

H-Net Reviews

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Medieval History Seminar 2007. Washington D.C.: Michael Borgolte (Humboldt University, Berlin), Carola Dietze (GHI Washington), Patrick J. Geary (University of California, Los Angeles), Dame Janet Nelson (King's College, University of London), Karsten Plöger (GHI London), Frank Rexroth (University of ..., 11.10.2007-14.10.2007).

Reviewed by Carola Dietze

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Medieval History Seminar 2007

The fifth meeting of the Medieval History Seminar took place in Washington, DC on October 11-14, 2007. It was the first tri-national seminar of its kind, organized jointly by the GHI Washington and the GHI London. Following an opening lecture by DAME JANET L. NELSON on periodization in medieval history and the need to question the notion of a divide around 1200, eight German, five American, and three British doctoral candidates and recent Ph.D.s discussed their papers together with faculty mentors MICHAEL BORGOLTE, FRANK REXROTH, PATRICK J. GEARY, DAME JANET NELSON, BARBARA H. ROSENWEIN, and MIRI RUBIN. Just as in the preceding seminars, proposals from all areas of medieval studies were considered. The presented projects covered a broad range of thematic perspectives, methodological approaches, and periods of medieval history. Since the participants' papers had been distributed beforehand, the eight panels could be fully devoted to discussion. Each panel featured two papers, introduced not by the authors themselves, but by two of their fellow students acting as commentators. The papers provided fascinating insights into current research in medieval history in Germany, Britain, and North America, and the discussion benefited greatly from the enthusiasm and expertise of all involved.

The opening panel started with a presentation of MATTHIAS HEIDUK's dissertation "Offene Geheimnisse – Hermetische Texte und verborgenes Wissen in der mittelalterlichen Rezeption von Augustinus bis

Albertus Magnus." Heiduk argued that the widespread reception of "Liber viginti quattuor philosophorum" points to the fact that Christian medieval writers adopted Hermes Trismegistus as an authority without difficulty. Taking his observations as a starting point, the panel discussed the use and spread of alchemical literature in the Middle Ages in general, that is, in a period where the importance of alchemical knowledge and practice is not as obvious as it was from the Renaissance onward. NIKLAS KONZEN's dissertation focuses on the feud between HANS VON RECHBERG and Swabian imperial cities (*Reichsstädte*) in order to research the development of territorial peace (*Landfriedensrecht*) in a society that lacked a state monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Taking his considerations as a starting point, the panel discussed the opportunities and limits of modern sociological thought on statehood and the monopoly of violence for an analysis of political violence in the Middle Ages.

The second panel began with a discussion of DANA POLANICHKA's dissertation, which situates Carolingian church consecration in its physical and societal contexts. Examining liturgical texts, she revealed the centrality of ideas of sacred space to church dedications. She questioned how the lay audience participated in, understood, and was affected by church dedications, arguing that even though the laypeople were neither present nor active participants during most of the liturgy, they nevertheless fulfilled important roles in ecclesiastical social

and religious transformations. After that, ERIC KNIBBS presented his textual analysis of pallium donations purportedly issued by the popes Gregory IV (in 832) and Nicholas I (in 864) for the missionary Anskar, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen. Whereas scholars have long debated the authenticity of these texts, Knibbs maintained that they are later forgeries, drafted by Anskar's successors in the tenth or eleventh century, to replace originals that had been lost or were somehow inconvenient.

In the third panel, SITA STECKEL presented her work on the 1148 heresy trial of French theologian Gilbert von Poitiers and its context from the perspective of the history of science. Comparing the practical use of theological thought in debates on heresy in France and the Stauffer Empire in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Steckel finds new ways to deal with the rise of scientific thought in the High Middle Ages. ERIN HEIDKAMP's dissertation deals with the charters of Altenberg Abbey's Cistercian monastery located in the Lower Rhine region to construct a regional history of the abbey for the period 1400-1539. Its charters reveal that over the course of this period, the number of leases of Altenberg's long-held urban dwellings in Cologne declined, while the number of rural farm and farmland leases increased or remained steady. Using this observation as a starting point, Heidkamp explores various themes as factors that influenced Altenberg's fiscal management during this time, including Cistercian reform, the decline of viticulture, and the increasing demand for fisheries.

