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May 2014

Vol. 23 No. 2

A BUSY SPRING SEMESTER FOR MEDIEVAL STUDIES!



From left to right, undergraduate minors Caitlyn Smallwood (History) and Lauren Branam (English & Theater), and graduate Area Certificate recipients John Radez (NELC) and Sean Tandy (Classics), pictured at the annual MEST Minor and Certificate Reception on April 30, 2014.

We've had a busy spring semester here at Medieval Studies! On January 23, **Ann Marie Rasmussen**, Professor of German at Duke University, discussed medieval badges, an underutilized category of evidence for scholars to use as we continue in new ways to un-

derstand and interpret the Middle Ages. Over the centuries, millions of these ubiquitous badges were produced, but today, perhaps 15,000 have survived. Building upon previous scholarship that saw these artifacts as an early, unrecognized form of media, Rasmussen argued

that badges, being highly mobile, transported notions of identity: while some could be used to maintain order and hierarchy among members of a group, others could play a subversive role, especially when parodic of religious or civic images. Badges matter because

their underutilization makes them perfect for interdisciplinary work, as well as expanding research upon material culture.

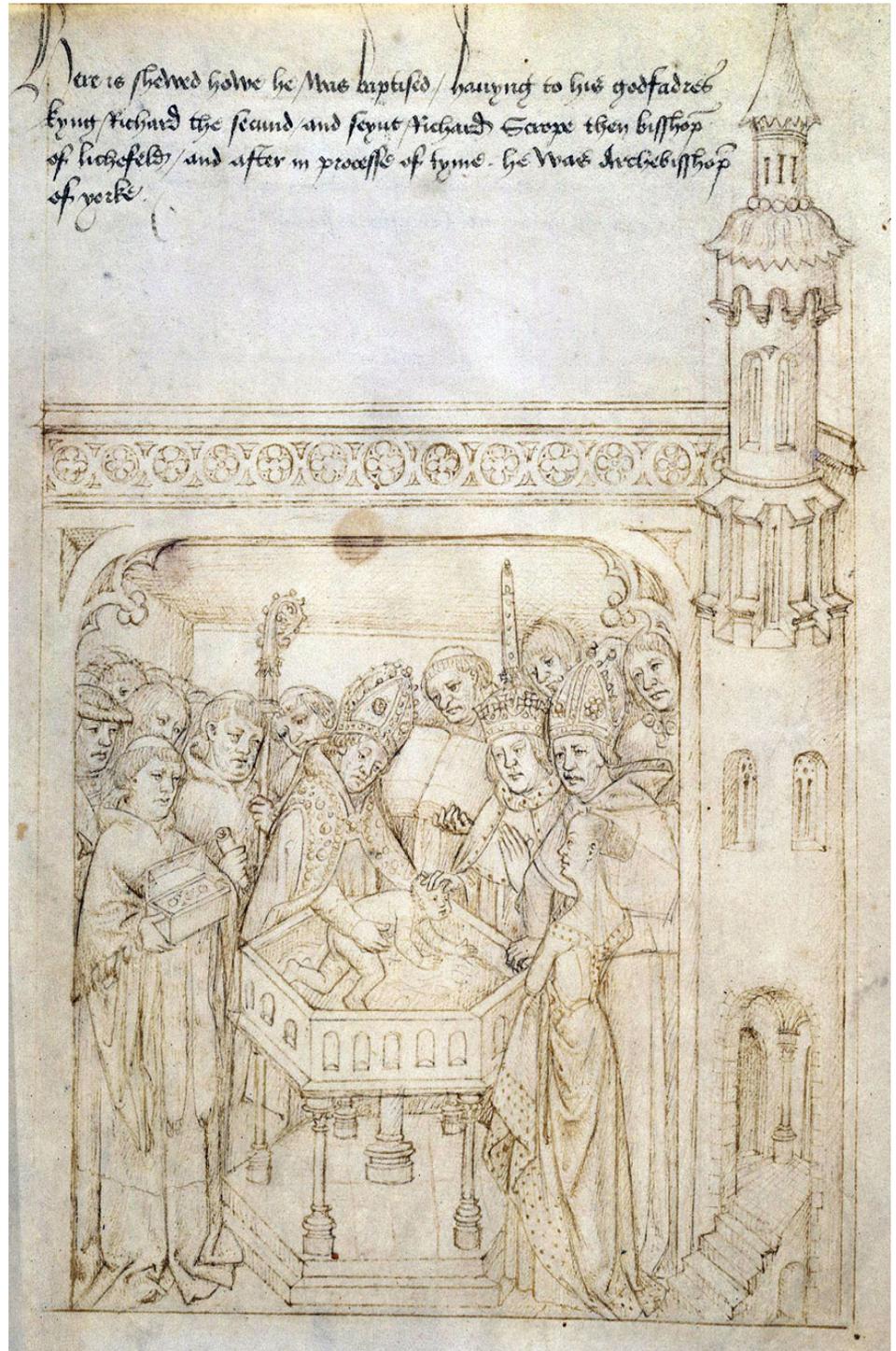
February 20 saw the latest Medieval Studies Alumni Series Lecture. **Claire Sponsler**, Professor of English at the University of Iowa, obtained her PhD in Comparative Literature at IU and returned to Bloomington to lecture on the Beauchamp Pageants, the unique, fifteenth-century manuscript that presents the biography of Richard Beauchamp, the earl of Warwick. Sponsler's talk explored how late medieval readers read through this book combining words with pictures and placed it at the intersection of the visual, the literary, and the theatrical, which allows us to glimpse habits of literacy in action.

