



CONSORTIUM OF
EUROPEAN
RESEARCH
LIBRARIES



Belgisch-Nederlands
Boekbandengenootschap

Bookbindings Academy 2025

Bookbindings Academy is a free online initiative to share the results of bookbindings research with an international audience.

The Belgian-Dutch Bookbindings Society (Belgisch-Nederlands Boekbandengenootschap) and the Consortium for European Research Libraries (CERL) cordially invite anyone with an interest in bookbindings to attend the first two sessions on 17 January and 14 February 2025 (both start at 15.00h CET).

Bookbindings Academy offers a platform to share recent research results, or to give important research extra attention. Ideally, each session consists of two 45-minute presentations on bookbindings. The topics can range from medieval bookbindings to innovating 21st-century binding techniques, from anonymous bookbinders at 19th-century book publishers to world famous bookbinders, and from book historians' legacies in the field of bookbindings research to presentations on bookbindings fashions through the ages.

We start with two sessions in 2025, and intend to repeat Bookbindings Academy annually in January and February, keeping the options for extra sessions throughout the year open.

For the first two sessions we have invited Alberto Campagnolo, Élodie Lévêque and Zanna Van Loon to present the results of their research on Carolingian-Romanesque bindings, bookbindings made of seal skin and the bookbinders at the *Officina Plantiniana*, but for future sessions of Bookbindings Academy researchers are encouraged to contact us when they have interesting research to present.

The goals of Bookbindings Academy are to share knowledge on bookbindings internationally and to create more possibilities for future international collaboration to increase that knowledge.

We hope to welcome you all on 17 January for the Bookbindings Academy kick off!

Registration

Participation in the Bookbindings Academy is free, but registration is recommended. Upon registration you will receive a Zoom-link that will take you to the presentations. The online sessions will open shortly before 15.00h CET.

Interested? Please register by following the link to the registration form, and check the boxes of the sessions you would like to attend: <https://forms.gle/PatnDb4gwdFWbi9V9>.

Programme

Session 1: 17 January 2025 – Bookbindings Academy kick off

- 15.00h

ALBERTO CAMPAGNOLO (KULeuven)

Hybridity and Transition: Exploring Carolingian-Romanesque Bookbinding Practices

This presentation investigates the hybridity and transitional techniques evident in Carolingian-Romanesque bookbindings, with a particular focus on manuscripts from the medieval collections of Cambrai Cathedral and comparative examples from other repositories. By examining the blend of Carolingian and Romanesque elements, the study highlights the fluidity of bookbinding traditions during the 8th to 12th centuries. The analysis examines how technical innovations and socio-cultural dynamics shaped book production across Europe, enriching our understanding of medieval manuscripts.

- 16.00h

MELISSA MORETON, SUZANNE CONKLIN AKBARI & IAN MCCALLUM (School of historical studies, Princeton)

To be confirmed – a paper on: *overcovers for bindings in First Nation tribes in the USA and Canada*

Session 2: 14 February 2025

- 15.00h

ÉLODIE LÉVÊQUE (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

The use of Wild Animal skins on Carolingian Bindings: origin and manufacture

The use of wild animal skins in medieval bookbinding offers a compelling area of study. Traditional methods, such as visual and microscopic examination, often struggle to identify leather species, especially when follicle patterns are obscured or absent. However, by employing advanced techniques like eZooMS, we have identified that a significant proportion of the skins used in French Carolingian collections originated from wild species such as deer and roe deer. This discovery challenges the prevailing assumption that domesticated animal skins dominated medieval bindings.

- 16.00h

ZANNA VAN LOON (Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp)

Tracing the hidden trade: the role of Antwerp bookbinders in the bookselling business of the Officina Plantiniana

[Abstract follows]

Presenting your research?

We encourage anyone doing research on bookbindings and bookbinders, from late Antiquity to the dawn of the 21st century, and wish to share their results with the international community of bookbinding specialists to contact us to schedule an online presentation in the Bookbindings Academy.

Please contact us via info@boekbandengenootschap.nl for any questions and suggestions, or to let us know about your research!