

1. General

The Center for Medieval Studies Amsterdam (CMSA) was founded in September 2011 by a group of scholars at the University of Amsterdam (UvA), seeking regular interdisciplinary cooperation and greater visibility for medieval studies in and beyond Amsterdam. In its second full year of activity CMSA has continued to offer a combination of formal and informal activities at the BA, MA, PhD and faculty level (often combined) and opened its doors to the wider academic and non-academic public. It continues to host the only ongoing lecture series in medieval studies in the country, featuring speakers from the UvA, the region, and abroad. At the same time, it has begun, as anticipated, a transition into a full-fledged research institute, and to develop formal relations with a growing number of similar centers and institutes beyond the Netherlands.

2. Personnel and Registered Participants

CMSA's board has remained structurally and personally unchanged. The current board consists of Guy Geltner (History); Yvonne Vermijn (French); Anne van Egmond (Art History); Jelle Koopmans (French); Maaïke van Berkel (History); Lex Bosman (History of Architecture); Claudine Mazel -Chavannes (Art History); Jacqueline Borsje (Religion); Marjolein Hogenbirk (Dutch); Arno Verhoeven (Archaeology); and Jos Biemans (UB Special Collections). We expect only slight changes in the coming year, with Claudine's retirement.

Our distinguished international advisory board has been appointed for an initial period of three years (2011-14) and consists of the following scholars: Rosamond McKitterick (Early Medieval History; Cambridge); Claudia Rapp (Byzantium; Vienna); Marc Boone (Lowlands Urban History; Gent); Mary Carruthers (English; NYU); Dagfinn Skre (Archaeology; Oslo); Hugo van der Velde (Art History; Harvard); Hugh Kennedy (Islam; SOAS); Gerd Althoff (History; Münster); Colum Hourihane (Art History; Princeton); Dominique Iogna-Prat (CNRS, LAMOP-PARIS, EHESS; Paris). We thank them for their continued support and extend once again our invitation to share their thoughts on the future of CMSA. As the current members' appointment will come to an end, we will begin to inquire about their desire to remain on board and will perhaps look for replacement in some cases.

Secretarial support for CMSA is kindly provided by the History Department's Wilma Schieving, Gaby Zijlstra, and Hilda Nobach. As the Center reorients itself as a research institute as well, it is likely to develop further administrative support for monitoring, evaluation and dissemination of scholarship.

At the end of its second formal year of activity CMSA's mailing list comprises 252 names, including 70 academic staff, 13 PhD candidates, 115 BA and MA students, and 57 community members.

3. Budget

CMSA's annual income amounts to Euro 6.500. It consists of generous contributions from the Institute of Culture and History (2.500), Archaeology (1.000) Medieval History (1.000), Art and Architecture (750); French (500); Religion (500); and Language and Literature (250). It should be noted that in some cases contributions stem from joint initiatives of CMSA members, such as workshops for teachers. On the other hand, funds have yet to be earmarked by departments in any long-term manner except for IC&G's contribution, originally secured for five years, but since it will soon be abolished, it is crucial to ensure that the same level of financial support arrives from what is its ostensible replacement, the History and Culture Cluster. We hope, in any case, that the commitment remains steady, and will strive to rely on a small number of public events (classes, tours, etc.) as well.

As anticipated, our expenses over the last academic year grew slightly, reaching 5.753,05 (slightly up from last year's 5.509.58), and can be attributed to slight inflation on the one hand and a greater expenditure on thesis prizes on the other. In terms of our running activities we anticipate no dramatic changes one way or the other next year, and are therefore looking for a similar level of commitment from our existing supporters and the same budget turnover. However, since CMSA will be overseeing ever more research activities, its budget in that region, which currently does not exist, might well change.

4. Activities

Lecture Series: At present, the central activity of the CMSA is its high-profile lecture series (see appendix A), which normally takes place once a month during term. It aspires to (and has so far succeeded in) bringing outstanding researchers from within and outside of UvA to deliver lectures appealing to a broad interdisciplinary audience of specialists and members of the community at large. Attendance this year has improved but still fails to reach the consistently high level of participation we believe is possible. It is the director's personal conviction that leading by example is the best possible way to get students and staff regularly involved in such activities.

Workshops: At least once a year we try to have one workshop, aimed also at graduate students. This year we hosted two, one by Alicia Montoya (Radboud Universiteit) on the Challenges of Medievalism and another with Daniel Lord Smail (Harvard), who held a Master Class in which he listened to and responded to four papers by young medieval historians from UvA and Leiden. The latter was very well attended, the former less so.

Teaching: Once again we have offered a *capita selecta* MA course entitled Originality and imitation, in which most of the Center's disciplines were represented. While students once again evaluated the course positively, it was less well attended than last year (8 students instead of 18), and it was felt among some that the structure of the course doesn't allow a sharp enough focus. We have decided to respond to this by experimenting with a narrower selection of topic and faculty, also with an eye towards attracting non-specialists from other historical disciplines. At the BA level we have offered a very successful course entitled Medieval Amsterdam in Context, developed in close contact with Amsterdam institutions such as the Amsterdam and Biblical Museums. It was well attended and hugely successful, becoming runner-up to the faculty's prestigious top teaching award.