The first weekend of March proved quite busy, as the Medieval Studies Institute supported our graduate students as they welcomed the university and community to our twenty-sixth annual symposium, themed this year to examine "**Magic, Religion, Science**" and ranking as one of our best-attended symposium events. Six panels offered seventeen papers, delivered by faculty and graduate students from both near and far to a diverse audience that responded with questions prompting lively discussions. Our keynote speaker was University of Virginia English Professor **Bruce Holsinger**, who spoke on "The Voices of Medieval London: History, Fiction, Historical Fiction," sharing insights gleaned from the writing of his just-released historical fiction novel, *A Burnable Book*. The ever-popular Readers Circle included readings from 12 medieval languages. Symposium weekend concluded with "Italia Mia," the spring concert of the **Early Music Institute**.

The last Thursday and Friday of March saw **Mediævalia at the Lilly**, a joint venture of the Lilly Library, the Medieval Studies Institute, and the Germanic Studies Department, offer-

ing events designed to better publicize the Lilly's collection and the central role of manuscript research in our field by bringing established scholars and experts for lectures and hands-on workshops for students and faculty. This year's guest for Mediævalia was **Erik Kwakkel**, Associate Professor in Medieval Manuscript Studies at Leiden University in the Netherlands

and Principal Investigator of the research project "Turning Over a New Leaf: Manuscript Innovation in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance." On Thursday evening, Kwakkel shared some of the incredibly fascinating results of his research project, including the development of a method of analyzing manuscript hands that objectively identifies the "DNA" of individual



A page and scene from the fifteenth-century Beauchamp Pageants, with an illustration of the baptism of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick (1382-1489).

scribes, often causing the reevaluation of previously determined dates, which can shift more than fifty years in some instances.

On April 9, **Paul Strohm**, Emeritus Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia, returned to IU, where he taught for over 30 years, to lead an informal talk on some of the evidentiary challenges of writing a pre-modern literary biography. Strohm is in the final stages of completing a biography of Geoffrey Chaucer, author of the *Canterbury Tales*, and notes that while Chaucer's official duties as a civil servant were recorded exhaustively, we have very little extant evidence of Chaucer the writer. Given this evidentiary paucity, Strohm explored under what circumstances we can use literary passages as a basis for making biographical claims about an author. In Chaucer's case, Strohm argues that portions of the *House of Fame* can be claimed as biographical evidence since those passages can be corroborated by other evidence. Strohm's biography, *Chaucer's Tale: 1386 and The Road to Canterbury*, will be released this November.

We concluded the spring semester and the academic year with our annual Minor and Certificate Reception, where undergraduate and graduate students who have completed the requirements for a minor or area certificate are recognized for their achievement. Among the undergraduates, **Lauren Branam** (English and Theater) will soon be heading off to graduate school. **Meredith Hylton** (Fine Arts) will be starting internships in archives and library studies. **David Sirkin** (History) will continue to study Latin America, through internships with several Brazilian businesses. **Caitlyn Smallwood** (History) will be attending IU next year, studying digital information and library science. Among the graduate students, **Isabella Magni** (French and Italian), **John Radez** (Near Eastern Languages and Cultures), and **Sean Tandy** (Classics) will be completing their dissertations.

