



PRESS RELEASE

57th Week of Study

Ireland and the Irish in the Early Middle Ages Spoleto, 16-22 April 2009

Opening Ceremony, Thursday 16 April, 10.30 am
Teatro Caio Melisso - Spoleto

The 57th Study week organised by the Foundation of the Italian Centre for the Study of the High Middle Ages in Spoleto, under the auspices of the Irish Cultural Institute and the Irish Embassy, shall examine in depth, from the perspective of a renewed historiography, the social, economic, religious and cultural manifestations of medieval Ireland, as well as its Celtic roots and its projections over time and space. Starting from pre-Christian Ireland and investigating the transition to Christian and medieval Ireland, the intent is to introduce or reprise the topics of the formation of an Irish society and anthropological identity (especially in contrast to the Anglican world), as well as questions involving economics, the management of power, the history of ecclesiastical activity, forms of worship and their administrative and liturgical manifestations, plus monastic movements, linguistic usages and literary and artistic culture, not to mention the various ways in which Irish civilisation spread to other territories, especially within the Carolingian world. For a significant period, Ireland was considered an area in which different experiences of Mediterranean origin came to rest, before being sent back out as new models and stimuli (customs, books and objects) that would go on to influence the spirituality, culture and art of Europe in the High Latin Middle Ages. These were the underpinnings of the myth of Ireland that, starting from the Carolingian age, endured for so many centuries. The opening speech, entitled Ireland and the Irish in the High Middle Ages, will be given on Thursday 16 April by Profes-

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sor Michael Lapidge of the University of Cambridge. In the course of the Study Week, 30 more scholars from universities in Europe and the United States shall also give speeches. Once again, in what is an established tradition, the best of international medieval scholarship will be on display in Spoleto.

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