

Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen
Mannheim 18.09.2022
bis 26.02.2023

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Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen



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NORMANNEN

Conference „Norman Connections – Normannische Verflechtungen zwischen Skandinavien und dem Mittelmeer“ (15.10.2020 –17.10.2020)

Abstracts

Thursday, 15 October 2020

13:30 Opening

13:30-14:15: Greeting **Alfried Wiczorek** (Mannheim), Introduction **Nikolas Jaspert** (Heidelberg)

14:15-14:45: **Viola Skiba** (Mannheim), Opening Lecture: Das Ausstellungsprojekt Die Normannen – Eine Geschichte von Mobilität, Eroberung und Innovation

Section I: Beyond the Baltic Sea: From Norsemen to Normans and Varangians

Chair: **Aleksandr Musin** (Sankt Petersburg)

14:45-15:30: **Charlotte Hedenstierna-Jonson** (Uppsala), *Farmer, trader, raider, ruler: society and people of the eastern Viking World*

There are many conceptions about Vikings, some of them possibly true while others are mere colourful figments of imagination. The one truth we can hold for certain, is that the Viking Age and its people, including those we call Vikings, were many different things often at the same time. The result is a multitude of histories rather than one shared history. This is especially true for the eastern part of the Viking World. The historical narratives of the Vikings are often dominated by actions and events framed by the raids in the North Atlantic and the coasts and rivers of Western Europe. The movement by Scandinavians into the European East, and far beyond, was equally extensive and connected Scandinavia to some of the foremost centres of power of the time. While the western expansion often is characterised by raids, violence and power politics, the eastern counterpart is often depicted as more peaceful, with Scandinavians mainly engaging in trade or in agricultural colonialization of sparsely populated regions. But was there really a great difference between the movements, or is this a later construct based on differences in source material and research traditions? This paper aims to explore the varieties of roles and identities that formed the society and people of the eastern Viking World.

16:00-16:45: **Christian Lübke** (Leipzig), *Die Entstehung der Kiewer Rus als Ergebnis transregionaler Mobilität*

09:45-10:30: **Lamia Hadda** (Florenz), *Architettura di tradizione fatimide e ziride nella Sicilia normanna (X-XII secolo)*

Between 10th and 11th century, the Fatimids, Zirids and Normans erected monuments on the northern and southern coast of the Mediterranean, which were constructed only for demonstrating their authority and absolute power over the territory.

With regard to the architecture of Fatimid tradition on Sicily, it is important to note that determining with precision the contribution of the Muslim culture – both from the Aghlabid and from the Fatimid-Zirid period – to the island's art history is very difficult due to the almost complete lack of examples recognisable today above the soil.

Paradoxically, only the buildings constructed by the Norman princes and their entourage provide precise information for determining the contribution of Islamic tradition to Sicilian architecture. Indeed, many royal residences show striking reminiscences on some monuments of central Maghreb, Ifriqiya and Egypt.

In conclusion, only a detailed morphologic analysis of Sicily's Norman monuments allows assumptions concerning the architectural tradition of the Normans – including the military architecture of Northern Europe as well as closer northern African –, enabling us thereby to define in a clear manner the contribution of the Arabic-Islamic culture to the civil Sicilian architecture.

11:00-11:45: **Wolf Zöllner** (Heidelberg), *St Michael, St Peter and the Holy Sepulchre. A socio-religious approach to Norman presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, ca. 1000–1300*

Norman expansion into the Eastern Mediterranean during the 11th and 12th centuries is a well-covered topic, which has been treated extensively over the course of the last decades, and this includes the wide thematic field of military expeditions to the Balkans, incursions into Byzantine Greece, raids into the Aegean, various forms of mercenarism and freelancing in Asia Minor as well as the conquest of Antioch during the First Crusade. The same is true for Norman participation in subsequent crusading endeavours, Norman involvement in the dealings of the principality of Antioch, the transfer of Norman law to Antioch, the Norman background of the nobility of Antioch etc. As a result, scholars, in recent years, have fundamentally revised the image, forged in twelfth century historiography, of a Southern Italian Norman regime reluctant to the idea of crusading.

However, in all these discussions, the religious sphere has received relatively little attention. Apart from the rather futile question, whether Norman crusaders like Bohemond of Taranto were primarily driven by spiritual motives or material gain, no systematic effort has been made to take into account the religious manifestations of Norman presence in the Levant., Set against the backdrop of a long history of Norman pilgrimage to the holy land, the present paper will therefore focus on Norman ecclesiastical patronage in Syria and Palestine, with a special emphasis on the intimate monastic links between the Latin churches of Southern Italy and the Crusader States.