

Literary history in a Medieval Eurasian environment: Methodological and interpretive approaches

A symposium: Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, 9-11 January 2023
Supported by the Gutenberg Forschungskolleg and the Leibniz Wissenschafts-Campus

The aim of the symposium is to contribute to the debate about the writing of literary histories, categories of taxonomy, theoretical approaches to premodern texts or any other matter that the participants would see as fitting the broader framework of the symposium. The speakers will not point to influences between the various medieval literatures but rather to look at larger methodological issues from the perspective of one's own field and area of specialization, but maybe also from other areas, in other words, to present problems in each respective field *vis à vis* its scholarly history, the history of its respective literature, and its position in a "Medieval Eurasian literary supersystem". There are sixteen participants: 9 scholars specializing in Greek literature (Classicists/Byzantinists), 2 scholars specializing in Byzantine history, 4 scholars from 4 other major medieval literatures (Slavic, Hebrew, Arabic, Persian). Ingela Nilsson (Uppsala University) will join our proceedings as a guest.

Program

Monday, 09/01 (Philosophicum, P1)

18:15 Dimitar Angelov (Harvard University)
*At the Intersection of History and Literature:
Reading and Thinking with Theodore II Laskaris*
Chair: Panagiotis Agapitos (GFK-JGU)

19:30 Wine Reception

Tuesday, 10/01 (Senatsaal der Naturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät)

Chair: Stratis Papaioannou (University of Crete)

9:00 Baukje van den Berg (Central European University)
The Byzantine Exegesis of Past Authorities: From Homer to John of Damascus

10:00 Fotini Hadjittofi (University of Lisbon)
Early Byzantine Literature and the Challenges of a "Late Antique Aesthetic"

11:00–11:30 Coffee Break

Chair: Ingela Nilsson (Uppsala University)

11:30 Cameron Cross (University of Michigan at Ann Arbor)
Grammars of Globality

12:30 Stavroula Constantinou (University of Cyprus)
The Art of Short Narrative: Towards a Theory of the Early Tale

13:30–14:30 Light Lunch

Chair: Miriam Salzmänn (JGU)

14:30 Divna Manolova (CNRS, Paris)

- Why read Aratus in Palaiologan Byzantium?*
The Case of John Pothos Peditasimos and Vaticanus graecus 191
- 15:30 Daniele Bianconi (Sapienza University of Rome)
Greek Palaeography and Byzantine Literature
- 16:30–16:45 Short Break
- 16:45 Susana Torres Prieto (IE University, Madrid)
Scribal Choices in Slavic: When the Message is the Medium
 Conclusion at 17:45
- 19:30 Participant Dinner in a downtown restaurant specializing in local cuisine

Wednesday, 11/01 (Senatsaal der Naturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät)

- Chair: Stavroula Constantinou (University of Cyprus)
- 9:00 Anna Maria Taragna (University of Torino)
“Logoi historias” Across Time: Evolution and Interrelationships in the Writing of Speeches and Letters in Byzantine Historical Works
- 10:00 Stratis Papaioannou (University of Crete)
Hagiographies on the Fringe and the Issue of Fictionality in Byzantine Literature
- 11:00–11:30 Coffee Break
- Chair: Susana Torres Prieto (IE University, Madrid)
- 11:30 Michael Cooperson (University of California at Los Angeles)
Towards an Arabic Literary History
- 12:30 Miriam Salzmänn (JGU) & Panagiotis Agapitos (GFK-JGU)
Court Literature and Elite Culture: Animal Fables as Political Admonitory Discourse in a Medieval Eurasian Perspective
- 13:30–14:30 Light Lunch
- Chair: Dimiter Angelov (Harvard University)
- 14:30 Saskia Dömitz (Goethe University Frankfurt)
A Literary History of Byzantine Hebrew Literature: Methodological Considerations
- 15:30 Theodora Antonopoulou (National and Capodistrian University of Athens)
Byzantine Oratory between Secular Rhetoric and Homiletics
- 16:30–17:00 Conclusion
- 17:30 Drinks and ad libitum light dinner on campus