conference invites submissions concerning one or more formations of the 'mirror.' We seek to encourage a plurality of perspectives from medievalists of all disciplines in recognition of the profound 'interdisciplinarity' of our common object of study: the Middle Ages. Topics might include, but are not limited to:

- encyclopedias and *summae*
- advice for princes and conduct manuals
- scientific treatises and astrology
- (Ciceronian) friendship
- reproduction and repetition
- twins and doubling
- vanity and the Narcissus myth
- reflection and replication
- representation and mimesis
- specularity and visuality
- recognition and self-consciousness

- the mirror of the soul and mysticism
- mirror as distorted image, figura, and metaphor

Mission Statement of M@P: Medievalists @ Penn (M@P) is a reading group run by graduate students at the University of Pennsylvania. The group is comprised of members from departments across the School of Arts and Sciences (French, Music, Spanish, English, German, and Art History among others). Our readings are primary and secondary texts chosen broadly from various disciplines, agreed upon each semester by the current participants. Our purpose is to foster discussion and interaction among students and scholars of all aspects of the Middle Ages and to provide mutual support for the development of a broad interdisciplinary understanding of medieval culture.

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Reference:

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