CARA-Europe Inaugural Meeting

13 July 2006: 14.00 to 16.30
Headingley Room, Weetwood Hall (University of Leeds)

Agenda and Draft Constitution

I. **Welcome and Introduction to the work of the Medieval Academy and the intended role of 'CARA-Europe' [Committee on Centres and Regional Associations] –** Simon Forde and Bob Bjork

II. **Approval of Elements for a Draft Constitution for 'CARA-Europe' – see Annex 1 below**

- Proposals 1-3 on Aims and Objectives
- Proposals 4-7 on Categories of Membership, Subscriptions and Benefits
- Proposal 8 on Working Languages
- Proposals 9-10 on a Balanced Regional Structure and Responsibilities
- Proposal 11 on a Steering Group.

III. **Institutions Present and Apologies for Absence:**

- Europe (north area – for definition of areas see proposal 9)
- Europe (south)
- Europe (east)
- Europe (west)
- CARA-North America
- Institutions from outside Europe and North America.

IV. **Nominations and Elections:**

The meeting shall break up into the above geographical regions in order to elect the following:

A. One person from a CARA member institution per European area to serve on the CARA-Europe Steering Group

B. Each European area to propose one member institution to serve as a host institution for ONE of the following tasks:

- co-ordinator for the annual meetings
- convenor of a research committee
- convenor of a panel for prizes and scholarships
- a secretariat (incl. the translation service)

V. Forthcoming Meetings – proposed locations and themes:

A. 2007 in Budapest (representing the eastern area), hosted by Central European University:

Provisional date: 9-11 March 2006, on the subject: 'Opportunities for Collaboration with Emergent Central and Eastern European Institutions for Medieval Studies'.

B. 2008 – to be proposed by the institution co-ordinating the annual meetings

VI. Exchanges of Staff and Students, and Information:

Proposal that this be co-ordinated by the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, since they currently do this for North America, but in conjunction with one or more European entities.

VII. Any Other Business

A. Follow-up with institutions not represented

B. European Science Foundation – identification of one or more projects that should be developed with the intention of attracting substantial funding from the ESF and/or other large funding agencies (see possible subjects in Annex 2 below).

Simon Forde and Bob Bjork, with the approval of the Medieval Academy

1 June 2006

Annex 1 – Draft Constitution:

1. The aim of CARA-Europe shall be to serve as a forum for European institutions in medieval studies, who are active in teaching and learning, and/or research, including the following:

   1.1. supporting the administration of bodies (institutes, centres, Fachbereiche, departments etc.) involved in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and training

   1.2. **working** as closely as possible with the physical and human resources of research libraries, art galleries or museums and suchlike, and that of private or commercial bodies involved in the academic enterprise; and

   1.3. involving national organisations or regional groups of medievalists (but not societies of individual scholars).

   Further, CARA aims to support the above bodies in their research activities.

2. The objectives of CARA-Europe include the following:

   2.1. holding an annual meeting, with a programme informed by that of CARA-North America, focusing on practical issues facing member institutions, such as:
   - recruitment and retention of students
   - publishing programmes
   - curriculum development
   - quality assurance and control
   - income generation
   - lobbying (within universities and with external public bodies)

   2.2. fostering and managing exchanges of:
   - researchers and teachers
   - students
   - information about member institutions

   2.3. identifying worthwhile research projects and seeking sources of funding for them; such projects to be characterised by two or more of the following:
   - providing basic research of a pan-European nature (e.g. editions of source-material, synthetic studies such as encyclopaedias, and bibliographies)
   - research on cultures and traditions, value-systems and behavioural norms which are identifiable in pre-Enlightenment Europe and which can inform current political development in Europe
   - research that should most appropriately be undertaken at a pan-European, multi-centred level, and on subjects or methodologies that are not promoted at a national level

   2.4. liaising with relevant, existing European organisations and parallel bodies on other continents

   2.5. representing the field of pre-modern European studies to public bodies

   2.6. fundraising in order to establish prizes and scholarships (for dissertations or publications on pan-European research)

3. The work of CARA-Europe excludes:

   3.1. duplicating activities already undertaken by the Medieval Academy (such as the annual conference and the CARA-database)
   3.2. publishing under its own auspices
   3.3. holding its own European conference of medieval studies
   3.4. undertaking its own teaching programmes.

4. Membership of CARA-Europe is open to the following organisations:

   4.1. University departments, Fachbereiche, or centres for medieval studies or those offering degrees in medieval studies or medieval subjects
   4.2. National organisations or regional associations (e.g. Dutch onderzoekschool mediëvistiek or Medievistenverband)
   4.3. Research institutions with interests in medieval studies (such as commissions of academies, public institutions such as libraries and museums, independent foundations)
   4.4. Commercial bodies (such as academic publishers or antiquarian bookshops), by invitation

5. Membership of the Medieval Academy allows the following categories of membership, only one of which shall permit membership of CARA-Europe:

   5.1. Individuals who are members of the Medieval Academy shall not be members of CARA-Europe in a personal capacity
   5.2. Institutions covered by section 6 above shall be eligible members of one of three CARA areas: 'Americas', 'Europe', 'Asia and Australasia'
   5.3. Fellows and Corresponding Fellows by invitation.