INTRODUCING PROF. MORTEN OXENBØLL

Morten Oxenbøll joined the Department of East Asian Languages & Cultures as Assistant Professor of Japanese History in Fall 2013. In Japanese historiography, the medieval period usually spans c. 1000 to c. 1600, and Professor Oxenbøll's research often finds him looking right at the middle of the period, specifically around 1300 or 1400. Although Japan geographically is quite distant from Europe, both are equally as distant from the modern societies in Europe and Japan. Indeed, while researching and writing his MA thesis on feudalism in Japan, as the sole student of East Asia in the History Department at the University of Copenhagen, Oxenbøll examined the scholarship on European feudalism, prompted in part by his advisor, a specialist in medieval Denmark, who also taught him to "speak medieval" and engage with others doing medieval studies to find common ground.

Oxenbøll started out studying Japanese history in general, but delved further and further back into the past as he asked "why?" and sought contexts and explanations for later developments in the medieval past. While warriors were often opposed to the nobility, he wanted to see the level beneath, of "part-time" or "irregular" armed forces. His dissertation explored the so-called bandits of the medieval period, looking at what hid behind that label, looking beneath the surface of contemporary discourses among courts, estate owners, temples, and court nobles, to see what was actually going on. In short, Oxenbøll found that banditry was part of a larger reorganization of the whole estate system in this period. As proprietors lost control in numerous places, some of the provinces peripheral to the center lost some traditional privileges. Feeling themselves in a pinch, local powerholders reacted. When they did so, they were often vilified as bandits. Lately, Oxenbøll's research has turned to looking into the aesthetics of violence, in chronicles composed by the elite, to see the portrayal of violence, elite manners and sentiment, and also to see the manner of hierarchical demarcation of the elite from ordinary warriors.

Before arriving at Indiana University to assume his faculty position, Oxenbøll called the historic capital of Denmark, Copenhagen, home for 20 years. It wasn't with a light heart that he uprooted his wife and daughter, but they've all found Bloomington a very pleasant city, especially since unlike in the Danish capital, a professor's salary allows for buying a house. Despite having lived in a major metropolitan area for so long, Oxenbøll has never considered himself a city dweller. He and his family enjoy hiking state parks as well as spending time in the backyard, where they've battled to find plants to grow in their backyard that the local deer population will not eat.

Students interested in studying medieval Japan should consider the two classes Professor Oxenbøll will be offering in Fall 2014. For undergraduates, EALC-E 203, *Samurai: Violence and Culture in Pre-Modern Japan*, will explore the violent culture of the samurai, from the invention of the *bushido* samurai code up to the Second World War. For graduate students, EALC-E 600, *The Invention of the Middle Ages in Japan*, will explore how the warrior-aristocracy of the early modern period called upon their medieval past to legitimize their rule at a time when no significant fighting had occurred for 250 years, as well examine the question of what eras the Japanese Middle Ages were supposedly in the middle of. These classes will, of course, count towards the completion of a Minor or Area Certificate in Medieval Studies.



Prof. Morten Oxenbøll

INTRODUCING PROF. JEREMY SCHOTT

Jeremy Schott, who last fall assumed the position of Associate Professor in the Department of Religious Studies after eight years at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, completed his PhD at Duke University. He is currently completing a monograph, *Eusebius of Caesarea: Textuality and Tradition in Late Ancient Christianity*, which examines that fourth-century Greek writer as a reader and a writer to show the scope of the methods Eusebius developed to address the practice and theory of reading and writing. Schott's interest in Greek dates back to his undergraduate days, when he enjoyed learning and working with Greek. He finds working on pre-modern literatures a particularly useful way to engage contemporary literary discourse, "because grappling with past literatures can sometimes surprise us and help us to rethink literature in general."

Schott maintains an eclectic and interdisciplinary approach to Religious Studies, making use of whatever tools are most useful for the project at hand. His students read both works by scholars of more traditional, empiricist history and works heavily influenced by post-structuralist theory. "I don't twist people's arms one way or the other, but I do want them to figure out what's going to work best for a given project." He adds, "Religious Studies as a field is self-consciously engaged with thinking about religion as a heuristic and hermeneutical category, including when it

doesn't work," especially during periods such as the late-antique and early medieval worlds, timespans in which religion doesn't often work all too well as an analytical category. To outsiders, he says it may seem counterintuitive for a Religious Studies perspective to resist the urge to go to religion as an explanatory category, but Religious Studies' self-conscious engagement is actually helpful and interdisciplinary. In courses, Schott often finds himself urging students to stop looking at religion as a category that provides any sort of explanatory power on its own and to branch out with their methodologies.

