



School of Arts
Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing

MA Medieval Literature & Culture

2019-2020

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Term Dates

| Autumn Term | Spring Term | Summer Term |
|---|--|---|
| Monday 30 September 2019 to Friday 13 December 2019 | Monday 13 January 2020 to Friday 27 March 2020 | Monday 27 April 2020 to Friday 10 July 2020 |

- **MA Medieval Literature and Culture induction: Thursday 26th September 6.00-7.00pm ([43 Gordon Square](#), room B01)**
- **MA induction (for all MA programmes): Thursday 26th September 7.00-8.00pm (room B04, 43 Gordon Square) followed by a reception in room G10 (43 Gordon Square) 8.00-9.00pm**
- **University Library (Senate House) induction: Date and time TBC**

Key personnel you need to know include:

Dr Michael Bintley, Course Director

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Administration Team

Programme administrator: Esther Ranson

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School of Arts, 43 Gordon Square

Introduction

Welcome to the MA in Medieval Literature and Culture in the Department of English & Humanities. This programme offers the opportunity to make a special study of the medieval period, considering the richness and diversity of its literature, art and history. On this programme it is possible to study in either an interdisciplinary or in a more literary way.

The core course, Medieval Text and Intertext, focuses on the relationships between medieval literary texts, looking at medieval literary theory. It offers students ways to consider a reading culture which is different from our own and specialist coaching in the resources which support study in medieval literature.

The Department of English occupies houses in Gordon Square which are associated with the members of the Bloomsbury Group. 46 Gordon Square was the family home of Virginia Woolf, her brothers and her sister, Vanessa, until the latter's marriage to the art critic Clive Bell in 1907. It was later occupied by the economist John Maynard Keynes.

MA Programme Director/ Personal Tutors

The MA Programme Director is available to discuss your progress through the degree and to answer any questions you may have about the course. In addition, each student will be assigned a Personal Tutor. The MA Programme Director for the current year is Dr Michael Bintley. Appointments with him, your Personal Tutor, and Optional Module convenors should be arranged on an individual basis, either during the tutor's office hours or at any other mutually convenient time. Please get in touch with tutors by phone or by email.

The Department Office

The Department Office is at 43 Gordon Square and is open from 10.00am to 6.00pm, from Monday to Friday. Outside of the office hours of 10.00am to 6.00pm you can leave a voicemail, send a query to englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk or book an appointment during office hours, or you may visit the Student Advice Service Helpdesk in Malet Street.

Programme Structure

Part-time Study

| | Autumn | Spring | Summer |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Year One | Core Module | Option Module 1 | Approaching Research in Medieval Studies |
| Year Two | Option Module 2 | Option Module 3 | Approaching Research in Medieval Studies Dissertation Research and Submission of Dissertation |

Full-time Study

| | Autumn | Spring | Summer |
|----------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Year One | Core Module Option Module 1 | Option Module 2 Option Module 3 | Approaching Research in Medieval Studies Dissertation Research and Submission of Dissertation |

Option modules run over one term and take up ten teaching weeks. Reading weeks are observed in most courses in week 6. As Medieval Literature and Culture is an interdisciplinary course, drawing on modules from several departments, starting dates, times of classes and reading weeks can vary. You should always check the dates on which modules start with the lecturer. Similarly essay deadlines may vary from module to module and you must check with your tutor to make sure of these.

Students may choose to study Latin, too, although this is not an assessed element of the course. Latin is offered at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. If you are interested in taking this option you should get in touch with the course director or administrator before the course begins.

Attendance Requirements

Taking a degree course at Birkbeck requires a high level of commitment; it is important that you attend lectures and classes consistently. **Birkbeck College enforces a 75% attendance policy. It is your responsibility to make sure you use your card on the e-card reader to register at every class you attend.** It is accepted that through illness or exceptional pressure at home or at work you may have to miss occasional classes. If you do have to miss a class please notify the module tutor, Programme Director and administrator by email.

Module Timetable

| Autumn Term | | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|-------------|-------------------|--------|--|-----------|--|--------|
| | 6.00 - 7.20 | | <p>Medieval Material Texts (Core Module or option module for 2nd years) Isabel Davis and Mike Bintley</p> <p>Magic, Science and Religion in the Renaissance, Stephen Clucas</p> <p>Art and Devotion in Fifteenth-Century Italy, Robert Maniura</p> | | | |
| | 6.00 - 8.00 | | | | <p>Imagined Landscapes of the Middle Ages, Kate Franklin</p> <p>Death, Disease, and the Early Modern City, Vanessa Harding</p> | |

| Spring Term | | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|---|---|---|---------------|
| | 6.00 - 7.20 | | Songs of the Earth: Texts and Landscapes in Early Medieval England, Mike Bintley | The Art of Persuasion, Dorigen Caldwell | | |
| | 6.00 - 8.00 | | | | Renaissance Florence, John Henderson | |
| Summer Term | | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| | 6.00 - 7.20 | | Summer Core: Approaching Research into Medieval Culture (compulsory for both 1 st and 2 nd years) (6-7.20) | | | |
| | 6.00 - 8.00 | | | To See the World in a Grain of Sand, Brodie Waddell | | |

As well as these options, which are the most applicable to this programme, it might be possible for you to take others from other programmes. You should contact the programme director if you want to take a module from another programme.

Core Module: Medieval Material Texts

AREN189S7

Autumn, Tuesdays 6-7.30 pm

Tutors: Dr Mike Bintley and Dr Isabel Davis

Overview

This course will focus on medieval English material texts, thinking about writing and reading in a manuscript culture. It will consider the question of books, parchment, and documents of different kinds, looking at the relationship between their contents and their physical form. Students will look at the practical topics of how books were made, bought, and consumed in different moments and places in the Middle Ages. It will ask about the relation in medieval manuscript culture between text, image and performance and explore the interrelationship between literature and other sorts of writing: legal and bureaucratic, ecclesiastical and devotional. Students will be encouraged to consider the intellectual questions which surround book production and consumption, issues such as: how reading and book production changes over time; what literacy means, perhaps particularly in relation to social status and gender; how book production might have been controlled and censored; what impact printing and other technological innovations (such as digitization) have had on the reception of medieval texts and images.

This module aims to

- extend students' knowledge of medieval material texts of all kinds.
- explore the relationship between text, image and performance in medieval culture.
- expose the sophistication of medieval textual productions.
- investigate the connections between the contents and format of medieval manuscripts.
- consider the history of book production and consumption across the medieval period.
- investigate the impact of printing at the end of the medieval period

Assessment

1 x 5000-word essay, the topic and title to be discussed at a tutorial. Deadline 2pm, 13th January 2020 via Turnitin.

Indicative reading list

Suggested preparatory reading

- Raymond Clemens and Timothy Graham, *Introduction to Manuscript Studies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).
- Richard Gameson (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain [volume 1], c.400-1100* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

- Lotte Helling and J. B. Trapp (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain [volume 3], 1400/1557* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- Nigel J. Morgan and Rodney M. Thomson, *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain [volume 2], 1100-1400* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Further background reading

- Peter Beal, *A Dictionary of English Manuscript Terminology 1450-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Arthur Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages: Forming Compilations in Medieval London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
- Julia Boffey, *Manuscript and Print in London c. 1475-1530* (London: British Library, 2012).
- Michelle P. Brown, *Manuscripts from the Anglo-Saxon Age* (London: British Library, 2007).
- Alexandra Gillespie and Daniel Wakelin, *The Production of Books in England 1350-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- A. S. G. Edwards and Vincent Gillespie (eds.), *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Studies in Memory of Jeremy Griffiths* (London: British Library, 2000).
- Mary P. Richards (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: Basic Readings* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1994).

A Course of Independent Directed Reading

AREN112S7

Autumn, Spring or Summer Term

By arrangement with the Course Director, Dr Michael Bintley

In place of one of the timetabled Option modules, the Course of Directed Reading can be taken by a student whose interests cannot be catered elsewhere and, subject to the Course Director's approval, can be supported by a member of academic staff. In consultation with the Course Director, the student will put together a research topic and then have 3 meetings with a member of academic staff; after the first of these meetings, a compulsory indicative bibliography will be produced. Amongst other things, the member of academic staff will advise on appropriate libraries, bibliographies, online resources as well as helping frame and refine the topic of enquiry. The subject of study could involve work in specialised languages such as Old English, Old Norse, Middle English, Latin and medieval Anglo-French, or specialised skills, such as palaeography or book history, or a clearly defined topic not covered by other modules available.

