

International Medieval Congress

JANUARY 2012 NEWSLETTER



ABOUT THE IMC

Entering its 19th year, the International Medieval Congress is firmly established as an unrivalled interdisciplinary forum for intellectual debate in all areas of medieval studies. The IMC is held in Leeds every July, and attracts more than 1600 medievalists from around the world every year, over 1350 of which are actively involved in the programme. The IMC is unique in that it welcomes papers in any major European language and the international nature of the Congress is central to its culture.

The IMC comprises a four-day programme of sessions, workshops, round tables, and special lectures and is complemented by an exciting range of excursions, workshops, concerts, and performances, receptions, bookfairs, craft and historical society fairs, and the annual Congress dance.

Papers and sessions for the IMC are selected by an international committee of 35 leading medievalists and proposals for papers in all major areas of medieval study are welcomed.

The IMC offers a great deal of opportunities to medievalists worldwide. Come and experience this for yourself at the IMC 2012!

Axel E. W. Müller
Director, International Medieval Congress

IMC 2012: 9-12 JULY ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

2012's Congress programme promises to be just as productive and exciting as in previous years. With some 450 sessions relating to many key areas of the study of the European Middle Ages, 19 round table sessions and a number of special lectures contribute to the core programme and special thematic strand, we are expecting more than 1800 medievalists to attend.

The IMC 2012 special thematic strand 'Rules to Follow (or Not)' is set to discuss the full range of rule making, stretching, bending, and breaking. Sessions will explore a range of topics including: When did rules transition from unwritten to written? Who were the rule breakers and why? In addition, there will be a number of special lectures at IMC 2012. The opening keynote lectures will be by Sverre Bagge (Centre for Medieval Studies, Universitetet i Bergen) on 'Changing the Rules of the Game: When Did Regicide Go out of Fashion and Why?' and Nicole Bériou, (Centre Interuniversitaire d'Histoire et d'Archéologie Médiévale, Université Lumière Lyon II / Institut Universitaire de France) on 'Just Follow Christ and the Gospels?: Debates and Confrontations about Rules in the 13th Century'.

'Rules to Follow (or Not)' is only one of the many focuses of the IMC, and discussion and events will be by no means limited to this special focus: over 200 sessions plus 19 round table discussions and workshops contribute to continuing debates in a variety of areas of medieval studies. We are, once again, pleased to welcome the Medieval Academy of America to IMC 2012. This year, Alan M. Stahl (Curator of Numismatics, Princeton University) will present the annual Medieval Academy Lecture, entitled 'The Mediterranean Melting Pot: Crosscurrents in Medieval Coinage'.

Due to an unprecedented number of deserving sessions, the Congress this year will include an extra time slot on Thursday afternoon. Activities will continue into Thursday evening to mark the move on campus in 2013 and the final year at Bodington. Please keep this in mind when considering your travel arrangements.

About the IMC

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The International Medieval Congress Online Registration is now available!

Congress delegates can now access the Online Registration option via the University of Leeds Online Store which provides a fast and secure method of payment. The Online Store registration is for payment by credit/debit card only. A Non-Online Registration option is available but will incur a non-online fee of £15 to cover the additional costs of processing the registration.

For more information go to www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/imc/IMC2012/registration.html

Events, Excursions, Exhibitions, and Fairs

EVENTS AND EXCURSIONS

This year's selection of events presents something for everyone to enjoy as an addition to the academic sessions. The events programme includes workshops and gatherings for musicians and singers, as well as musical and dramatic performances. There will also be the opportunity to participate in hands-on workshops on calligraphy and games as well as the chance to learn medieval harp. In addition there will be the opportunity to experience medieval food and table manners in a medieval feast.

Excursions are led by experts in their field and often give privileged access to areas not usually open to the public. This year's excursions include visits to the historical sites of Pickering, Rievaulx, Ripon, and Southwell. There are also excursions to the guildhalls of York and behind the scenes of the Royal Armouries and Leeds City Museum. Full details of all events and excursions are available in the programme and through our website. Although Congress participants will be given precedence, all events and excursions are open to the public, and early booking is essential.

POST CONGRESS TOUR: THE WELSH CASTLES OF EDWARD I

Due to popular demand the Post Congress Tour returns to North Wales, focussing on the castles of Edward I.

The wars between England and Wales during the reign of Edward I (r. 1272–1307) resulted in a programme of castle-building and strengthening that cost approximately £100 000 (more than £30 000 000 at modern prices). Begun between 1277 and 1295, the castles remain, due to their comparative completeness, some of the most potent and impressive symbols of power and conquest constructed in the Middle Ages.