Schott is starting work on a project that will look at eighth-, ninth-, and tenth-century Byzantine *scholia* and *catena*, examining Middle Byzantine textuality and how those readers understood their books. *Scholia* are marginal notations that may gloss a word or a concept, place a long quotation from another work to comment on the main work, or just provide additional information. *Catena*, on the other hand, are Christian *scholia* in the margins of biblical literature, glosses on words and commentaries on texts.

Schott has long wanted to live in the Midwest, and enjoys the size of Bloomington. Since arriving last fall, he has become involved with the local cycling community, enjoying slow, leisurely rides at about 15 mph, trips of 25 to 150 miles through the coun-

tryside outside town, surveying the remains of defunct stone quarries.

Spring 2015, Professor Schott will be offering two graduate seminars, one on post-colonial theory in religion, and a second on either gender and sexuality in Late Antiquity or late antique intellectual culture. Schott is also part of a Late Antiquity reading group on campus that meets twice a month, with students and faculty so far from the History, Classics, and Religious Studies departments. Participants read and meet to discuss either some recent scholarship in the field or to exchange and discuss some of their own work. The temporal scope has been deliberately wide, including readings on the Hebrew Bible and early Islam. All those with "first millennial" interests at IU are welcome to join and can contact Schott directly at jmschott@indiana.edu to be added to the email mailing list.



Prof. Jeremy Schott

FLANIGAN FUND SUPPORTS GRADUATE STUDENT TRAVEL TO CONFERENCES

The C. Clifford Flanigan Fund was established in honor of Clifford Flanigan (1941-1993), Professor of Comparative Literature and a founding member of the Medieval Studies Institute. In memory of his commitment to facilitating opportunities for graduate students, the fund provides travel assistance for graduate students studying the Middle Ages to attend conferences. This year, twelve graduate medievalists have received support from the Fund.

Richard Barrett (History) for his paper "Marian Cult in Seventh Century Constantinople: A Pivot Point in Late Antiquity" at the International Congress on Medieval Studies (2014).

Diane Fruchtmann (Religious Studies) for her paper "Martyrdom without Death in Augustine's Feast-Day Sermons" at the North American Patristics Society Conference in Chicago (2014).

Kyle Grothoff (Classics) for his paper "Digenis Akritas, the Book of

Dede Korkut, and the Poetics of Liminality" at the International Congress on Medieval Studies (2014).

Lindsey Hansen (Art History) for her paper "Revisiting Reims North: The Vita Sancti Remigii and the Formation of Episcopal Identity" at the International Congress on Medieval Studies (2014).

Kerilyn Harkaway-Krieger (English & Religious Studies) for the roundtable "The Medievalist Mother: Balancing the Demands of Research

FACULTY, STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

and Motherhood,” sponsored by the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship, at the International Congress on Medieval Studies (2014).

Jessica Leach (History) for her paper “The Art of Persuasion in the Web of Holy Women: The Intersection of Crusading and Crusade Preaching in 13th Century Vitae of *Mulieres Sanctae*” at the 31st Annual Illinois Medieval Association Conference, “Seduction: The Art of Persuasion in the Medieval World” (2014).

Christine Libby (Religious Studies) for her paper “The Object of His Heart” at the fortieth Sewanee Medieval Colloquium, “Medieval Emotions” (2014).

Emerson Richards (Comparative Literature) for her paper “Io non mori e non rimasi vivi, or L'enfer c'est les autres: Borders Formed by Text, Language & Communication (or Lack Thereof) in Dante's *Commedia*” at the International Congress on Medieval Studies (2014).

Cynthia Rogers (English) for her paper “In Earnest and in Game”: A Reconsideration of Women's Voices in the Findern Manuscript” at the International Congress on Medieval Studies (2014).

Corey Sparks (English) for his paper “?: Interrobanging Chaucer” at the International Congress on Medieval Studies (2014).

Erin Sweany (English) for her paper “Bones and Books: Using Bioarchaeology in the Literature Classroom” at the International Congress on Medieval Studies (2014).

Mohammad Syifa Amin Widigdo for his paper “The Role of Nishapuri Scholars in the Advancement of Sunni Scholarship in Tenth-Eleventh Century Islam” at the International Congress on Medieval Studies (2014).

