



Fashioned from
**HOLY
MATTER**

A Cross-Cultural Workshop on
the Semantics of Image-Making

Florence, 6 – 7 July 2017

THURSDAY, 6 JULY

9:00 Welcome
Gerhard Wolf

9:10 **Introduction**
When Sacred Substances Matter:
Preliminary Remarks
Annette Hoffmann and Jessica N. Richardson
(Florence)

Chair: Felix Jäger

9:30 Ornament and Amulet:
Pre-Roman Figured Amber Pendants
Faya Causey (Washington)

10:15 Ancient Cameo as Passion Relic:
The Reception of the Gemma Augustea at
Saint-Sernin of Toulouse
Catherine Fernandez (Princeton)

11:00 *Coffee Break*

Chair: Mabi Angar

11:30 The Materiality of Classic Maya Artifacts
Sanja Savkic (Berlin)

12:15 Icons Made of Relics:
Creating Holy Matter in Byzantium
Alexei Lidov (Moscow)

13:00 *Lunch Break*

15:00 Visit to view the *Paliotto di San Zenobi*,
Museo dell'Opera dell Duomo (speakers only)
Jessica N. Richardson (Florence)

18:30 **Evening Lecture**
Liquid Holy Sites
Michele Bacci (Fribourg)

FRIDAY, 7 JULY

Chair: Marco Musillo

9:30 Eating the Image:
Customs, Rites and Legends Concerning
'Iconophagia' in Europe, East Asia and Melanesia
Hans Wernher von Kittlitz (Frankfurt)

10:15 Ink and Buddhist Texts in Middle Period China
and East Asia
Kaiqi Hua (Vancouver)

11:00 *Coffee Break*

Chair: Sinem Casale

11:30 Written on a Bodhi Tree Leaf
Michele Matteini (New York)

12:15 From Embodied to Mediated Experiences:
Reuses of Sacred Wood in Ottoman Artifacts
Gül Kale (Montreal)

13:00 *Lunch Break*

Chair: Corinna Gallori

14:30 The Semantics of Transcendence in Havana:
The Making of Relic-Images in Cuban Santería
and in Everyday Revolutionary Life
Elena Zapponi (Rome)

15:15 Flesh and Stone: Interpreting the Sacred in
Dakota and Euro-American Art
Annika Kelsey Johnson (Pittsburgh / Washington)

16:00 *Coffee Break*

Chair: Peyvand Firouzeh

16:30 The Power of Architectural Images in Medieval
Deccan India and Beyond
Subhashini Kaligotla (Berlin)

17:15 Image and Matter: Conclusions
Gerhard Wolf

17:30 **Final Discussion**

This workshop draws attention to a particular type of image, which has not been studied yet as a group: images that were made of or shaped from holy matter, such as earth, stone, blood, sweat or wood. These materials might have been used as a support for painting, colour itself, as a modelling substance or as building material. The image-relic relationship – in particular, the insertion of relics into images/icons or reliquaries – and the miraculous properties of images in general have been the subject of sustained scholarly interest. In addition, the material properties of images and materiality, more broadly, are now major areas of study in both art history and a number of related disciplines. Yet little work has been devoted to the creative use of matter already perceived as holy or, vice versa, the later attribution of holiness to the substance of images.

The workshop seeks to explore from a cross-cultural and interreligious perspective how holy material becomes semantically charged and/or redefined through the process of artistic creation. How is meaning attained through the interaction between holy substance and image and how is the value of the holy matter communicated to various audiences (through inscriptions or legends for instance)? Does the image authenticate its holiness and, if so, what visual strategies were used? How might written descriptions or representations of images also make this holy presence known? A related objective of the workshop will be to analyse the implications of meaning: how does it contribute to the function, use and activation of such images – in both sanctioned and unofficial devotional and ritual practices –, which might be informed by possible transcultural and transhistorical dynamics. Further, how might the meanings ascribed to fashioned matter express apotropaic, pharmacological or other concerns?

Photo: The Archangel Michael, Monastery of the Taxiarchis, Mantamados, Island of Lesbos

Location

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz
Max-Planck-Institut
Palazzo Grifoni Budini Gattai
Via dei Servi 51
50122 Florence

Free admission until capacity is reached.

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