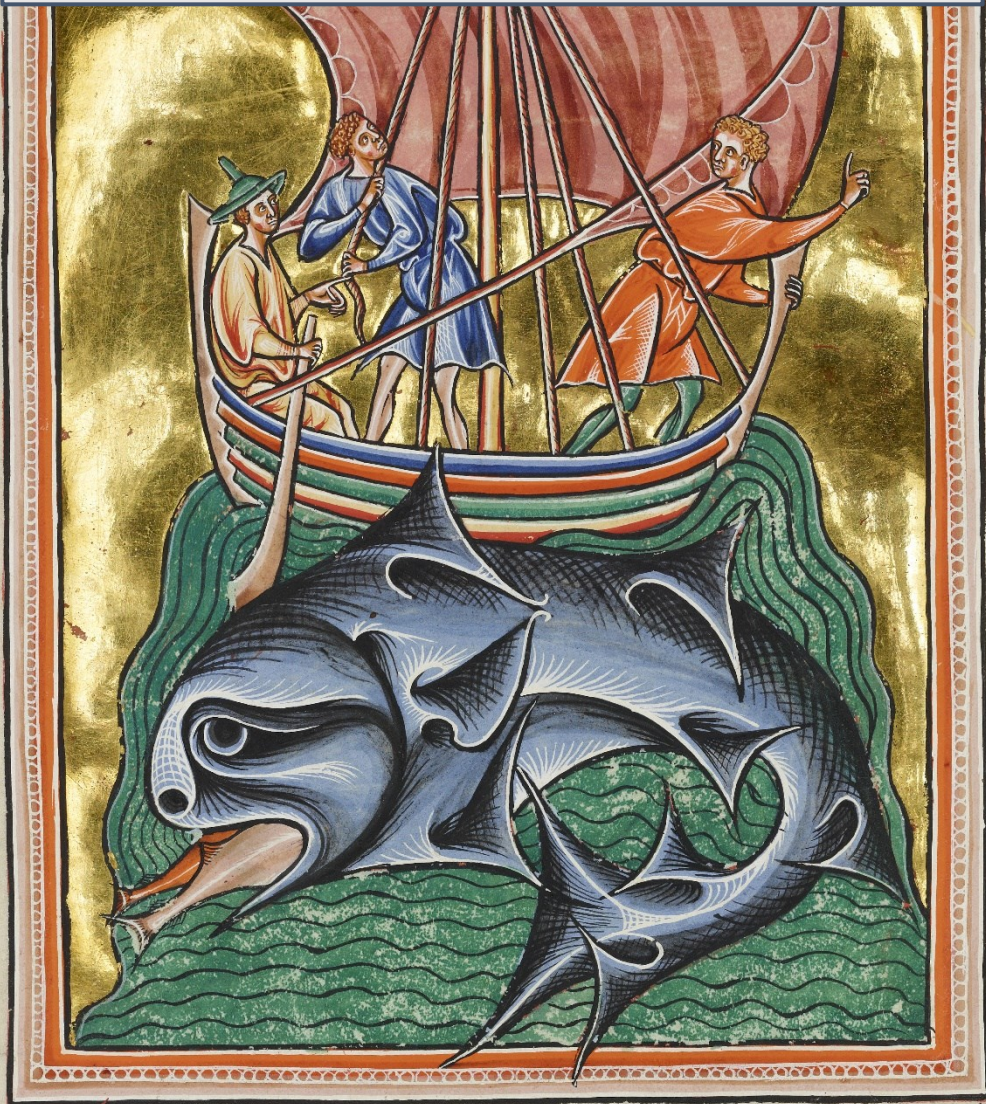


Oxford Medieval Studies Impact Report 2022/23



Est belua in mari q̄ grece aspidō delone d̄r. latine ū
aspidō testudo. Lete ⁊ dicta. ob immanitatem cor
poris. ē. enim sic ille qui excepit ionam. cuius alius
tante magnitudinis fuit ut putaret infemus dicen



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Ashmole Bestiary, Bodleian Library MS. Ashmole 1511, f. 86v

Introduction

(Henrike Lähnemann and Lesley Smith)

In the last ten years, Oxford Medieval Studies [OMS] has grown into a stunningly successful interdisciplinary Humanities community for research and teaching, with a reach that now goes far beyond Oxford. Begun on the initiative of Prof. Chris Wickham, and transformed from a TORCH network into a permanent programme under the directorship of Prof. Sophie Marnette, OMS now encompasses the local - such as the interdisciplinary MSt. in Medieval Studies - to the global, with 1,300 visitors to our blog last year alone (<https://medieval.ox.ac.uk>). The termly booklet of offerings around the

University, Faculties and Colleges gives some idea of the breadth and variety available to (and from) Oxford's medievalists: as the statistics on the next page show, we are finding an eager audience for the Middle Ages both inside and outside the city.

Our regular seminars, reading groups, one-off workshops and social events make for a rich and lively culture. We are the biggest and most diverse group studying the Middle Ages in any UK university, with links to the most important US and European institutions. Just as much as its reputation in science or medicine, the Middle Ages puts Oxford on the map.

As co-directors our job is made simple by the enthusiasm and expertise of our graduates and post-docs. Over the last two years Luisa Ostacchini has done a brilliant job of producing a weekly Monday morning newsletter of the week's offerings, which comes with the wit and wisdom that only an expert in Old English and medieval Latin can claim. Her piece below paints a vivid picture of what goes on each year - not forgetting the fun (anyone for haruspices?) that is a hallmark of so many medieval manuscripts, and of our gatherings today. We thank Luisa and all those who help make Oxford a wonderful place to be a medievalist, and we look forward to ten more successful years. This report is an experiment to bring the lively culture and documentation of the Oxford Medieval Studies blog <https://medieval.ox.ac.uk/> into a material form and gather together the rich offerings of seminars, reading groups, regular and one-off events in a booklet.

From the OMS Communications Officer

(Luisa Ostacchini)

Usually the OMS Communications Officer only writes up a description of their work when leaving the post. Karl Kinsella and Caroline Batten have both, in the past, written up wonderful descriptions of the highlights of working for OMS, and the experience of working as the herald of medieval studies at Oxford. I'm not going anywhere, but it seems a shame

not to celebrate the past couple of years at OMS. As I enter my third year as your guide to all things medieval at Oxford, I want to pass on some insights into my work as communications officer, and the joys of this role.

When I first joined OMS as a new postdoc in 2021, I was immediately struck by the tremendous scope of Oxford's medieval community. Two years have passed, and I am still continually delighted and surprised by the great range of offerings we have, and the great diversity of work going on at Oxford. In 2022/23, there were an astounding 39 different medieval seminars, societies and reading groups, ranging from the Celtic Seminar to the Invisible East Seminar to Queer and Trans Medievalisms. There were eleven different language-specific groups (from Anglo-Norman to Old Norse); work ranging from the post-classical (Late Antique and Byzantine Seminar) to the immediate present day (Medieval Misuse Reading Group); and an incredible disciplinary range including archaeology, heraldry, history, literatures and languages, manuscript studies, music, numismatics, theology, and visual culture. Every year, there are new contributions, and one of the greatest joys of this work has been seeing new reading groups and societies blossom into long-standing mainstays of the weekly newsletter.

But don't just take my word for it: here are some statistics that highlight the astounding size and reach of our work. Over 850 people receive the Medieval Matters newsletter every week, and last year we had over 1,300 different visitors to the blog. Our reach extends far beyond Oxford itself: last year we had significant numbers of blog hits from the USA, Australia, Spain, Poland, Germany, China, France and Singapore. We have accounts on Twitter (currently at a strong 5823 followers), Facebook (914 followers), Instagram (654 followers), Mastodon (503 followers), YouTube (266 subscribers), TikTok (160 followers), and Threads (106 followers). Actual engagement is more difficult to judge and varies quite widely across platforms and their respective ever-changing algorithms but our most popular TikTok, which was Alison Ray talking about transferable skills in an archivist career, has 127 likes and 2001 views as of today, and our most viewed YouTube video appears to be James McGrath's Bodleian Coffee Morning on Mandaean manuscripts, with 618 views.

All of this is to say: medieval studies is flourishing at Oxford. As Communications Officer, my primary job is to bring together this enormous, vibrant community to foster interdisciplinary communication and to spotlight the very many happenings across the university (and beyond!). I am also extremely lucky to be able to work alongside both Oxford's most long-serving academics and its very youngest, newest researchers. My role is twinned with work for the Humanities Division mentoring the Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies MSt students, and it has been a consistent joy to see so many bright young medievalists bringing new and exciting interdisciplinary approaches to our community.

The main public-facing aspect of my role is writing the weekly Medieval Matters Newsletter. This involves assembling the medieval booklet and listing all of the goings-on in a user-friendly weekly calendar format; collecting information on CFPs and job opportunities; and keeping a keen eye on my inbox for any last-minute changes and updates. But it has also been an opportunity to have fun with medieval studies, and to highlight amazing things happening in my own field and beyond that might otherwise go

underappreciated. Each email has featured snippets of wisdom drawn from my own experience as an Old English / Anglo-Latin literature specialist: I hope these have served not just to make the newsletter enjoyable, but also shine some light on the exciting literature of pre-conquest England. In 2023/24, I will be taking the opportunity to feature extracts of letters from the *Epistolae* project, based at Columbia University, which catalogues letters to and from medieval women. This open-access work was pioneering in digital humanities, feminist scholarship and open-access dissemination. In 2022, *Epistolae* was preserved as a static project and is now published by Columbia University Libraries. Featuring quotations from these letters is intended not only to link Oxford's medievalists to an exciting resource outside of Oxford, but also to provide an inspirational and aspirational model for exciting interdisciplinary, boundary-pushing, open-access and digital humanities work. The values of the project align strongly with what OMS is trying to achieve as an international and interdisciplinary community invested in digital outreach, and I hope you enjoy reading the weekly quotations as much as I have enjoyed selecting them.