Judith H. Anderson (Professor Emeritus, English) will be giving a plenary at the conference “Dan Geffrey with the New Poete: Reading and Rereading Chaucer and Spenser” in Bristol in the United Kingdom in July.

Christopher I. Beckwith (Central Eurasian Studies) has just completed correcting the page proofs for “The Aramaic Source of the East Asian Word for ‘Buddhist Monastery’: On the Spread of Central Asian Monasticism in the Kushan Period,” an article coming out in the next issue of *Journal Asiatique* (302.1), in the writing of which he unexpectedly discovered some of the earliest evidence for Christian monasteries, as well as for monasteries and monasticism per se.

Diane Shane Fruchtman (PhD Candidate, Religious Studies), after presiding at the panel she organized at Kalamazoo (“Aspirations Unmet: Failure and its Fruits in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages”) on May 8, and presenting a paper (“Martyrdom without Death in Augustine's Sermons”) at the North American Patristics Society's annual meeting on May 23, will defend her dissertation (“Living in a Martyrial World: Living Martyrs and the Creation of Martyrial Consciousness in the Late Antique Latin West”) on July 15, after which she will move down to Lexington, Virginia, to join the faculty at Washington and Lee University as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion for the 2014-2015 academic year.

Shannon Gayk (English) was named a fellow at the National Humanities Center for next year

(2014-2015) to complete her book, *Instruments of Christ: The Arma Christi in Early England*.

Barbara Hanawalt (Professor Emeritus, History) gave a paper at the Renaissance Society of America in March: “Stage Directions for the Mayor of London.”

Lindsey Hansen (PhD Candidate, Art History) has been awarded the Bourse Jeanne Marandon by the Société des Professeurs Français et Francophones d'Amérique. This fellowship will enable her to carry out a full-year archival and site-specific dissertation research in France during the 2014-2015 academic year. She was also awarded conference travel grants by the College Arts and Humanities Institute and the Friends of Art to present papers at the Vagantes Medieval Graduate Student Conference at UT Austin and the International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo this spring. Finally, she has a chapter titled “Sculpture, Liturgy and the Formation of Episcopal Identity in the Saints Portal at Reims Cathedral” forthcoming in the volume *New Studies of the North Façade of Reims Cathedral*.

Kerilyn Harkaway-Krieger (PhD Candidate, English and Religious Studies) has had an article, “Mysticism and Materiality: Pearl and the Theology of Metaphor” accepted to *Exemplaria*, and will be participating in an NEH seminar this summer on “Art, Architecture, and Devotional Interaction, 1200-1600,” in York, UK.

Stephen Hopkins (PhD Candidate, English) received a First Year Teaching Award.

FACULTY, STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

Cindy Rogers (PhD Candidate, English) was just awarded an English Department Summer Dissertation Fellowship. She will be giving a conference presentation, "Translating Lechery to Love: Reading 'Apollonius of Tyre' within the Findern MS (CUL Ff.I.6)" at the Third International Congress of the John Gower Society, University of Rochester, summer 2014. She also organized one of the MEST sections at Kalamazoo this year: "Performance of Women's Voices in Medieval Lyric: Theory and Evidence."

Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, Ruth N. Halls Emerita Professor of NELC, retired from IU in Dec. 2013 and now holds the Sultan Qaboos bin Said Chair in Arabic & Islamic Studies at Georgetown University. Among her paper presentations in the past year were: "The Lexical Exile of Abū al-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī": Arabic Literature: Migration, Diaspora, Exile, Estrangement" at the Middle East Institute, Columbia University, NYC, Nov. 7-9, 2013; "Min al-Mujtama' ilā al-Mu'jam: wajhay al-Insāniyyah fī shī'r Abū al-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī," presented at the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of the Humanities / Kuwait University, Kuwait, Nov. 11-13, 2013; and "Arabic Poetry and the Invention of the Abbasid Golden Age," presented at: "Baghdad: Cradle of Culture and Civilization, 1013-2013," a conference of the Iraqi Cultural Center & The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq (TAARII), at the Iraqi Cultural Center, Washington, DC, Nov. 15-16, 2013. A related paper, "Abbasid Panegyric: Badī' Poetry and the Invention of the Arab Golden Age" was presented at the American Comparative Lit-

erature Association Annual Meeting, NYU, 20-23 March, 2014, on a seminar she organized, entitled, "Baghdad and/in the Arab Imaginary: Imperial Capital and Symbolic Capital." A longer version of this paper was presented as the Keynote Lecture at BRISMES-American University of Sharjah conference, "Mapping Arabic Heritage: Language, Literature and Culture," held at American University at Sharjah, April 14-16, 2014.