Learning Objectives and Aims

The course will enable students to:

- Develop an expertise in a specific and well-defined subject area through primary materials.
- Develop information-gathering, bibliographic, archival and writing skills.
- Interpret, analyse and interrogate a specific set of sources. If appropriate, this will be done in the original language or in the original media (e.g. manuscript)
- Develop the relevant skills with which to interrogate successfully these sources
- Demonstrate an awareness of the secondary scholarly bibliography around a given subject in specific terms
- Use libraries and relevant archives or institutions to develop an in-depth bibliography and critical perspective
- Work closely with a member of academic staff, using their advice to guide their research and writing
- Develop expertise in a specific subject-area and begin research-led scholarly activities

Assessment

| Assignment | Description | Weighting |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Indicative Bibliography | | 10% |
| Assessed Essay | 5000 Words | 90% |

The deadline for this module will usually be the first day of the following term. However, if taken in the summer term it will be the same day as the dissertation (deadline 7.9.2020)

Option Module Information

Please also look at the other options offered on the [timetable](#) above

Autumn term

Death, Disease, and the Early Modern City

HICL218S7

Autumn, Thursdays 6-8pm

Professor Vanessa Harding

Module Description

Early modern cities were widely, and often rightly, regarded as deadly environments. They contained large concentrations of population, often poorly fed and housed, and drawn from a wide migration pool. Infant mortality was high; diseases such as typhus, smallpox and tuberculosis prospered, and plague epidemics periodically swept through. In this course we will examine the characteristics of disease, demography and mortality in the city, and the medical and social resources which contemporaries drew upon. We also consider the social and psychic impact of mortality, and the interaction of different needs that determined how the dead were buried. We will concentrate on London between c.1550 and 1700, but include comparative study of some other European cities. You will be introduced to the main themes and historiographical debates of this period of study, and encouraged to develop a critical approach to sources and secondary literature.

Indicative Module Content

- Urban demographics: the history of population; migration; the demography of London
- Morbidity and mortality: the Bills of Mortality; causes of death; nutrition and disease; mothers and children; the environment; health and social topography; poverty and poor relief
- Care and cure: medicine and medical practice; professionals and empirics; public health; lay attitudes to health and disease
- Plague epidemics: epidemiology and impact; public responses; private impacts; the survival of society
- Dealing with death: old age and the approach of death; wills, willmaking and the good death; funerals; burying the dead: the politics of space; corpses and commemoration

Assessment

One essay of 5000-5500 words (100%)

Recommended Reading

- L Brockliss and C Jones (1997) *The Medical World of Early Modern France*.
 - R Finlay (1997) *Population and Metropolis: the Demography of London 1580-1640*.
 - TR Forbes (1971) *Chronicle from Aldgate: Life and Death in Shakespeare's London*.
 - M Pelling (1998) *The Common Lot: Sickness, Medical Occupations and the Urban Poor in Early Modern England*.
 - P Slack (1985) *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England*.
 - J Walter and R Schofield (eds.) (1989) *Famine, Disease and the Social Order in Early Modern Society*.
-

Imagined Landscapes of the Middle Ages

SSHC488S7

Autumn: Thursdays 6-8pm

Dr Kathryn Franklin

Module Description

Are there any connections between the Heroic Fantasy of Frank Frazetta, the new satanism, Excalibur, the Avalon sagas, and Jacques Le Goff? If they met aboard some unidentified flying object near Montailou, would Darth Vader, Jacques Fournier, and Parsifal speak the same language? And if so, would it be a galactic pidgin or the Latin of the Gospel according to St. Luke Skywalker? - Umberto Eco, 1986

This module sets out to explore the history of the middle ages through landscapes of medieval imagination. If we define 'imagined landscapes' as the frameworks through which people in the middle ages situated themselves in text, in art, in historical argument and in built spaces, then we can undertake to trace the ways that imagined landscapes served both as the setting for medieval lives and as an agent in medieval history. Beyond this, by taking as our object the world as medieval people imagined it, we are confronted by a hybridisation of our data; this module will look at epigraphy and epics, charters and poems, songs, site plans and sagas, romances and records of journeys. As historians, what happens if we let the distinctions between these forms of landscape representation blur? How do we reconstruct medieval places that were read and recited as well as walked? Finally, the course also explores the afterlives of medieval spatial imaginaries in modernity, asking to what extent we continue to dwell in medieval landscapes.

Indicative Module Content

- Introductions: medieval/imaginations
- Beyond the castle walls
- Gardens
- Wilderness: knights of green and red

- Strangers in distant lands
- Otherworlds
- 1001 nights
- Heaven and hell
- Romancing the ruins
- Dreaming of the middle ages

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be:

- familiar with historiographical narratives relating to the construction of medieval social space
- familiar with primary text examples that shape/reveal the narrative construction of space in the middle ages
- familiar with techniques of landscape production, perception and representation which shaped medieval cultures
- able to reflect on the links between medieval imaginaries of space/place/landscape and early modern and modern perceptions of medieval places
- able to analyse the relationships between and across genres of textual evidence informing on medieval spatial imaginaries
- able to reflect critically on the similarities and differences between ‘literary’ and ‘historical’ texts as sources for culture history.

Assessment: a 4000-word essay (80%) and 1000-word response paper (20%)

Magic, Science and Religion in the Renaissance

ENHU071S7

Autumn: Tuesdays 6-7.20pm

Dr Stephen Clucas

Module Description

This module investigates the relations between some of the major intellectual currents in Early Modern Europe, the complex interplay between its various kinds of magic, science and religion. The course calls into question conventional forms of historiography that contrast a benighted illicit magic to either a pious religiosity or enlightened science and helps the student develop a familiarity with the theories and practices of those engaged in what has been called “the Other Side of the Scientific Revolution”. The course considers the boundaries of acceptable knowledge and the particular communicability of its forms in Renaissance and Reformation Europe. Discussing the works of significant early modern thinkers (including Agrippa, Bacon, Browne, Copernicus, Dee, Della Porta, Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, Paracelsus, and Reuchlin), it will look at the interaction between magical, religious, and humanist discourse, the relations between ‘occult’ and ‘scientific’ forms of knowledge and natural and supernatural forms of experience and agency. By the end of the

course the student will have considered ‘occult’ subjects as astrology, alchemy, cabala, natural and ceremonial magic, as well as works traditionally associated with the Scientific Revolution (such as Copernicus’s *De revolutionibus* and Kepler’s *De Harmonia Mundi*) in the context of contemporary religious belief.

Assessment:

| Assignment | Description | Weighting |
|----------------|-------------|-----------|
| Assessed Essay | 5000 Words | 100% |

Reading List

The following list includes full bibliographical details of the primary and secondary texts used in the course, together with some additional works which students may wish to consult in order to broaden their knowledge of the field. Good short introductions to the ‘scientific revolution’ (the so-called ‘paradigm shift’ between Renaissance and Modern ‘science’) by Peter Dear, John Henry and Steven Shapin (all available in economical paperback form) are asterisked. Students might also wish to take a closer look at the excellent collection of essays edited by Robert Westman and David Lindberg, *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*. Essays from this collection by Copenhaver (on Hermeticism and early modern science), Westman (on Copernicus) and Ashworth (on Renaissance natural history) will be studied on the course, but there are other excellent pieces in the collection. All students are *strongly recommended* to read the essays by Andrew Cunningham listed below on the problematic use of the term ‘science’ for the study of the physical world in the early modern period (when it was usually called ‘natural philosophy’).

Primary Texts

- Albertus Magnus, *Speculum Astronomiae*, ed. Paola Zambelli, *The Speculum Astronomiae and its Enigma: Astrology, Theology and Science in Albertus Magnus and his Contemporaries* (Dordrecht, Boston and London: Kluwer, 1992).
- — —, *The book of secrets of Albertus Magnus of the virtues of herbs, stones and certain beasts. Also A book of the marvels of the world*, ed. Michael R. Best and Frank H. Brightman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973).
- Al-Kindi, *De radiis siue theorica magica*, ed. M. T. D’Alverny and F. Hudry, *Archive d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen age*, 47 (1980), pp. 277–87 [Latin only, translated extracts provided].
- Ashmole, Elias, *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* (London, 1652), facsimile edition ed. Allen G. Debus (New York/London: Johnson reprint corporation, 1967).
- Bacon, Francis, *Sylva sylvarum: or a Naturall Historie. In ten centuries ... Published after the Authors death. By William Rawley* (London, 1627), extracts in Arthur Johnston (ed.) *Francis Bacon* (London: Batsford, 1965).
- Bacon, William, *The Roman Secrett*, British Library, Sloane MS 3851, ff. 109v–111r.
- Browne, Sir Thomas, *Pseudodoxia Epidemica or Enquiries into very many received tenets and commonly presumed truths* (London, 1646) in Geoffrey Keynes (ed.) *Sir Thomas Browne. Selected Writings* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968).
- Copernicus, Nicolaus, *De revolutionibus*, trans. Edward Rosen, ed. Jerzy Dobrzycki, *On the*

