

Bio:

Stephen Church is Professor of Medieval History at the University of East Anglia where he has taught since 1995. His two recent publications are two biographies, *King John: England, Magna Carta, and the Making of a Tyrant*, Macmillan (UK), 2015 and *Henry III: A Simple and God-Fearing King*, Allen Lane, Penguin Books, 2017.

Prof Church argued that when on 2 February 1141 King Stephen of England (1135-54) fell into the hands of his rival for the throne, the Empress Matilda, that the king had ceased to rule and therefore ceased to be a king. The kingdom had, in this construct, entered a liminal state when royal authority had come to an end and the king's peace ceased to exist. The paper explored the ramifications of this point and examined the ways in which Bishop Henry of Winchester, Stephen's brother, negotiated with the empress and her party so that she could assume the full plenitude of royal power without being crowned as monarch. Since Stephen was still living, and many in the kingdom argued that his reign had as yet not come to an end, a compromise was essential: that compromise, summed up in Matilda's new title, *domina Anglorum* (lady of the English), which she received on 8 April 1141, gave Matilda authority to rule as king but without enjoying that title.