
EDITORIAL

We are very pleased to present the new, second volume of the annual journal of our Centre for Medieval Studies. This journal in line with our plans will present the latest research and foster scholarly discussion on the history of medieval Central and Eastern Europe. The present volume focuses in particular, but not exclusively on the transfer of people, skills and ideas and the perception of others. The topography of Central and Eastern Europe facilitated the flow of people, goods, and ideas along east-west and south-north axes. In Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, the region witnessed the great migrations of nomadic peoples from the east, from the vast Black Sea steppes, who moved across the plains of Central and Eastern Europe, breaking through the Roman Empire's *limes* on the Danube and Rhine, creating their own political systems and transforming social and economic structures. Exchanges of people and goods, ideas and skills across central Europe continued throughout the Middle Ages.

The texts collected in this volume explore some of the issues raised above in the context of Central Europe and the continent as a whole. Among the seven texts comprising the first section is an article by Tomasz Pełech, devoted to perceptions of the 'Other'. He analyses chronicles describing the First Crusade to the Holy Land, focusing on the rhetorical devices used to present Muslim armies. Karolina Wyszynska examines the physical translation of relics in the early Piast monarchy, drawing attention to the importance of the cult of saints in shaping the religious attitudes of the Polish political and social elite. Leslie Carr-Riegel's article addresses the interesting issue of trade between Poland and Pera in the waning years of the Byzantine Empire and how migrant merchants

identified themselves and were categorized by others. In his paper David Bourgeois also touches on economic history and examines the importance of migrants in the development of the mining industry in the Vosges region, which bears comparison with German migration in the kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary. In turn, László Szokola meticulously collected materials showing the recruitment of mercenary infantry from Hungarian cities who served abroad, in order to indicate the military strength of Hungary in the late fifteenth century and the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

This section also includes two articles dedicated to the memory of Professor František Šmahel, a doyen of Czech medievalists and an exceptionally diligent researcher, who passed away in January. They were prepared by his longtime friends, Jean-Claude Schmitt and Rainer Christoph Schwinges. The former devotes his article to the participation of lay people in the liturgy, especially their devotion to the Holy Blood in the period before the Hussite Revolution, analyzing the iconographic representations related to this issue. Rainer Christoph Schwinges, in turn, studies the career of Winand Ort von Steeg (1371–1453), a lawyer, theologian, and Hebraist who was a professor in Würzburg and also served as secretary at the court of the Holy Roman emperor, Sigismund of Luxembourg.

We are pleased to announce the launch of the section entitled ‘Materials’, where we publish short source editions and source studies. In the present volume this section includes three articles addressing various topics. Andrea Pambuku and Arjan Prifiti analyse a rich collection of graffiti inscriptions in the late medieval Holy Trinity Church in Berat, Albania, which suggest connections with traditions from Armenia, Serbia and Cyprus; Wojciech Świeboda proposes a new dating for two trials *in causa fidei* of the Czech astrologer Henry of Prague, which took place in Cracow in the 1420s; and Adam Poznański and Reima Välimäki publish a critical edition of the fifteenth-century treatise *De inquisitione hereticorum*, directed against the Waldensians, the only copy of which survives in the University Library in Wrocław.

This volume also includes six reviews of publications by authors from Germany (Carolin Gluchowski), Poland (Adam Kozak, Adam Krawiec, Marcin Starzyński, Jakub Turek), and Hungary (Gábor Klaniczay). We also introduce for the first time a section with texts *in memoriam*,

which we hope will become a permanent feature in subsequent volumes. In the second volume, Joanna Nastalska-Wiśnicka presents an academic biography of Sr Aleksandra Witkowska OSU, who died in 2024, while Sobiesław Szybkowski and Paweł Kras, respectively, commemorate the lives and achievements of Janusz Bieniak and František Šmahel, who died in 2025.

We would like to thank all the reviewers and collaborators from our International Editorial Board from so many distinguished academic centres across Europe.

We wish you fruitful reading and invite you to collaborate!

Paweł Kras
Stephen C. Rowell