- revolutions* (London : Macmillan, 1978).
- Dee, John, *Propaedeumata aphoristica* (London, 1568), trans. Wayne Shumaker, *John Dee on astronomy 'Propaedeumata aphoristica' (1558 and 1568), Latin and English edited and translated [from the Latin], with general notes, by Wayne Shumaker with an introductory essay on Dee's mathematics and physics and his place in the scientific revolution by J.L. Heilbron* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).
- — —, *The Mathematicall Praeface to the Elements of geometrie of Euclid of Megara* (London, 1570) facsimile edition ed. Allen G. Debus (New York: Science History Publications, 1975).
- Della Mirandola, Pico, *900 Theses [De Adscriptis numero noningentis: Dialecticis: Moralibus: Physicis: Mathematicis: Metaphysicis Theologicis: Magicis: Cabalisticis: cu suis: tum sapientum Chaldeorum: Arabum: Hebreorum Graecorum Aegyptiorum: latinorumque placitis disputabit publice Johannes Picus Mirandulanus concordie Comes* (Rome, 1486)], trans. Stephen A. Farmer, *Syncretism in the west : Pico's 900 theses (1486) the evolution of traditional religious and philosophical systems with text, translation and commentary* (Tempe, Ariz. Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998).
- — —, *De Hominis Dignitate*, available online (with Latin and English texts, and commentary) at: www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/pico/ (available at this URL January 2015).
- Della Porta, Giovanni-Battista, *Magiae Naturalis, sive de miraculis rerum naturalium libri IIII* (1558), anon. trans., *Natural Magick ... in twenty bookes* (London, 1658; facsimile edition New York: Basic Books, 1957).
- Del Rio, Martin, *Martín Del Rio - investigations into magic*, ed. P.G. Stuart-Maxwell (Manchester Manchester University Press 2000).
- Ficino, Marsilio, *Epistolae*, trans., *The letters of Marsilio Ficino, translated from the Latin by members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, London* (London: Shephard-Walwyn, 1975-).
- — —, *De vita libri tres*, ed. and trans. Carol V. Kaske and John R. Clark, *Three books on life* (Tempe, Arizona: Mediaeval and renaissance Texts and Studies, 1998).
- Gilbert, William, *De Magnete, magneticisque corporibus, et de magno magnete tellure; Physiologia nova, plurimis & argumentis, & experimentis demonstrata* (London, 1600), trans. P. Fleury Mottelay, *On the loadstone and magnetic bodies by William Gilbert etc* (Chicago and London : William Benton, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952).
- Grosseteste, Robert, *De Lineis, angulis et figuris*, in Grant, Edward, *The Foundations of Modern Science in the Middle Ages: Their religious, institutional and intellectual contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 385–88.
- Lambsprinck, *Lambspring, das ist: Ein herrlicher Teutscher Tractat vom Philosophischen Steine*, [Translated extracts provided]
- Liber virtutis*, anon., British Library, Harleian MS 181, ff. 1r–5r.
- Philalethes, Eireneaus, *An Exposition upon sir George Ripley's Vision*, reprinted in Stanislaus Klossowski de Rola, *Alchemy: The Secret Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973).
- Pelagius Solitarius [Pseud.], *De arte crucifixi*, British Library, Harleian MS 181, ff. 75r–81r [translation provided]
- Ripley, George, *The compound of alchymy, or the ancient hidden Art of Archemie* (London, 1591) facsimile edition (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1977).
- Turner, Robert, *Ars notoria: The notory art of Solomon Shewing the Cabalistical key of*

Magical Operations, The liberal Sciences, Divine Revelation, and The Art of Memory (London, 1657), digital online edition by Joseph H. Peterson, 1986 at <http://www.esotericarchives.com/notoria/notoria.htm> [currently online: January 2015]
Weyer, Johann, *De praestigiis daemonum*, trans. John Shea, *Witches, devils, and doctors in the Renaissance* (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1991).

Art and Devotion in Fifteenth-Century Italy

ARVC118S7

Autumn: Tuesdays 6-7.20

Dr Robert Maniura

Module Description

This module aims to generate a fresh approach to a much-studied period. The fifteenth century in Italy has long been regarded as a turning point in the history of art, and the self-conscious emulation of the art and learning of the classical world has been taken as the defining characteristic of the period. This 'Renaissance' is often paired with the Reformation of the sixteenth century and presented as a comprehensive challenge to received ideas. Yet the culture of the fifteenth century remained rooted in traditional religious observance and one of its most important legacies was its contribution to the transformation of the Christian visual tradition. This module uses the institutions and practices of traditional religion to structure an approach to the art of the period. It covers some of the most celebrated works in the western canon, not as independent aesthetic objects but as integral parts of a rich ritual system.

Assessment: 5000 word essay (100%)

Recommended Reading

- Ajmar-Wollheim, Marta and Flora Dennis (eds), *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (London: V&A, 2006).
- Baxandall, M., *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy* (Oxford, 1972).
- Burke, Jill, *Changing Patrons: Social Identity and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Florence* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004).
- Crum, Roger J. and John T. Paoletti (eds), *Renaissance Florence: A Social History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
- Hood, W., *Fra Angelico at San Marco* (London, 1993).
- Howard, Peter and Cynthia Troup (eds), *Cultures of Devotion: Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Religion* (Monash Publications in History, 2000).
- Paoletti, John T. and Gary M. Radke, *Art in Renaissance Italy* (London: Laurence King, 2001).
- Rubin, M., *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1991).
- Steinberg, L., *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion* (London, 1984).

- Swanson, R. N., *Religion and Devotion in Europe c.1215-c.1515*(Cambridge, 1995).
 - Syson, L. and N. Mann ed., *The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the Renaissance* (London, 1998).
 - Trexler, R. C., *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (Ithaca and London, 1980).
 - van Os, H. et al., *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300-1500* (London, 1994).
 - Verdon, T. and J. Henderson, *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento* (Syracuse, 1990).
 - Warburg, A., *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance* (Santa Monica, 1999).
 - Welch, E., *Art and Society in Italy 1350-1500* (Oxford, 1997).
 - Wisch, Barbara and Diane Cole Ahl (eds), *Confraternities and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy: Ritual, Spectacle, Image* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
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Spring term

Songs of the Earth: Texts and Landscapes in Early Medieval England

AREN243S7

Spring: Tuesdays 6-7.20

Dr Mike Bintley

Module Description

How did people living in the early Middle Ages think about the landscapes they inhabited, and how were their ideas shaped by literature and other texts? In what sorts of ways were the textual and material traditions of early medieval England moulded by external influences from places such as Rome, Scandinavia, and Ireland? How did this affect the development of ideas concerning ethnic identity, gender, power, and authority? This module will introduce you to the landscapes, spaces, and places of early medieval England through its literature, artefacts, architecture, and significant sites. We will consider a broad range of Old English poetry and prose in translation, alongside manuscript illustrations, stone sculpture, architecture, artefacts, and places, thinking about the way in which these texts reflect approaches to the landscapes of early medieval England. This module will consider a broad range of literary and historical contexts, including issues such as migration, conversion, the growth of the Church, the 'Viking Age', the Benedictine Reform, and the beginnings of urbanism.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- demonstrate a knowledge of key texts and topics reflecting the development of ideas about landscape in early medieval England
- recognize the intellectual, social, religious, political, and cultural contexts in which these ideas developed
- engage with secondary criticism and other forms of evidence including historical texts and material culture
- show an understanding of current approaches to landscape and environment in medieval studies

Assessment: a 5000-word essay

Primary Reading

- Bradley, S. A. J., *Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (Dent, 1982)
- Hamer, Richard, *A Choice of Anglo-Saxon Verse* (Faber, 2006)
- Heaney, Seamus, *Beowulf: A Verse Translation* (W. W. Norton and Co., 2002)
- North, Richard, and Michael D. J. Bintley, eds, *Andreas: An Edition* (Liverpool UP, 2016)

Secondary Reading

- Bintley, Michael D. J., *Trees in the Religions of Early Medieval England* (Boydell, 2015)
- ---- *Settlements and Strongholds in Early Medieval England: Texts, Landscapes, and Material Culture* (Brepols, 2019)
- Blair, John, *Building Anglo-Saxon England* (OUP, 2018)
- Clarke, Catherine A. M., *Literary Landscapes and the Idea of England, 700-1400* (D. S. Brewer, 2006)
- Discenza, Nicole Guenther, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place* (University of Toronto Press, 2017)
- Estes, Heide, *Anglo-Saxon Literary Landscapes* (AUP, 2017)
- Gittos, Helen, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England* (OUP, 2013)
- Howe, Nicholas, *Writing the Map of Anglo-Saxon England: Essays in Cultural Geography* (Yale UP, 2008)
- Lees, Clare A., and Gillian R. Overing, *A Place to Believe In: Locating Medieval Landscapes* (Penn. State Press, 2006)
- Langeslag, P. S., *Seasons in the Literatures of the Medieval North* (Boydell, 2015)
- Williamson, Tom, *Environment, Society and Landscape in Early Medieval England* (Boydell, 2013)

Renaissance Florence: Society, Religion, and Culture

HICL211S7

Spring: Thursdays 6-8pm

Professor John Henderson

Module Description

For centuries, Florence has played a central role in the study of the Renaissance, one of the most important cultural movements in western European history. However, gradually our perception of that movement has been subtly changed and enriched as the great artistic achievements have begun to be examined and understood within their socio-economic, religious and political context. In the process, traditional preconceptions of the Renaissance have been rethought, as has the enduring aesthetic of nineteenth-century writers such as Jacob Burckhardt, Walter Pater and John Ruskin. The course will thus begin by exploring the historiography of the Renaissance, a theme that will provide a link to subsequent classes, which will be framed by a critical assessment of recent research to include the economy, politics, religion, the family and disease.

