

## MEDIEVAL HISTORY SEMINAR 2002

Seminar at the Humboldt University, Berlin, October 24–27, 2002. Con-  
veners: Michael Borgolte (Humboldt University, Berlin), Caroline W.  
Bynum (Columbia University/American Academy, Berlin), Johannes  
Fried (University of Frankfurt), Patrick J. Geary (University of California,  
Los Angeles), Christof Mauch (GHI), Christoph Strupp (GHI). Made pos-  
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In 2002, the German Historical Institute successfully continued its new  
program for junior scholars in medieval history. For the second time, the  
Medieval History Seminar brought together sixteen German and Ameri-  
can doctoral students and recent Ph.D. recipients to discuss their projects  
and benefit from the comments of their peers and senior faculty. Profes-  
sors Michael Borgolte and Johannes Fried from Germany, and Caroline  
W. Bynum and Patrick J. Geary from America served as mentors and  
chairs of the panels. After last year's meeting in Washington, D.C., this  
year's seminar took place at the Humboldt University in the heart of  
Berlin, where it was graciously hosted by Professor Borgolte and his staff.

Once again, proposals from all areas of medieval studies were con-  
sidered. The selected projects covered the broadest possible range of  
thematic perspectives, methodological approaches, and periods of medi-  
eval history. Since the participants' papers had been distributed before-  
hand, 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 insight into current research in medieval history in Germany  
and North America, and the discussions benefited greatly from the en-  
thusiasm and expertise of everybody involved.

The opening panel featured two projects dealing with medieval di-  
plomas and their value for historical research. Jennifer Davis presented  
the results of her research on the diplomas that Charlemagne granted to  
Italian recipients. They account for roughly one quarter of all the surviv-  
ing diplomas of Charlemagne. They were issued to Italian monasteries,  
episcopal sees, and individuals. Even though there had already been a  
strong tradition of Lombard royal grants, Charlemagne developed his  
own pattern. Ms. Davis interpreted this as an indication of the deliberate  
integration of Italy into the Carolingian realm and of Charlemagne's  
persistent claim to rule in Italy. Participants discussed the meaning of  
integration in the Early Middle Ages, and Ms. Davis's elaborate statistical

analysis of her material led to an intense debate on the problems of quantification in medieval research arising from the random preservation of sources.

Jochen Johrendt's paper focused on the relationship between the papacy and church organizations in Germany, France, Italy, and Catalonia, as reflected in the papal diplomas of the ninth and tenth centuries. The requests for papal grants shed light on the general function of the papacy and the way the papacy was shaped by the expectations and wishes of the petitioners. Until 1046, the legal institution of "papal protection" was open to a variety of interpretations by the recipients. Based on the diplomas granting papal protection in Germany and France, Johrendt concluded that in Germany there was a close connection between the monasteries receiving those grants and the Ottonian royal dynasty. Papal protection almost always supplemented royal protection in Germany, while in a politically fragmented France the situation was more complex. In some parts of the country, it strengthened local authorities. Johrendt also pointed out that papal protection did not only establish a close legal bond between the Holy See and the monasteries, it also contributed to the salvation of their members.

The second and third panels continued the discussion of politics and culture in the eighth to tenth centuries. Dmitri Starostine dealt with the medieval measurement of time. Using sources such as the Salzburg calendar of 818 and the poems of Wandalbert of Prüm, he examined the failed attempts of Charlemagne to introduce a new calendar, which was based on the rhythm of agricultural activities and assigned cosmological significance to these activities. The new calendar was supposed to be more closely linked to the everyday life of the people than the traditional Roman calendar and to have a unifying effect on the empire. Once again, the discussion concentrated on the scarcity of sources for this difficult subject and the resulting problems of interpretation.

Harold Siegel focused on the often neglected court of Emperor Lothar I and his patronage of learning and culture in the Middle Kingdom from 840 to 855. Based on the exchange of letters between Lothar and two leading intellectual figures of the period, Hrabanus Maurus and Angelomus of Luxeuil, who provided Lothar with extensive biblical commentaries, Siegel demonstrated how Lothar used the resources of the time to create an intellectual court with a broader appeal. His network of intellectual contacts extended beyond the political boundaries of his empire. However, it is still open to question whether Lothar really stood out among his contemporaries or whether his court was a spiritual and cultural center like others at the time.