Two of her recent articles are: "Performative Poetics in 'Abbāsīd Poetry: A Re-Reading of Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī's Rā'iyyah: Arāka 'aṣiyya al-dam'i" in the *Annals of the Japan Association of Middle Eastern Studies* 29.2 (2013): 107-44; and "The Snake in the Tree: Abū al-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī's Risālat al-Ghufrān: Essay and Translation" in the *Journal of Arabic Literature* 45 (2014): 1-80.

Corey Sparks (PhD Candidate, English) writes, "My article, 'Lydgate's Jailbird,' will appear in *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, vol. 36 (2014). And this spring and summer I'm giving two conference presentations. In May, I'm presenting the paper "Interrobanging Chaucer" at the International Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo. And in July I'll be traveling to Reykjavik, Iceland to present 'The Matter of Medieval Newgate' at the New Chaucer Society Congress for a seminar panel entitled "Ecomaterialism: Questions/Problems/Ideologies."

Erin Sweany presented "Bones and Books: Incorporating Bioarchaeology into the Literature Classroom" as part of a TEAMS pedagogy panel at Kalamazoo.

Wayne Storey and **John Walsh**, on March 20 of this year, presented "Digital Tools of the Petrarch and Humanistic Applications" as the inaugural workshop for the 2014 Society for Textual Scholarship at the University of Washington in Seattle. March 29, Wayne presented "Petrarch's Appropriation of Boccaccio: the Historia Griseldis" at the Renaissance Society of America conference in New York. April 1 he conducted a seminar on his new edition of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and petrarche.org at Columbia University. And April 5 he gave the keynote address ("A Rich-Text Petrarch and the Expansion of Communities") for the conference "The Communities of Italy: New and Traditional Approaches" of the Delaware Valley Medieval Association.

Usha Vishnujula (PhD Candidate, English) writes, "my first article, 'Loyalty and Horizontal Cosmopolitanism in Chrétien de Troyes' Cligés' was published this semester in the Spring 2014 (24.1) issue of *Arthuriana*."

John Walbridge (Near Eastern Languages and Cultures) gave in December a keynote speech on the manuscripts of the Illuminationist school of Islamic philosophy at a conference on Islamic philosophy in the 13th century at Yildirim Bayezit University in Ankara, Turkey. The paper has since been published in the conference proceedings. His article "A Response to Seyed N. Mousavian, 'Did Suhrawardi Believe in Innate Ideas as A Priori Concepts?' A Note." appeared in the April 2014 issue of *Philosophy East and West*.

ADVICE FROM OUR GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP PANELISTS

As part of an ongoing series of professionalization events to help students complete the PhD and obtain positions, the Medieval Studies Graduate Student Advisory Committee coordinated with MEST to offer a grant-writing workshop. Rega Wood, Professor of Philosophy and a very successful grant applicant, joined Alex Strong of the IU GradGrants center and Richard Barrett, doctoral candidate in History and recent winner of the highly selective Wells Graduate Fellowship, to impart numerous valuable nuggets of advice for students aspiring to obtain grant funding. Some of these include...

- Make sure you're eligible and to follow instructions carefully
- Write with the grantor in mind, since application readers won't be medievalists
- Ground your applications in the appropriate literature
- Have advisor answer transcript problems; for example, if you've been in the degree program "too long," it would help if an advisor can write that you can finish promptly
- List your accomplishments, because the grant application is not a place for modesty
- Notify reference writers early
- Ask for feedback! Some grantors will read drafts, and you can often get sample proposals
- See how many actual awards the grantor gives out
- Come up with the budget section first
- Signpost in your proposal to help guide the application readers
- Discuss completed disserta-

