

CALL FOR PAPERS

Women and Artistic Production Beyond the Borders of Byzantium

[International Medieval Congress](#) / Leeds / 6-9 July 2020



Organizers: Maria Alessia Rossi, PhD, Index of Medieval Art, Princeton University
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The ever-shifting borders of the Byzantine Empire and the spiritual power of Eastern Orthodoxy contributed to the development of new visual forms in regions of the Balkan Peninsula and the Carpathian Mountains between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. The rich art, architecture, and visual culture of these eastern European regions remain to be fully explored, as do the key roles women played in the transfer of artistic and cultural knowledge, the development of local artistic styles, as well as in the establishment of diplomatic relations and the transformation of identities and ideologies. Women have been frequently overshadowed by powerful husbands, sons, and communities, and too often relegated to the margins of scholarly inquiry. This session explores women and female agency beyond the borders of Byzantium, in light of their roles within marital and inter-dynastic relations, as well as in religious and spiritual dynamics. In efforts to gain new perspectives on the nature of cultural contact and transfer, as well as on visual production in late medieval Eastern Europe as a result of the direct involvement of women, either as patrons, artists, mediators, and/or recipients, this session aims to focus on case studies that examine individual female figures from all walks of life (royal courts, noble families, monastic communities, etc.). Moreover, the session seeks to highlight the significance of prosopography, gender, and network studies in historical and art historical research.

Papers could address topics that include, but are not limited to:

- The role of women as key agents of cultural contact, transfer, and adaptation of knowledge
- Women as patrons, artists, and recipients of art beyond geographical, socio-political, and religious boundaries
- Instances of art (icons, embroideries, manuscripts, metalwork) and architecture that speak to women, allow for self-identification, and/or established gender roles and norms

Proposals for 20-minute papers in English should include an abstract (300 words max.) and a brief CV (2 pages max.), and should be sent to Alice Isabella Sullivan ([aisulli\[at\]umich.edu](mailto:aisulli[at]umich.edu)) and Maria Alessia Rossi ([marossi\[at\]princeton.edu](mailto:marossi[at]princeton.edu)) by **September 10, 2019**.

This session is organized under the larger initiative *North of Byzantium* (www.northofbyzantium.org), which explores the rich history, art, and culture of the northern frontiers of the Byzantine Empire in Eastern Europe between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries.

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