Kerstin Schulmeyer shed new light on one of the most important sources of Ottonian history of the ninth and early tenth centuries: the

chronicle of Thietmar of Merseburg. Historiography is always a construction, never a copy of the past. This is true for modern as well as for medieval historians. Medieval historiography had a strong teleological dimension, a point of reference that enabled its authors to sort out the important facts and make sense of the events of the past. Thietmar wrote his chronicle of the history of the Saxonian kings after 1013. With Henry II's ascent to power in 1002, the presentation changes noticeably from a historical tale to a chronicle of current events. It becomes contemporary history and faces the typical difficulties of judgement. The historiographical concept of an "Ottonian" epoch ending with the childless Henry II, which is taken for granted today, was in fact Thietmar's answer to the politically motivated call for a change of ruling dynasty. But the chronicle and the historiographical message it sends also reveal how important the influence of subconscious "images of the past" (*Vergangenheitsbilder*) was for its structure. Separating the intentional from the subconscious level is the major challenge of Ms. Schulmeyer's project.

Jenny Oesterle presented her dissertation project on the liturgical dimension of royal representation under the Ottonians and early Salians. Drawing on a historiographical tradition established by Gerd Althoff and Hagen Keller, she interpreted the ceremonial coronations on Easter and Christmas and the official court meetings (*Hoftage*) as a "chain of rituals." They enabled all present to participate in the representation of power. Historians have noted the sacralization of the royal government after the ninth century and its visual demonstration, but there has been little examination of the development of liturgy as a crucial element of transformation and shaping in this process. Ms. Oesterle stressed the multiple character of ceremonial coronations and coronation processions as an opportunity to display royal power in all its dimensions. Such events also reminded the viewers of the king's first coronation and his future as a heavenly co-ruler. The discussion revolved around problems of inclusion and exclusion inherent to all rituals, their constant adjustment to new situations, and the inevitable discrepancy between the descriptions of rituals historians work with today and the actual events of the past.

The papers of the fourth panel took a close look at the conditions of military action in the High Middle Ages. Holger Berwinkel analyzed Friedrich Barbarossa's campaign against Milan in 1158, and David Bachrach dealt with the military administration of King Henry III of England in the thirteenth century. Berwinkel concentrated on the logistical challenges of moving an army of tens of thousands through the country, supplying the troops, and organizing a siege. Bachrach focused on the building, transportation, and storage of siege engines, for which Henry III developed a complex administration, which generated an extensive parchment trail. Many documents have survived, providing his-

torians of England with a more extensive body of sources than is available to historians of Germany. Both authors attempted to write military history as social history by dealing with broader problems of cartography, royal finances, and—at least for Germany—a lack of sources resulting from the oral character of medieval society.

The fifth panel took the seminar to medieval Paris with two papers on the abbey of Saint-Victor. This reformist abbey, formally founded in 1113, gained great intellectual and political influence in twelfth-century France. Martina Schilling examined the connection between the architecture of the building and the canonical identity of its inhabitants from an art historian's perspective. By combining information on the internal structure of the Victorine order with an analysis of other contemporary reformist abbeys, she challenged the common assumption that there were no distinctive traditions for the architecture of regular canonical houses. Unfortunately, little is known about the original building of Saint-Victor: the oldest views date from the fifteenth century, and it did not survive the French Revolution.

Todd Upton discussed perceptions of Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the sermons of Richard of Saint-Victor during the first crusades. Upton examined their liturgical topoi, compared the sermons to the explicit crusade homilies and letters of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, and speculated on possible Victorine attitudes about the Levant in general. The sermons can be viewed as a serious contribution to crusade ideology in the High Middle Ages, but at the same time mention of "Jerusalem" or "Israel" was part of the strong allegorical tradition of the Victorines. Participants recognized this double dimension as the key challenge of Upton's project. It calls for a careful reading of the texts and the consideration of aspects such as the character of the genre of sermons in general, their function at the abbey, and the audience Richard was writing for.