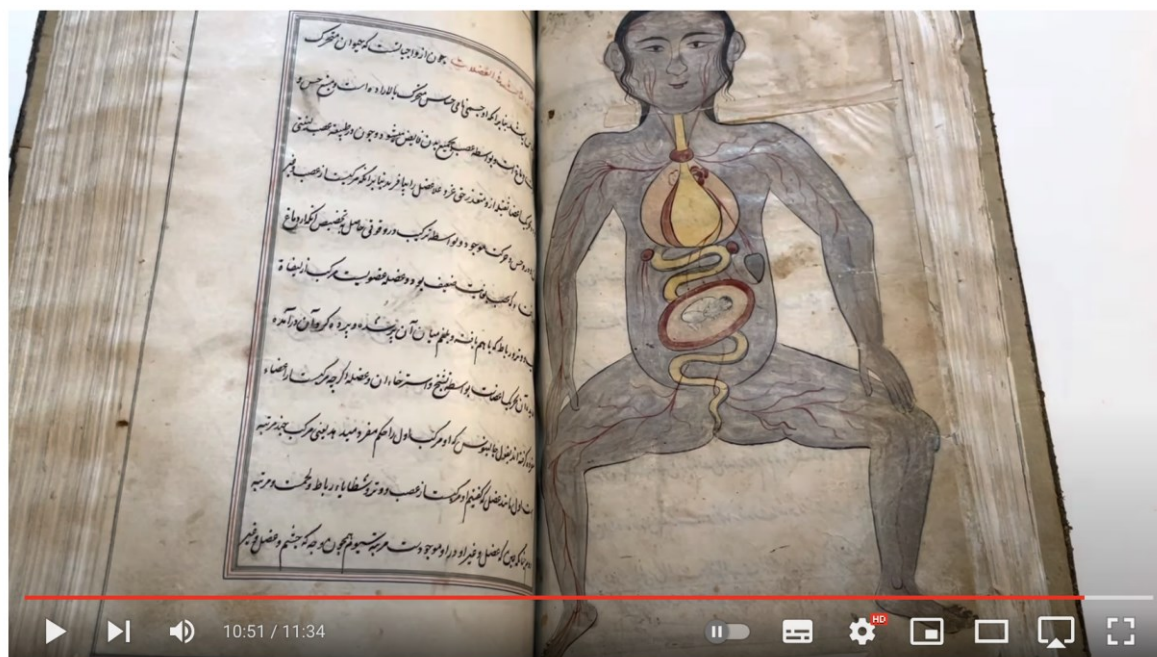
On the same note, but turning closer to home: I've particularly enjoyed highlighting the hard work done by Oxford's medievalists and librarians to digitise our manuscript holdings. Every year, I feature one manuscript held at Oxford: in 2021/22, the emails featured Merton College, MS 249, digitised by postgraduate student Sebastian Dows-Miller, and in 2022/23 we turned to the charming illustrations of [Bodleian Library MS. Ashmole 1511](#). In 2023/24 you can look forward to the extremely newly digitised St John's College MS 61, which is now available thanks to hard work by Sophie Bacchus-Waterman (Special Collections Photographer) and the Bodleian Digital Library Systems and Service. I of course enjoy writing a caption and choosing a suitably charming image to brighten your Monday mornings each week, but also am keenly aware of the importance of drawing attention both to Oxford's manuscript holdings and to the huge amount of work (and funding!) that goes into making these resources more widely accessible.

Oxford Medieval Studies has grown into one of the largest forums in the world for interdisciplinary research on the Middle Ages, and my work would not be possible without the assistance of our team of graduate students who update the Google calendar, operate our social media channels, facilitate online and hybrid event streaming, and assist with uploading posts to our blog. Neither would it be possible without the cooperation and enthusiasm of medievalists across the university: OMS is a very different beast than it was a few years ago, and I am extremely fortunate that I often no longer have to search out information but get sent it directly. I have also been ably assisted by my colleagues Henrike Lähnemann and Lesley Smith (the Directors of the OMS Programme) and Mark Williams and Elena Lombardi (Convenors of the MSt 2021/22 and 2022/23 respectively).

It really does take a village to manage the huge task of coordinating the Oxford medieval community. But the reward of this is the provision of a stable, consistent point of contact for all of Oxford's medievalist happenings. No medievalist at Oxford has to rely on word-of-mouth to advertise their events, nor to know what relevant events are happening. No other university world-wide has such a clear, coordinated facility for advertising interdisciplinary medieval events, groups and opportunities. It has been an honour to be at the helm of this, and I look forward to continuing to be your guide for 2023/24.

Medievalists Coffee Morning

(Anja Peters)



Early medieval Persian Medical Texts at the Bodleian Library (Marc Iravani)



Oxford Medieval Studies
251 Abonnenten

Abonniert

10



Teilen

Clip



339 Aufrufe vor 3 Monaten WESTON LIBRARY

A presentation by Marc Iravani MD at the Weston Library Coffee Morning on 5 May 2023.

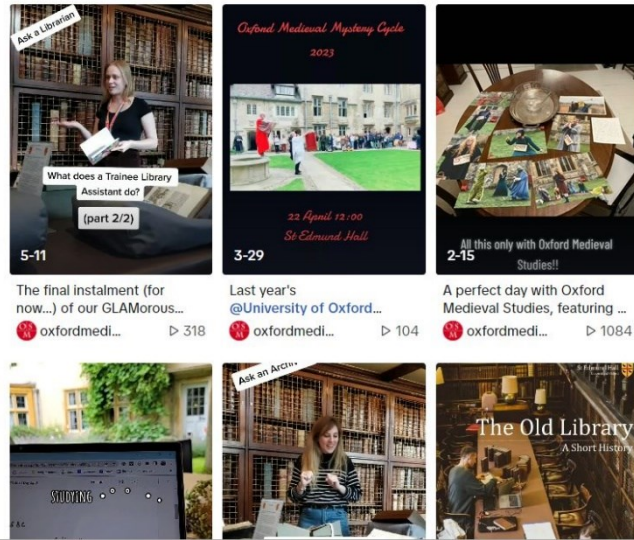
All presentations <http://tinyurl.com/CoffeeMorningsWeston>

Screenshot from the recording of the presentation of [medieval Persian medical encyclopaedias](#) on 5 May 2023

The [Medievalists Coffee Mornings](#) at the Weston Library were among my favourite events during my stay in Oxford. Every Friday from 10:30 to 11:30am, Chris Fletcher (Keeper of Special Collections, Bodleian Libraries) hosts coffee, tea and biscuits on one end of the Visiting Scholars Centre, and old books, manuscripts, maps or other fascinating special collections items on the other. With presentations by experts on different topics every week, the Coffee Mornings were a great opportunity to learn about interesting subjects and research projects and see some wonderful objects from the Bodleian Library. One of my personal favourite presentations was about [medieval Persian medical encyclopaedias](#) by Marc Iravani (University of California at Los Angeles), who provided some fascinating insights into ancient treatment methods against melancholy and other ailments (definitely not to be tried at home). Another very enjoyable demonstration was given by Dr Henry Parkes (University of Nottingham, Albi Rosenthal Visiting Fellow in Music at the Bodleian) about several [medieval liturgical manuscripts](#) that were used during the night office and include musical pieces relating to Saint Thomas Becket; afterwards he even sang one of the songs with us together. There are many visitors attending every week, and not just medievalists. The Coffee Mornings are a great place to meet new people and have a friendly chat in a relaxed atmosphere. And after the presentation, the roof terrace on the fifth floor is open to enjoy amazing views of Oxford.



Videos



The OMS TikTok account

<https://beacons.ai/oxfordmedievalstudies>.

By far the most novel of these has been TikTok, which brings not only a new format but also a completely new audience. On average, TikTok has a younger user-base and thus has great potential for use in outreach. It is likely for this very reason that the University of Oxford created its own TikTok account this year—no doubt inspired in some way by us... TikTok is an entirely new platform for me personally as well, so it has been interesting experimenting with different types of videos and seeing what resonates the most. Our most popular videos so far with nearly 2000 views each (still fairly small numbers for the platform) have been two clips of Dr Alison Ray describing paths into an archival career. Also popular are segments of a performance of the Old Norse poem *Völuspá* by Clare Mulley. A mix of performance and practical advice, then, seems to be the way forward.

I have found that there is still some hesitation within Oxford about being spotlighted on TikTok, but I do hope to be able to get more medievalists to share their work on the platform, as well as increasing coverage of the weekly Coffee Mornings and perhaps even getting reading groups involved. This is a great opportunity to spread the medieval love even further, so it would be great to include more of our wonderful medievalist community!

OMS Online

(Ashley Castelino, OMS Social Media Officer)

2023 has been a tumultuous year for social media. Every time the platform formerly known as Twitter changes a feature, a multitude of new social media platforms are born to take advantage of the chaos, and OMS must weigh the benefits of creating an account on each. OMS now has accounts with Twitter/X, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Mastodon, and Threads, some more active than others but each coming with its own promises and challenges. Links to all our social media accounts can be found at



Oxford Medieval Studies Lecture MT2022

(Eugenia Vorobeva)

Is 'lyric' something that has always existed as a category of poetry or music, or has it been created through a process of study and academic debate from the nineteenth century onwards - a process that Virginia Jackson has called 'lyricization'? If that's the case, where does medieval lyric fit in?

This lecture argued that medieval lyric is not on the edge of that debate, but at its centre. It does this by investigating the missing ingredient in many literary discussions of lyrics: their music. Thinking about the music for medieval lyrics (which in so many cases has not survived) can have an impact on modern theoretical discussions of poetry, requiring all of us to rethink our categories and assumptions.