6. Subscription rates shall be set in discussion with the Medieval Academy and in conformity to CARA in North America, but the Steering Group of CARA-Europe shall be empowered to define membership categories, approve new members, and abrogate or modify subscriptions for specific categories of member. Subscription fees may be paid in euro (€), US dollars ($) or pounds sterling (£). Rates for individuals (e.g. Active / Contributing / Life / Student etc.) and for centres are agreed annually within the Medieval Academy.

7. Benefits shall be agreed in discussion with the Medieval Academy.

8. CARA-Europe shall respect the multilingual nature of Europe and its national diversity. In particular it will promote diversity of working languages, including through the following actions:

    8.1. All European meetings shall permit presentations at meetings to be delivered in either English, French or German

    8.2. Any member may deliver comments on papers or speak at meetings in English, French or German, while the person responding may select whichever of these languages is most convenient to him or her

    8.3. All preparatory material to meetings, and minutes of meetings shall be made available in English, French, and German.

9. CARA-Europe shall promote the maximum possible geographical spread of membership and an equitable regional balance in the allocation of tasks and responsibilities. It shall do this by defining four geographical areas (north, south, east and west). The four geographical areas are not to be fixed, but serve to divide the number of members roughly equally on a geographical basis; therefore as distribution of membership changes, so can the areas.

    9.1. Official representatives of the Medieval Academy itself and of CARA in North America shall be invited to attend meetings of CARA-Europe.

    9.2. Members of CARA from institutions outside North America and Europe may be invited to CARA-Europe meetings at the discretion of the Steering Group of CARA-Europe.

10. The responsibilities of the four geographical areas shall be shared equitably and include the following:

    10.1. nominating one office-holder to the Steering Group from their area

    10.2. hosting annual meetings in turn (thus, once in four years)

    10.3. hosting one key function/office for CARA-Europe:
- a co-ordinating institution for the annual meetings
- an institution to convene a research committee
- an institution to convene a panel for prizes and scholarships
- an institution to host a secretariat (incl. the translation service)

11. CARA-Europe's Steering Group shall comprise:

    11.1. four members, elected one from each area

    11.2. the chair of CARA in North America

    11.3. a European nominated by the Medieval Academy to serve as International Secretary and honorary secretary of CARA-Europe (and possibly CARA-Asia/Pacific in the future)

Annex 2 – Proposed initial research projects and sources of funding:

The Research Committee shall comprise a group of scholars whose initial tasks shall be:

    i.   To draw up guidelines on the permitted remit for such proposals and procedures for their submission and acceptance for future support

    ii.   To consider the initial research proposals (see below) and, where relevant, ratify them by an agreed date

    iii.   To explore and oversee the submission of an ESF funding application for 2007

    iv.   To identify other sources of major funding for approved projects.

The initial projects for consideration include the following:

1.   Multilingual Thesaurus for Medieval Studies

The *Multilingual Thesaurus for Medieval Studies* (MLTMS (see www.mith2.umd.edu/thes) links terms, i.e. word-forms, with the same meaning, i.e. concept, in the core languages of contemporary studies of the Middle Ages. MLTMS will enable scholars to search a variety of electronic resources in different languages at a conceptual level whilst being based on both common and technical word-forms in the major languages used by scholars and other interested parties. Cross-language retrieval of search-results will therefore be possible from a number of query-languages. MLTMS is an open source reference tool that will be made available to producers of reference works in medieval studies, both large and small, in a non-profit way both for application and for adaptation to provide enhanced functionality.

Key features of the database at the start of project comprise:
    i.   list of subjects, divided as follows:
- 3200 major subjects with dozens of approved subdivisions for each
- 5300 minor or technical subjects

    ii.   2200 settlements
    iii.   2900 historical concepts, such as political entities, families and dynasties, events (parliaments, battles, synods)
    iv.   9500 historical persons
    v.   each category having an authorised list of subdivisions
    vi.   all terms are harmonised to Library of Congress norms (where possible)

The creation of three-dimensional relationships between these terms (broader terms, narrower terms and related terms etc.) in multiple languages is the core of the project. A prototype input-screen and library-compatible outputs have already been developed.

2. Well-being in its Historical Context

A research project to explore factors that can be identified as having a positive or negative correlation with personal or social well-being from analysis of pre-modern Europe. The intention is to analyse contemporary (post-1960s) social scientific findings on such findings and to test whether they appear to be well-founded over long periods and a range of historical societies. The coverage will include the Greco-Roman, scriptural (Hebrew, Christian, and Islamic), medieval, and early-modern worlds of Europe, North Africa and the Near East until the Enlightenment.

