

Charlemagne A European Icon

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A newsletter of the International Charlemagne Project

Project leaders: Dr Marianne Ailes (University of Bristol);
Prof. Philip Bennett (University of Edinburgh)

October Workshop

On 14 October, the network met at the University of Bristol for what proved to be a day of excellent papers and productive meetings. The workshop was well attended by leading scholars from across Europe and the USA, and it provided us with an ideal environment in which to build momentum on this exciting project.

Catherine Leglu (University of Reading) and Sif Rickhardsdottir (University of Iceland) provided a stimulating start to the day with papers on Charlemagne in Occitan and Norse literature. After a discussion and short break, the afternoon progressed with Annalisa Perotta (University of Rome) and Franca Strologo (University of Zurich) speaking about Charlemagne in Italian literature. Dr Perotta's paper explored the memory of Rencesvals in fifteenth-century chivalric literature while Dr Strologo presented on the dating of the Italian cantari of Charlemagne.



Phillipa Hardman (University of Reading), William Purkis (University of Birmingham) and Albrecht Classen (University of Arizona) then took part in a roundtable panel. This group was tasked with leading a discussion on the extent to which Charlemagne can be considered a European icon. All three offered their own thoughts on this matter before leading into a vibrant dialogue.

We were fortunate enough to end the workshop with a lecture from Professor Albrecht Classen (University of Arizona) on the topic of Charlemagne in medieval German literature. This event drew a significant audience, and was followed by a wine reception, where the day's discussions continued into the evening. Professor Classen was able to be in Bristol for three weeks on a Bristol Institute of Advanced Studies, Benjamin Meaker Visiting Fellowship.



The meeting also proved remarkably productive. It was an opportunity for those involved in editing our seven volumes to offer briefings on progress and feedback on the challenges encountered over the past few months. The intellectual advantages of being a network, and thus able to meet and exchange ideas, rather than existing as separate research groups, were evident. It was especially useful for everyone to be able to meet with William Purkis as the Latin group were one of the first to get going and all literary cultures of the Middle Ages are affected by the material on which they are working. In sharing our experiences, we were able to produce an agenda for the year ahead and develop strategies to overcome the challenges encountered. We were also able to begin planning for next year's workshop, which will take place in Edinburgh during October 2016.

Representatives of all the research groups apart from the Hispanic team were able to attend. Albrecht Classen and Marianne Ailes later also met in Reading with Françoise Le Saux, our representative from British Branch of the Société Rencesvals.

This was an excellent start for our new network. Thanks to funding from the Leverhulme Trust, we will be able to continue to build on the team spirit, which was so clearly evident at our Bristol workshop. We have a strong set of goals and a real sense of purpose, so the future is looking tremendously promising for Charlemagne: A European Icon.

Social Media Presence

Our network's Twitter account has grown quickly over its first month, but it always helps to have people using our hashtag (#CharlemagneIcon) or including us in their own tweets (@CharlemagneIcon). As well as promoting the activities of the project, it is also a forum for advertising related activities, so please feel free to send us information about related stories or projects that you believe will be of interest, and, of course, your own work.

<https://twitter.com/CharlemagneIcon>

Alongside Twitter, we also now have a Facebook page. As I am sure you will all be aware, Facebook is a powerful tool for disseminating information and garnering support for a project. If you are a Facebook user, please do 'like' our page, and follow us to keep up to date on other Charlemagne Icon news,

<https://www.facebook.com/charlemagneicon800/?ref=hl>

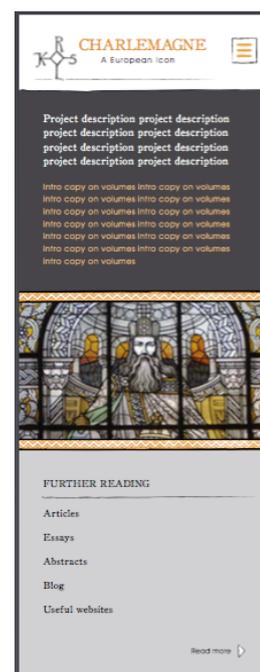
Website



Our design team has produced outstanding results for our website, and we are extremely excited about the imminent launch. The content and appearance of the page was an issue discussed at our October meeting, and the feedback from that occasion has led directly into the developing product.