Featured manuscripts (in order of appearance):

- Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C. 670, f.148v
- British Library, Harley MS 978, f.11v
- British Library, Arundel MS 248, f.154r
- Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 302, f.24r (John Audelay's book)
- Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates MS 18.7.21, ff. 116r-121v (John of Grimestone's preaching book)

Professor Butterfield also gave a manuscripts masterclass on 'Manuscripts of medieval lyric and song in the Bodleian Library'.

Oxford Medieval Studies Lecture TT2023

(Alison Ray)

The Oxford Medieval Studies Trinity Term lecture on Thursday, 4 May was a careers talk with a twist, featuring an exhibition in the St Edmund Hall Old Library as well as coffee and cake! Alison Ray (Archivist, St Peter's College) and Heather Barr (Graduate Trainee Library Assistant, St Edmund Hall) were delighted to share their experiences of working in archives and libraries to attendees and how they make use of their skills as medievalists in their present roles. You can watch back the careers talk on our youtube account

<https://www.youtube.com/@oxfordmedievalstudies9613>



Events

Quarterly Meeting of the Slavonic and Eastern European Medieval Studies Group



The Slavonic and East European Medieval Studies Group was formed in 1974 by a group of British medievalists including Anne Pennington, Robert Auty and Dame Elizabeth Hill in order to provide a means for scholars with an interest in any aspect of the Medieval Slavonic World to meet informally and to exchange ideas.

The group currently has over seventy members throughout Europe and abroad. It meets biannually, usually on the Saturday nearest to Martinmas and on a Saturday in the second half of March. Meetings have generally alternated between Oxford, Cambridge, and London. Three or four papers are normally read at each meeting and paper proposals and submissions are always welcome!

The group has reciprocal arrangements with the Early Slavic Studies Association in the United States, and members of ESSA are warmly invited to attend meetings of SEEMSG when in Britain and vice versa.

Programme 2022:

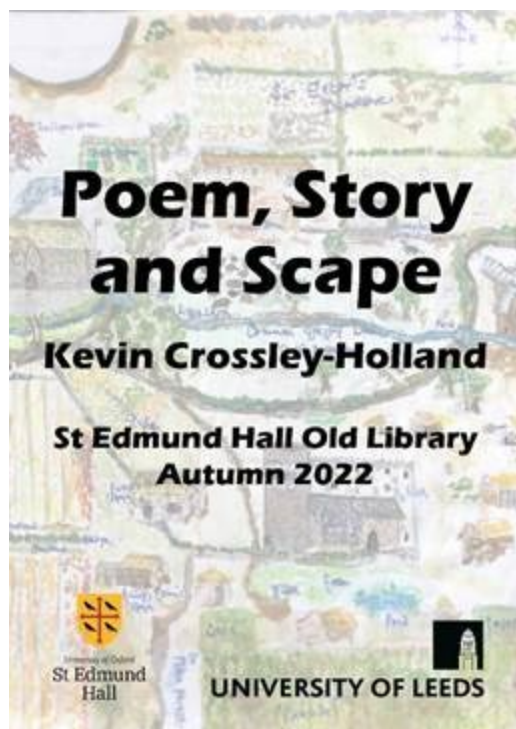
- Elena Draghici-Vasilescu (Oxford) "Byzantine objects in mediaeval Rus': a case study"
- Lilian Ann-Charlotte Gutsjö (Gothenburg) "Змнн and лѣвъ with the -ov- suffix in the Codex Suprasliensis"
- Angus Russell (Cambridge) "Taxation or bribery? The semantics of bureaucracy in fifteenth-century Moscow"
- Ralph Cleminson (Oxford) "Pilgrimage literature in mediaeval Rus': fact or fiction?"

E. A. Lowe Lectures 2023

Manuscripts of Character: Codex, Ethos, and Authority in Byzantium and Beyond

Professor Niels Gaul (Professor of Byzantine Studies and Director of the Centre for Late Antique, Islamic and Byzantine Studies at the University of Edinburgh) delivered the E A Lowe Lectures at Corpus Christi College:

- “Codex” - explored the phenomenon of Byzantine literati curating their own writings in codex format and possible ancient and patristic models; with glances at similar practices in other medieval manuscript cultures.
- “Ethos” - examined the ways in which such codices were thought to display the author’s character, and what the concept entailed in this context.
- “Authority” - related expressions of authorial ethos to matters of mise-en-page, with particular attention to marginal spaces.

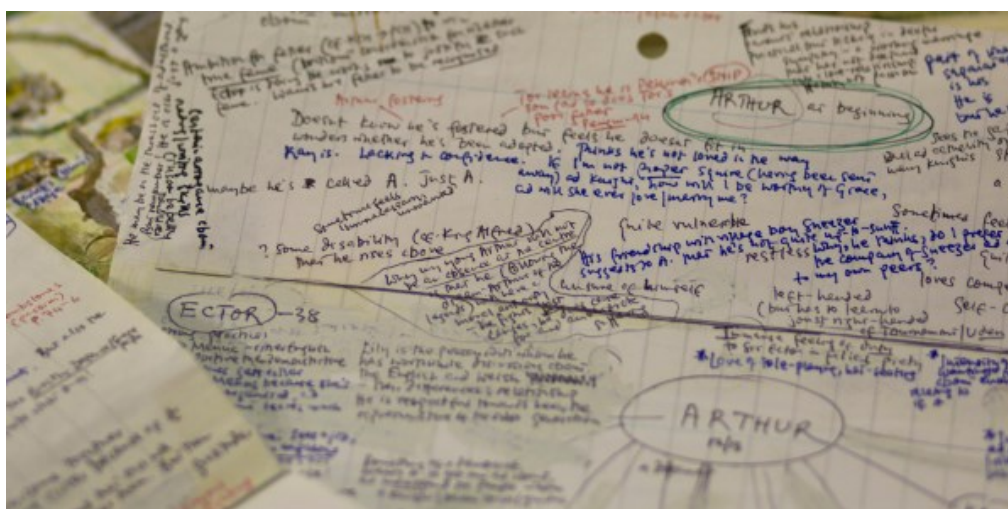


St Edmund Hall Library Exhibition

‘Poem, Story, and Scape in the work of Kevin Crossley Holland: An exhibition in the Old Library of St Edmund Hall’ ran from Friday 8 September - Monday 31 October.

This exhibition explored the work of Kevin Crossley-Holland (Honorary Fellow and 1959, English), prize-winning children’s author, translator, poet, librettist, editor and professor. Kevin engages creatively with language and poetry, place, history and legend. He captivates us by telling stories deeply rooted in past cultures, which he remakes to be compellingly contemporary and relevant. For this exhibition, Kevin generously loaned items from his private collection to add to material from St Edmund Hall’s Archives and Special Collections.

Early in his career, Kevin established himself as a poet and as a translator and re-teller of Old and Middle English poetry, romance, and folklore for all ages, and as an enthusiastic collaborator with composers and visual artists. His Arthur trilogy has sold over one million copies worldwide and is available in twenty-six languages; it has inspired young readers to become medievalists and writers themselves. Recent works, such as Norse Tales: Stories from Across the Rainbow Bridge (2020) demonstrate how Northern European myth and legend continue to beguile him.



Piers Plowman Performance at St Edmund Hall

(Eloise Peniston)



Video filmed and edited by Natascha Domeisen, cover image by Duncan Taylor

On 11 February 2023, a world premiere took place: under the title ‘The Fair Field of Folk’ a dramatized version of a potted adaptation of Piers Plowman took place, so successfully that the Deadly Sins part was repeated during the Medieval Mystery Cycle on 22 April 2023. Under the directorship of Eloise Peniston, a final year student of English, the Middle English prose text was dramatized and brought to stage by an eclectic mix of English students, medievalists, business students, historians, even a mathematician! With original music by Anna Cowan (harp) and Rachael Seculer-Faber; ceremonial trumpet: Henrike Lähnemann, special advice: Jocelyn Wogan-Browne.

It is incredibly difficult to describe what happens in Piers Plowman but “churlsgace” is certainly the perfect descriptor for the essence of the text. A mere ploughman knows the way to Truth and is gracious enough to guide the reader, in return for help in plowing and sowing a half-acre. Eloise writes: “Piers Plowman is ultimately a text that encourages mental labour, in a field, at a bus stop, or even in the gardens of St Edmund Hall...” Read the full report and watch the performance <https://medieval.ox.ac.uk/2023/02/10/piers-plowman-performance-at-st-edmund-hall/>



Nigel Palmer Memorial Symposium

(Henrike Lähnemann)

The symposium “[Literary, religious and manuscript cultures of the German-speaking lands](#)” took place 19 and 20 May 2023 in memory of Nigel F. Palmer who died on 8 May 2022. It was a joyous event despite the sad reason for it taking

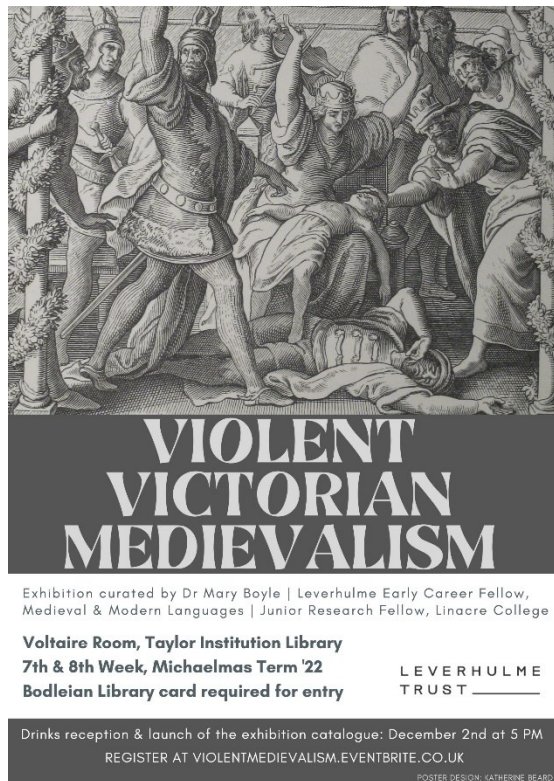
place. Contributions celebrated the wide spectrum of Nigel’s intellectual interests, which ranged extensively within the broad scope of the literary and religious history of the German- and Dutch-speaking lands, treating Latin alongside the vernaculars, the early printed book alongside the manuscript, and the court and the city alongside the monastery and the convent. Appropriately, in addition to scholarly papers, we also gathered in places and around objects important to him: first and foremost the libraries of Oxford - the [Taylor Institution Library](#) of which he was a firm supporter and where he had taught many of those present in German literature, palaeography, and history of the book (including the two manuscripts from Erfurt Charterhouse Taylor Institution Library MS. 8° Germ. 1 and MS. 8° Germ. 2); among the special collections in the Weston Library (with a [presentation](#) of rare books in his honour), and in the Old Library of St Edmund Hall (with [Exhibition of books](#) related to him). Equally important was the opportunity to exchange memories and share across several generations Nigel’s enthusiasm for manuscripts, good food (excellent dinner in St Edmund Hall) and collegiality.



