SOWING THE SEEDS

SOWING THE SEEDS x WORKING GROUP FOR LATE MEDIEVAL ECONOMIC HISTORY: A Conference for Medieval Economic Historians

LSE & King's College London

Thursday 5 November 2026, LSE and
Friday 6 November 2026, KCL

KING'S College LONDON

LSE Department of Economic History





We Acknowledge the generous support of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, King's College London, Department of Economic History, LSE, the Economic History Society and the British Agricultural History Society.

How did medieval societies organize production, distribution, and exchange? What were the relationships between economic systems and political power? How did institutional frameworks shape individual agency and collective outcomes?

This two-day conference offers an exceptional opportunity for researchers to present their work, develop new collaborations, and engage with leading scholars in medieval economic and social history. We invite papers that explore the intersection of economic structures and political organization in medieval societies, broadly construed. Contributions might address labour coercion, fiscal systems, commercial regulation, property rights, governance, or any aspect of the medieval economy viewed through the lens of power, institutions, and political relationships. We particularly encourage submissions from researchers at all stages of doctoral and early postdoctoral careers.

The conference brings together two vibrant research communities: the UK-based Sowing the Seeds network and the Continental European Research Group for Late Medieval Economic History, creating a unique space for dialogue concerning the range of sources and methodologies used in medieval economic history. As a conference shared between LSE and KCL, we also aim to bridge generalist history departments and specialized economic history programs.

This conference will provide a supportive environment for presenting work-in-progress and workshopping new methodologies, where participants can receive constructive feedback from scholars working across diverse theoretical and methodological approaches. The event is designed to foster lasting research networks between UK and Continental European scholars, facilitating the kind of focused, cross-regional and interdisciplinary discussions that deepen our understanding of medieval economies and societies and build opportunities for collaboration.

Programme

Thursday November 5th: LSE. Parish Hall (PAR 1.02)

Session 1: 10.00-11.30am - Conflict and Custom
Chair: Chris Briggs

Louis Henry (Stavanger): '*Don't Do the Crime If You Can't Pay the Fine': Amercements and Local Governance in Late Medieval English Leet Courts*

Aviya Doron (LMU Munich): *Private Affairs, Public Power: Economic Conflict and Urban Governance in Late Medieval German Towns*

Gillian Hollebone (LSE): '*And he shall clean the lord's private chamber for two works': Unfreedom and Obligation in English Custumals from 1155–1348*

11.30-11.45am: Coffee

Session 2: 11.45am-1.15pm - Merchants and Trade
Chair: Ulla Kypta

Hannah Cole (KCL): *'Thynges not endurynge that we bye': Luxury Non-Durable Goods and Anglo-Mediterranean Trading Networks*

Karol Banach (Warsaw): *Beyond Profit: Non-Commercial Factors in Merchant Careers and Decision-Making in Late Medieval Mazovia*

Robin Wheeler (Freie Universität Berlin): *Ports & Politics: Customs Duties as Tools of Governance in the Later Hundred Years' War*

1:15 – 2:15pm: Lunch

Session 3: 2.15-3.45pm - Money, Investment and Banking
Chair: Tanja Skambraks

Zoey Shen (LSE): *Currencies in Contest: Monetary Decentralization and Financial Innovation in Song China*

Bram Hilkens (Utrecht): *Urban Investment, Rural Development, and Inequality in Early Modern Holland*

Anna Molnar (Reading): *Private Banking, Institutional Power and Female Religious Communities in Late Medieval Central Europe*

3:45 – 4:00pm: Coffee

Keynote Lecture: 4.00-5.00pm
Chair: Spike Gibbs
Professor Oliver Volckart, LSE
Grand narratives of German history and the political economy of the Holy Roman Empire

5.00-7.00pm: Reception. Upstairs bar, George IV pub, LSE

Friday November 6th, KCL, Pyramid Room (KIN 450)

Session 4: 10.00-11.30am - Inclusion and Exclusion in Economic and Political Development
Chair: John Lee

Carissa Tudor (Amsterdam): *Monarchical Pragmatism: Women's Inclusion in Institutionally Fragmented States*

Andrea Aparicio Lozano (Basque Country University): *Open-Access Regimes vs Enclosures: Land Appropriation and Rent Formation in Early Medieval North-Western Iberia*

Leonardo Cherci (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore): *The Feudal Origins of Economic Development: Evidence from Medieval Sicily*

11:30 – 11:45am: Coffee

Session 5: 11.45am-1.15pm - Military Innovations and State Capacity
Chair: Jordan Claridge

Anders Wieland (Gothenburg): *The Medieval Military Revolution and State-Building in England, 1216–1399*

Yuankai Jin (LSE) & Ningzhu Wu (LSE): *From Military Innovation to Civilian Application: How Institutional Structures Shaped Gunpowder Technology Diffusion in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia*

Lienhard Thaler (Vienna): *Measly Manors or Capable Domains? Ground Rents and State Capacity of the 13th and 14th Century Counts of Tyrol*

1:15 – 2:15pm: Lunch

Session 6: 2.15-3.45pm - Environmental Management and Plague
Chair: Grace Owen

Arnoud Jensen (Antwerp): *The First Green Transition? Forest-Management, Energy and Sustainability in the Late Medieval Southern Low Countries, 1280–1500*

Antoni Ginot-Julià (KCL): *Defending the Reefs: Jurisdiction, Authority and Coral Fishing in North-Western Mediterranean (14th–16th Centuries)*

Maya Elmes Jenkinson (Stirling): *Gendered Plague: Sex Selectivity in Plague Mortality in Tudor and Stuart Wales*

KCL Campus map



LSE Campus map

