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PhD Seminar Groups

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Bollaert	Abercrombie	3a
Cirafesi	Bonde	Dalen
Diesen	Chahanovich	Kloster
Given	Hagen	Klawitter
Holmqvist	Halsnes	3b
Morrison-Atkins	Hatløy	Nysether
Rodenbiker	Heinz	Eriksen
Sætre	Naderer	Abreu da Costa

PhD Projects: Group 1

Bollaert, Johan. Department of Linguistics and Scandinavian Studies, Faculty of Humanities, University of Oslo.

"Roman alphabet inscriptions in Norway – A writing culture?"

During the early Middle Ages, Roman alphabet inscriptions occurred alongside runic inscriptions. How were these two writing systems used (differently), and why were they used simultaneously? Characteristics of the writing strategies used in the Roman alphabet inscriptions are investigated and compared to runic and manuscript material. As such, the place of Roman alphabet inscriptions in the Scandinavian writing culture and its role in the verschriftlichung of society is studied.

Cirafesi, Wally. The Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo.

"John within Judaism in Priestly Perspective: Reading the Fourth Gospel within the Material Culture, Institutions, and Theology of the Second Temple Period"

My project explores the priestly-oriented Jewish context of the Gospel of John by looking at the material culture of purity rituals, the role of synagogue and temple, and the development of priestly-oriented theology in Judaism of the Second Temple period. The goal is to understand how John relates to and works as a particular form of Judaism in the first century, long before the emergence of a distinct religion called "Christianity."

Diesen, Rakel I. Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

"Conceptions of Nordic Childhood and Youth in Medieval Hagiography"

My project: "Conceptions of Nordic Childhood and Youth in Medieval Hagiography" looks at what Nordic vitae and miracle collections can reveal about the lives of children and the conception of childhood in the Nordic Middle Ages. The outlined project is designed as a text- and discourse analytical study.

Given, J. Gregory. Committee on the Study of Religion, Harvard University, U.S.A.

"Narrativizing Ignatius of Antioch: Generic and Textual Fluidity in the Making of an Early Christian Martyr"

The letters attributed to Ignatius of Antioch survive in a number of recensions and arrangements, scattered across dozens of manuscripts. What does this textual variance signify about the early reception of these letters? This project analyzes the versions of Ignatius's letters, examining how editorial interventions in the texts relate to the authoritative status of the figure of 'Ignatius' and the letter collection as a literary genre in early Christian discourses.

Holmqvist, Karen Langsholt. Norwegian Institute of Cultural Heritage Research and Faculty of Humanities. University of Oslo.

"A personality set in stone: Portrayals of the self in medieval epigraphic texts"

The objective of my project is to investigate how carvers portray their selves in epigraphic writing on different materials (gravestones, runestones, churches, other medieval buildings), and in different contexts in medieval Scandinavia. I will look at the inscriptions from a cognitive perspective and study the interplay between inscription and context, and how the carver's cognitive processes concerning his self-perception and self-portrayal is both formed by and forming his surroundings.

Morrison-Atkins, Kelsi. Committee on the Study of Religion, Harvard University

"The Rhetoric of Dress and Adornment and the Construction of Identity in Early Christianity"

This dissertation examines how the rhetoric of dress and adornment is deployed in early Christian texts to make particular political, ethical, and theological claims about what it means to be a follower of Christ.

Using a framework of analysis situated at the intersections of feminist and queer theory, I explore how appeals to clothing the body subtly weave together crucial questions of embodiment and identity in order to shape the self-fashioning of the individual and community more broadly.

Rodenbiker, Kelsie. Department of Theology and Religion, Durham University
"The Role of the Catholic Epistles in the Formation of the New Testament Canon"

This project is focused on the role of the Catholic Epistles in the formation of the NT canon as evidenced by third- and fourth-century papyri, codices, canon lists, Patristic usage, and (para)biblical intertexts and narrative exemplars. It emphasizes the contingent canonicity of early Christian literature as shaped through a process simultaneously historical, theological, and practical. Neither arbitrary nor inevitable, the CE collection illuminates the intentionality and non-linearity of NT canon history.

Sætre, Per Kristian Hovden. MF Norwegian School of Theology, Oslo.

"Solomon Between the Lines. Meanings Made by the Memories of Solomon in the Gospel of Matthew."