Participants at the memorial symposium view the exhibition of books related to his interests in the Old Library of St Edmund Hall where Nigel Palmer was Library Fellow (Heather Barr, Anja Peters, Marlene Schilling, Luise Morawetz, Carolin Gluchowski, Anna Wilmore, Lucian Shepherd).

Exhibition: Violent Victorian Medievalism

(Mary Boyle)



Rediscovered in the eighteenth century, the *Nibelungenlied* was quickly acclaimed the German national epic, but over the course of the nineteenth century, various anglophone writers also identified it as their own cultural inheritance, based on a belief in a shared so-called Germanic ancestry. Particularly after the premiere of Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*, English-language adaptations proliferated, often illustrated, and many aimed at children. While - given the *Nibelungenlied*'s plot - references to violence are unavoidable in adaptations, it is striking how often editors or adapters chose to highlight these events in illustration.

The exhibition was launched in conjunction with a workshop, *Translating the Middle Ages*, co-organised with Katherine Beard (DPhil candidate in English, Linacre College), who also designed the exhibition poster. The workshop brought together participants at all career stages from a variety of UK and international institutions. The exhibition catalogue is available to download as a free ebook:

<https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/libraries/taylor/exhibitions-and-publications>

With thanks to the funder: the Leverhulme Trust

'Violent Victorian Medievalism' was an exhibition at the Taylor Institution Library (21 Nov to 2 Dec 2022) and still available online <https://violentmedievalism.web.ox.ac.uk/>. It was curated by Mary Boyle (Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, Medieval and Modern Languages and Junior Research Fellow, Linacre College). The exhibition tells part of the story of how 'medieval' often becomes synonymous with 'violent' in later responses to the Middle Ages by bringing together some of the Bodleian's collection of Victorian and Edwardian English-language adaptations of the *Nibelungenlied* and related material. These publications are accompanied by eye-catching images, often focusing on some of the more violent aspects of the narrative.



Oxford Festival of The Arts 2023: People. Stories. Histories.

(Michelle Cachia Castelletti)



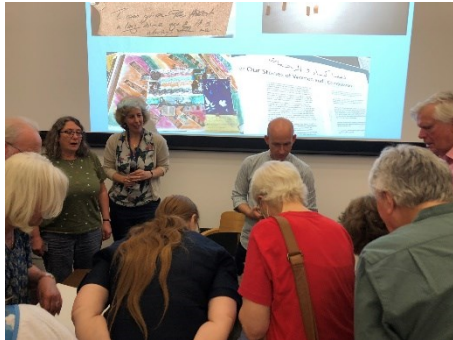
The festival is growing its public engagement related to artefacts and exhibitions; and increasing events relating to history, political history, as well as historically-informed performance. The festival started with a five-day installation at University Church inspired by the story of the Renaissance. Hundreds of people walked through Luxmuralis - a spectacular son-et-lumière experience, curated for the building, using the architecture as its canvas to project the Renaissance world through the eyes of the artists and Masters of the time, with specifically-commissioned sound art to go with it, for an immersive walk-through experience.

One of the most special projects this year was Secret Byrd, to celebrate the 400-year legacy of William Byrd, one of England's finest composers. Award-winning British vocal ensemble Gesualdo Six collaborated with the consort of viols, Fretwork, in a theatrical performance - where the audience became part of the 'enactment', in Abingdon Abbey Buildings, chosen purposefully for its history. One of the richest monastic foundations in the country, the Benedictine Abbey of Abingdon, became one of the first victims of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. According to the monks' records, Henry VIII visited the abbey four times, with Katherine of Aragon accompanying him on two of these visits at the height of his reign.

In between performances, there was a discussion between Dr Elizabeth Gemmill and Dr Michelle Castelletti on the vibrancy (or not) of monastic life in late medieval England, and the changes in the sacred soundscape brought about by the shifting paradigms of the Tudor Court. The buildings were draped and candlelit to achieve complete blackout at the threatening knock,



while bread and soup and wine was passed around the audience, with medieval and early modern “props” helping to re-enact the clandestine recusant Catholic service, singing sacred polyphony in secret, with the audience becoming part of the ritual. To further confirm the survival of polyphony beyond the Reformation, Oxford’s three ancient choral foundations (The Choirs of Christ Church, Magdalen College, and New College, Oxford; directors: Steven Grahl, Mark Williams and Robert Quinney) came together in a programme of music to mark the 400th anniversary of the deaths of celebrated Tudor composers William Byrd and Thomas Weelkes, concluding with the famous 40-part motet, *Spem in alium*, by William Byrd’s teacher and mentor, Thomas Tallis.



Exhibitions at New College, Magdalen College and the Weston Library were curated together with the libraries and archives from the Colleges. A special “thank you” is due to Dr Andrew Dunning, Ms Anne Chesher, Mr Christopher Skelton-Foord, Dr Michael Stansfield, Dr Nicholas Perkins, and Dr Richard Allen. Based on the book which captured the public imagination bringing together the history of the buildings, the people, the worship, and telling the

story of how the Church was used, I asked Professor Nicholas Orme to turn his attention to Oxford, with a talk on *Going to Church in Medieval Oxford*. Lord Sumption discussed Joan of Arc and the problems for a secular historian dealing with the supposedly miraculous. The Q&A was led by Professor Hannah Skoda, Fellow in Medieval History at St John’s College, Oxford.

Probably the most mesmerising ‘performance’ was Caravaggio: *Tableaux Vivants*. Twenty-three of Caravaggio’s best canvases were recreated by the actors, using only their bodies and a few props, such as draped fabrics and other everyday objects. In accordance with Caravaggio’s distinct compositional style, a single stream of light illuminated the scene, working as an imaginary frame, imbuing each visual composition with raw naturalism, as the paintings literally came to life in seamless transition between frame-to-frame, capturing the intense physicality evident in Caravaggio’s work.



The festival is also proud to have been part of - and supporting the Oxford Medieval Graduate Conference this year.

Harrowing of Hell: The Medieval German Mystery Play

(Timothy Powell)



Lucifer surveying the lost souls gathered by Satanas to refill hell

Oxford German medievalists past and present staged the Harrowing of Hell from the fourteenth-century *Innsbrucker Osterspiel* at the Medieval Mystery Plays on 22 April 2023. Around twenty senior members, graduate students, undergraduates, alumni and friends came together to perform the play in Middle High German with Modern English narration, directed by D.Phil. candidate Luise Morawetz.

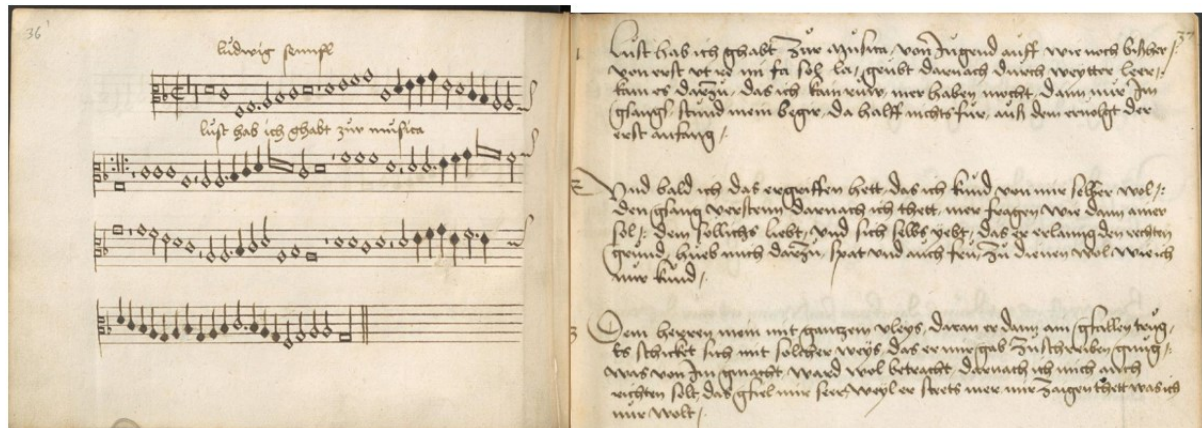
Lucifer and Satan trembled at the trumpet as the Heavenly Host approached and Jesus broke down the gates of Hell at the entrance to the former crypt of St Peter-in-the-East, freeing Adam and Eve from their four-thousand-year captivity. After momentarily regretting the pride that reduced him to this, Lucifer came up with a crafty plan to ensnare as many other sinners as possible. The two tempters scurried through the audience to great amusement, bringing back eight likely-looking lost souls in medieval costume. These fourteenth-century fiddlers, from swindling shoemakers through philandering priests to thieving tailors, received their comeuppance as they were cast into the crypt, before the narrator himself was dragged away to laughter from the audience.

