



## **Call for Papers**

### **Games and competitions in medieval societies**

#### **Conference**

**14–17 February 2018, German Historical Institute Paris**

**Deadline: 15 September 2017**

Particular games and contexts have attracted wide interest in recent research. But further studies are needed on the cultural history of the ludic in pre-modern societies, with its all-pervasive character and relevance throughout society. The goal of this conference is to explore the elementary meanings of ludic aspects of leisure time in medieval societies, notably examining their agonistic character, in sport and in societal competition. In medieval life, games and competitions were spaces for power plays, communication, and contact between social ranks and between the sexes. Moreover, they offered a stage for the representation and theatricalization of social order and cultural practice. With evolving social and societal contexts, understandings of such performative idioms and their role in social life may need re-evaluation. And indeed, in pre-modern societies, more was at stake in the ludic: for members of every social and sexual category, games and competitions had an important role in the mediation and perpetuation of society's order.

The conference seeks to open an international dialogue on these topics, covering the entire medieval period (5th to 15th centuries), with no geographical restrictions.

Possible themes for talks could include:

- Seriousness and play in medieval competition
- Pedagogy and didactics in teaching and learning games
- City and court between (power) games
- Theatre, leisure, and entertainment
- Games in religion and spiritual contexts
- Games and competitions in intercultural exchange

- Dangerous games and competitions
- Puzzles, riddles, and conversation games
- Rules, norms, and practices in and through games
- Integration, exclusion, and sociability
- The performance of competitions and games
- Satire, humour, and subversion
- Gender-historical perspectives on games and competitions

This call for papers is addressed mainly to historians, but also to researchers in other associated disciplines at the doctoral or post-doctoral level and beyond. The working languages of the conference will be French, German, and, if necessary, English. Papers in these three languages are thus welcome. Knowledge of the other languages (particularly French and German) is an advantage.

Applications should include a brief summary of the planned 30-minute talk (max. 250 words), a cover letter (including information on the applicant's mastery of the conference languages) and an academic CV.

Participants will be expected to submit a summary of their talk (around 500 words) in English two months before the beginning of the conference. These abstracts will be published on the blog of the research group [ludite.hypotheses.org](http://ludite.hypotheses.org).

Participants' travel costs will be reimbursed, and accommodation will be made available if necessary.

Any questions can be addressed to Vanina Kopp ([vkopp@dhi-paris.fr](mailto:vkopp@dhi-paris.fr)), Constanze Buyken ([cbuyken@dhi-paris.fr](mailto:cbuyken@dhi-paris.fr)), or Guillaume Bureaux ([gbureaux@dhi-paris.fr](mailto:gbureaux@dhi-paris.fr)).

All documents should be sent as a single combined PDF file to one of the above addresses by 15 September 2017, in an email with the subject "CFP Jeux et compétitions".