The project investigates how diverse first century traditions connected to Israel's king Solomon may have informed the first readers of the Gospel of Matthew and influenced their interpretation of the text and their image of Jesus.

PhD Projects: Group 2

Abercrombie, Lloyd Gregory. The Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo.

"Continuity and Change in an Age of Transition: Biblical Reception and Manuscript Culture in Coptic Literature in Early Islamic Egypt"

My project will look at Coptic literature around the time of the Arab conquest of Egypt. The project has two aims: (1) to document how, and toward what ends, biblical and extra-biblical motifs were employed in this period in comparison to the Byzantine period (continuity and change in biblical reception); (2) to document and analyze how manuscript patronage, production, and dissemination occurred in this period in comparison with the Byzantine period (continuity and change in manuscript culture).

Bonde, Line M. MF- Norwegian School of Theology

"Materialized Conceptions of Jerusalem in Twelfth-Century Danish Rural Parish Churches"

This dissertation is a venture into the most common and shared denominators of the first Danish rural parish churches built of stone during the long twelfth-century.

Chahanovich, W. Sasson. Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University

"The Ottoman Apocalyptic Mentality and the Dark Side of Sufism (15th – 17th c.): Pseudo-Ibn al-'Arabī's *The Tree of Nu'mān (al-Šagarah al-nu'māniyyah)*, *The Cry of the Owl (Şayḫat al-būm)*, and the End of Time"

Sasson Chahanovich is a Ph.D. at Harvard University in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. There he is studying post-classical Islamic Intellectual History with Prof. Khaled el-Rouyaheb. For the purpose of his thesis, Sasson is investigating eschatological enthusiasm, apocalyptic prophecy, and mystical occultism and their collective function within, and service to, the Ottoman Empire. Sasson has identified a corpus of heretofore barely studied texts that vividly – both in language and in art – bring to life this trifold of topics. Moreover, not only do Sasson's manuscripts demonstrate central role of eschatology, apocalypse, and the occult in the Ottoman imperial imagination, but also how our own modern conceptions of Islamic orthodoxy, as embodied in the throne of the last great Sunni Caliphate, are complicated in light of this information.

Hagen, Kaja Merete. The Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo.

“The miraculous medieval image in Early Protestantism”

I am a member of the research project *“The ambiguous memory of Nordic Protestantism (MEMORY)”* and my Ph.D. project focuses upon medieval objects that once were perceived as miraculous. The overall aim is to examine the interpretations and understandings of medieval images believed to be miraculous or animated in early Protestantism in a Danish-Norwegian context.

In the Middle Ages, several paintings and sculptures across Europe were reported to weep, bleed or move, or to possess powers that could heal or interfere with the faithful’s earthly life. The medieval image could potentially embody a real presence of the divine, and its ontology thus reached far beyond the referential, aesthetic or didactic.

In what today constitutes the Norwegian territory, post-Reformation sources reveal that four preserved objects were perceived as miraculous: The Crucifix from Røldal Church, still hanging in the church, the Cross from Borre Church and the figure of St. Nicholas from Eidsborg Church, both in the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo and the Crucifix from Fana, now in the University Museum of Bergen. Even though these objects originate from the medieval period, it is yet to be established if the understandings of these objects as miraculous derive from the same period or if the cults developed first after the Reformation. An examination of possible medieval sources that might disclose the objects’ medieval ontology will take place in the first part of the Project.

Next, the project aims to shed light on the objects’ materiality, and hence ontology, understood as an examination of their form, iconography and of the materials of which they were crafted. The project will examine how the beholder understood how the divine could be revealed through human sensory experiences of earthly matter and how, if any, changes occurred in such understandings and interpretations in the transition from the Middle Ages to early modern time.

Halsnes, Magnus. Department of archaeology, history, cultural studies and religion, Faculty of Humanities, University of Bergen.

An updated description will appear at <https://www.tf.uio.no/english/research/phd/research-schools/attr/participants/ATTR-members/>

Hatløy, Brage Thunestvedt. Faculty of Law, University of Bergen.

“The harmonization of the Gulathing and Frostathing compilations in the creation of the Code of the Norwegian Realm of 1274”

The project aims to chart and analyse the development of Norwegian property law and law of obligations in the change from the 12th and 13th century provincial compilations from Gulathing and Frostathing to the Code of the Norwegian Realm of 1274.