tion chapters, the success metric of a graduate student

- Meet once a week with your advisor, a fact that reassures application readers that your work comes in on-time; it's best for advisor to say you'll finish when you say you will
- Ask your advisor whether the opportunity you're applying for is one for which he or she would be comfortable recommending you
- Make one-on-one appointments at the GradGrants center, where the staff will help you search for opportunities, and then edit and draft with you multiple times
- Start preparing way early; a year in advance of when you'd receive funds is a good idea, 9 months if you're lucky, leaving lots of time for multiple drafts
- Be very specific about your research proposal
- Use funding databases, including GrantForward and Foundation Grants for Individuals; the latter can be accessed only at select on-campus sites, including GradGrants
- Keep in mind earlier, internal IU deadlines which precede those of the grantor
- Some grantors may want to see a completed dissertation chapter
- Use clear, concise language
- By the end of your first page, answer the "so what" question
- Thank your recommenders
- Have your peers review your application
- Make sure to list other funds; as counterintuitive as it might seem, the more awards you list, the more comfortable a grantor will be to give you funding:

money begets money

- Have a backup recommender
- FLAS (Foreign Language and Area Studies) Fellowships are a boon for language acquisition
- In preparing your applications, copy others as much as you can, modifying their format for your own circumstances; use the metric of what successful applications did to reconcile any particular, conflicting advice you might get from those giving you well-intentioned advice
- Applicants from History should tie everything to H601, discussing especially the theories that modernists on fellowship committees would understand: emphasize the jargon they want to hear
- You cannot be boring!
- The success rate is 5-10%; additionally, the right person at the right time has to read it right
- Network: you never know who will let you know about a funding opportunity that will fit you
- At the start of the semester, send your recommendation writers an email listing application deadlines and the websites where they can submit them
- Ask both graduate students and professors whether there's any chance they'd be willing to share a successful application

The PowerPoint presentations Professor Wood and Alex Strong used during the workshop will soon be made available on the Medieval Studies website (www.indiana.edu/~medieval).

MEST CONTACT INFORMATION

The members of the administrative staff of MEST are: **Rosemarie McGerr**, Director, **Bridget Balint**, Associate Director, **Erin Sweany**, Assisant to the Director, and **Maksymilian Szostalo**, Special Projects Assistant. If you have communications you would like to have distributed as a general announcement in Medieval Studies, please contact Maks at mest@indiana.edu.

mest@indiana.edu: for general correspondence with the Institute, or for administrative matters with Erin, or newsletter and publicity issues with Maks.

mestdir@indiana.edu: for direct and confidential communications with the Director; this is an administrative account we have established that will transfer from director to director. Please note that dirmest@indiana.edu is a personal account of another faculty member.

In addition to these two e-mail accounts, we also maintain six distribution lists: one for undergraduate students, one for graduate students, one for alumni, one for faculty, one for core faculty, and one for community members. If you would like to be added to any of those lists, please contact Maks at mest@indiana.edu.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Professor Rosemarie McGerr, Director, Medieval Studies Institute

Thanks to everyone who participated in MEST events this spring. We may have had our busiest semester yet, combining lectures, the symposium, *Mediævalia* at the Lilly, the reception for minors and certificate recipients, and the GSAC workshop with sponsoring two paper panels at the International Medieval Studies Congress. Many more of our current students and faculty have been active in giving papers and publishing their work, which also attests to the strength of Medieval Studies scholarship and teaching here at IUB.

MEST also continued to partner with our affiliated departments this semester. With **EALC**, we co-sponsored a lecture by Prof. **Anna Shields** on "The Body of the Friend: Friendship and Literary Culture in Mid-Tang China"; and with **NELC**, we co-sponsored the Danner lecture by Prof. **Sebastian Guenther** on "The Quest for Enlightenment in Clas-

sical Islam: Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*," as well as a colloquium on Averroes and Aquinas.

Among plans in the works for next year is the next phase of the "**Performing the Middle Ages**" Mellon Foundation proposal, in which MEST faculty and graduate students from several different departments and schools have been participating. Our proposal includes live and film performances, as well as courses and conferences over the course of two years. The project as a whole includes performance in the Middle East and East Asia, as well as Europe, so it provides exciting opportunities for comparative study. We therefore hope to be able to help our students and faculty attend performances at the other universities in the consortium.

As we come to the end of this academic year, I want to thank two graduate students who have served as MEST assistants and are now moving on to new phases of their careers: **Erin Sweany**, a doctoral candidate in English, who has been the assistant to the director in the MEST office, and **Corey Sparks**, also a doctoral candidate in English, who has been the editorial assistant for the MEST Journals Initiative office. We appreciate the excellent work they have done for MEST, and we wish them every success as they complete their degrees.

With best wishes to all,
Rosemarie McGerr