

# Annual Highlights

## Engagement with science

In August, postdoc Dale Kedwards arranged the workshop “[Interstellar Skies: The Lunar Passage in Literature through the Ages](#).” The place and time were carefully chosen: the meeting took place on the island of Hven, the location of Tycho Brahe’s centre of excellence (costing more than 1% of Denmark’s GDP at the time) and the setting for Kepler’s ‘sci-fi’ novel *Somnium*; and 2018 marked the half-centenary of *Earthrise* (1968), the famous image of the Earth taken from the moon’s surface. This interdisciplinary symposium daringly brought together specialists in literary studies, the natural sciences, and the anthropology of space exploration to think about lunar constructions in literature, and the cultural commentary they have enabled. From a diversity of perspectives, we asked how literatures, from the Middle Ages to the 21st century, have conceptualized lunar spaces, from our own moon to those of distant worlds. Speakers included Prof. Tom McLeish (York), distinguished physicist and historian of science and new associate member of CML, and Divna Manolova, newly appointed postdoc. McLeish also gave a well-attended [lecture](#) at the Danish Institute for Advanced Study (SDU) on his book on the arts and scientific and scholarly breakthroughs. We are delighted that CML has strength in science across the Latin West and Byzantium.

## Establishing the team for CML2

Five early- and mid-career scholars took up new positions at CML during 2018, joining the six senior scholars already in place for CML’s second grant period (2018-22). These scholars are: historian Thomas Heebøll-Holm (Associate Prof. SDU) with projects on French-Danish elite networks and on the medieval historian Saxo Grammaticus; Byzantinist and classical scholar Aglae Pizzone (Assistant Prof. Danish Institute for Advanced Study, SDU) with projects on self-commentaries and the history of emotions (including a digital humanities component); medieval Latinist and classical and Arabic scholar Julian Yolles (postdoc SDU) with projects on Levantine Latin literature and libraries of the Christian Middle East; art historian and historian of ideas Anya Burgon with an interdisciplinary project on the view from above in intellectual history (postdoc York); Byzantinist and historian of science Divna Manolova with a project on Byzantine astronomy and philosophy (postdoc York). Welcome all!

## Imperial Languages

Høgel has been developing the idea of Imperial Languages from the early years of CML. Imperial languages are those languages by which an empire was run – in terms of administration, schooling, and – not least – literature glorifying that empire. Such languages received special attention and status, and left a written corpus which could secure the longevity of that language beyond the lifetime of the given empire. Imperial Languages became one of CML’s three main research strands at the beginning of the second grant period in 2018, replacing the first grant period’s Languages strand. Major 2018 developments include a [workshop](#) (April 19-20, Courtauld Institute, London), arranged in collaboration with Tyler, Alixe Bovey (Courtauld), Francesca Orsini (SOAS), and Ziad Elmarsafy (King’s College), with speakers from these institutions and Cambridge University. Drawing on these experiences, Høgel published a full definition of the notion of Imperial Languages and its possible use in medieval and contemporary contexts in the new, high-profile open-access online journal *Medieval Worlds* (Vienna): “[World literature is trans-imperial: A medieval and a modern approach](#).”

## Global and Danish outreach

CML launched our new, public-facing, custom-made website ([cml.sdu.dk](http://cml.sdu.dk)) in early 2018, with a combination of mostly-static content (About and Network) and frequently-updated content (News including blog posts, and Events). In combination with our strategic use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, email newsletter), this has substantially increased our visibility to the broader research community and the public. Over its first eleven months, a total of 4892 individual users visited the website. Traffic from Europe strongly outperforms that from other continents, while the top three countries represented are the United Kingdom, Denmark, and the USA. This demonstrates a high level of impact in CML’s two host countries as well as in the regions in which CML members are most active. Within Denmark, Mortensen published an introduction to the medieval Danish historian Saxo with the 100 Danmarkshistorier series (Aarhus University Press). Taking into account CML’s European focus, the book places more weight than usual on the European background of both Saxo and his chronicle. The book was favourably reviewed in newspapers such as Weekendavisen and Mortensen gave interviews and a public talk at Folkeuniversitet in Aarhus.