Heinz, Katharina. Department for Linguistics and Scandinavian Studies. Faculty of Humanities. University of Oslo.

"Visuality as Gateway to knowledge in Old Norse educational thought: an analysis of material and mental images in Konungs skuggsjá (The King's Mirror)"

My project is an analysis of how visuality as part of medieval education was approached in Old Norse intellectual thought. By applying a rhetorical framework, this study will approach material and mental images in the main manuscript of Konungs skuggsjá in a way that it will contribute with new perspectives on how pedagogy was used in moral and spiritual education within the Norwegian elite during the thirteenth Century.

Naderer, Max. Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History, University of Oslo.

"Violence in the political culture during the Nordic 'Civil Wars'"

I want to discuss the use, function and perception of (physical) violence in the political culture during the Nordic 'civil wars' in the High Middle Ages. Geographically I will focus on Norway, Denmark and Germany described in the narrative sources of the Old Norse as well as the Latin sources of a more ecclesiastical origin. By comparing these, not only different regions, but also different literary cultures I will hopefully be able to identify characteristics and mutualities.

PhD Projects: Group 3

Costa, Bruno. Department of archaeology, history, cultural studies and religion, Faculty of Humanities, University of Bergen.

„Insular Inquisition. The Holy Office in the Atlantic Islands (16th – 17th centuries)"

This project will evaluate the activity of the Spanish and the Portuguese Inquisition in the Atlantic archipelagos (Azores, Canaries, Cape Verde, Madeira, and São Tomé and Príncipe). By resorting to the comparative method, it will analyze the agents of the Holy Office and its activity (trials, visitations, and visits to the ships), trying to establish concordance and discordance between those Spaces.

Dalen, Ingebjørg Aamlid. Department of Archaeology, History, Religious Studies and Theology, University of Tromsø - The Arctic University of Norway.

"The post-reformation priesthood in Northern Norway: Recruitment, education and Networks"

A study of the Clergy of Northern Norway from the reformation in 1537 to the introduction of autocracy in 1660. The priesthood is investigated as a group using prosopography as a method. Who was recruited, were they formally educated and to what extent did they create social networks to secure their position are central questions in the Research.

Eriksen, Evelyn. University of Tromsø - The Arctic University of Norway

"The Principle of the Best Interests of the Child in kindergarten context"

The PhD-project investigate how the Principle of the Best interests of the Child is concretized, understood, and practiced in a kindergarten context, by analysing different authoritative texts, and interviewing kindergarten teachers. Texts being analysed, is various expert, political and legal documents relating to both Norwegian kindergarten and the principle of the best interests. The study is conducted through the lens of social constructionism and apply a hermeneutic understanding.

Klawitter, Brandt. MF Norwegian School of Theology, Oslo.

"Did Luther Like Babies?—Luther, Procreation and the Theology of the Lutheran Confessions"

This project seeks to examines Luther's understanding of the nature, purpose, function, and significance of procreation as understood primarily through the lens of Luther's Genesis Lectures (1535-1545) even as it addresses important contextual and textual issues surrounding the editing and publication of those lectures.

Kloster, Sven Thore. The Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo.

"Text and Tradition: A critical study of interpretations of historical continuity in a contemporary Protestant theology"

The overall research question of the project is "how can the relation between historical continuity and change be interpreted and conceptualized within contemporary Lutheranism?" From a Protestant point of view this question concerns hermeneutical topics such as authority, tradition and textual interpretation. The project explores constructions of history and tradition in the theologies of Gerhard Ebeling and Christine Helmer and subsequently brings these interpretations into dialogue with Michel

Foucault's critical thinking and Aleida Assmann's concept of cultural memory. Thus, in a wider sense, the project also elaborates on the relation between systematic theology and contemporary intellectual thinking.

Nysether, Hilde Andrea. Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History, University of Oslo.
"Beggja vinir ok frændr – Overlapping networks as a stabilizing element under «the Nordic civil wars»"

My projects main goal is to study how overlapping networks between the social elite in Norway/ Iceland influenced on the phenomenon often described as «the Nordic civil wars». The aim is to investigate to what degree such networks helped to limit the losses in the conflicts, particularly by arbitration between members of the networks, or by seeking truce on the behalf of specific persons or whole groups of People.