



Weather and Climate in Medieval Theatre

IMC Leeds, 5–8 July, 2021

Call for Papers

Talking about weather phenomena in early theatre, everybody might immediately associate Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Weather, however, plays an important role in medieval theatre, too, both on the level of the plot, and concerning the conditions of open air performances. These two levels might meet, for example when the shepherds in Nativity plays staged in winter complain about the cold, or when the nobility in Neidhart plays (staged in spring) rejoices over the sun and the new green in nature. Often, however, the plays were not staged in the same weather or climate described in the plot, for example, when the Big Flood, the Nativity, and the Temptation of Christ in the desert are part of the same cycle. These plays need to insinuate a weather and a climate different from the climate the audience experiences during the performance. On the other hand, weather conditions could well be obstacles for performances, be it storm or heat.

For the IMC 2021 with its special thematic focus on “climates”, I would like to invite specialists of medieval theatre, music, liturgy, art history and civic history to enquire about the techniques that medieval theatre (religious or secular) used to communicate or simulate weather conditions, and to ask how the plays used similarities or differences of climate between the plot and the performance situation. How and for what reason do the plays thematize weather at all, and how did performances cope with unfavourable weather conditions? What do performance records tell about the weather, and why did they find it worth telling about it?

Please send your ideas for papers (20min) in English, French, or German, dealing with this complex of questions to:

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by **September 15, 2020**.

After the conference, you are invited to submit your paper to *European Medieval Drama* (Brepols)