Each class will discuss contemporary textual and visual evidence. Thus, shifts in the demographic and economic profile of the city will be examined through changes in the urban landscape, while recent work on the family and household can be studied through the extraordinarily detailed Catasto tax survey of 1427, in conjunction with diaries and material culture. This was linked closely to the central role of political and artistic patronage of leading patrician families, such as the Medici, and also of religious corporations including convents and friaries.

Indeed, one of the more striking shifts in recent years is the reassessment of the role of religion, as historians have moved away from the dominant secular paradigm towards a picture of the fundamental importance of devotion at all levels of society through an examination of ritual and the art of devotion. Another shift in the historiography has been the study of groups other than male patricians; much has been revealed, for example, about the multifarious roles of women, whether as daughters, wives, widows or nuns. Humbler sections of society have also been examined not just as recipients of institutional charity, but also as actors in both politics (the Ciompi revolt of 1378) and at the level of neighbourhood networks. All these themes will help us to appreciate the context of this period of great artistic and intellectual production.

Assessment: one essay of 5000-5500 words (100%)

Recommended Reading:

General

- M Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-century Italy* (Oxford, 1972).
- JC Brown and RC Davis (eds), *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy* (Harlow, 1998).
- J Burckhardt, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (London, 1978; 1st ed. 1860).
- P Burke, *The Italian Renaissance. Culture and Society in Italy* (Cambridge, 1986 rev. ed.).

- D Hay and J Law, *Italy in the Renaissance, 1380-1530* (London and New York, 1989).
- FW Kent and P Simons (eds), *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford, 1987).
- JJ Martin (ed.), *The Renaissance in Italy and Abroad: Rewriting Histories* (London and New York, 2003).
- E Welch, *Art and Society in Italy, 1350-1500* (Oxford, 1997).

On Florence

- JC Brown and RC Davis (eds), *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy* (London, 1998).
- GA Brucker, *Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1969; rev. ed. (Berkeley, 1983).
- G Ciappelli and P Rubin (eds), *Art, Memory and Society in Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge, 2000).
- SK Cohn, *The Laboring Classes of Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1980).
- P Findlen, MM Fontaine, DJ Osheim, *Beyond Florence. The Contours of Medieval and Early Modern Florence* (Stanford, 2003).
- RA Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History* (Baltimore, 1980).
- J Hale, *Florence and the Medici: the Pattern of Control* (London, 1977; rev. ed. London, 2001).
- J Henderson, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence* (Oxford, 1994, Chicago, 1997).
- C Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, 1985).
- J Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575* (Oxford, 2006).

Rome: Place, Continuity and Memory

AHVM084S7

Spring: Wednesdays 6-7.20 pm

Dr Dorigen Caldwell

In this option we will look at ways in which the ancient past has been referenced and enshrined in the evolution of the city of Rome from the Middle Ages to the present. We will begin with a consideration of the history of the city after the fall of the Empire and look at how successive generations of rulers and inhabitants used and re-used the remains of antiquity in their occupation and re-occupation of space. The legacy that antiquity bequeathed to later ages was so expansive and rich, both physically and symbolically, that it was mined time and again, creating a continuity between past and present which is inescapable even into the twenty-first century. We shall look at a variety of modes of appropriation and memorialisation, from the borrowings of buildings and materials in the Middle Ages, to the creation of classicizing styles and the revival of architectural types in the Renaissance, to the challenges faced by today's planners and archaeologists to create a contemporary city out of a heritage site. As well as looking at broader themes, we shall focus on case studies, which highlight the significance of place and memory in the city and how that has been incorporated into its modern identity.

Assessment:

| Assignment | Description | Weighting |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Assessed Essay | 5000 Words | 100% |

Key readings:

- Agnew, J., *Rome* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd), 1995
 - *Rome: Continuing Encounters Between Past and Present*, eds D. Caldwell and L. Caldwell, Aldershot, 2011
 - Jacks, Philip, *The antiquarian and the myth of antiquity: the origins of Rome in Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1993
 - Krautheimer, Richard, *Rome: Profile of a City 312-1308* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press), 1980
 - McGregor, J., *Rome from the Ground Up* (Cambridge Mass & London: Harvard Belknap), 2006
 - Weiss, Roberto, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity* (Oxford: Blackwells), 1969
-

Summer term

To See the World in a Grain of Sand: Reading and Writing Microhistories

SSHC428S7

Summer: Wednesday 6-8pm

Dr Brodie Waddell

Module Description

How much can we learn about the past through the story of a single person, place, object or event? For example, what can the inquisition of a heretical Italian miller tell us about popular beliefs in the age of Reformation? Since the 1970s, historians have attempted to show that such 'microhistories' can in fact reveal much about the grand sweep of history. By narrowing their focus to magnify the small, the particular and the local, these scholars have proven that studies of seemingly inconsequential subjects can have a major impact on our understanding of history.

This module will examine both the microhistories themselves and the extensive scholarship that has been produced explaining, refining, justifying and critiquing this approach. In most weeks, we will examine a particular microhistory. We will read several classics from the genre - including Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms*, Natalie Zemon Davies' *The Return of Martin Guerre* and Martin Darnton's 'The Great Cat Massacre' - as well as more recent innovative works of 'global microhistory' and 'object biography'. The primary focus will be on the period c.1500 to c.1800, but there will also be sessions on medieval and modern topics. The module will include at least one session with a scholar discussing their own experience of writing microhistory and a workshop based on a selection of primary sources, where we will discuss how we might write our own. In addition, by the end of the module, you will have explored the sorts of topics, methodologies and primary sources that could serve as a basis for a successful dissertation.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- display a good knowledge of the development of 'microhistory' approach, including its most prominent practitioners and their key works
- compare and contrast the approaches used by different microhistorians and to understand the reasons for difference
- handle primary sources with confidence and demonstrate the ability to see the implications of different methodological approaches to them
- understand how and why historians have conceptualised scale
- situate microhistory within wider debates about the development of the historical discipline.

Assessment: an essay of 5000-5500 words

Summer Core course for all students

Approaching Research into Medieval Literature and Culture

AREN049Z7

Tuesdays 6-7.20pm, weeks 1-5.

This course is a series of workshops and study-skills classes which all students should attend, including those who came to the course last year. There is no formal assessment, although students are asked to present different materials and contribute to class discussion.

Birkbeck Medieval Seminar

This is a free annual event which is specifically organized for Birkbeck students and is part of the core course provision. However, it is opened out to all in order to broaden the conversation. Usually there are four speakers and time for discussion on a dedicated theme. Topic and details for 2020 to be confirmed. When they are available details will be posted on the college website at:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/eh/research/research_seminars/bms

Birkbeck Arts Week

This is a week of free talks and other events held on all sorts of different subjects, at the School of Arts. You often have to sign up in advance but there is always space. Make sure to check here for details of the programme when it's available.

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/arts/about-us/events/arts-week>

Presentation of Essays & Dissertations

Assessment is an opportunity for you to produce a portfolio of work of which you're really proud. You can be inventive and creative as long as you make sure that your work also follows acceptable standards of scholarship. The main criterion for your work is that it should present critical analysis of some primary evidence which is central to the module being assessed or the dissertation topic on which you have chosen to work. It is difficult to be prescriptive about the style and scope of the essays and dissertations. Individual topics will often broadly determine the approach you are going to take, how much primary and how much secondary reading you need to attempt and so forth. You should usually try to discuss your topic in a one-to-one tutorial.