In the fourth panel, SHIRIN FOZI presented her work on Quedlingburg. Although textual sources claim that Henry I, patriarch of the Ottonian dynasty, was buried in Saint Servatius, no material evidence of the king's body has been found. Fozi discussed the implications of the king's absent body in light of other funerary monuments made for Saint Servatius in the tenth through twelfth centuries. HENDRIK MÄKLER's dissertation concerns the introduction of gold coins in the reign of Ludwig the Bavarian (1314-1347). This introduction gave Ludwig the opportunity to present his rule in particularly representative imprints. These utilized the double eagle coat of arms for the first time in conflict with the papacy. Moreover, Mäkler argued that this use of coins clearly reflects the fact that development in northern Europe had begun to catch up with development in the south.

In the fifth panel, COURTNEY KNEUPPER considered a fourteenth-century prophecy preached by the leader of a little-known heretical group: the crypto-flagellants of Thuringia. She offered a detailed examina-

tion of the prophecy and, more generally, of the eschatological beliefs of the crypto-flagellants, exploring the context from which the heretics drew their unique vision. Finally, she reflected upon the role of this eschatological vision in inspiring the heretics' beliefs and actions. ERIK SPINDLER presented a detailed case study of a judicial incident in 1406 involving a Hanseatic captain in Flanders and a study of apprenticeship in London that was drawn largely from court records. He argued that "marginality" describes social relations specifically weak and imbalanced ones. Mobility is integral to urban society and to the people and circumstances discussed herein.

In the sixth panel, HANNAH WHEELER examined how tavern violence was enacted, understood, and represented in late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Paris and Picardy. She argued that violence in the taverns of Picardy self-consciously developed a semiology of excess that responded to the perceived disequilibrium of a rapidly developing commercialism. Tavern violence in Paris, on the other hand, nihilistically commented on the futility of life by eliminating meaning from its gestures. She shows the tavern to be a place of violent commentary on day-to-day life. HIRAM KÄMPER studies the ways in which old German law in the period from 1250 to 1600 dealt with sexuality. His paper focused on the connection between sexuality and violence and the construction of masculinity.

In the seventh panel, ERIK NIBLAEUS's study on the cathedral of Lund was discussed. A survey of the earliest manuscripts preserved from the cathedral of Lund, founded in 1060 and seat of the archbishop of Denmark in the Middle Ages, reveals a number of connections with German centers, often in the southwest, indicating that the cathedral from early on actively interacted with other young foundations at the forefront of continental European Christianity. After that, the panel discussed two chapters from JULIANE SCHIEL's dissertation, comparing the view of two Dominican monks on the Mongolian invasion and the fall of Constantinople. Analyzing the letters of Philippus and Julian between the contradictory contexts of semantics and social practice reveals that the fraternal order was a transcultural hybrid whose members were adaptable border crossers, not only when dealing with the cultural Other, but also within their own culture: They constantly transgressed status boundaries, for example.

In the eighth panel, KATHARINA BEHRENS presented her work on medieval shame. Taking the ubiquity of shame in English source texts of the Late Mid-

dle Ages as her point of departure, Behrens examines the contemporary modes of thought and their expression in social practices and institutions. Using chronicles of the peasant revolts of 1381 as an example, she demonstrates how talk of shame and dishonor were used to underscore class differences. SILKE SCHWANDT examines *virtus* as a central term of political ethics. She focuses on the development of concepts of *virtus* in medieval society and the limits of legitimate power that become visible in the different uses of the term, contending that developments in the use of the term mirror developments in the social and political reality of society.

