



Stockholm  
University

Call for Papers

## MOVEMENT AND ARREST IN EARLY MODERN CULTURE



**A Multidisciplinary Conference in Stockholm, Sweden**  
**Hosted by Stockholm University**  
**November 5-7, 2014**  
**Submission deadline: October 2, 2013**

Stockholm University, in cooperation with the Nordic Network for Renaissance Studies and the Swedish *Barockakademien*, is pleased to announce a multidisciplinary conference in Stockholm, Sweden (November 5-7, 2014). With registration and a reception in the evening on the 5<sup>th</sup>, the actual conference will start in the morning on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Our intention is to enable and promote the exchange of ideas, experiences and knowledge across disciplinary and national borders.

\* \* \*

In the preface to his book on the history of the Nordic peoples, published during his exile in Rome 1555, Olaus Magnus gives praise to all travelling philosophers, *peregrinantes philosophi*. He especially mentions Democritus, who would not hesitate to go anywhere where there was anything to be learned. He points to Homer, Alexander the Great and Aristotle to show that travelling and wisdom have often gone hand in hand. Authors, politicians and philosophers: they have all searched for new knowledge and a better understanding of the world through the movement of the journey as well as an arrested thoughtfulness.

The cultural history of travelling philosophy is yet to be written. Its foundations are to be found in the Antiquity, especially within the cynic “school of thinkers” who denied the value of material possessions and family life. They were followed by the apostles and pilgrims of the medieval world. In the Early Modern period, aspects of poverty became less important, while for example the interest in scholarly reflection and the possibility to publish increased considerably. Olaus Magnus himself is an example of this, with his immense knowledge of classical and contemporary texts, his keen travelling all over Europe and the success of his book throughout the centuries.

At this conference we want to expand the theme of the travelling philosopher, addressing the tense relationship between movement and arrest in Early Modern culture. Certainly, this is a period of great achievements, both in regard to "movement" and "arrest" – and their interaction. The urge to travel and to report is to be found not only among explorers of the New World but among the many humanists and artists who would tour the European courts in search for new patrons and audiences. This desire for new experiences and vistas was also a philosophical issue in itself, crucial to any understanding of the period's redesigned world picture, expanded cultural networks and cutting-edge aesthetics.

Certainly, there were scepticism and resistance to this dynamics as well. Political and social movements were seen as threats to the traditional order. Theological and philosophical ideas of an open-ended universe were met with horror and vengeance. Armies and mercenaries moving around Europe exposed its population to great stress. Traditional strongholds of meditative withdrawal, such as the monasteries, were criticised by reformers of the church.

Arranging this conference, we are now asking for sessions or papers on topics such as – but not limited to – the following:

- The travelling philosopher
- Writings and reflections on the problems and benefits of travelling
- Meditative thinking beyond the monasteries
- The prime mover within philosophy and theology
- Freedom of thought and the development of knowledge
- Issues of aesthetics and representation
- Social mobility and turbulence
- Home, family and education
- Involuntary and forced mobility

Sessions (three papers) and individual papers will be selected depending on their relevance, considering the overall topic of the conference, regardless of discipline. We expect to be able to host around 60 speakers, but the conference will be open for non-presenting participants as well. The accomplishment of the event still depends upon further funding. A website is coming up soon.

Papers should be given in English. They should be no longer than 20 minutes, to allow a fruitful discussion after each contribution. If you are interested in participating with a paper, please submit a 250 word abstract to the address [renaissance2014@su.se](mailto:renaissance2014@su.se) before October 2, 2013.

Organizers at Stockholm University are:

- Anna Carlstedt, PhD, French Literature
- Anders Cullhed, Professor, Literature
- Carin Franzén, Professor, Literature
- Peter Gillgren, Professor, Art History
- Tzortzis Ikononou, Research Fellow, Italian Literature
- Erland Sellberg, Professor, History of Ideas
- Mårten Snickare, Associate Professor, Art History
- Elisabeth Wåghäll Nivre, Professor, German Literature

\* \* \*

John Dee (1527-1600), experienced in both movement and arrest, called his home in Mortlake the *Mortlacensi Hospitali Philosophorum Peregrinantium* (The Mortlake Hospice for the Travelling Philosopher), in a wish to “gather and entertain learned people”. We hope to do the same in Stockholm next year!