Some general observations are offered here about the expected standards. We are looking for a developed **critical** argument within your essays. This does not mean that you have to be strikingly original (though that is always welcome) but it does mean that the essay should show a thoughtful assimilation and assessment of the material you are dealing with – whether of the medieval evidence or of secondary material. Surveys of scholarship should be avoided. You should use critical scholarship in the service of your own argument, establishing the differences between what you are saying and what others have said. This does not mean that you cannot accept the arguments of a writer you agree with, but you need either to show evidence of having come to that agreement after reading widely around the topic or to demonstrate that you are exceeding or building on that critical agreement.

You should keep in mind the following when preparing your essays and dissertation:

Depth and extent of reading

You should try to achieve a balance between these two. Some people prefer to concentrate on close and precise reading of one or two texts or to argue closely on a narrowly focused topic. There is nothing wrong with this, provided you remember also that it is essential to establish a context for the argument. Others like to build arguments based on a large number of wide-ranging texts or to detail a great mass of critical contributions. Again, this is fine, provided that the material presented is germane to the chosen focus of the essay. If you are going to concentrate on a small number of texts – e.g. Petrarch's Sonnets – you should try to give some indication of the position they occupy in the Petrarch canon or, if adopting a generic approach, how Petrarch's sonnets compare with others of his period or later. In contrast, if you are discussing a very broad topic – e.g. medieval mysticism – discuss at length some representative examples and avoid making the discussion so diffuse that you cannot offer anything more than commonplaces.

Recent scholarship

You should give some indication that you are acquainted with recent scholarship and critical arguments (i.e. work published within the last decade). Clearly, you are not expected to read everything that may have been written on your topic, nor should you necessarily agree with the dominant directions taken by recent criticism, but you must reveal some knowledge of the most important directions. Part of the task in preparing your essays and especially the dissertation is discovering what has been written about your topic. It is important that you learn how to use libraries to discover what has been done and to learn how to sift large amounts of information to discover what is important for your discussion. The study skills sessions will help you with advice on this.

Documentation

References within your essay and the bibliography should be full, consistent and properly presented. **You are expected to consult and follow the MHRA Style Book** where a much fuller discussion of presentation is to be found. It can be downloaded from the MHRA website:

<http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/download.shtml>.

Essays for options run by departments other than English, Theatre and Creative Writing should, however, follow their documentation guidelines.

While minor lapses (e.g. commas out of place, forgetting to mention the translator of a work in the bibliography) may be ignored if they are infrequent, *you will be penalized for sloppy and inaccurate documentation*. While doing your preparatory reading, it is important to take full and accurate references so as to avoid spending a great deal of time hunting back through works to find page numbers etc.

Often MA students underestimate the time it takes to prepare a successful essay. This is not only because of the extent of the reading required, but because constructing a carefully-documented piece, and dealing with a larger body of primary and secondary materials than you are likely to have experienced in writing undergraduate essays, is a time-consuming process. No matter how long you spend on doing the preparatory reading, leave yourself plenty of time to write your piece.

Presentation

Essays and dissertations should be double spaced, although indented quotations should be single spaced. Include page numbers and a title at the top of the first page. The word count includes quotations, although not modern English translations of those quotations where they are needed. It is normal to translate foreign language and Old English material, but not

Middle English. The word count does not include the bibliography or any footnotes which are used purely for referencing and which contain no discursive material. In general it is best to use footnotes rather than endnotes and to reserve them for referencing only. If something is important to say, put it in the body of your essay; if not, leave it out. If you want to include illustrations that is fine but you must caption them, using MHRA referencing conventions as usual. They can go at the end of your essay or at the place in your essay where they are being discussed (although beware the formatting issues with attempting this).

Dissertations should be presented with a 300-word abstract at the front, which is excluded from your word count. You should include a title page, a contents page, a list of illustrations and/or abbreviations (if relevant), the text of the thesis and, then, the bibliography. You should otherwise present your dissertation as you would an essay. The thesis itself should be between 14,000 and 15,000 words long. Essays are usually 5,000 words long but you should check with the module tutor as sometimes requirements within modules differ. Excessive length or brevity (more than 10% over or under the word limit) will be penalized by 5 percentage marks.

Editions

Wherever possible, standard editions should be used, especially for passages essential to the argument of the essay. References to the same work should be to the same edition, unless differences between editions are relevant to the argument of the essay.

Quotations

Quotations must be accurate and should be checked carefully before the essay is submitted.

Prose quotations up to about three lines and verse quotations up to one full line should be incorporated into the body of the text and indicated with 'single quotation marks'. Longer quotations should be inset, in which case quotation marks are not needed. Do not italicize inset quotations.

Once the source of quotation has been clearly identified in a footnote, quotations from the same text and edition can be identified by page number (or line number, or act, scene and line number etc., as appropriate) in parentheses immediately after the quotations, thus avoiding unnecessary footnotes.

Citations

If in doubt about how to cite a particular book or journal ask your option tutor or the course director. Enter citation details as you write your essay/dissertation, rather than trying to insert them after you have finished. Not only is this a tedious job, it makes the likelihood of error

much greater. Keep proper notes so that you don't have to hunt down places of publication or page numbers later.

References should be placed in notes, either at the foot of the page (footnotes) or pooled at the end of your essay/dissertation (endnotes). Note numbers are placed after punctuation, such as commas or full-stops, and quotation marks.

Thus: This was widely believed to have been 'brought about by witchcraft'.¹

If you do not have facilities to place notes in superscript (as above), then place the number of the note in brackets.

Thus: This was widely believed to have been 'brought about by witchcraft'.(1)

Notes should be numbered continuously throughout the dissertation. Follow the punctuation and formatting indicated in the guide below.

For the first citation of any source, give the full reference; for the second and subsequent citations, use a shortened version.

i. Books

In the first instance, references to books should be given as follows: Stephanie Trigg, *Congenial Souls: Reading Chaucer Medieval to Postmodern* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), p. 35.

second and subsequent citations: Trigg, *Congenial Souls*, p. 99.

ii. Articles in journals and periodicals

In the first instance: Andrew Galloway, 'Intellectual Pregnancy, Metaphysical Femininity, and the Social Doctrine of the Trinity in *Piers Plowman*', *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 12 (1998), 117-52 (p. 117).

second and subsequent citations: Galloway, 'Intellectual Pregnancy', p. 117.

iii. Essays in edited volumes

In the first instance: Pamela Sheingorn, 'Appropriating the Holy Kinship: Gender and Family History', in *Interpreting Cultural Symbols: St Anne in Late Medieval Society*, ed. by Kathleen Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn (Athens GA: University of Georgia Press, 1990), pp. 169-98 (pp. 169-70).

second and subsequent citations: Sheingorn, 'Appropriating the Holy Kinship', pp. 169-70.

iv. Unpublished dissertations

In the first instance:

Amy Willis, 'How to be a bore: an examination of the construction of tedium in the nineteenth century' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Appleton, 1997), p. 15.

second and subsequent citations: Willis, 'How to be a bore', pp. 22-23.

'Op. cit.', 'Ibid.', and 'Id.'

As noted above, for second and subsequent citations you should use a shortened form of the full title or reference. This is preferable to the use of the abbreviation 'op. cit.' (*opere citato*, 'in the work cited'), with the author's name (as: Booth, op. cit. p. 33), since this forces the reader to search back through your notes to find the full citation.

Ibid. (*ibidem*, 'the same', or 'in the same place') may be used but only where the reference is to the exact same, single work referred to in the immediately preceding note. If all details are the same (even the page number), Ibid. may stand alone as a reference. If the pages referred to are different, then write: Ibid. p.13.

Id. or idem (*idem*, 'the same [person]') may be used when two works by the same person are cited one after another, as: Trigg, *Congenial Souls*; idem, 'The Vulgar History of the Order of the Garter', in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 91-105 (p. 92).

You can also refer to MHRA style guide, which is available to download via the Department website, for details on how to cite other sources (e.g. newspapers, e-resources).

Bibliography

Your bibliography should be divided into two sections: one section for primary sources (original historical documentation, whether in printed or manuscript form) and the other for secondary sources (books, articles and papers written about the subject, usually at a later date). Within these headings, you may wish to separate printed primary sources from those in manuscript, or to separate primary sources by type (narrative sources, official pamphlets, private papers, and so on). Do not list books and articles separately. Do not divide up your books by the chapters of your dissertation; present them all together in a full alphabetised run.

You may find it helpful to look at the format adopted in the bibliography of a book dealing with the broad subject of your topic. You could also consult Judith Butcher, *Copy-Editing: The Cambridge Handbook* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

When you write out your bibliography, your references should be in alphabetical order of the author's surname, with works by the same author in chronological sequence of the publication date. As for reference notes, all titles of books and journals must either be underlined or (preferably) *italicised*, but article titles and book chapters are in inverted commas. You must provide the range of page numbers for journal articles and book chapters.