Key objectives of the project will be:
  i. The analysis of texts from classical, scriptural, medieval, and humanist thinkers and authors who have written on this subject
  ii. The identification and study of other physical artefacts (including works of art) which offer insight into this topic in these periods
  iii. Case-studies of particular localities in time, to understand the interplay of factors in their comparative well-being (or lack thereof)
  iv. Studies of particular regions to identify whether certain factors that promote or inhibit personal or social well-being remain present over very long timespans
  v. Dialogue with contemporary social scientists who are trying to modify GDP-measurements to include broader measures of social well-being, and an attempt to test their findings (based on contemporary societies) and to influence their reports

The aim is to produce from these studies a synthetic grid of factors influencing personal and social well-being (positive and negative) that can be drawn from the classical, scriptural, medieval, and humanist traditions, with an initial attempt at plotting the currency and effect of individual factors over time.

3. Plotting the Subsidiarity of Communities

A research project to identify common hierarchical layers of social organisation and government from the end of the Roman empire to pre-modern Europe. The intention is to identify layers of social organisation rooted in European history. The project seeks to inform the concept of 'subsidiarity' in modern European political usage.

Key objectives of the project will be:
  i. To identify five or six hierarchical levels of social and governmental organisation (from the individual household through to the nation-state and empire)
  ii. To plot the nomenclature, structure and roles of such organisations across Europe over time (ca. 500-1800).

    iii.   To identify social and governmental organisations that cut across geographically-based hierarchical structures (leagues of cities, migrant communities, guilds and confraternities)

    iv.   To identify strengths and weaknesses of particular elements in these structures

    v.   To enter dialogues with constitutional advisors at European and national levels, and political parties and think-tanks, to inform their reports

The aim is to produce a map of social and governmental organisations that seem rooted across Europe over a long period of time, but to identify the diversity of features of each, region by region.

4.   Encyclopaedia of the Middle Ages

A project to commission articles on all aspects of the Middle Ages worldwide, defined as the period ca. 400-1500. This may be done in conjunction with the *Multilingual Thesaurus* (see above), which will provide an overarching list of possible topics and subdivisions of topics. The primary languages of publication will be English and French. It is envisaged as an ongoing, authoritative online reference tool. The initial focus will be on topics that have been poorly covered by such encyclopaedias thus far, particularly: (i) 'peripheral' areas of Europe and countries where histories have been the object of nationalistic revisionism; (ii) women and marginalised groups within Europe; (iii) local history and historical artefacts in local, regional or national repositories; (iv) subjects where the historiography has changed greatly in recent years – such as research on Eastern Europe.

Key objectives of the project will be:
    i.   To identify initially, in conjunction with the *Multilingual Thesaurus*, an overarching structure for topics and lemmata

    ii.   To prioritise the editing of material and develop a means of generating 500,000 words' worth of material p.a.

    iii.   To develop wiki-methodologies for commissioning material, and also methods for academic peer-review of such material

    iv.   To buy-in relevant and suitable material to supplement the commissioned articles

    v.   To publish the articles online, made searchable through links to the *Multilingual Thesaurus*.

5.   Prosopography of the Pre-Tridentine Church

A project to update the lists of prelates produced in the nineteenth-century by Eubel and Gams, in light of various national projects since then (*Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, *Fasti Ecclesiae Gallicanae*, etc.) and to cover regions of Christendom that have not benefited from such research.

Key objectives of the project will be:
  i.   To correct information on dioceses and bishops, archbishops (etc.) contained in the Eubel and Gams directories
  ii.   To include new information on dioceses or prelates omitted by Eubel and Gams (particularly in Eastern Europe and for the Eastern and non-Roman churches)
  iii.   To make links to national or other projects that have already updated or are in the process of producing such prosopographical resources and produce updated bibliographies on all featured dioceses or prelates
  iv.   To publish electronically a new edition of these works
  v.   To train doctoral students in appropriate information technology applications.

6.   Bibliography of Early Europe – publications from 1830 onwards

A project to provide a bibliography of publications from the end of the hand-printed-book era (ca. 1830 onwards), covering all historical publications prior to then. Initial attention will be given to publications from Eastern Europe (bounded by the Elbe, Ural mountains, Baltic sea and the Aegean/Mediterranean). The initial coverage shall centre on the period ca. 500 to ca. 1250. The bibliography would continue its coverage up to publications which have already been extensively catalogued by the likes of the *IMB* and *Iter*.

Key objectives of the project will be:
  i.   To convert the current database of 33,000 records into a MARC-compatible format
  ii.   To expand coverage post-1250 through to ca. 1650
  iii.   To develop a network of teams in target areas to focus on coverage of all publications since ca. 1830