The sixth panel continued the series of papers dealing with questions of intellectual history. Markus Schürer's paper concentrated on the genre of exemplum literature, as it was used by the orders of the Dominicans and Franciscans in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Exempla—short stories of a (sometimes fictional) historical deed with an argumentative or educational character—had a tradition going back to antiquity. For the Dominicans, they seemed to have been even more important than for the Franciscans. In the Late Middle Ages, they preserved and institutionalized the knowledge of the founding generation of the order and revealed much about its self-conception. Exempla ensured that daily life went according to the rules. They had a strong normative dimension, and they supported the general orientation of the order.

Pavel Blazek discussed the medieval reception of the views of Aristotle on marriage as presented in the "Nicomachean Ethics," the "Poli-

tics,” and the (Pseudo-Aristotelian) “Economics.” Leading scholars such as Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, and other members of the Parisian art faculty used the texts of Aristotle to prove the natural character of marriage. They enhanced the Christian understanding of the special relationship between man and woman and the divine command for reproduction and thereby created a unique link between Christian theology and ancient philosophy. This makes marriage one of the most interesting examples of the medieval reception of Aristotle.

Benjamin Scheller presented his research on the housing complex that Jakob Fugger the Rich built for poor people in Augsburg in the early sixteenth century. Scheller discussed the concept of social welfare in the Late Middle Ages in general and the concept of the “worthy poor”—often whole families, who alone were eligible for help—as opposed to ordinary beggars. The still operating “Fuggerei” is a unique example of this concept because of its size and architectural structure, which, on the one hand, allowed the inhabitants a maximum of privacy and, on the other, had a strong disciplinary function. There were no uncontrolled common rooms or public places in the complex. Vices such as profanity, drinking, gambling, or unchastity could not be pursued. Since the “Fuggerei” was a foundation, inhabitants were supposed to maintain the “memoria” of Jakob through certain well-regulated actions.

John Eldevik’s paper on the Thuringian tithe dispute of the 1050s and 1060s concluded Saturday’s meeting. The ecclesiastical tithe, a ten-percent levy on all gross income and produce, was a key source of income for any church in the Middle Ages, and a significant link to the community it served. Eldevik’s research shed light on the tension between local traditions and a normative understanding of medieval institutions. Tithe conflicts were not only a matter of legal theory, but reveal important information on the character of episcopal lordship in general. While officially it was the prerogative of the bishops to collect tithes, from the ninth century prominent monasteries such as Hersfeld and Fulda had become the de facto recipients. The efforts of bishop Siegfried I to reestablish his rights in Thuringia met with fierce resistance and showed the limits of episcopal power in the High Middle Ages.

In the last panel, Robert Fajen, who specializes in medieval literary studies, and Amy Morris, an art historian, demonstrated the value of including medievalists beyond the scope of traditional historical studies in this program. Their presentations—on the 1396 “Livre du Chevalier Errant” (The Book of the Knight Errant), written by the Piemontesian count Thomas III of Saluzzo, and on Lucas Moser’s 1432 St. Magdalene Altarpiece of the parish church at Tiefenbronn near Pforzheim—led to a lively discussion on historical contextualization and the function of art in the Middle Ages. Fajen emphasized that literary texts should not be re-

duced to their political or social context, but rather viewed as a mediator between reality and imagination. The “Chevalier Errant,” a combination of knight’s tale, literary allegory, and encyclopedia, reveals the self-perception of its author, but at the same time differs from modern autobiographies in its complex relationship between real life and literary fictionalization. Fajen interpreted these fictional elements of the book not so much as an expression of a flight from reality, but rather as an elaborate reflection on the problems of noble identity in general.

Little is known about Lucas Moser, the painter of the St. Magdalene Altarpiece, a German counterpart to the famous Ghent Altarpiece by Jan van Eyck, and little work has been done so far on its historical context. Amy Morris’ dissertation combines an iconographical analysis of the five scenes from the life of Mary Magdalene depicted in the painting with a comparison to other Magdalene cycles both in Germany and Europe, and research on the medieval function of the cult of Mary Magdalene, patronage and pilgrimage practices. She also examines the history of the city of Tiefenbronn.