A bibliography of all the texts cited so far would be:

Galloway, Andrew, 'Intellectual Pregnancy, Metaphysical Femininity, and the Social Doctrine of the Trinity in *Piers Plowman*', *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 12 (1998), 117-52.

Sheingorn, Pamela, 'Appropriating the Holy Kinship: Gender and Family History', in *Interpreting Cultural Symbols: St Anne in Late Medieval Society*, ed. by Kathleen Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn (Athens GA: University of Georgia Press, 1990), pp. 169-98.

Trigg, Stephanie, 'The Vulgar History of the Order of the Garter', in *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 91-105.

Trigg, Stephanie, *Congenial Souls: Reading Chaucer Medieval to Postmodern* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

Willis, A., 'How to be a bore: an examination of the construction of tedium in the nineteenth century' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Appleton, 1997).

Acknowledgements

In footnotes and list of sources the student must make clear acknowledgement of ALL works, reports and sources from the internet used in writing the essay and should not descend to plagiarism or collusion. S/he should carefully note the University of London General Regulations for Internal Students, 9.5:

Where the regulations for any qualification provide for part of an examination to consist of 'take-away' papers, essays or other work written in a candidate's own time, course-work assessment or any similar form of text, the work submitted by the candidate must be his own, and any quotation from the published or unpublished works of other persons must be duly acknowledged.

Plagiarism is the quotation, verbatim or virtually verbatim, of other people's work, published or unpublished, without acknowledgement. Plagiarism carries severe penalties and may even warrant exclusion from the course. If in doubt about the protocols of acknowledgement, **ask**.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, the act of taking somebody else's work and presenting it as your own, is an act of academic dishonesty, and Birkbeck takes it very seriously. Examples of plagiarism include (but are not restricted to)

- copying the whole or substantial parts of a paper from a source text (e.g. a web site, journal article, book or encyclopaedia), without proper acknowledgement
- paraphrasing another's piece of work closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained

- piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole
- procuring a paper from a company or essay bank (including Internet sites)
- submitting another student's work, with or without that student's knowledge
- submitting a paper written by someone else (e.g. a peer or relative) and passing it off as one's own
- representing a piece of joint or group work as one's own.

If you knowingly assist another student to plagiarise (for example, by willingly giving them your own work to copy from), you are committing an examination offence.

Like plagiarism, 'collusion' is an assessment offence. Any piece of writing you submit must be your own work. In the humanities, the way you structure your argument and express yourself is an inherent part of producing work of the required standard, and you will be judged on that, so it is not acceptable to get an inappropriate level of help in this area. You may ask friends, family or fellow students to proof-read your work and offer advice on punctuation, grammar, and presentational issues, but it is not acceptable for someone else to come up with your arguments for you, or to re-write a draft you have produced.

If your first language is not English, you may find your written work a challenge initially, and it is acceptable to ask someone to look over your work and give you advice on punctuation, grammar and phrasing. However, that advice must be minimal and the argument and structure of any assessment must be your own work, and written in your own words. It is unacceptable to pay someone to write (or re-write) your essays for you and if you are discovered to have done so, you risk expulsion from the programme.

The College and the School of Arts have a range of services in place to help you improve your academic writing, so if you are concerned at all and would like some additional support, you should contact your personal tutor, or contact Dr Fleur Rothschild, the Learning Development Tutor for the School of Arts, or follow the link to Student Services <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services>

What happens if plagiarism or collusion is suspected

In October 2008, the College introduced a three-stage policy for dealing with assessment offences. The first stage allows for a very rapid and local determination for first or minor and uncontested offences. Stage two allows for a formal Department investigation, where a student wishes to contest the allegation or penalty, where there is an allegation of a repeat offence or for more serious cases. Stage three involves a centrally convened panel for third and serious offences, dealt with under the code of Student Discipline. You can read the college's policy on assessment offences here:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/administration/assessment/offences>

What if I am worried that I'm not referencing correctly?

Please see your module tutor or contact a member of the learning support team as soon as possible. Ignorance of Birkbeck's commitment to student standards will not be accepted as

an excuse in a plagiarism hearing. The following links from Birkbeck's Registry provide some helpful information, but are not intended to replace any guidelines or tuition provided by the academic staff.

General Guidelines

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/exams/plagiarism-guidelines>

Plagiarism

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/culture/students/avoiding-plagiarism-and-collusion>

– Written for Birkbeck's Registry.

You will also find an interactive online plagiarism quiz, which you can look at on Birkbeck [Moodle](#).

Coursework Submission

Your work should be submitted electronically, via Turnitin (or, exceptionally, in case of difficulty with this system, by email to the Administration Team: englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk, copying in the lecturer concerned).

All work should normally be computer-generated (using a format compatible with Microsoft Word or a PDF). All work should be submitted double-spaced. Please note that the word count excludes: the bibliography, translations of foreign text quotations, footnotes which are used purely for referencing, the abstract and the title.

For further information and instructions on how to submit coursework using Turnitin please see the appendices or visit the ITS Help Desk.

Return of Coursework

Coursework will normally be marked and returned electronically within 4 weeks from the stated submission date or the date of handing in, whichever is later. Larger modules and modules with numerous seminar groups, such as core modules, could take longer due to the number of students involved. There may also be a delay if the college is closed or if there are extended holidays during that 4 week period.

Essays are never sent back to students by post. If online submission/return has not been used, or in cases where your tutor or dissertation supervisor has added annotations in hard copy rather than online, your tutor will advise the method by which your work will be returned. Your tutor or administrator will email you to let you know when coursework has been marked. Please do not phone/e-mail to ask whether your essay has been marked unless the marking periods as above have elapsed.

College Assessment Policy

It may also be useful to familiarise yourself with the official college assessment policy. Please see the following link: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/feedback-on-assessment.pdf>

Late Submission of work for assessment

All Schools and Departments across the College have moved to a system whereby students are **not** permitted to ask for extensions to coursework deadlines. If for some reason you are unable to submit a piece of work by the deadline, you should complete a Mitigating Circumstances form, which can be downloaded from the Birkbeck website [here](#). This form gives you space to describe the circumstances that have prevented you from meeting the deadline, and requires you to provide supporting evidence (e.g. medical certificate).

It is advisable to discuss the situation with your personal tutor before submitting the form. Please see the following website for the Mitigating Circumstances policy: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/MitCircs.pdf>.

The Mitigating Circumstances Form and supporting evidence should be emailed to the course administrator or handed in to the Department office **within 14 days of the deadline**. Any work that is submitted for formal assessment after the published deadline is given two marks: a penalty mark of 50% for postgraduate students, assuming it is of a pass standard, and the 'real' mark that would have been awarded if the work had not been late. The case will then be considered by the appropriate sub-board or delegated panel.

If no case is made then the penalty mark will stand. If a case is made and accepted then the examination board may allow the 'real' mark to stand.

Note: If you are taking an option within another School please note that you will need to adhere to the deadline/ extension policy of the School in which the option course is based.

Dissertations

It is particularly important to submit dissertations on the deadline date. This deadline is not negotiable. If missed, the candidate may not be examined in the same year and may have to wait another twelve months before being awarded the degree as MA examination boards meet only once a year, in November. Any difficulty in meeting the dissertation deadline should be brought to the attention of the Course Director at the earliest opportunity.

Assessment

All assessed essays are double-marked; a set of comments and a mark are returned to the student. These marks remain provisional until ratified by the external examiner at the Board of Examiners' meeting in November of the following year.

Marking Scale

| | |
|--------|-----------------------|
| 70-100 | Pass with distinction |
| 60-69 | Pass with merit |
| 50-59 | Pass |

Marks below 50 constitute a 'fail'.

Assessment Weighting

67% of the overall grade (average of the marks from four modules) includes:

- 16.75% Medieval Literature and Culture core module
- 16.75% Option module 1
- 16.75% Option module 2
- 16.75% Option module 3.