Book launches: We have begun to celebrate the publication of members' books publicly, and with the success of Jacqueline Borsje's event we would like to continue doing so.

Cooperation with other institutions and centers: Our ties are developing. Alongside The Centre for Medieval Studies at York, the Pirenne Institute in Gent, The Centro “Gina Fasoli” per la storia della città (Bologna), and the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at Monash University (Melbourne, Australia), we are now part of the Prato Consortium (led by Monash), which brings together a group of researchers and medieval studies programs from the UK and Canada. We are likewise in touch with the parallel center at the University of Canterbury at Kent, though no formal plans for cooperation have been developed yet, and the same status holds for the University of Southampton’s Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Culture. As our research profile is likely to become somewhat sharper soon, it will probably be a good opportunity to begin developing exchange programs and more substantial collaborations.

Prizes: This year we awarded a first BA and MA thesis prize to two students, a lovely tradition which we plan to continue. The recipients are: Josephine van den Bent (BA), *Gewelddadige ongelovigen? Ibn Khaldûns beeldvorming over de Mongolen*; and Anna Duijsings (MA), *Donec optata veniat. The production and context of two early sixteenth-century illuminated manuscripts with French translations of (Pseudo-)Plutarch Lives*.

Website: The CMSA Website has been completely renewed as part of the UvA’s overhauling of its own system. It is an attractive and informative portal for our activities and is routinely updated.

5. Research

CMSA has been well prepared for the faculty’s research reorganization, a process which began this year. After surveying and discussing members’ interests, we have joined forces with a number of scholars whose expertise straddles the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, and inaugurated a program entitled Boundaries and identity Formation in the Premodern World. The program is coordinated by Arno Witte and Guy Geltner, and is, at least theoretically, among the largest such programs in the faculty. As the form and content of such programs becomes clearer, we will update its structure as well, but in the meantime it is important to begin a careful inventorying of persona and group projects under this program, and stimulating proposals for internal and external funding. CMSA or rather the research program it oversees will most likely form part of the new cluster History and Culture (tentative title), which will come to replace some of the main constituents of the current Institute for Culture and History, which is likely to be abolished 1 January 2014.

CMSA members’ publications can be viewed via personal homepages on the UvA’s Website. With the new research structure, it will be easier as of next year to cluster these in an appendix to this report.

6. Future Plans

CMSA will continue to improve the range of activities already mentioned and develop new activities, especially on the (cooperative) research front. We are also setting up a dissertation writers’ workshop, in which PhD students can exchange and discuss thesis chapters and sources, as a way to hone their writing skills and ability to address an interdisciplinary audience at least within medieval studies.

On behalf of the CMSA Steering Committee,

G. Geltner

Director

Appendix A: CMSA lecture series 2012-13

- 12/9 Guy Halsall (York): Relating Changes in Material Culture to Changes in Ideas around 600
- 3/10 Claudia Rapp (Vienna): Ritual Brotherhood in Byzantium
- 7/11 Jos Biemans (UvA): The Founding of Late-Medieval Urban Libraries
- 12/12 Sylvia Huot (Cambridge): The Giantess in Medieval Tales of Giants
- 6/2 Bram Kempers (UvA): Piero della Francesca's The Flagellation (1483): An Enigma?
- 6/3 Jelle Haemers (Leuven): The Identity of the 'Commoners' in Thirteenth-Century Flanders
- 3/4 Koen Goudriaan (VU): Willem van Hildegarsberch and the Devout Revolution of his Time
- 8/5 Daniel Lord Smail (Harvard):¹ The Medieval World of Goods: Marseille and Lucca, 1330-1450

Appendix B: CMSA lecture series 2013-14

- 11/09 Naomi Standen, History (Birmingham), *Borderlands : shared practices in pre-modern eastern Eurasia*
- 2/10 Arno Verhoeven, Archaeology (UvA), *New insights into the early development of Tiel.*
- 21/10 Judson Emerick, Art History (Pomona College), *Charlemagne and the first Christian emperor.*
- 6/11 Catrine Santing, History (Groningen), Representations and embodiments of Humanness.
- 4/12 Peter Howard, History (Monash), Heresy and sorcery in Renaissance Florence.
- 5/2 Philip Buc, History (Vienna), Religious violence in the West.
- 5/3 Claudine Chavannes-Mazel, Art History (UvA), *Representations of Jews in the Low Countries.*
- 2/4 Alice Hunt, History (Southampton), Ceremonies in 16th-century England.
- 7/5 Kathryn Rudy, Art History (St. Andrews), How medieval users touched their manuscripts.

¹ In cooperation with the History Research Seminar.