Led by Kelly DeVries (Loyola University, Maryland) and Robert C Woosnam-Savage (Royal Armouries, Leeds), this four-day tour will explore the turbulent history of the borders and the changing face of its defensive architecture. Sites visited will include the castles of Flint, Rhuddlan, Conwy, Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Criccieth, and Harlech.

EXHIBITIONS & BOOKFAIRS

Once again, the 2012 Congress will feature more than 70 stands showcasing the publications and other output from publishers, booksellers, and

academic departments from around the world in our popular annual four-day Main Bookfair. With a vast range of publications we are confident that there will be something for all tastes. If previous years are anything to go by then there should be plenty of bargains to be found. The ever successful Antiquarian and Second-Hand Bookfair, also returns for another year. Delegates will have the opportunity to browse the stalls on Sunday 8 and Monday 9 July.

The Congress will also again host an exciting one-day Craft Fair on Tuesday, 10 July. Come and browse the unique selection of hand-made items on offer! Items range from lampwork glass beads to wax candles, naturally dyed wool, silks and linens, leatherwork, and jewellery, all made by artisans with training in historical crafts or inspired by a medieval theme. Also returning for another year, there will be an opportunity to meet some of the many groups that work within the UK to preserve and promote local and national history and archaeology. Representatives will be on hand to discuss their work on Wednesday 11 July.



YORK MYSTERY PLAYS: 2-27 AUGUST 2012

The medieval cycle of York Mystery Plays has been performed by the people of York across the centuries and is a world-famous part of the city's cultural heritage. From Creation to the Last Judgement, these plays form one of the greatest stories ever told. This summer, the story of God, of man and woman, and of the cosmic struggle between good and evil will be presented on an epic scale against the magnificent backdrop of St Mary's Abbey in York Museum Gardens. For more information visit

www.yorkmysteryplays-2012.com

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CONTACT DETAILS

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PRINTED PROGRAMME

The printed programme will be ready in February and a copy will be sent to everybody actively involved in the IMC 2012. A publicly-available and fully-searchable online programme is accessible at

www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/imc/IMC2012.html

The online programme includes abstracts of all sessions.

LOOKING AHEAD

IMC 2013: 1-4 JULY 2013

Pleasure is a universal human experience, but its components, evaluation, and meaning, and the contexts in which it is, or is not, a legitimate feeling and form of behaviour vary according to cultures and among individuals. Pleasure can be brought on by sensory stimulation, by aesthetic appreciation, by practising an activity, by sharing a common experience with others – or even all of these together (as in the case of the experience of sexual love). The crucial importance of pleasure in medieval living, as well as its multiple facets, constitute the reasons why the IMC has chosen as its special thematic focus for 2013:

Pleasure

Medieval Christianity had a specific cultural attitude towards pleasure, with a strong focus on the division of this world and the afterlife. Pleasure was often either spiritual or corporeal, although sometimes seen as both (as in the mystical/ecstatic experience). Earthly pleasures were first and foremost associated with sin and damnation, and even posed a threat to health, while spiritual pleasures contributed towards salvation and a more harmonious life. The attitude towards pleasure was ambiguous: with the threat of the devil on one side, and the enticement of heaven on the other, pleasure was linked to both joy and pain. Questions around pleasure were posed in philosophical and theological debates throughout the Middle Ages. Pleasure was nonetheless an experience commonly and eagerly sought for – in all its forms and by all social groups, in and outside Christendom. Aristocratic life is particularly represented as a culture of pleasure in both iconography and literature. The balance between celestial and terrestrial values was renegotiated in the late medieval period, so that pleasure became an aspiration for all.

Areas of discussion could include:

- Diverging cultural attitudes toward pleasure
- Pleasure in non-Christian contexts
- Earthly pleasure versus spiritual pleasure
- Visual and narrative representations of pleasure
- Social and corporeal manifestations of pleasure
- Pleasurable activities
- Individual and collective experiences of pleasure
- Prohibition and condemnation of pleasure
- Chastity, celibacy, fasting, and abstinence
- Love / sexuality / pleasures of the flesh – and their specific cultural expressions
- Medical theories and approaches to pleasure
- Mysticism, spirituality, and pleasure
- Creating and/or experiencing pleasure
- Entertainment and leisure
- Humour and fun
- Material culture and evidence of pleasure
- Pleasure and luxury / cultural goods / worldliness

IMC 2013: On Campus

We are delighted to announce that from July 2013, the International Medieval Congress will be centred on the main campus of the University of Leeds, close to the city centre. This location offers purpose-built, well-equipped, and more accessible lecture theatres, a larger variety of accommodation, and award-winning catering, together with the ambience of a major world-class University. This will allow us to continue the Congress's work of bringing together medievalists from all over the world to network, share knowledge, and discover the latest academic developments with greater scope to develop and improve the Congress in future years.

