

## Call for Papers:

### "Medieval World-Building: Tolkien, His Precursors and Legacies"

sponsored by the Fantasy Research Hub, School of Critical Studies, University of Glasgow,  
55th International Congress on Medieval Studies (May 7-10, 2020) Kalamazoo, Michigan



The recent volume *Sub-creating Arda: World-building in J.R.R. Tolkien's Works, its Precursors, and Legacies* (2019), edited by D. Fimi and T. Honegger, examines the importance of invented story-worlds as spaces for primary-world social commentary, or as means for visualizing times and places not accessible to the reader. Tolkien was one of the foremost proponents of literary world-building, what he called "sub-creation," and his Middle-earth has had unrivaled influence on subsequent world-building efforts. Yet, Tolkien's own sub-creations were born from medieval story-worlds such as *Beowulf*, *Kalevala*, *Volsungasaga*, and others. This paper session examines the emergent, interdisciplinary research field of world-building through Tolkien's Middle-earth, its medieval precursors, and/or its modern legacies.

Papers might be on such topics as mythopoeia, design, systems of magic, geology, geography, cartography, cosmology, ecology, sociology, demographics, cultural anthropology, materiality, religion, philosophy, language—literally anything that goes into world-building—in conjunction with the worlds of J.R.R. Tolkien, or his medieval/medievalist precursors, or his worldbuilding legacy in literature or other fields. Papers on interdisciplinary topics are welcome.

A paper proposal for the International Congress on Medieval Studies comprises a single-page abstract of the proposed paper and a completed Participant Information Form (PIF). (The new PIF will be available on the conference website <https://wmich.edu/medievalcongress/submissions> in July 2019.)

Please send your proposals with "Tolkien World-Building" in the subject line to:

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The deadline is September 1, 2019.

Illustration Credit: A German Astronomer and Cosmographer after a 16th century wood engraving by Jost Amman From *Science and Literature in The Middle Ages* by Paul Lacroix published London 1878. Photograph. *Britannica ImageQuest, Encyclopædia Britannica*, 25 May 2016. [quest.eb.com/search/312\\_1013489/1/312\\_1013489/cite](https://quest.eb.com/search/312_1013489/1/312_1013489/cite). Accessed 11 Jul 2019.