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## **IN HEAVEN AS IT IS ON EARTH: ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRACES OF MINORITIES AND RADICAL RELIGIOUS IDEAS WITHIN SOCIAL IDENTITIES IN THE MIDDLE AGES**

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Understood as a part of social identity of past societies, religion shall be contextualized in a historic and social frame that can explain this phenomenon in terms of complexity. Religion can be seen as part of macro-ideological discourses, such as the Crusades or Jihad, or as part of the relation between States and religious institutions, but also a form to shape social relationships within local communities and a form of political and ideological control among those who profess a different faith of the rulers.

The main aim will be to explore the possibilities and limits of archaeology to study religion as a social phenomenon in past societies and to shape its importance in different case studies within a long-term view. The session will discuss religion both in its importance as a state institution and as a social form of identification within local communities and minority religions, and also the conflicts derived from the contact of those spheres, as for example when internal transformations from radicalization of some groups within major religions are produced. The first groups were targeted by stigma and discrimination, especially when religious differences are correlated with other instances of social identity, such as ethnicity. The seconds have been agents of change at different times, causing not only cultural reforms, but above all economic, political and social transformation. Both are needed to understand the role of religion as a part of social identity, and serve to understand the cultural complexity of the Middle Ages and beyond.

Which kind of material record is available for the study of these groups? What are the main differences of minorities and radical versus majorities beyond the cults? How does religion reinforce their identities in relation to others? These are some of the questions we intend to address in this session.

Presentation Preference - Regular session (half day)