For further details, visit www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/imc/imc2013_move.html



IMC DIARY DATES

- IMC 2012 Registration Deadline: 14 May 2012
- IMC 2012: Special Thematic Strand, 'Rules to Follow (or not): 9-12 July 2012
 - IMC 2013: Paper Proposals Deadline: 31 August 2012
- IMC 2013: Session Proposals Deadline: 30 September 2012
- IMC 2013: Special Thematic Strand, 'Pleasure': 1-4 July 2013
 - IMC 2014: 7-10 July 2014
 - IMC 2015: 6-9 July 2015

We prefer proposals to be completed online – a quick, easy, and secure method. Paper proposals must be submitted by 31 August 2012; Session proposals must be submitted by 30 September 2012. The IMC welcomes session and paper proposals submitted in all major European languages.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR MEDIEVAL STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

LATEST NEWS: NEW CHAIR IN MEDIEVAL STUDIES

An exciting new post of Chair in Medieval Studies has been advertised in the Institute for Medieval Studies at the University of Leeds. More details, including how to apply, can be found at www.universityofleedschairs.co.uk or by emailing IMS-Leeds@perrettlaver.com. The deadline for application is 23 March 2012.

TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Formed in 1967, the IMS continues to go from strength to strength. IMS research spans all across Europe, from Late Antiquity to the end of the Middle Ages, from Iceland to Africa and the Middle East. Areas of specialisation include liturgy and music; the Mediterranean (Islam, the Crusades); cultural history of the post-Roman period; mission, monasticism, ecclesiastical history, and archaeology; historical topography; art history, and critical theory. Leeds is noted for medieval languages and their associated literatures: in addition to Latin and Old English, Leeds caters for Old Norse, Arabic, Hebrew, Old High German, Italian, French, and Spanish www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/study/index.html. The Institute's links with the Royal Armouries provide a rich environment for teaching and research on chivalry, arms, armour, tournaments, medieval warfare, and the archaeology of battle.

The Institute's community includes some forty scholars from constituent Schools and partner institutions, together with a nucleus of medievalists within the Institute who work alongside the interdisciplinary teams that produce the Bibliography and organise the Congress. The Bibliography and Congress attract international visitors and lecturers, who contribute to the Institute's lively programme of seminars, lectures, and a year long programme of excursions and events www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/about/events.html. The co-location of postgraduate teaching and research with the International Medieval Bibliography and Congress provides a milieu wherein students have the opportunity to gain practical as well as academic experience. Links with heritage bodies and museums enable internships.

The University's world-class library has the best medieval resources in the north of England, and, with

the adjacent archive of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, houses important collections of medieval manuscripts and rare books. Many of the medieval manuscripts of the Library can now be viewed online www.leeds.ac.uk/library/spcoll/.

The libraries of the Royal Armouries (Britain's national collection of arms and armour) and the British Library Lending Division are near to hand. Cooperation with the Royal Armouries and Leeds City Museum enriches teaching, research, and career development opportunities.



INTERNATIONAL MEDIEVAL BIBLIOGRAPHY: CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The editorial team is looking for individuals or organisations to become contributors to join its existing range of partners throughout the world. Contributors take responsibility for identifying and cataloguing publications relating to specific subjects or geographical areas, and are rewarded with free subscriptions to IMB (online or print), other free publications and additional benefits. Contributors are sought for national, regional, and local history in France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Portugal, Serbia, Israel, Lithuania, Greece, Cyprus, Latvia, Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Korea, and the Arab world. Thematic contributors (who may be based anywhere) are particularly sought for art history, humanism, Italian literature, French literature, German literature, Jewish Studies, linguistics, numismatics, and music.

IMC 2012 Reception and Meeting

If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a contributor to IMB, there will be a reception and information session at 19.00-20.00 on Monday 9 July in the Senior Common Room at Bodington Hall. Alternatively, contact the Editorial Director, Alan V. Murray, at a.v.murray@leeds.ac.uk.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE INSTITUTE

Membership of the IMS offers medievalists priority access to IMC information and bookings and discounts on IMC registration and titles produced by Brepols academic publishers. Members also receive one free book per year from the Brepols back catalogue. There are two levels of membership: Affiliate and Associate. Associate members will gain access to the IMBOnline. For full details and how to join, visit www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/about/join.html