33% of the overall grade:

Dissertation

Grade-Related Criteria

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>80-100% High Distinction</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possesses all the qualities of work of distinction level, but performed to an exceptional standard in most areas • Demonstrates the potential for publication |
| <p>70-79% Distinction</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a sophisticated understanding of the topic, presenting a highly persuasive and original response • Displays an outstandingly perceptive knowledge of the relevant primary evidence, making creative, incisive and/or subtle use of that evidence • Presents an elegantly structured argument that displays sustained critical independence and cogent analysis • Engages critically and imaginatively with secondary and, where relevant, theoretical literature, moving well beyond the material presented in classes and positioning its own argument within academic debates • Deploys a lively and sophisticated prose style with precision • Demonstrates an advanced command of critical vocabulary and the rules of grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation • Referencing (including quotations, footnotes and bibliography) immaculately presented according to the course handbook |
| <p>60-69% Merit</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a sound understanding of the topic, presenting a perceptive and relevant response • Displays detailed knowledge of the relevant primary evidence, making sustained, specific and often thoughtful use of that evidence • Presents a lucid and well-structured argument that displays critical independence and effective analysis • Engages critically with secondary and, where relevant, theoretical literature and/or material from classes, doing so in the service of an independent argument • Deploys a lucid and fluent prose style • Demonstrates an accurate command of critical vocabulary and the rules of grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation • Referencing (including quotations, footnotes and bibliography) presented according to the course handbook |
| <p>50-59% Pass</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows some understanding of the topic, and presents a largely relevant response • Displays adequate knowledge of the relevant primary evidence under discussion, making appropriate use of that evidence • Attempts a structured argument, but may be prone to the general, the arbitrary, the derivative, the incomplete and/or the descriptive • Makes use of secondary and, where relevant, theoretical literature (whether critical, theoretical or historical) and material from lectures and seminars, but not always in the service of an independent argument |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploys a fairly fluent prose style • Demonstrates an adequate command of critical vocabulary and the rules of grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation • Referencing (including quotations, footnotes and bibliography) largely presented according to departmental criteria. |
| 0-49% Fail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a limited or scant understanding of the topic and presents a less than competent response that lacks focus • Displays a barely adequate or erroneous knowledge of the primary evidence • Either fails to present an argument or presents one that is incoherent, incomplete and/or flawed • Makes little or no use of secondary or theoretical literature or uses it inappropriately and derivatively; is heavily reliant on material derived from classes without evidence of independent assimilation or understanding of it. • Deploys an inaccurate and unclear prose style • Demonstrates an insecure command of critical vocabulary and the rules of grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation • Referencing (including quotations, footnotes and bibliography) poorly presented according to departmental criteria |

Notes:

- *The above table is designed to give an indication of the qualities that are required in the different MA classifications, and to show the factors that are taken into account when marking MA work. Frequently, essays do not fall neatly into any one band. For example, an essay might have the 'lucid and well-structured argument' of a Merit while deploying the 'fairly fluent prose style' of a Pass. In such cases the marker has to weigh these qualities against each other and strike a balance in the final mark and classification.*

These criteria will be applied when assessing the work of disabled students (including those with dyslexia), on the assumption that they receive prior learning support. Students who think they might qualify for support should refer to the Student Support section in this handbook for further information.

Dissertation Advice

The dissertation constitutes 33% of your final mark. It should be between 14,000 and 15,000 words. This excludes abstract, titles, diagrams, bibliography and simple references (lengthy, discursive, foot or end notes should be included in the word-count). It must be prefaced by an appropriate title page and a 300-word abstract – a brief précis of your thesis.

A dissertation proposal form, to be submitted to Moodle **by 6th March 2020** is at the end of this Handbook. If you have any difficulties about meeting the deadline contact the course director. Dissertation workshops will be held in weeks 1-5 in summer term. The final dissertation should be submitted by **2pm on Monday 7th September 2020**.

Dissertation supervisors will read up to 3,000 words of the dissertation and this should be submitted before the end of the summer term. Only in highly exceptional cases will supervisors, in consultation with the MA Convenor, read more.

Student Support

Student Services at Birkbeck encompass a wide range of services within Birkbeck, aimed at supporting students' learning experience and personal development.

Advice Service

Our trained advisors are on hand to provide information and advice about many aspects of your studies at Birkbeck including but not limited to: application and enrolment process, applying for government loans and financial support from the College, and payment options.

Where we cannot answer questions immediately, we will either get back to you with an answer or refer your query to a specialist team who can.

Ask us a question, call us on 020 3907 0700 or come along to our drop-in sessions for help and support. Alternatively, please visit our website for further information.

Careers and Employability Service

We provide comprehensive careers advice, events and information services both in person and online. The service is free and available to all Birkbeck students and recent graduates.

To find out how we can help you to enhance your career development and employability ask us a question or visit the Students' Employability Space. Alternatively, please visit our website for further information.

Counselling Service

We offer a free, non-judgmental and confidential counselling service to support you with emotional or psychological difficulties during your time at university.

To make an appointment for an initial consultation, please email counselling-services@bbk.ac.uk with your name, student ID, gender and telephone number. Alternatively, please visit our website for information about the service including a comprehensive selection of self-help resources which may be useful in gaining a greater understanding of the personal challenges you are facing and the ways in which you can think about addressing them.

Disability and Dyslexia Service

At Birkbeck we welcome students with disabilities and we are committed to helping you seize the opportunities that studying here presents. Regardless of your condition, our experienced, understanding and welcoming staff are here to support you during your studies.

To make an appointment, please contact the Wellbeing Team from your My Birkbeck profile by clicking on 'Ask us' and selecting 'New Ask' or call us on 020 3907 0700. Alternatively,

please visit our [website](#) for information about a Study Support Plan, Disabled Students' Allowance, free dyslexia screening and more.

Study Skills

Through a range of workshops, accessible learning materials, and one-to-one meetings, our Learning Development Service is here to help you to fulfil your potential in a number of ways while studying at Birkbeck. Visit our [Learning Skills module on Moodle](#) for resources that will help you build academic skills and increase academic performance.

[Ask us a question](#), call us on 020 3907 0700 or visit our [website](#) for advice and support with study skills.

Mental Health Advisory Service

We provide specialist advice and support in a safe, non-judgemental environment. Like the Counselling Service, we are here to help you when you are going through emotional or psychological difficulties. The main difference between our services is that the emphasis of our work is on practical support, rather than therapeutic interventions, to enable you to progress through your studies.

To make an appointment, please contact the Wellbeing Team from your My Birkbeck profile by clicking on 'Ask us' and selecting 'New Ask' or call us on 020 3907 0700. For further information about the service, please visit our [website](#).

Nursery Service

We understand that studying while caring for a child or children can be especially challenging and so we offer an affordable, professional evening nursery service, based in our central London campus, for children aged from two to six years.

For further information and contact details, please visit our [website](#).

Resources

Birkbeck College Library

Birkbeck Library is on the first floor of the main building in Malet Street. To join the Library, bring your College ID card to the Library issue desk. The opening times of the library are designed to meet the needs of part-time students in full-time work, and can be found on their website here <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/about/hours>.

You can borrow up to 15 items as a postgraduate student, and they can be renewed as long as no-one else has requested them. Most books can be borrowed for 3 weeks. Some books, videos and DVDs can be borrowed for 1 week.

Tours of the Library will be available for you to join at the start of the academic year - watch out for details of times. A more in-depth session with your Subject Librarian may also be arranged.

Birkbeck Electronic Library

The Library subscribes to many electronic journals and databases. You can access these from anywhere within College using your Central Computing Services (CCS) username and password, and the majority of these resources can also be accessed from home or work.

The Library website is at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/library/>. As well as finding comprehensive information about the Library, its services and collections, you can also:

- Search the Library catalogue, renew your books and place reservations on items out on loan.
- Read articles in over 12,000 electronic journal titles and newspapers.
- Search databases to help you find out what has been written about the subject you are researching, including *Literature Online (LION)*, which includes the *MLA International Bibliography (MLA)* and the *Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (ABELL)*, the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index, JSTOR, PCI and Project Muse*.
- Work through LIFE – an online tutorial to help you make the most of the Library.

Other libraries

Birkbeck students can also use a range of other libraries. Students have reference access to most University of London college libraries. In addition, the UK Libraries Plus Scheme allows students reference access to over 135 other higher education libraries and part-time students may also borrow from up to three member libraries. See the Library web site <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/otherlibs> for more information.

Further information and help

If a book you need is not available in the Library or you require any help using the resources or finding information, please ask at the enquiry desk (020 7631 6063). We also have two subject

librarians at the library, Lindsay Tudor and Charlotte Hobson. Their email address is librarian@bbk.ac.uk.

University of London Library

Senate House,
Malet Street,
London WC1E 7HU

Situated next door to Birkbeck, on the fourth floor of Senate House, this is an excellent research library with a very good collection of up to date critical material and with essential journals for research on the Middle Ages. The Senate House also has extensive e-resources; chief amongst these are the International Medieval Bibliography and the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Membership of this library is vital for your MA.

British Library

96 Euston Road,
St. Pancras
London WC1E 7HU

A copyright library, it receives all new books published in Britain and orders patchily from Europe and the USA. It has an unrivalled collection of medieval manuscripts. It also has a map library and many other resources. Membership is free, and important. To obtain membership, the current regulations require that you give evidence of needing texts not available elsewhere. You will need a letter from us to view the special collections. Do ask us for one if you need it.

Warburg Institute Library

Woburn Square,
London WC1HOAB

An excellent and fascinating Medieval collection with much material not available elsewhere. Students from the Medieval Literature and Culture MA are admitted to the library. You may need to show a letter from the Graduate Administrator. Do ask if you want one.