We were keen that our adaptation should preserve the mischievous spirit of medieval mystery plays and make the most of the unique space offered by the south side of the former twelfth-century church. It was highly rewarding to see it develop as we rehearsed online and in person. Despite overcast skies during the dress rehearsals, the weather remained on our side on the day to help us pull off the performance and made it a hit with the audience. Read further reports and watch the plays

<https://medieval.ox.ac.uk/2023/04/21/oxford-medieval-mystery-plays-2023/>

Cooperating with musicians: James Gilchrist and Andrew Parrott

(Henrike Lähnemann)



'Lust hab ich ghabt zur Musica', the autobiographical song by Ludwig Senffl where the stanza initials form his name as acrostic. (ÖNB, Ms. 18 810, tenor part-book, fol. 36v/37r)

Two unexpected but highly enjoyable requests for help with historic pronunciation came my way in the past year. The first by James Gilchrist who was cooperating with the Linarol Consort for the recording of a historic songbook from late medieval Germany, the texts of which were mostly not recorded elsewhere. Our discussions led to a lecture-recital in the Holywell Music Room together with the musical editor, David Hatchet, on [late-medieval German song culture](#).

The second occasion came for the 50th anniversary of the Taverner Consort when Andrew Parrott wanted some advice on the sound of 17th century Latin and German and we ended up doing a public discussion of his source handbook for historic performance practice [The Pursuit of Musick: Musical Life in Original Writings & Art c1200-1770](#), a uniquely colourful compendium of almost everything to do with pre-modern musical life. The conversation took as its starting point how the examples on music in the everyday life of medieval and early modern Germany can be used as a teaching tool and also discussed questions of translation of premodern sources. All original source material is open access available on the publication website <https://www.taverner.org/everyday-life>.

Old High German Words for Writing 'Topics in German Histori...
rizan, scriban, rûna and their word families in Old
 High German - a cultural history of writing
 based on Old High German material.

Dr. Aletta Leibold
 Althochdeutsches Wörterbuch
 Watch on YouTube
 Sächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig

Lecture translated and read by William Thurlwell

Middle High German Word Formation and Old High German Etymology: Guest Lectures in German Historical Linguistics

(Henrike Lähnemann)

Screenshot of the lecture recording on the word families of 'writing' in Old High German

German historical linguistics was bookended by a contributions from German colleagues who spiced up the offer for Paper IV students and embraced

the opportunity to collaborate with Oxford colleagues in the university and beyond. Nikolaus Ruge (Trier) delivered a lecture series on Middle High German from non-standardized historical sources, with his lecture on Middle High German Word formation ([panopto recording](#)) proving particularly popular. Aletta Leipold (Old High German Dictionary, Leipzig) presented a guest lecture on the etymology of words related to writing in dialogue with experts from the Oxford English Dictionary; these and earlier lectures on questions in German historical linguistics are available under <https://tinyurl.com/PaperIVHistoricalLinguistics>

Noblesse Oblige? Conference Report - 25th-27th May 2023

The first and third *Noblesse Oblige?* conference was held at St Cross/Pusey House, University of Oxford, between the 25th and 27th May 2023. This event brought together fifteen scholars from around the world to discuss the role of non-royal élites in Japan, China, India, Russia, Syria, the Eastern Roman empire, the Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa, England, and France. In addition to this incredible subject breadth, these scholars came from as far afield as Vancouver and Tokyo, and it was heartening to see a broad range of attendees from around the UK as well. We had a good number of associate members, our supervisory board members, and much interest from wider histories faculties. More than



one senior professor told us they would merely put their head around the door for a paper and then ended up staying all day, which we take as a massive vote of confidence in the project, and in the calibre of our speakers!

This event was an opportunity for these specialists to come together and exchange the particular circumstances that shape political expression and aspiration in their own contexts, as well as recognising the common experiences of power and conceptions of the common good. Rather than a project for global historians, this has been a project for specialists in their fields to share what they know, and this model worked well for doing comparative history in depth, rather than merely provide broad overviews.

This conference was an important step in the development of the eventual contributions to the network's first published volume. It also highlighted a number of conceptual challenges that will shape our work going forward, such as terminology, inequalities in source bases, and the ultimate aims of comparative history. We will continue to refine these issues alongside our particular case studies over the coming year through further webinars, and a major strand at the Leeds International Medieval Congress 2024, as well as consider future steps for comparative and collaborative work beyond this phase of funding.

As part of the conference, we also visited the archives of Oriel College, where we were given the chance to view their Magna Carta, Forest Charter, and multiple other documents from medieval Oxford - this includes a Papal bull calling on scholars to please refrain from killing each other. We'd like to thank not only Oriel, but also the Oxford History Faculty, and especially St Cross/Pusey House for hosting us so well.

Old Frisian Summerschool

(Johanneke Sytsema)

The 3rd Oxford/Groningen Old Frisian Summer School (10-15 July) was well attended: 36 participants in Oxford of Basque, Chinese, Dutch, English, German, Irish, Italian, Russian, Slovak and US background (including 12 from our partner university Groningen). The 14 online participants hailed from Australia, Bulgaria, Frisia, UK and US. Every day consisted of two lectures and translation group work in the Old Dining Hall in St Edmund Hall or the Taylor Library.

Old Frisian grammar was made fun in 3 lectures by the Indo-Europeanist Dr Alex Kerkhof of the Frisian Academy (Netherlands). The importance of the sword at weddings was highlighted : brides had to bow and walk underneath the sword held high horizontally by the bride groom, a sign of submission and a sign of fear. In case of adultery the wife could be skinned by it. Dr Rafael Pascual (English Faculty) lectured on principles of Historical Linguistics. Prof Andreas Deutsch, director of the Deutsches Rechtswörterbuch in Heidelberg discussed links between Old Frisian and other Old Germanic Laws, all of which could be found in the Germanic Legal Dictionary. Remarkably, he demonstrated more similarities than differences between Old Frisian and other Old Germanic rules. Hilbert Vinkenoog, postgrad in Viking Studies at Oslo, presented on Frisian settlers in Britain and the Faroer Islands. Prof Versloot (Amsterdam) demonstrated online his method of establishing the relative age of Old Frisian texts. Participants were impressed to see the actual the Old Frisian manuscripts from the Junius collection in the Weston Library. Prof Horobin (Magdalen College) spoke on Junius' interests in Old Germanic languages including Old English, Old High German, Gothic and Old Frisian, based on Bodleian collections.

A variety of texts from different manuscripts/dialects were translated in small groups where participants learned from each other as well as from the tutors. Seeing St Edmund Hall Old and New Library, the Taylor Library and the Bodleian Duke Humphries was felt as impressive and social activities including pub quiz and punting from Magdalen Bridge made the week memorable. Sierd Prins (Groningen University) made the following film report <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CvCIS9FonDw/?igshid=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==> which says it all.

Islamic Law in Norman Sicily

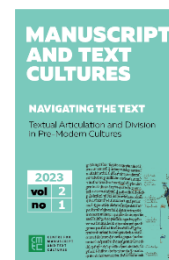
Professor Jeremy Johns delivered a lecture on *Islamic Law in Norman Sicily* at Wolfson College on February 27th as part of the college's Law in Societies research cluster. His lecture focused upon the operation of Islamic law under Norman rule. From 1060 until the early 1220s, the majority of the population of the island of Sicily were Arabic-speaking Muslims who attempted to live according to Islamic law. How, in the age of the Crusades, did Islamic law operate under Christian rule in Sicily? What, if any, influence did Islamic law have upon Norman administration, government and legislation? Why did royal law ultimately fail to protect the Muslims of Norman Sicily so that, before 1250, both the Muslim community and Islamic law had completely disappeared from the island?

Medieval Crafternoon

On Wednesday 8th March, an afternoon of medieval textile crafts was held at St John's College. The crafternoon featured a guided workshop focussing on four textile techniques: fingerloop braiding; lust cord making; spinning; and embroidery. The event was sponsored by the Oxford Research Center in the Humanities (TORCH).

Launch of Volume 2 of the Journal of Manuscript and Text Cultures

In celebration of the release of vol. 2 of the Journal of Manuscript and Text Cultures (MTC) by the Centre for Manuscript and Text Cultures (CMTC), which takes an explicitly experimental approach of involving digital tools for the presentation of research in manuscript cultures, CMTC held a round table 26th April at The Queen's College, Oxford. The topic of the round table was digital publishing and future research in manuscript studies. The round table was chaired by Richard Ovenden, OBE, Professorial Fellow and Bodley's Librarian.



Interface of Old English Dictionaries: Inflection and Derivation

A special talk by Javier Martín-Arista, Professor of Old English Linguistics at the Universidad de La Rioja and the President of SELIM (Spanish Society for Medieval English Language and Literature) was held at Magdalen College on 27th April.

