

CfP: Mediterraneanizing the North Atlantic: Transmission, Translation, and Textuality (A Panel Discussion)

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In 2009, Sharon Kinoshita called for a new approach to Medieval Studies—indeed, for a linguistic and geographic re-definition of the field. The panel proposes to apply what Kinoshita has called a “Mediterraneanizing” perspective to the critical analysis of medieval literature from North Atlantic Europe (broadly defined to include the coastlines of the modern-day British Isles, Iceland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, the Southern Basque Country, France, Scandinavia, and Germany). Following Kinoshita, we hope to consider these regions less as nations than as a network of languages and cultures that interconnected through the waterways of the Atlantic Ocean.

This approach necessarily entails that its practitioners re-map “traditional disciplinary divides,” and “embrace collaborative inter- and cross-disciplinary work.” Ultimately, as Sahar Amer explains, the study calls for a re-assessment of the perspectives on transmission, translation, and textuality. To reassess these concepts is possible by “revisiting our notion of border” and of “border crossings” historically, politically, economically, and literally because “we can no longer isolate political missions or economic transactions from the social and cultural milieu in which they took place.” Applying these parameters to the study of the North Atlantic demands that we do not study the North Atlantic from a linear perspective, but rather like a web, spreading out, in “ever-wider concentric—and, eventually, decentered—circles,” including not only Northern Europe but parts of North America.

See: Kinoshita, Sharon. 2009. “Medieval Mediterranean Literature.” *PMLA* 124.2: 600-08; and Amer, Sahar. 2015. “Reading Medieval French Literature from a Global Perspective.” *PMLA* 130.2: 367-74.

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