

## Four Highlights of 2016

### • Imperial Languages – Tyler and Høgel invited talk at KCL

In November, Christian Høgel and Elizabeth Tyler jointly spoke about Imperial Languages at Kings College London to a combined meeting of the Comparative Literature and CLAMS (Centre for Late Antique and Medieval Studies) research seminars. The very well-attended meeting initiated a collaboration which will explore and extend the model of Imperial Languages into the early modern and modern periods and involve several other institutions in London.

### • Istanbul Summer school on reading pleasure

In collaboration with prof. Ingela Nilsson (Uppsala), the CML held a summer school at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul 23-28 May 2016. The title of the summer school was *Reading pleasure – pleasure reading*, and involved inspiring talks from four lecturers (Bo Utas, Uppsala; Virginia Langum, Uppsala; Pernilla Myrne, Gothenburg; Stratis Papaioannou, Brown). 27 PhD students from a variety of countries (incl. Cuba, Georgia, Russia, Syria, and Venezuela) participated in presentations, discussions and group readings. Group readings were – in shifting combinations – led by four tutors (AnnaLinden Weller, Uppsala; David Wallace, Penn; Ingela Nilsson, Uppsala; Christian Høgel, Odense) on various locations in the city (the Hippodrome area, the Büyük Londra Hotel, the Pera Tower, and the Chora church), and included ventures into both medieval (e.g. the story of Barlaam and Josaphat, Byzantine novels, etc.) and modern texts (Erich Auerbach, fan fiction, etc). Student presentations became the occasion of intense discussions, across disciplines and methodologies. Aspects of the historical rise of (perceived) pleasure reading and the increased writing of stories and production of manuscripts with fiction at their core received attention in all gatherings. Istanbul offered a wonderful venue in which to combine discussions of medieval literature with visits to Byzantine monuments.

### • York flagship conference on Europe

At the end of June and beginning of July, CML held the flagship conference for our first period of funding. With speakers and attendees from across Europe and North America, addressing topics from many points within Northwestern Eurasia, ‘Theorizing Medieval *European* Literatures’ aimed to lay fundamental groundwork for thinking in European ways about the literary cultures of the Middle Ages. In this it built on, but radically extended, discussions within CML and the Interfaces Network and publications within the journal. Around eighty participants attended and, appropriately in the week after the Brexit vote, intensively interrogated the concept of ‘Europe’ as applied to medieval literature. This conference initiated a biannual series which will contribute to the continuation of the work of CML beyond 2022.

### • Evaluation – continuation of CML 2018-22

The midway evaluation of CML was conducted throughout 2016. In the beginning of the year we worked intensively on both our self-evaluation and the extension plans. It was a good opportunity for reflection and refocusing, and we submitted our documents by June 1. An international panel of three experts was put together, and they studied our report, plans and ten select publications and visited us for a whole day of interviews in September. Finally in late December we got the happy notification that we had been selected for a second grant period. The two major changes from the first grant period are the inclusion of two new PIs into the core group (former postdocs Forrai and Younge) and changing the Fictionality research theme into a more comprehensive one called Transformations and Translocations.