A range of information, articles and posts will be appearing on the project website. Of particular note, there will be a series of short (1000–5000 word) peer-reviewed papers on topics related to literature about and involving Charlemagne. Philip Bennett will be providing us with our first: ‘Translating Charlemagne: the insular experience’, and Adrian Ailes is offering a version of the paper he gave in Leeds on ‘The Attributed Arms of Charlemagne’. We are eager to receive further submissions. We are currently gathering material so that we have some content to put on the website as soon as it is available. For instance, there will also be a section of the website listing details of PhD theses, both recently completed and in progress, on Charlemagne topics. If you are supervising any research students working on such a topic, or are aware of any, then please do get in touch so that their details can be added.

Right: the website as it will appear on mobile phones



Progress of Volumes

It became clear at our October meeting that our teams of editors have already made significant progress in bringing all seven volumes to fruition. Below is an update by volume:

Charlemagne in England (eds. Marianne Ailes, Phillipa Hardman): This volume predates the network project and was well into development before the research groups were brought together. Feedback from the two chapters first sent to the publisher was very positive; the complete volume is with publisher's readers.

Medieval Francophonia and Occitan (eds. Marianne Ailes, Philip Bennett): four contributors have been recruited. The articles are at various stages of development. The whole team were able to meet on 14 October before the network workshop.

The **Hispanic World/Iberia** (eds. Matthew Bailey, Ryan Giles): volume is complete and should be published prior to Kalamazoo 2016, where the team is presenting. The jacket cover design was shown to colleagues when we met at the workshop.

Italian (eds. Jane Everson, Claudia Boscolo): 8 chapters have been assigned, and the first full draft will be complete by September 2016.

The **Celtic and Scandinavian Worlds** (eds. Helen Fulton, Sif Rikhardsdottir): all contributors have been signed up, and two chapters have been submitted. The first full draft will be complete by October 2016. It was also noted that there will be a joint bibliography, rather than separating works by the Scandinavian and Celtic regions.

Latin (eds. William Purkis, Matthew Gabriele): editors have received readers' report, which is very positive. Some editing is still required but nothing substantial.

Medieval and Early Modern **German and Dutch** (Albrecht Classen): this volume is a monograph rather than the result of a team of researchers. 8 chapters are close to completion and further work has been carried out on this during Albrecht's stay in Bristol as a Benjamin Meaker Visiting Speaker (11 October–1 November). It was particularly helpful that he was able to meet with others in October.

Upcoming and Recent Activities

Network Activities

Kalamazoo 2016: panels have been organised by the Hispanic team. Marianne Ailes will also participate.

British Branch Société Rencesvals: The British Branch of the Société Rencesvals (one of our network partners) will be holding their annual conference in Perth, Scotland, 2-3 April 2016. The society's constitution requires anyone giving a paper to be a member. If you are interested please contact the current president, Professor Françoise le Saux (f.h.m.l.le-saux@reading.ac.uk) and she will put you in touch with the membership secretary.

Member Activities

On **13 October**, **Sif Rickhardsdottir** (University of Iceland) spoke about 'Medieval Emotionality: The Feeling Subject in Medieval Literature' at the University of Bristol. This lecture explored the interplay between the empathetic engagement of the modern reader and the emotive indicia embedded in medieval works, focusing in particular on *La Chanson de Roland*. In particular, there was a focus on the question of where we can locate this perceived emotionality and the role of the reader in construing an emotive interiority of the feeling subject in medieval literature.

Marianne Ailes (University of Bristol) will present a paper at The James Lydon Research Seminar in Medieval History, Trinity College, Dublin, on **10 December** this year. The title of her presentation is 'Reading Charlemagne in Medieval England'.

Catherine Leglu (University of Reading) will be giving a paper based on her ongoing work for the project on **17 February 2016**. Professor Leglu has been invited to do so by Jean-François Courouau, and it will be part of a year-long series of talks organised at the Université de Toulouse-Jean Jaurès (département de Lettres modernes, Cinéma et Occitan) with the support of the CELO (Centre d'Étude de la Littérature Occitane), and the CREO-MP (Centre Régional pour l'Enseignement de l'Occitan en Midi-Pyrénées) as well as the Région Midi-Pyrénées.

If you are giving any talks, publishing on related material, or have any other form of output related to Charlemagne, then please do get in touch at Charlemagne-icon@bristol.ac.uk. Awareness of our project within the scholarly community is growing quickly, and we can offer a platform on which to promote your work.



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