

Call for Papers

Session at Leeds International Medieval Congress, 4-7 July 2016



Exploring the Fourteenth Century Across the Eastern and Western Christian World

“ [...] and that Giotto changed the profession of painting from Greek back into Latin, and brought it up to date.”
Cennino Cennini, *The Craftsman's Handbook*, Chapter I

These words by the Italian artist Cennino Cennini, written just before the end of the fourteenth century, seem to testify to the definitive break between the Byzantine and the Western artistic traditions. Whilst studies of cultural and artistic relationships between the Catholic and Orthodox milieux during the thirteenth century are plentiful, the fourteenth century is considered as the culmination of the rupture between the two, a rupture initiated by the Fourth Crusade and the following Sack of Constantinople in 1204.

This session aims to challenge traditional assumptions about interactions between the East and the West, and explore possible points of contact between the Byzantine and the Latin traditions. Indeed, while the disastrous political and religious outcome of the Union of Lyon in 1274 seemed to presage a definitive break between the two Christian Worlds, their cultural and socio-political histories remained deeply intertwined. The Latin domination and the ongoing Franciscan missionary activities left profound traces in Constantinople and the Empire. Similarly, Byzantine merchants and scholars, as well as looted or exchanged artefacts, travelled to the West, influencing Latin culture and creating new artistic trends.

From an art historical point of view, it is commonly acknowledged that while fourteenth-century Western artists explored three-dimensionality, Byzantine art maintained an abstract character. However, visual evidence demonstrates that similar changes occurred in both Eastern and Western art at this time: the number of figures increases, architectural settings become more detailed and multiple episodes are adopted to expound a narrative that was previously encapsulated in one scene only. Are these changes linked? What are the similarities and dissimilarities?

Scholars within the field of late medieval Western and Byzantine history and art history are invited to submit proposals for twenty-minute papers. We propose a loose understanding of the fourteenth century that includes the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth to better contextualise the session's findings. Topics may include but are not restricted to:

Contacts between Eastern and Western merchants, patrons, and artists

Diplomatic embassies, marriage alliances, and gift exchange between the Eastern and Western Christian world

Eastern scholars emigrating to the West and vice versa

Instances of comparison between specific monumental decorations across East and West

Examples of Orthodox churches build in the West or Catholic churches in the East, their influences and effects

The proliferation of more developed narratives and secondary hagiographical cycles

The increase in the number of figures and the role of architectural settings within the narrative

Please send papers' titles, abstracts of 250 words and a 100-word biography by **September 21, 2015** to:
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