

CALL FOR PAPERS

Artificial Light in Medieval Churches between Byzantium and the West

Online workshop | Tufts University & Accademia di architettura di Mendrisio | 9-10 February 2023



Organizers:

Alice Isabella Sullivan, PhD, Tufts University

Vladimir Ivanovici, PhD, University of Vienna | Accademia di architettura di Mendrisio

Throughout the Middle Ages, artificial illumination was used to draw attention to and enhance the symbolism of certain areas, objects, and persons inside Christian sacred spaces. The strategies usually found in Latin and Byzantine churches have been analyzed in recent decades. However, the cultures that developed at the crossroads of the Latin, Greek, and Slavic spheres, particularly in regions of the Balkan Peninsula and the Carpathian Mountains, have received less scholarly attention. The uses of artificial light in churches were likely shaped by aspects such as inherited practices, the imitation of other societies, as well as by local climatic, economic, and theological parameters.

Following a similar workshop that focused on natural light, which showed how uses of sunlight reveal patterns of knowledge transfer and cultural interaction between Byzantium, the West, and the Slavic world throughout the Middle Ages, this workshop invites papers on the economy of **artificial light** in medieval churches across Eastern Europe, from the Balkans to the Baltic Sea. Whether innovative or inspired by the more established traditions on the margins of the Mediterranean, local customs are to be examined in order to understand how artificial light was used in ecclesiastical spaces, and how it brought together the architecture, decoration, objects, and rituals.

Following the workshop, select papers will be revised and published in a volume that will complement the edited collection that resulted from the workshop on natural light, which is currently in print with Brill.

Proposals for 20-min. papers in English should include the following: an abstract (300 words max.) and a brief CV (2 pages max.). Proposals should be emailed to the organizers of the workshop at [alice.sullivan\[at\]tufts.edu](mailto:alice.sullivan@tufts.edu) and [vladimir.ivanovici\[at\]jusi.ch](mailto:vladimir.ivanovici@jusi.ch) by **1 September 2022**. Please include in the email subject line “**Artificial Light Proposal.**”