

Fourth NNRS Conference

House of Science and Letters, Helsinki

26-28 September 2018

Call for Papers

Renaissance Libraries and the Organisation of Information

Libraries are an important factor in preserving and transmitting knowledge, thus contributing to historical continuity. The availability of different texts transmitting possibly contradictory ideas, however, implies a great potential for engaging readers in new ways of thinking, thus promoting change. In addition to transmitting texts, historical libraries would often also be perceived as objects of material and spiritual value enhancing the prestige of their owner, e.g. contributing to the image-building of the political entities ruled by emperors, kings and princes. The Renaissance (c. 1300-1600) is a period of intense mediatic (transition from the handwritten to the printed book), cultural, religious (exasperation of confessional conflicts) and political change (emergence and consolidation of the Early Modern State) in Western Europe. In order to cope with the multiple challenges of the period, libraries not only had to be protected from destruction (e.g. repairs to old volumes) and renewed (production and acquisition of new volumes; construction of new buildings), but also organising information through thematic cataloguing systems. In this period, in addition to the traditional monastic, university and princely libraries, new scholarly libraries of academies and learned societies are established. Furthermore, from the fifteenth century onwards, there is an increasing amount of libraries of a public character (e.g. the library housed at S. Marco in Florence, the Vatican Library and the Bodleian), catering for an unprecedented diversification and multiplication of readers. Last but not least, by the end of the fifteenth century printing revolutionises the processes of book production, making it considerably cheaper to build up book collections.

Societal and cultural changes (such as easier access to knowledge for a broader public through printing, the availability of more Greek literature in the West, the Lutheran Reformation) are also reflected in the way knowledge and information is organised in other contexts. Collections of other material objects than books are arranged to inform the viewer and facilitate study; commentaries on Classical authors become vehicles for the transmission of encyclopedic knowledge; books must be made to adapt materially and culturally to changing technological and market trends; and visual representations convey to the onlooker political ideology and religious stances.

The Fourth NNRS Conference will be organised by the **Association for Classical Philology of Finland** with the collaboration of the Academy of Finland and University of Jyväskylä project *Late Medieval and Early Modern Libraries as Knowledge Repositories, Guardians of Tradition and Catalyst of Change (LaMeMoLi, 2017-2021)* and with the financial support of the **Federation of Finnish Learned Societies**. The organising committee invites scholars of all fields of Renaissance studies to contributions on the **role of Renaissance libraries in the organisation of information**, not only as regards the information contained in the volumes but also as regards

information about the library as an institution projected by the books and the library setting. At least one, preferably several, of the following aspects should be considered.

1) Library premises: organisation of space serving organisation of information; contribution of the architecture to the prestige of the owner

2) Cataloguing systems

3) Material books: in manuscripts, strategies serving the organisation of information, such as indices; in printed books, in addition to printed indices and lists of contents, hand-written annotations serving the organisation of information; material characteristics of books, such as binding and decoration, contributing to the prestige of the owner

In addition to sessions on this general theme, a few specific sessions with **papers on other aspects of the organisation of information** in the Renaissance are welcome. Furthermore, young Renaissance scholars are invited to present their research on Renaissance subjects in a poster session.

The three keynote speakers of the conference are Kristian **Jensen** (British Library), Angela **Quatrocchi** (University of Reggio Calabria) and Bernd **Roling** (Free University Berlin).

Please send in **your proposal of max 350 words in a separate Word file** (NO pdf), containing your name and affiliation, **by 31 October 2017, to Outi Merisalo (omerisalo@gmail.com)**.

Further details, including instructions for registration and a provisional programme, will be posted on the NNRS conference website in September 2017:

http://nnrs.renaessancestudier.org/admidio/adm_program/modules/dates/dates.php

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More information:

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