The final discussion of the German Historical Institute’s Medieval History Seminar 2002, moderated by Professor Borgolte, summed up the discussions and offered general observations. Most of the projects presented could be characterized as intellectual history with a touch of social history. They dealt with the mentality and culture of an elite—ecclesiastical or noble—rather than with problems of economies or material culture. Substantial differences between the German and American approaches were less noticeable than expected. Participants discussed the problems of inter- or transdisciplinary projects, which often require language skills, extensive background knowledge from other disciplines, and familiarity with methodologies beyond the scope of the individual historian. Everybody agreed on the value of collaborative and cooperative work to overcome tendencies of fragmentation and self-referentiality. Without a doubt, the Medieval History Seminar made a contribution in this direction by enabling its participants to establish fruitful international contacts at an early stage of their careers.

For the GHI, the value of its graduate conferences comes not so much from the fine-tuning of specialized research. Consequently, there will be no publication of the conference proceedings. Rather, it is the atmosphere of open discussion and the participants’ engagement with approaches and methodologies that are at first glance unrelated to their own projects that often proves to be the most important aspect of these conferences. Especially for younger scholars absorbed in the details of their dissertation research, it is very helpful to look beyond the scope of their topics. This year’s Medieval History Seminar—with its contributions ranging from Charlemagne to the dawn of the Reformation and covering political,

ecclesiastical, and cultural history as well as Medieval architecture, art, and literature—offered ample opportunity for this and encourages us to continue this unique program in medieval history.

The third Medieval History Seminar for German and American doctoral students and recent Ph.D. recipients will take place at the GHI in October 2003. If you are interested in participating, please see the “Announcements” section of this issue for further information and application requirements.

Christoph Strupp

### Participants and Their Topics

DAVID S. BACHRACH (University of Notre Dame): *The Military Administration of King Henry III of England (1216–1272): The Royal Artillery*

HOLGER BERWINKEL (University of Marburg): *Friedrich Barbarossas Feldzug gegen Mailand 1158 und die strategischen Verhältnisse in der Lombardei*

PAVEL BLAZEK (Friedrich Schiller University, Jena): *Die Rezeption aristotelischer Gedanken über die Lebensgemeinschaft von Mann und Frau im dreizehnten und vierzehnten Jahrhundert*

JENNIFER R. DAVIS (Harvard University): *The Integration of the Regnum Italiae: Charlemagne's Diplomas for Italian Recipients*

JOHN T. ELDEVIK (Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies, Toronto): *Episcopal Lordship and the Politics of Submitting Tithes in Medieval Germany*

ROBERT FAJEN (University of Würzburg): *Adelige Kultur im spätmittelalterlichen Piemont: Untersuchungen zum Chevalier errant Thomas' III. von Saluzzo und zum Freskenzyklus in der Burg von Manta*

JOCHEN JOHRENDT (Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich): *Papsttum und Landeskirchen im Spiegel der päpstlichen Urkunden (896–1046)*

AMY MORRIS (Wittenberg University, Ohio): *Lucas Moser's St. Magdalene Altarpiece: An Iconographical and Contextual Reevaluation*

JENNY RAHEL OESTERLE (Westfälische Wilhelms University, Münster): *Liturgie und Herrschaftsrepräsentation. Festkrönungen und Hoftage in ottonischer und frühsalischer Zeit*

BENJAMIN SCHELLER (Humboldt University, Berlin): *Die Armensiedlung als Disziplinarraum, oder “Das Prinzip Atopie.” Die Fuggerei Jakob Fuggers des Reichen*

MARTINA SCHILLING (University of Warwick): *The Regular Canons of Saint-Victor, Canonical Identity and Architecture*

KERSTIN SCHULMEYER (Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt): *Vom Umgang mit erzählenden Quellen des Mittelalters: Interpretationsstrategien zur Chronik Thietmar von Merseburgs*

MARKUS SCHÜRER (Technical University, Dresden): *Exempelliteratur, kollektives Gedächtnis und Institutionalität der Mendikantenorden (13.–14. Jh.)*

HAROLD SIEGEL (University of Notre Dame): *Cultural Patronage at the Court of Emperor Lothar I, 840–855*

DMITRI STAROSTINE (University of Michigan): *Calendar, Territory, and Power: Medieval Concepts of Time and Space and the Political Context of Their Origins*

TODD P. UPTON (University of Colorado): *Jerusalem and the Holy Sites in the Twelfth Century: Perceptions of the Holy Land in Sermons of Richard of St. Victor*