Searobend Masterclass and Focus Group

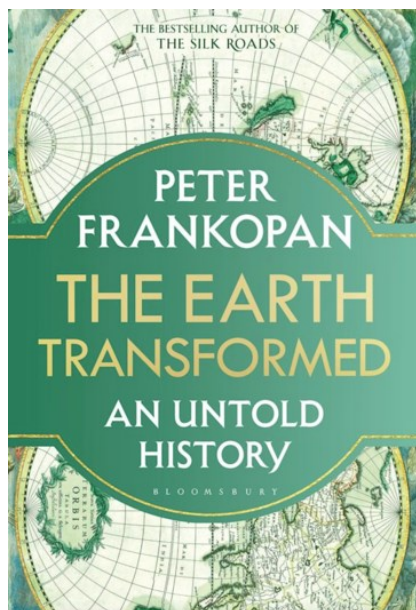
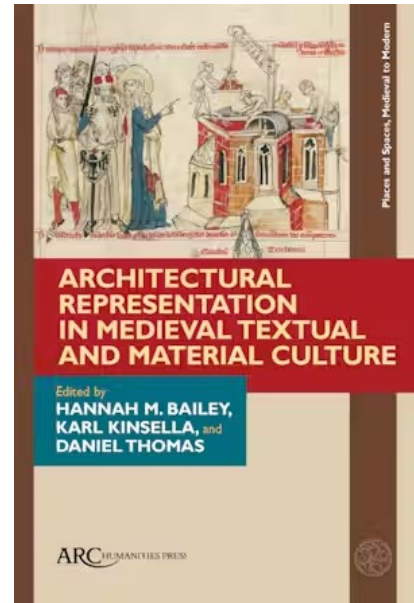
The Searobend project - which takes its name from an Old English word meaning 'clever linkage' - will use techniques from computer science to link fifteen major resources for the study of English texts from the High Middle Ages (c. 1000-1300), making much clearer how much survives and what proportion of this is available digitally. This will considerably enhance the utility of these resources for scholars and facilitate the next generation of research on this formative period of literary, linguistic and cultural history. A Masterclass and Focus Group for Linked Metadata for English Language Texts, 1000-1300 took place on 4th May at the Weston Library. This event showcased the project's sources and methods, including a masterclass on Bodley 340+342, and an introduction to linked open data, knowledge graphs, and metadata structure. It aimed to gather feedback from undergraduates, postgraduates, and early career researchers, which will influence the size, structure and scope of the project's final website interface, to launch in July 2024.

Book Publications

Architectural Representation in Medieval Textual and Material Culture: Places and Spaces, Medieval to Modern

Edited by Hannah M. Bailey, Karl Kinsella, and Daniel Thomas
(ARC Humanities Press, 2023)

Exploring the work of writers, illuminators, and craftspeople, this volume demonstrates the pervasive nature of architecture as a category of medieval thought. The architectural remnants of the past—from castles and cathedrals to the lowliest village church—provide many people with their first point of contact with the medieval period and its culture. Such concrete survivals provide a direct link to both the material experience of medieval people and the ideological and imaginative worldview which framed their lives. The studies collected in this volume show how attention to architectural representation can contribute to our understanding of not only the history of architectural thought but also the history of art, the intersection between textual and material culture, and the medieval experience of space and place.



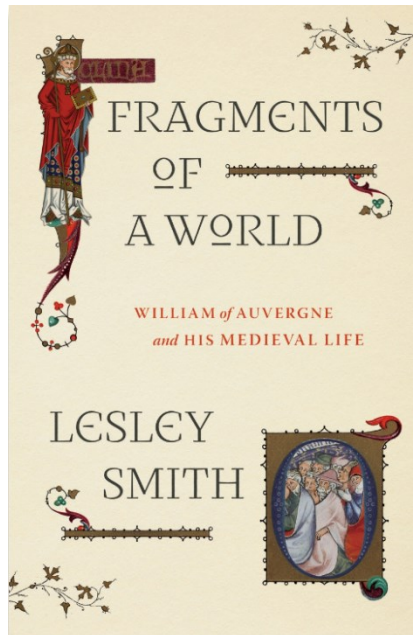
The Earth Transformed: An Untold History

Peter Frankopan (Bloomsbury, 2023)

When we think about history, we rarely pay much attention to the most destructive floods, the worst winters, the most devastating droughts or the ways that ecosystems have changed over time.

In *The Earth Transformed*, Peter Frankopan, one of the world's leading historians, shows that the natural environment is a crucial, if not the defining, factor in global history - and not just of humankind. Volcanic eruptions, solar activities, atmospheric, oceanic and other shifts, as well as anthropogenic behaviour, are fundamental parts of the past and the present. In this magnificent and groundbreaking book, we learn about the origins of our species: about the development of religion and language and their relationships with the environment; about how the desire to centralise agricultural surplus formed the origins of the bureaucratic state; about how growing demands for harvests resulted in the increased shipment of enslaved peoples; about how efforts to understand and manipulate the weather have a long and deep history. All provide lessons of profound importance as we face a precarious future of rapid global warming.

Taking us from the Big Bang to the present day and beyond, *The Earth Transformed* forces us to reckon with humankind's continuing efforts to make sense of the natural world.



Fragments of a World: William of Auvergne and His Medieval Life

Lesley Smith (University of Chicago Press, 2023)

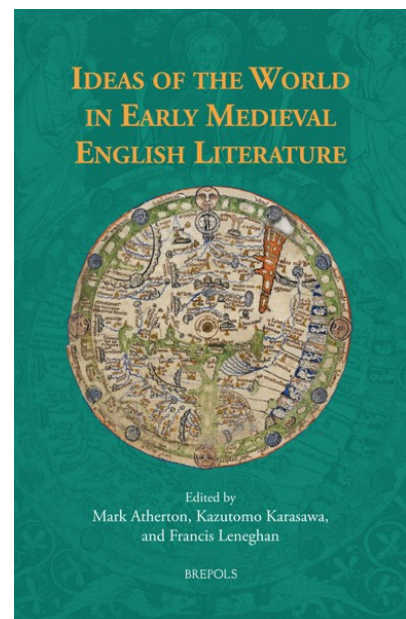
Today, William of Auvergne (1180?-1249) is remembered for his scholarship about the afterlife as well as the so-called Trial of the Talmud. But the medieval bishop of Paris also left behind nearly 600 sermons delivered to all manner of people—from the royal court to the poorest in his care. In *Fragments of a World*, Lesley Smith uses these sermons to paint a vivid picture of this extraordinary cleric, his parishioners, and their bustling world. The first modern biography of the influential teacher, bishop, and theologian, *Fragments of a World* casts a new image of William of Auvergne for our times—deeply attuned to both the spiritual and material needs

of an ever-changing populace in the medieval city.

Ideas of the World in Early Medieval English Literature

Edited by Mark Atherton, Kazutomo Karasawa, and Francis Leneghan (Brepols, 2022)

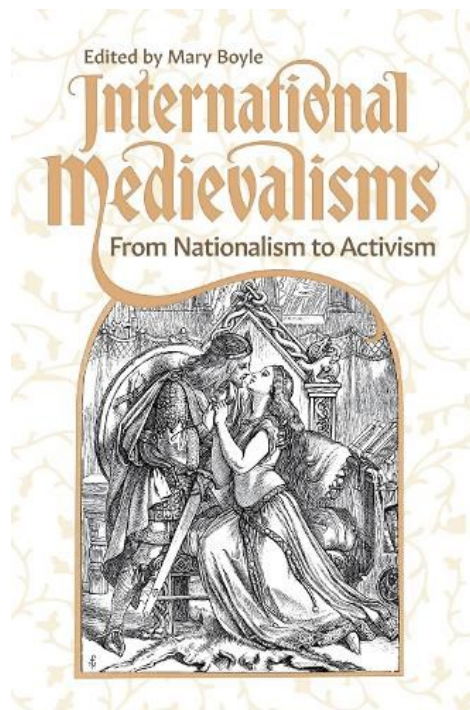
Across three thematically-linked sections, this volume charts the development of competing geographical, national, and imperial identities and communities in early medieval England. Literary works in Old English and Latin are considered alongside theological and historical texts from a range of disciplinary perspectives. Accounts of travel, foreign contacts, conversion, migration, landscape, nation, empire, and conquest are set within the continual flow of people and ideas from East to West, from continent to island and back, across the period. The fifteen contributors investigate how the early medieval English positioned themselves spatially and temporally in relation to their insular neighbours and other peoples and cultures. Several chapters explore the impact of Greek and Latin learning on Old English literature, while others extend the discussion beyond the parameters of Europe to consider connections with Asia and the Far East. Together these essays reflect ideas of inclusivity and exclusivity, connectivity and apartness, multiculturalism and insularity that shaped pre-Conquest England.



Immaterial Texts in Late Medieval England: Making English Literary Manuscripts, 1400-1500

Daniel Wakelin (Cambridge, 2022)

Daniel Wakelin introduces and reinterprets the misunderstood and overlooked craft practices, cultural conventions and literary attitudes involved in making some of the most important manuscripts in late medieval English literature. In doing so he overturns how we view the role of scribes, showing how they ignored or concealed irregular and damaged parchment; ruled pages from habit and convention more than necessity; decorated the division of the text into pages or worried that it would harm reading; abandoned annotations to poetry, focusing on the poem itself; and copied English poems meticulously, in reverence for an abstract idea of the text. Scribes' interest in immaterial ideas and texts suggests their subtle thinking as craftspeople, in ways that contrast and extend current interpretations of late medieval literary culture, 'material texts' and the power of materials. For students, researchers and librarians, this book offers revelatory perspectives on the activities of late medieval scribes.

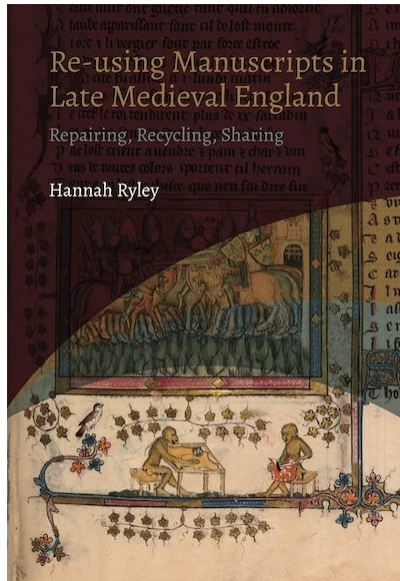


International Medievalisms: From Nationalism to Activism

Edited by Mary Boyle (DS Brewer, 2023)

Medievalism - the reception of the Middle Ages - often invokes a set of tropes generally *considered* 'medieval', rather than consciously engaging with medieval cultures and societies. International medievalism offers an additional interpretative layer by juxtaposing two or more *national* cultures, at least one of which is *medieval*. 'National' can be aspirational: it might refer to the area within agreed borders, or to the people who live there, but it might also describe the people who understand, or imagine, themselves to constitute a nation. And once 'medieval' becomes simply a collection of ideas, it can be re-formed as desired, cast as more geographically than historically specific, or function

as a gateway to an even more nebulous past. This collection explores medievalist media from the textual to the architectural, from *The Green Children of Woolpit* to *Refugee Tales*, and from Viking metal to Joan of Arc. For centuries the medieval has provided material for competing causes and cannot be contained within historical, political, or national borders. The essays show how the medieval is repeatedly co-opted and recreated, formed as much as formative - inviting us to ask why, and in service of what.



