

Objects of Law in the Medieval and Early Modern Worlds (Bern, 29–30 Aug 24)

Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Universität Bern, Mittelstrasse 43, 3012 Bern, Room 120,
Aug 29–30, 2024

Corinne Mühlemann

The international conference “Objects of Law in the Medieval and Early Modern Worlds” proposes to reflect on the artistic practices that shaped the materiality, iconography, and texts of legal objects in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period. What forms did these objects take? How did they confer authenticity and legal authority? What education and knowledge are evident in the objects? The conference seeks an interdisciplinary dialogue among scholars from art history, legal history, history, archaeology, and related disciplines who engage with legal objects.

Organized by Corinne Mühlemann (University of Bern) and Fatima Quraishi (University of California, Riverside).

For registration, please contact: janina.ammon@unibe.ch

The conference will be held in person.

PROGRAM

THURSDAY | August 29th, 2024

9:00-9:30 ARRIVAL | COFFEE

9:30-10:15 Introduction by Fatima Quraishi
and Corinne Mühlemann

10:30-12:00

PANEL 1 | FORMATIONS OF AUTHORITY

Moderated by Omar Anchassi, University of Bern, SNSF Project “Trajectories of Slavery in Islamic Societies”

Zahir Bhalloo (University of Hamburg)

Social and Spatial Dynamics of Bukharan Fatwas as Written Artefacts

Stella Wisgrill (University of Cambridge)

Testing Virtue, Forging Nobility: Emperor Frederick III's 1462 Augmentation of Arms for the Margrave of Moravia and the Performance of Legal Authority

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00

PANEL 2 | CIRCULATION AND FORMATION OF LEGAL KNOWLEDGE

Moderated by Irina Dudar, Institute of Art History, University of Bern

Phillipa Byrne (Trinity College, Dublin)

The Materiality of Medieval Judicial Ordinances

Niko Munz (Oxford University)

Bildnisrecht: Legal Aspects of Early Portraiture

15:00-15:30 Coffee Break

15:30-17:30

PANEL 3 | MULTIPLE MATERIALITIES

Moderated by Corinne Mühlemann, Institute of Art History, University of Bern

Subah Dayal (New York University)

To Attest, Fold, and Copy in the Islamic Port-City: Safavid Seals and Mughal Envelopes across the VOC Archive

Masha Goldin (University of Basel)

Weapon of Justice? Medieval Swords as Objects and Images

Nino Zchomeldise (John Hopkins University)

Aesthetics of Illusion and Authenticity in Ottonian Legal Documents

19:00 Dinner

FRIDAY | August 30th, 2024

8:30-10:30 PANEL 4 | LEGAL PERFORMANCE

Moderated by Fatima Quraishi, University of California, Riverside

Shounak Ghosh (Vanderbilt University)

Epistolary Texts as Legal Objects: Querying the Mughal Farmān in Diplomatic Contexts

Daniela Maldonado Castaneda (University of Toronto)

Between Sacred and Script: Examining Legal Objects in Promises, Vows, and Oaths as Defined by Alfonso X in The Seven-Partidas

Jordan Skinner (Princeton University)

The Medieval Curfew Bell: Sonority and the Voice of Law

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-12:30

PANEL 5 | LONGUE-DURÉE STUDIES

Moderation TBA

Krisztina Ilko (Queens College / University of Cambridge)

The Chess-Knight Seal

Heba Mostafa (University of Toronto)

"God Protect us from One Finger under Twenty!" The Abbasid Nilometer Column as a Legal Object

12:30-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30

PANEL 6 | EVERYDAY LAW

Moderated by Moïra Dato, Institute of Art History,
University of Bern

Gül Kale (Carleton University, Toronto)

The Material and Social Implications of Measuring Tools in Ottoman Legal History

Lorenzo Paveggio (University of Padua)

What Does a Bribe Look Like? Carolingian munera in Literary Texts

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-17:30

PANEL 7 | OBJECTS IN COURT

Moderated by Carlos Rojas Cocomá, Institute of Art History, University of Bern

Nathalie Miraval (Yale University)

The Sacred Suspended: Martha, Law, and Image in the Early Modern Spanish Atlantic

Linda Mueller (Bibliotheca Hertziana Rome/Harvard University)

Drawings, Courtroom Practices, and Juridical Decision-Making at the
Edges of the Spanish Empire

17:30-18:00 CLOSING REMARKS

Reference:

CONF: Objects of Law in the Medieval and Early Modern Worlds (Bern, 29-30 Aug 24). In: ArHist.net, Jul 12, 2024 (accessed Jul 16, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/42330>>.