“Mediating the Sacred and Secular in the Medieval and Early Modern Period”

Graduate conference hosted by the University of Michigan Early Modern Colloquium (EMC)
February 20-21, 2015

The Early Modern Colloquium, a graduate interdisciplinary group at the University of Michigan, is seeking submissions for its conference on the conceptualizations of the sacred and secular during the Medieval and Early Modern periods. This conference will engage with issues of periodicity through questions of secular versus sacred authority both during and between these eras. More specifically, it will investigate particular literary and visual representations that negotiate and mediate the divide of the sacred and the secular in Medieval and Early Modern Europe. Keynote speakers will be Nancy Warren, Professor of English (Texas A&M) and Sara Poor, Associate Professor of German (Princeton).

- How is the sacred or the secular defined?
- How does premodern culture define the status and authority of religion and state?
- Do changes in geographical borders or ideologies produce new discourses of sacred or secular?
- How might we consequently think about or challenge periodicity?
- What are the meeting places or shared spaces of sacred and secular? How do these terms come together to confront rival forms or terms?

Conference participants are invited to examine how Medieval and/or early modern writers, collectives, and cultures grappled with these questions within a series of interrelated realms—e.g., academic, artistic, economic, geographical, legal, medical, philosophical, private, public, religious, and scientific.

The Early Modern Colloquium will give priority to abstracts submitted by graduate students. Please send 250-300 word proposals to Maia Farrar at mfarrarw@umich.edu. The deadline is December 5th.