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Foreword

In July 2010, we had the pleasure of welcoming in north-east Germany 13 scholars from all over Europe and the United States for discussing the phenomenon of *Death at Court* in the Middle Ages from different cultural perspectives. It was a memorable event, warm in atmosphere and hot in temperature (for this part of the world), culminating in a daytrip to the burial site of Ulrich of Mecklenburg in Güstrow and of Margaret of Denmark, Albrecht II and Albrecht III of Mecklenburg (the latter also being king of Sweden for some time), and others in Bad Doberan. We would like to thank all participants, speakers and the audience alike, for having undertaken the trouble of the long and tiresome journey to Greifswald and for the fruitful and stimulating discussions inside and outside the conference room. Most of all, we would like to thank the speakers for having taken up the burden of preparing their talks for print; we believe that it was worth the while and that this volume will contribute greatly to the scholarly discourse of death and burial of the higher ranks of society in the middle ages. The preparation of the volume was overshadowed by the tragic death of Eugene Vance in a plane crash on 14 May 2011. At the conference, Gene presented an excellent paper on the depiction of St Lawrence in the so-called mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna. He was not given the chance to prepare it for print. His death marks the end of an outstanding academic career, and we will miss both his scholarship and his good-humored character. This volume is dedicated to his memory.

It remains to thank all those who made the publication of the present volume possible. In organizing the conference proper, Doreen Wollbrecht and the students of the *Lehrstuhl für Allgemeine Geschichte des Mittelalters und Historische Hilfswissenschaften* were extremely helpful. Financial support came from the *Alfried-Krupp-Kolleg*, the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, and the *University of Greifswald*. Daniel Frisch did a characteristically excellent job in preparing the layout and index of the volume. Barbara Krauß and Jens Fetkenheuer of Harrassowitz carefully saw the volume through the publication stages. Finally, we thank the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris/France), the Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon (France), the Bodleian Library (Oxford/UK), and the Koninklijke Bibliotheek (The Hague/Netherlands) for permission to reproduce images under their copyright.

Karl-Heinz Spieß and Immo Warntjes Greifswald, March 2012