Institute of Historical Research

Situated on the ground floor of the North Wing of Senate House, the IHR is an excellent resource for reference and many other materials for the study of medieval Europe and beyond. In order to join, take your Birkbeck College card to reception and join. "Connections", the IHR booklet, will indicate the excellent range of seminars run through the year.

University College Library

University College is on Gower Street, close to Birkbeck. Students from Birkbeck are admitted to the library as reference users (no borrowing). It has good collections in the medieval area and some unexpected archives. Check with the library for any revised visiting arrangements. Make sure you have your Birkbeck College card and a photograph when you first visit the library.

Wellcome Institute Library

The Wellcome Building,
183 Euston Road,
London NW1 2BE

The Wellcome Institute has a huge collection of literature on medicine and the body. They also have a museum.

Courtauld Institute of Art Library

Somerset House,
The Strand,
London WC2R 0RN

The Courtauld Institute specialises in Art History. It has excellent literature collections and an image library.

Guildhall Library

Aldermanbury,
London, EC2Y 8DS

Material on London, print and manuscript, guilds etc.

| Academic Staff Contact Details | | |
|---|----------------------|---|
| Name | Phone Number | E-mail Address |
| Dr Michael Bintley | 020 3073 8404 | michael.bintley@bbk.ac.uk |
| Dr Isabel Davis | 020 3073 8414 | i.davis@bbk.ac.uk |
| Professor Alison Finlay | 020 7631 6195 | a.finlay@bbk.ac.uk |
| Professor John Henderson | 020 7631 0686 | j.henderson@bbk.ac.uk |
| Professor Sue Wiseman | 020 3073 8408 | s.wiseman@bbk.ac.uk |
| Dr Zoë Opačić | 020 7631 6126 | z.opacic@bbk.ac.uk |
| Dr Rebecca Darley | 020 7631 6489 | r.darley@bbk.ac.uk |
| Dr Kate Franklin | | k.franklin@bbk.ac.uk |
| Dr Stephen Clucas | 020 3073 8421 | s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk |
| Charlotte Hobson (subject librarian) | 020 7631 6061 | c.hobson@bbk.ac.uk |
| Dr Matthew Champion | 0207 631 6400 | m.champion@bbk.ac.uk |
| Dr Robert Maniura | 020 7631 6142 | r.maniura@bbk.ac.uk |

Please check office hours with individual staff members. We ask you to visit offices only when you have made an appointment. Please ring or e-mail in advance. Staff members are available for tutorials at other times by appointment.

- Staffing is subject to change and listing in this booklet is not a guarantee that a specific staff member will be with the Department in the 2019-2020 academic year.
- There is a research leave policy in the College, which means that all members of academic staff are entitled to one term's research leave every three years. In addition, members of staff are regularly awarded externally funded research leave, by organisations such as the Leverhulme Trust and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Therefore, not all academic staff will be present at all times. On such occasions the Department will arrange replacement cover and advise the affected students.
- Please see our website for queries regarding academic staff's research interests and Departmental responsibilities.

Appendix A: Key Dates and Assessment Deadlines

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Core Course Essay | Monday 13 th January 2020 |
| Autumn Term Module Essays | Monday 20 th January 2020 for English essays or, if from another department, check with module tutor. |
| Dissertation proposal form | Friday 6 th March 2020 |
| Spring term Module Essays | Monday 27 th April 2020 for English essays or, if from another department, check with module tutor. |
| Dissertations | 2.00pm Monday 7 th September 2020 |

Appendix B: Term Dates

| Autumn Term | | Spring Term | | Summer Term | |
|--|------------------|--|------------------|--|------------------|
| Monday 30 September to Friday 13 December 2019 | | Monday 13 January 2020 to Friday 27 March 2020 | | Monday 27 April 2020 to Friday 10 July 2020 | |
| Week 1 | 30-Sep-19 | Week 1 | 13-Jan-20 | Week 1 | 27-Apr-20 |
| Week 2 | 7-Oct-19 | Week 2 | 20-Jan-20 | Week 2 | 4-May-20 |
| Week 3 | 14-Oct-19 | Week 3 | 27-Jan-20 | Week 3 | 11-May-20 |
| Week 4 | 21-Oct-19 | Week 4 | 3-Feb-20 | Week 4 | 18-May-20 |
| Week 5 | 28-Oct-19 | Week 5 | 10-Feb-20 | Week 5 | 25-May-20 |
| Week 6 | 4-Nov-19 | Week 6 | 17-Feb-20 | Week 6 | 1-Jun-20 |
| Week 7 | 11-Nov-19 | Week 7 | 24-Feb-20 | Week 7 | 8-Jun-20 |
| Week 8 | 18-Nov-19 | Week 8 | 2-Mar-20 | Week 8 | 15-Jun-20 |
| Week 9 | 25-Nov-19 | Week 9 | 9-Mar-20 | Week 9 | 22-Jun-20 |
| Week 10 | 2-Dec-19 | Week 10 | 16-Mar-20 | Week 10 | 29-Jun-20 |
| Week 11 | 9-Dec-19 | Week 11 | 23-Mar-20 | Week 11 | 6-Jul-20 |
| Most services will be unavailable from 5pm on Friday 20 December 2019, re-opening at 9am on Wednesday 2 January 2019 | | Most services will be unavailable from Wednesday 8 April to Wednesday 15 April inclusive. Normal services will resume from 9am on Monday, 27 April 2020 | | Most services will be unavailable on Friday 8 May & Monday 25 May 2020 | |

Students are reminded that it is inadvisable to take holidays during term time.

Please see the following website for more information regarding term dates:
<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/about-us/term-dates>

Appendix C: Getting Started with Moodle

Logging in and getting started

All modules within the School of Arts will be using Moodle for coursework submission.

- To log into Moodle you will need your ITS username and password, a computer with a connection to the internet and a web browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox.
- If you are having login problems, but your password is working for other services, please change your password via the online form at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/its/password> (allow one hour after completing this form, and then log in to the VLE again).
- There is support information available in Moodle if you click on the Support menu and select 'Moodle Support for Students'.

Contact ITS/Moodle Support

You can contact the ITS Helpdesk by submitting an 'Ask' query - please click [here](#) or sign into your My Birkbeck profile to do so. You can call them on the following number telephone: 020 7631 6543, or in person (Malet St building, next to the entrance to the Library).

Moodle (Birkbeck's Virtual Learning Environment Platform)

[Moodle](#) is an online student portal. You will be expected to upload and submit all assignment documents using Moodle throughout the duration of your study. You can also use Moodle to access interactive tutorials, lecture slides, reading lists and recorded lectures, career management resources and your personal student record.

It is recommended all students access [Moodle Support for Students](#) to become familiar with how to access Moodle and submit coursework online. Please login to Moodle with your Birkbeck College username and password. If you have difficulty using Moodle, or if you do not have your username and password, please contact ITS Reception in the main Malet Street building or by submitting an [Ask Query](#).

Appendix D: Programme Structures and Regulations

The majority of Birkbeck's programmes are offered as part of the College's Common Award Scheme (CAS). Programmes will therefore have common regulations, and a common structure. This will help to ensure greater consistency of practice amongst programmes and will also make it possible for you to take modules from Departments across the College which are outside of your normal programme (subject to programme regulations and timetable constraints).

Some areas covered by CAS Regulations include:

- Degree Structure
- Degree Classification
- Module Weighting
- Marking Scheme
- Failure and Re-Assessment
- Plagiarism and Academic Offences
- Mitigating Circumstances.

Full regulations can be found here:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/regulations>

Research Ethics

All research involving human participants and confidential materials, carried out by students in the School of Arts is subject to an ethics approval process. This is to ensure that the rights of participants and researchers alike are protected at all times, and to underline our commitment to excellence in research across a wide range of subjects.

If you are undertaking any such research work for a dissertation, project, thesis etc. please complete the form 'Proposal for Ethical Review template' and pass this to your academic supervisor. The proposal will be reviewed and assessed as 'routine' or 'non-routine'. In most cases it is envisaged that such work will be routine, and your supervisor will inform you of the outcome. In a small number of cases, the proposal may be referred to the School's Ethics Committee for further consideration. Again, you will be informed of any outcome.

The proposal form is available through our departmental web pages (current students). If you have any queries, please speak to your supervisor in the first instance.

Further guidelines are available on the Birkbeck website at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/english/current-students/research-ethics>.

Appendix: E: MA Medieval Literature & Culture Dissertation Proposal Form

This form must be emailed to michael.bintley@bbk.ac.uk by 2pm on Friday 6th March 2020

Name:

Proposed Topic:
Brief Outline/ Abstract

Brief indicative reading list/sources to be used

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page below the heading. It is intended for the student to write a list of reading sources.