Re-using Manuscripts in Late Medieval England: Repairing, Recycling, Sharing

Hannah Ryley (Boydell & Brewer, 2022)

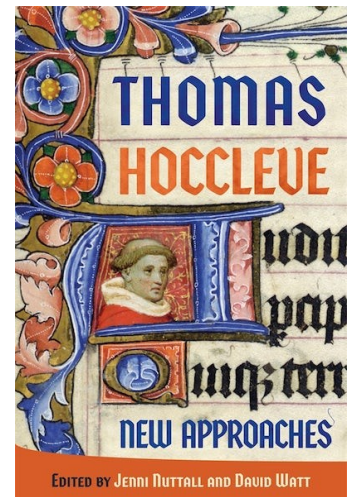
During the "long fifteenth century" (here, 1375-1530), the demand for books in England flourished. The fast-developing book trade produced them in great quantity. Fragments of manuscripts were often repurposed, as flyleaves and other components such as palimpsests; and alongside the creation of new books, medieval manuscripts were also repaired, recycled and re-used.

This monograph examines the ways in which people sustained older books, exploring the practices and processes by which manuscripts were crafted, mended, protected, marked, gifted and shared. Drawing on the codicological evidence gathered from an extensive survey of extant manuscript collections, in conjunction with historical accounts, recipes and literary texts, it presents detailed case studies exploring parchment production and recycling, the re-use of margins, and second-hand exchanges of books. Its engagement with the evidence in - and inscribed on - surviving books enables a fresh appraisal of late medieval manuscript culture in England, looking at how people went about re-using books, and arguing that over the course of this period, books were made, used and re-used in a myriad of sustainable ways

Thomas Hoccleve: New Approaches

Edited by Jennifer Nuttall and David Watt (DS Brewer, 2022)

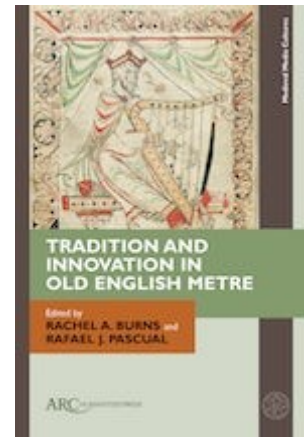
The Middle English poet Thomas Hoccleve, known particularly for his entertainingly biographical verse describing life as a Privy Seal clerk in early fifteenth-century Westminster, is now recognised as a key figure in the literature of later medieval England. This volume, the first collection of essays devoted to Hoccleve since 1996, both confirms his importance in shaping the English poetic tradition after Chaucer's death and demonstrates the depth of ongoing critical interest in Hoccleve's work in its own right. Chapters explore the idiosyncratic forms of his two principle works, *The Regiment of Princes* and *Series*, as well as Hoccleve's distinctive imagery of moving feet, of swelling and bursting bodies, and of the actions of personified Death. Other essays consider the presence of the figure of the woman reader, the part played by the codex in posthumous literary sanctification, the links between Hoccleve's formulary of model letters and documents and his own verse, and the mutually informing relations of Hoccleve's minor poetry and major works. They are preceded by a substantial introduction, considering contemporary responses to Hoccleve in the light of current trends in literary criticism and surveying the reception of his works between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries.



Tradition and Innovation in Old English Metre

Edited by Rachel A. Burns and Rafael J. Pascual (ARC Humanities Press, 2022)

The importance of metrical analysis to the broad work of textual criticism and literary analysis cannot be overstated. In the thirty years since the publication of R. D. Fulk's *A History of Old English Meter*, metrical theory has been brought to bear on questions of poetic style, dating and literary history, linguistics and language history, editing practice, manuscript analysis and scribal practice. The essays in this collection include contributions from both new scholars and established metrists. They focus on the application of metrical study to literary criticism and manuscript studies, engaging with current debate and offering new perspectives on the crucial role of metre to Old English scholarship.



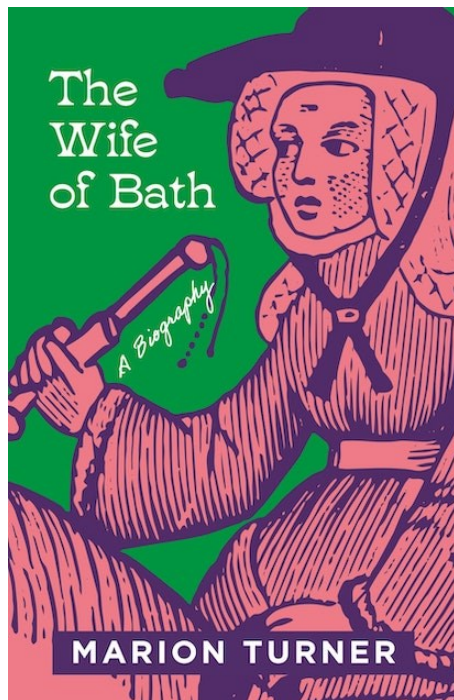
Unerhörte Frauen: Die Netzwerke der Nonnen im Mittelalter

Henrike Lähnemann and Eva Schlotheuber (Propyläen 2023)

Unerhörte Frauen presents the world of the religious women in their own voices and art works :What were their motives? What was their cloistered life like? How did they think and how did they live? Based on the diary of a nun from Braunschweig, 1.800 letters from the Benedictine convent of Lüne, and material evidence from Northern German convents such as Ebstorf World Map, Wienhausen Tristan tapestry, and the black Maurice from Medingen. [Reading sample in German](#). [Reading sample in English](#). A prize for the best catchy title for the English translation which is currently in preparation “Unerhört” covers both ‘Unheard’ and ‘Unheard-of’. Suggestions so far include ‘Unheard and unherdable’, ‘Outrageous Habits’, and ‘(N)unheard’ or to make the sub-title into the main title: ‘Networking Nuns’.



<http://medingen.seh.ox.ac.uk/index.php/2023/06/03/unerhorte-frauen/>



The Wife of Bath: A Biography

Marion Turner (Princeton University Press, 2023)

Ever since her triumphant debut in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the Wife of Bath, arguably the first ordinary and recognisably real woman in English literature, has obsessed readers—from Shakespeare to James Joyce, Voltaire to Pasolini, Dryden to Zadie Smith. Few literary characters have led such colourful lives or matched her influence or capacity for reinvention in poetry, drama, fiction, and film. In *The Wife of Bath*, Marion Turner tells the fascinating story of where Chaucer's favourite character came from, how she related to real medieval women, and where her many travels have taken her since the fourteenth century, from Falstaff and Molly Bloom to #MeToo and Black Lives Matter. Entertaining and enlightening,

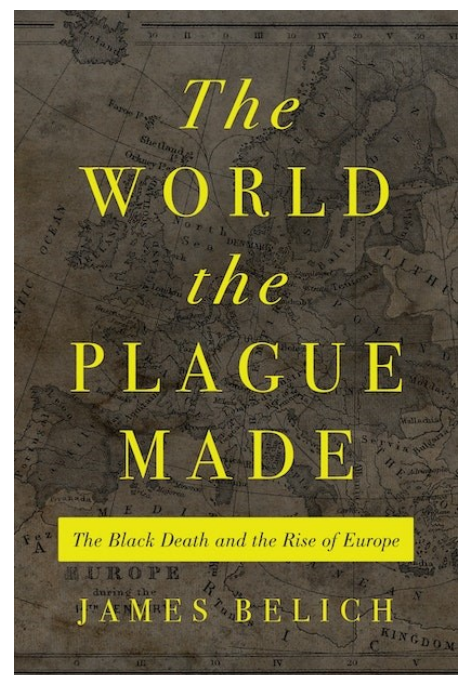
funny and provocative, *The Wife of Bath* is a one-of-a-kind history of a literary and feminist icon who continues to capture the imagination of readers.

The World the Plague Made: The Black Death and the Rise of Europe

James Belich (Princeton University Press, 2022)

In 1346, a catastrophic plague beset Europe and its neighbours. The Black Death was a human tragedy that abruptly halved entire populations and caused untold suffering, but it also brought about a cultural and economic renewal on a scale never before witnessed. James Belich takes readers across centuries and continents to shed new light on one of history's greatest paradoxes. Why did Europe's dramatic rise begin in the wake of the Black Death? Belich shows how plague doubled the per capita endowment of everything even as it decimated the population. Many more people had disposable incomes. Demand grew for silks, sugar, spices, furs, gold, and slaves. Europe expanded to satisfy that demand—and plague provided the means. Labour scarcity drove more use of waterpower, wind power, and gunpowder. Technologies like water-powered blast furnaces, heavily gunned galleons, and musketry were fast-tracked by plague. A new “crew culture” of “disposable males” emerged to man the guns and galleons.

Setting the rise of Western Europe in global context, Belich demonstrates how the mighty empires of the Middle East and Russia also flourished after the plague, and how European expansion was deeply entangled with the Chinese and other peoples throughout the world.