The final discussion focused on similarities and differences between medieval study and scholarship in Germany, Britain, and the United States. Most of the participants felt that there are no longer principal differences in the approaches chosen by doctoral students in the three scholarly communities; the requirements concerning the use of theory and sources/source criticism are the same. The methodology in medieval studies has now become universal. Moreover, the present status of the discipline in the different university systems was compared and found to be very similar in Germany, Britain, and the United States: medieval historians feel increasingly pressured to produce studies that contribute to current political debates or face marginalization in university curricula and funding. A number of participants criticized this tendency, stressing the importance of basic studies, for example, in paleography. They maintained that according to their experience the public often finds genuine interest in medieval studies precisely because they open a window to a world so very different from our own.

The sixth Medieval History Seminar for German, British, and American doctoral students and recent Ph.D. recipients will take place at the German Historical Institute in London in October 2009. If you are interested in participating, please visit the website of the GHI Washington for further information.

Kurz&halfsblick:

Opening lecture by Prof. Dame Janet L. Nelson

First Panel

Chair: Patrick Geary

Matthias Heiduk (Freiburg):

Offene Geheimnisse & Hermetische Texte und verborgenes Wissen in der mittelalterlichen Rezeption von Augustinus bis Albertus Magnus

Niklas Konzen (T½bingen):

Stra½enraub oder exekutierte Recht? Gesetz und

Gewalt in Hans von Rechbergs Fehde gegen den Schw½bischen St½ndtebund, 1451-57

Comments: Niblaeus, Wheeler

Second Panel

Chair: Janet Nelson

Dana Polanichka (UCLA):

Transforming Space, (Per)forming Community: Church Consecration in Carolingian Europe

Eric Knibbs (Yale):

The Pallium Grants of Gregory IV and Nicholas I for Anskar.

Comments: Behrens, Schwandt

Third Panel

Chair: Michael Borgolte

Sita Steckel (M½nster):

Gef½hrliches Wissen. Gilbert von Poitiers und scholastische Theologie im Blick deutscher Gelehrter des 12. Jahrhunderts

Erin Heidkamp (Connecticut):

Cistercian &Localism&: A Regional History of Altenberg Abbey 1400-1550

Comments: Spindler, Schiel

Fourth Panel

Chair: Frank Rexroth

Shirin Fozi (Harvard):

The King½s Missing Body and Ottonian Funerary Representation

Hendrik M½ckeler (Kiel):

Visualisierung und Verdichtung des Reiches: Das Reichsm½nzwesen in der Zeit Ludwigs des Bayern

Comments: K½mper, Kneupper

Fifth Panel

Chair: Miri Rubin

Courtney Kneupper (Northwestern Univ. Chicago):

&You have kept the good wine until now&: The Crypto-Flagellants of Thuringia and their Narrative of the last days

Erik Spindler (Oxford):

Mobility and marginality in late medieval Bruges and London

Comments: M½ckeler, Steckel

Sixth Panel

Chair: Karsten Pl½gger

Hannah Wheeler (Oxford):

&O½s comme il fierent grans caus!& Tavern violence in thirteenth and early fourteenth-century Paris and Picardy

Hiram K½mper (Bochum):

Sexualität, Mann-Sein und Recht im spätmittelalterlichen Deutschland, ca. 1250-1600	Eighth Panel
Comments: Konzen, Fozi	Chair: Barbara Rosenwein
Seventh Panel	Katharina Behrens (Göttingen):
Chair: Carola Dietze	Scham, Schande, Schamhaftigkeit. Zum sozialen Gebrauch der Rede von der Scham im ricardischen England
Erik Niblaeus (King's College London):	Silke Schwandt (Bielefeld): Et omni virtute praes-
German Influence on the Cathedral of Lund in its First	tantior:
Century of Existence (1060-1164)	Zur Sprache der politischen Ethik in Frühstenspiegeln
Juliane Schiel (HU Berlin):	von der Spätantike bis ins Hochmittelalter
âDie Mongolen kommen!â. Zwei dominikanische	Comments: Polanichka, Knibbs
Deutungsversuche aus dem Jahr 1237 im Vergleich	Final Discussion
Comments: Heiduk, Heidkamp	

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at:

<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/>

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