Saints and their legends in Medieval Art: Narrative, Audience and Patron
0821-6207-01

Shiur 2, Shirat HaTorah, malekh 2, shemita 2, "A".

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The subject: If there are any changes to the terms of the course.

The course will cover central issues in the depiction of the lives of the saints in medieval art.

Course topics (subject to change)
A specific reading list will be provided at the beginning of the semester.

Course 1: Introduction – The role of the saint in medieval society.

Course 2: Blueprints for the shrine. The saint as a narrative element.


The portrayal of saints, and of their lives and death (often as martyrs), constituted a central part of medieval art from its very conception. The intricate plots of their conversion, their voyages to the far corners of the earth to Christianize pagans, the miracles they performed both in life and after death, all became major topoi of an extensive narrative corpus. As such saint's lives were depicted in numerous narrative cycles in different media. The saint thus became a source of identification for diverse audiences, with which the visual representations communicated in a multy-layered
The course wishes to investigate central aspects of the portrayal of saints in Romanesque and Gothic Art.

The lessons will be dedicated to (Subjected to changes):

1. Introduction
2-4: Cycles of Saint's lives – central topoi and narrative development in Saints' lives.
5-6: Saints and the development of local, regional, dynastic or urban identities and traditions.
7: The Saint, the relic, and the reliquary
8-9: Saints and patrons
10-11: Martyrdom
12-13: The female martyr – suffering, eroticism and the male gaze


Favreau, Robert (ed.), *Le Culte des saints aux IXe-XIIIe siècles*. Actes du Colloque tenu à Poitiers les 15-16-17 septembre 1993; Poitiers: Centre d'Etudes Supérieures de Civilisation Médiévale, Université de Poitiers; 1995.


-----, Portrayed on the heart: narrative effect in pictorial lives of saints from the tenth through the thirteenth century, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.


Mecklin, John, M. The passing of the Saint: a study of a cultural type, Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1941


Rutchick, L., "A reliquary capital at Moissac: liturgy and ceremonial thinking in the cloister," in: S. Lamla, E. Valdez del Alamo (eds.), Decorations for the Holy Dead:


