

NOUVELLES

Nouvelles



Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies
The Ohio State University
February 2003

CENTER FOR MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES

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Greetings

In the most recent issue of *Speculum*, Sarah Stanbury reviewed our colleague Karen Winstead's *Chaste Passions: Medieval English Virgin Martyr Legends* (Cornell UP 2000), and, in the course of praising Karen's work, suggested that a direct line might be traced between these sometimes racy tales from days of yore and a contemporary genre of fiction that Stanbury calls "bodice-rippers": those paperbacks that we all see (and—be honest—sometimes even skim) while waiting in grocery-store check-out lines or lingering in airport gift shops.

Although I wish to emphasize (as did Stanbury) that Karen's book is a serious and excellent work of scholarship, the comparison of *Chaste Passion* to bodice-rippers once again brought to my mind a question that I have long pondered: why is it that the medieval and Renaissance periods so fascinate people outside of the academy? Arguably, the French court of the 17th century, Rome under the



Caesars or England under Victoria offer the public just as many odd customs, intriguing characters and interesting styles of dress as do the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Yet we don't see notices for local "Victoriana Fairs," "Musketeering Days" or "Roman Reenactments" (toga parties don't count, since participants seem to have little interest in anything that approaches historical accuracy...certainly, they don't dilute their alcohol with water, as Romans did). Instead, we

have Medieval and Renaissance Fairs, such as the one scheduled to be held on our own campus on May 3rd, to say nothing of another, larger one that is held every autumn at a site halfway between Columbus and Cincinnati, and numerous others all over the country. These fairs have become such a staple of mainstream American culture as to be spoofed on the *The Simpsons* a few seasons ago. In a more serious, and yet still popular, vein, books such as Umberto Eco's *Baudolino*, Iain Pear's *The Dream of Scipio* and the *Goldstones' Out of the Flames* sell well enough to attract mainstream presses.

The answer to my question will probably remain elusive—and anyway, we need to confront a far more important one: how do we spin gold of out this straw? Public awareness of our field gives us a unique potential compared with other areas of the humanities, but it also puts on our shoulders a uniquely heavy burden: as scholars who focus on these attractive periods in our teaching as well as our research, it frequently will be us who first expose students to college-level study of the humanities in general. Very often, it will be through “Arthurian Legends,” “Gothic Paris” or another of our GRE courses that a student first learns to think about the culture and literature of another place and time. As CMRSers we lay the groundwork for what humanities will mean to a student for the rest of her career, the rest of her life.

Which gives us the perfect reason to listen to as many entertaining—and educational—lecturers as we can. Coming up soon we’ll be hosting John Astington in the Lecture Series and Dan Collins of Slavic in the Faculty Colloquia series. I hope to see you at both events.

Sarah

CMRS CORNER

STANLEY J. KAHRL AWARDS

Faculty affiliates, please don’t forget that we are accepting nominations for the Stanley J. Kahrl Awards, which are given to the writers of the best undergraduate and graduate papers. If you need a nomination form, please contact CMRS and we will send you one as soon as possible. The nomination form is also available on our web site <<http://www.cohums.ohio-state.edu/cmrs>>. The deadline for submission is **Wednesday, April 16, 2003, by 5:00 p.m.**





Among Us

Hannibal Hamlin (Professor, Department of English) presented "The Moor of Venice: Race and the Performance History of Shakespeare's *Othello*" as part of the 2002 Black History Month Lecture Series at The Ohio State University, Mansfield.

Jane Hathaway (Professor, Department of History) published *Osmanli Misir'inda Hane Politikolari: Kazdaglilarin Yukselisi*, a Turkish translation of her book *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Kazdaglis*, (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayinlari [History Foundation Publications], 2002).

Sarah-Grace Heller (Professor, Department of French and Italian) published "Fashion in French Crusade Literature: Desiring Infidel Textiles" in Désirée G. Koslin and Janet E. Snyder, eds., *Encountering Medieval Textiles and Dress: Objects, Texts, Images* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 103-119.

Sarah Iles Johnston (Professor, Department of Greek and Latin) published "The *Testament of Solomon* from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance," in J. Bremmer and J. Veenstra, eds., *The Metamorphosis of Magic from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period* (Groningen 2003).

Fritz Graf (Professor, Department of Greek and Latin) published "Augustine and Magic," in J. Bremmer and J. Veenstra, eds., *The Metamorphosis of Magic from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period* (Groningen 2003).



Spring Quarter Courses

Medieval and Renaissance Studies 214

The Golden Age of Islamic Civilization: Baghdad, c. 750-900



Professor Parvaneh Pourshariati

(Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures)

Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30-3:18

Call #12615-7 University Hall 82

Undergraduate 5 credit hours

What do we mean by “The Golden Age of Islamic Civilization”? How did it start, when and why did it end, and who participated in it? What does Baghdad have to do with it? What do algebra and algorithm, alcove and alchemy have in common? How foreign will we be in the world of 1001 Nights? And what does this all have to do with our contemporary civilization? Come share the world of medieval Islamic civilization, in both its courtly and popular dimensions, and get a glimpse of part of our human heritage.

Early Modern London

Professor Luke Wilson
(Department of English)

T R 1:30-3:18 Hopkins Hall 162 5 credit hours
Call # 12616-2



Our focus will be the evolution of the city of London from large but compact town to sprawling metropolis and center of England's cultural and political life. The course will cover the years 1509, when Henry VIII ascended the throne, to 1666, when the Great Fire of London destroyed much of the city.

During these years London's population more than quadrupled, and with this growth came poverty, disease, and civil unrest, but also new ways of living, new opportunities for making and spending money. The period also saw vast changes in England's political, cultural, and economic life, from the religious turmoil of the Protestant Reformation to the deposition and execution of the king in 1649 and the restoration of his son in 1660. In order to understand these events and their impact on the Lives of Londoners, we'll read a range of literary and historical documents, including urban surveys, pamphlets on sensational events and issues, and the plays and entertainments attended daily by Londoners at the theater and in the court.



New Course!
(GEC Approval Expected by the End of Winter Quarter)

MRS 240

Magic and Witchcraft in the Middle Ages and Renaissance



Professor
Sarah Iles Johnston
(Department of Greek and Latin)

Call # 12617-8
UG 5 credit hours
MWF 12:30
Journalism 300

In this interdisciplinary course, students will explore the history and culture of **witchcraft** and

magic from ca. 400 to 1700 C.E. within intellectual, sociological, and religious contexts. By the end of the course, students will have a better understanding of the practice, persecution, and social construct of magic and witchcraft in the medieval and early modern periods and its far-reaching impact on society.

For more information about any of these courses, contact The Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at <cmrs@osu.edu> or 292-7495.



Faculty Colloquium Series

Check Your Calendars; or, A Monk's Guide to Dating in the 16th Century

Featuring:

Daniel E. Collins

(Department of Slavic and East
European Languages and Literatures)

Monday, March 10, 2003

4:00 p.m.

Cunz Hall, room 212

Looking for Anglo-Saxon England: A Slide Talk

Professor Nicholas Howe
(Long-Time Friend of the Center)

Monday, April 7, 2003

4:00 p.m.

Cunz Hall, room 212



Our other Spring Quarter speakers will include Richard Firth Green and a special faculty panel on martyrs featuring Karen A. Winstead, John King, and Marueen Ahern, co-sponsored by ICRPH.

This quarter CMRS will present the following lecture from the series
**Portraits and Biographies: Representing Lives in the
Middle Ages and Renaissance:**

Persona and Personality: Portraits of the Actor



John H. Astington
(University of Toronto)

Friday, February 28, 2003
1:30 p.m.
Main Library, room 122

During the Spring Quarter, the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies will
present the following lectures from the same series:

Julia Haig Gaisser
(*Bryn Mawr College*)

**Apuleius: A Celebrity
and His Image**

Friday, April 18, 2003, at 1:30 p.m.
in Main Library, room 122 on the
OSU campus





Stephanie S. Dickey
*(Indiana University Purdue
University Indianapolis)*

**Seeing the Self:
Rembrandt's Portraiture
and the Limits of
Visual Biography**

Friday, May 2, 2003 at 1:30 p.m.
in room 122 of the Main Library

————— and —————

Writing the Biography of a Medieval Lady

Frederic L. Cheyette
(Amherst College)

Friday, May 16, 2003
at 1:30 p.m.
in room 122 of the Main
Library on the OSU campus



A conversation for faculty and graduate students will
take place immediately after all four lectures in
Cunz Hall, room 212.

These are the seventh through tenth lectures in a series of ten developed by CMRS. For the location and time of each lecture and conversation or for more information, please contact the Center at (614) 292-7495 or <cmrs@osu.edu> or visit our web site at <<http://www.cohums.ohio-state.edu/cmrs>>.

Calls for Papers

On Saturday, April 5, 2003, Yale University will host a **Graduate Renaissance Studies Conference**. Their goal is to bring together graduate students from across the region and across the disciplines to build relationships and share ideas. In keeping with the theme, "Copia," the one-day symposium aims to present a cross-section of current research on the English and Continental Renaissance and to explore paths for future study. The special focus will be on interdisciplinary approaches to Renaissance studies. Proposals for papers or panels that cross disciplinary boundaries or that speak to the opportunities and challenges of Renaissance studies across the disciplines are encouraged. Possible topics include patronage and politics, and readings, misreadings, and clichés of the Classical past. Inquiries, requests for registration forms, and 300- to 400-word abstracts should be sent by **February 21, 2003**, to <copia_conference@hotmail.com>.



The first **British Shakespeare Association Conference** will be held on August 29-31, 2003, at DeMontfort University, Leicester, UK. They are organizing a number of different seminars and sessions. Those interested in contributing should send abstracts of between 150-200 words for consideration by no later than **February 28, 2003**. For more information, including seminar and session titles, please visit the BSA website at <www.britishshakespeare.ws>.

The Eleventh Annual Northern Plains Conference on Early (British) Literature will be held April 4-5, 2003. Papers are invited on any topic concerning pre-1750 British Literature. This year, they will also feature special sessions on Continental and non-European medieval and Early Modern Literature, modern perspectives on these literatures, and Colonial Literature as tied to Britain. Proposals from graduate students are welcome, and complete panel submissions are highly encouraged. The proposal deadline is **March 7, 2003**. The Contact is Michelle M. Sauer, sauer@misu.nodak.edu.

The Faculty of Arts and the Departments of English and History at University College, Cork, Ireland, are pleased to host "**Borderlines VII**," an interdisciplinary postgraduate conference in Medieval Studies on April 8-10, 2003. For the 2003 conference, they propose "Borderlines" itself as the conference theme. Papers from all disciplines are invited, and those dealing with more than one discipline are especially welcome. Possible topics might include the limits of generic/chronological classification, orthodoxy/heresy, text/music, manuscript/print, and medieval source/modern film. Inquiries and proposals for 15-minute papers are due by **March 14, 2003**, to <border@imbolc.ucc.ie>.

"Feast, Fast, or Famine: International Conference on Food and Drink in Byzantium," the thirteenth conference of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, will be held July 11-13, 2003, at the University of Adelaide, in Australia. Papers are invited on any aspect of eating and drinking in the Byzantine world by **March 15, 2003**. Contact Paul Tuffin <paul.tuffin@adelaide.edu.au> or visit the website <www.mcauley.acu.edu.au/aabs>.



Papers are invited for any topic related to the Renaissance for the **Central Renaissance Conference**, September 19-20, 2003: history, literature (English and continental), art or music history, science, philosophy, and religion. Proposals for special sessions are welcome. Send one-page abstracts to Professor Richard Hardin, at <rhardin@ku.edu>. The deadline is **March 15, 2003**.

The English Departments of Utrecht University, the University of Ghent, and the University of Namur, with the Shakespeare Society of the Low Countries, will host the international conference "**Shakespeare and European Politics**." A major aim of the conference is to explore and define the European political parameters of Shakespeare, his work, and his international afterlife. For information on the keynote lectures, other plenaries and seminar topics, please visit their website <shakespeare.let.uu.nl>. Scholars should submit proposals for seminar papers by **March 31, 2003**.

Local Events

Conference

The **Ohio Medieval Colloquium** will meet **Saturday March 15, 2003, from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m.** to present papers and presentations, and to discuss topics and proposals.

The event will be hosted by **The Arts and Science Division & The Humanities Department, The Columbus State Community College, Columbus, Ohio.** Dinner will follow at Claddagh Irish Pub and Restaurant located in the famous Columbus Brewery District (the food is excellent and there is a wide selection) at 585 Front Street Columbus. Dinner will last from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and at 8:00 p.m. the Irish band Heartstone will perform. For more information, please contact contact Mark Bocija at mbocija@csc.edu.



Concerts



On Friday, March 7, 2003, **The Early Interval** will present "**London, circa 1700: A Portrait in Words and Music**" in Mees Hall on the campus of Capital University in Bexley, Ohio, at 8:15 p.m. A pre-concert lecture will be held at 7:45 p.m. For more information, please contact Early Music in Columbus at (614) 861-4569.

On Sunday, March 30, 2003, **The Josephinum Choir** will perform the Spring Concert "**Laetare Jerusalem**" in the St. Turibius Chapel, at 4:00 p.m. For this concert, two choirs will join forces to build a spectacular tonal architecture of motets and polyphony of the season. Renaissance composers and polychoral works will take great advantage of the multiple balconies and generous acoustics of the chapel. Free of admission charge, the concert is open to the public. For further information, call (614) 985-2404.

Upcoming Conference

“Health and Healing in the Medieval Garden,” a conference at the Pennsylvania State University, will take place April 4-5, 2003, in University Park, Pennsylvania. This year’s conference will look at some of the ways in which the garden was central to medieval existence in its role as a source of well-being. The many facets of our speaker’s expertise will demonstrate not only the preferred layout of the garden itself, but also its wide range of medicinal applications, from French medieval academic medicine and the surgeon’s world to the cook’s role as clinical dietician for his patron, from Arabic plant remedies to Anglo-Saxon magic, alchemists and astrologers. For further information and to register, contact Brigitte Weinstein at <bxw186@psu.edu>.



MRGSA



The Medieval and Renaissance Graduate Student Association invites fellow graduate students to join us for a Winter Quarter Gathering. We will assemble Friday, February 28, 2003, at Mac’s Cafe at 5:00 p.m., after the CMRS lecture and conversation featuring John H. Astington. Mac’s is located at 693 North High St. This will be our second event of the Winter Quarter, and we will discuss past and future outings. Don’t miss this opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new ones!

At the Library

***by Assistant Professor and General Humanities
Bibliographer Marti Alt***

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The Dynamics of Aristotelian Natural Philosophy from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century. Eds. Cees Leijenhorst, Christoph Luthy, Johannes M.M.H. Thijssen. Leiden, Netherlands; Boston: Brill, 2002.

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Renaissance Commonplace Books from the British Library, London. Marlborough: Adam Matthew Publications, 2002.



Activities

If you have information about your professional or scholarly activities that you would like to have included in the next edition of the CMRS newsletter (*Nouvelles Nouvelles*), please submit it by campus mail or e-mail. Such activities include published books, articles, or reviews, papers, or lectures given, awards received, services done, and research grants awarded. Please be sure to include your name, department, rank (i.e. Assistant Professor, Ph.D. candidate) and all other pertinent information. Submission deadline for the next publication is Friday, April 11, 2003. Please send submissions to the Editor, *Nouvelles Nouvelles*, Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, The Ohio State University, 256 Cunz Hall, 1841 Millikin Rd., Columbus, OH 43210-1229 or send them by e-mail to <cmrs@osu.edu>.



Cover Image: The cover image is of the Sarcophagus of Ilaria del Carretto in Lucca, St. Martin, in Italy. It was sent to CMRS by Dawn Cunningham (Ph.D. Candidate, Department of History of Art).

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2001-2002**

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