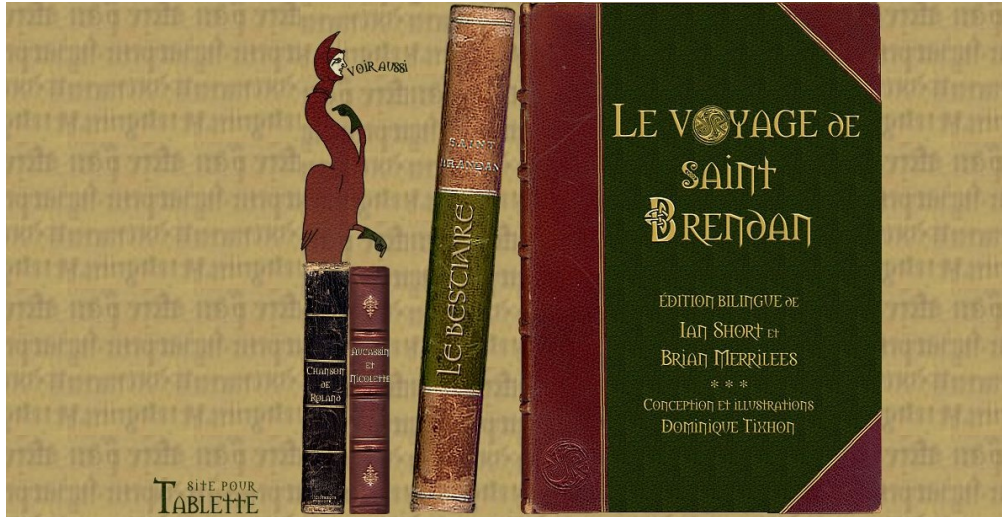


Seminars and Reading Groups

The following research seminars and reading groups ran in 2022-23 (in alphabetical order)

Anglo-Norman Reading Group

(Jane Bliss)



The group is now nearly as old as the century! It was born of a chance conversation in the Taylorian Library, as we deplored an apparent lack of interest in Anglo-Norman. From the outset we were keen to build an informal and collaborative forum for reading, discussing, and translating a wide variety of texts. We welcome all comers, primarily graduate students but also numerous others, whatever their level of knowledge. We study the literature of Anglo-Norman (the insular French of the Middle Ages), presenting and translating texts chosen according to members' needs or suggestions. The range of material is inclusive: romance, chronicle, saints' life, religious material, letters, legal texts, and much more. When possible, we invite a guest speaker, or (for example) the editor of a work in progress. Recent texts have included the Anglo-Norman life of *St Godric*, presented by one of its recent editors Margaret Coombe, and an *Apocalypse* edited and translated (with our help) by Antje Carroll. We even once presented extracts from one of our texts at the Medieval Road Show: dramatic readings from the *Maniere de Langage* in which sample conversations, some highly comic, are offered to the language student. Read more here: <https://medieval.ox.ac.uk/2023/07/09/anglo-norman-reading-group/>

Groups Ctd.

- Bibitura Dantis Oxoniensis
- Byzantine Graduate Seminar
- Celtic Seminars
- Continental Old French Reading Group
- Cross-Cultural Entanglements Oxbridge Group
- Discussion Group: Governability across the medieval globe

Early Medieval Britain and Ireland Network

(Meredith Cutrer)



Oxford Centre for Early Medieval Britain & Ireland

@OxfordEarlyMedieval 440 Abonnenten 3 Videos

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The videos posted on this channel are part of Oxford's Centre for Early Me... >

ÜBERSICHT

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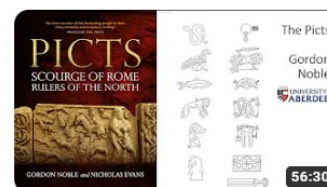
Stolen Sheep & Wandering Cows:
Reclaiming Lost & Stolen Property in...

297 Aufrufe • vor 3 Monaten



Tintagel in Late Antiquity: Recent
Excavations and Research with...

8559 Aufrufe • vor 7 Monaten



Discovering the Northern Picts with
Professor Gordon Noble

15.389 Aufrufe • vor 9 Monaten

OMS generously sponsored three lectures in the 2022-2023 academic year for the Early Medieval Britain and Ireland Network. The first was held in November with Professor Gordon Noble, whose award-winning archaeological dig excavating important sites associated with the Northern Picts has garnered international attention. His fascinating talk provided an overview of his team's latest excavations and recent findings.

The second talk was another wonderful archaeological talk, this time by Dr Jacqueline Nowakowski of the Cornwall Archaeological Unit. Dr Nowakowski presented the findings from the two-year dig she oversaw on the earliest portions of Tintagel Castle. Her lecture highlighted Tintagel's well-deserved reputation for being a site of great importance for the study of early medieval Britain. Despite the tremendous number of artefacts from around the Mediterranean uncovered on the site, however, her team's findings reveal that these items were imported during a relatively short amount of time so may have been for a particular client with a penchant for foreign luxury items rather than indicative of widespread, long-term interaction between Tintagel and the Mediterranean.

The third talk was by Professor Charlene Eska, an expert in early medieval law. Her fascinating talk discussed a recently discovered vernacular law tract from medieval Ireland discussing the proper procedure for recovering lost or stolen property. She offered an entertaining and insightful comparative analysis of Ireland's approach with diverse legal systems including those from neighboring Wales to the laws of the Hittites, Hammurabi, and even the Chi'in. Her talk highlighted important points of commonality and offered appropriate caution to assuming similarities in laws necessarily means

borrowing, when in fact it could just be various peoples coming up with common sense solutions to everyday problems on their own.

All the talks were recorded and put onto the Early Medieval Britain and Ireland YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/@OxfordEarlyMedieval/videos>

Groups Ctd.

- Early Slavonic Webinar
- Europe in the Later Middle Ages
- GLARE (Greek, Latin, and Reception) Reading Group
- Invisible East Seminar
- Late Antique and Byzantine Seminar
- Medieval Archaeology Seminar
- Medieval Book Club
- Medieval Church and Culture
- Medieval Commentary Network
- Medieval English Research Seminar
- Medieval French Research Seminar

Medieval German Seminar

(Henrike Lähnemann)



Apollonius crosses the wheel bridge ([Gotha](#), [Forschungsbibl. der Universität Erfurt, Cod. Chart. A 689](#) fol. 89v)

In a tradition going back to the first Chair in Medieval German, Peter Ganz, the medieval Germanists meet every Wednesday 11:15-12:45 in one of the Colleges to discuss a text or a topic agreed by the whole community. Part of the fun is that we generally try to find topics on which nobody is currently working and which we can explore together. But we gratefully make use of the specialist expertise offered by visitors, be they here for a guest lecture, a term, or a year. We profited in MT in Somerville for the topic ‘Dietrichsepik’ from the expertise of Ruth von Bernuth (Chapel Hill) talking on the Yiddish

‘Sigenot’, in HT in Oriel on Heinrich von Neustadt’s ‘Apollonius von Tyrland’ from Julia Brusa (Geneva) on the mirror column in the Golden Valley, and in TT in St Edmund Hall for ‘Von Gottes Zukunft’ from Magdalena Butz (Munich) about the incarnation in this apocalyptic text.

Medieval Church and Culture

(Lesley Smith)



Valentine's Day at the Medieval Church and Culture seminar featured a enthralling talk from Dr Federica Gigante, Curator of the Collection from the Islamic World at the History of Science Museum in Oxford. Federica showed us the many places where Islamic textiles can be found in medieval Christian religious settings - places we've all seen, but never realised what we were looking at. Islamic silks were used to wrap saints' bones, or were depicted as *trompe l'oeuil* hangings on church walls - such as here in the upper basilica in Assisi: The images can be linked to surviving Islamic textiles and often feature kufic or pseudo-kufic script in a band along the top, with Islamic religious messages. Perhaps the most fascinating set of images Federica showed was the depiction of a whole Islamic tent in the chancel of a medieval convent in Ferrara, Sant'Antonio in Polesine - still extant, though with later interpolations. Why a tent might be painted on the walls of a convent chancel prompted lively speculation from the audience, and we all went away with our eyes opened for when we next spot textiles in churches.

Groups Ctd.

- Medieval History Seminar
- Medieval Italian Seminar
- Medieval Latin Document Reading Group
- Medieval Latin Manuscript Reading Group
- Medieval Misuse Reading Group
- Medieval Trade Reading Group
- Medieval Visual Culture Seminar
- Middle High German Reading Group
- Old English Reading Group
- Old High German and Germanic Reading Group
- Old Norse Reading Group
- Oxford Latinitas
- Oxford University Heraldry Society
- Oxford University Numismatic Society
- Pre-Modern Conversations
- Queer and Trans Medievalisms: A Reading and Research Group
- Seminar in Manuscript Studies and Palaeography
- Seminars in Medieval and Renaissance Music

About

Oxford Medieval Studies is one of the largest forums in the world for interdisciplinary research on the Middle Ages, bringing together over 200 academics and a large body of graduate students. The period of a thousand years from c.500 to c.1500 saw huge social change, political upheaval, technological revolution, intellectual debate, and artistic innovation across Europe and the wider world. In Oxford, medieval studies link disciplines such as Archaeology; Art History; Byzantine Studies; Classics; English; History; European, Middle- and Far-Eastern languages; Music; Philosophy; Theology and Religion; and work with heritage sites and institutions such as the Ashmolean Museum and the Bodleian Library. It also offers an interdisciplinary Master's degree in [Medieval Studies](#).

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*A Medievalist takes a break from the flowers of wisdom to
smell the flowers of University Parks*

Ashmole Bestiary, Bodleian Library MS. Ashmole 1511, f. 10v (from
Luisa Ostacchini's weekly offerings of medieval wisdom & images)

Up-to-date calendar of all events

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