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PLENARY TALK 1

Jan Čermák

Charles University, Prague

THE TIDES OF TIME AND LANGUAGE: TRANSLATING *BEOWULF* AND *SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT* INTO CZECH

The talk will discuss some of the challenges the translator faces in rendering the texts of Beowulf and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* into Czech, a language that is similar to Old English, the translator´s code of departure, in terms of grammatical structure but dissimilar in poetic diction and whose literary history lacks a comparable depth of poetic narrative tradition. Focussing primarily on the strategies of reconciliation within the framework formed by the differences of literary context and (dis)similarities of language structure, my talk will also comprise selected translation issues related to (1) the linguistic evolution from Old to Middle English, and (2) the generic progression from epic to romance.

PLENARY TALK 2

Tamás Karáth

Comenius University, Bratislava and Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest

HEARING SOUNDS FROM BEYOND: AUDITORY SPECULATIONS IN LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLISH MYSTICISM

Medieval theories of perception and cognition were more anchored in seeing and vision than in hearing and sound. However, the increasing scholarly interest in medieval soundscapes and auditory experiences has yielded much to fill a medieval chapter of the concept of the "mind's ear". This paper will argue that late medieval English mystical writings constituted a body of texts that explore the nature of auditory phenomena. Acoustically sensitive mystics such as Richard Rolle (d. 1349) and Julian of Norwich (c. 1343–after 1416) not only perceived sounds from beyond, but also sought to grasp the essence of heavenly voices. The late 14th-century anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing,* a major representative of negative (apophatic) mysticism in the late Middle Ages, ambiguously treats sounds as both an impediment to mystical ascent and a trigger of contemplative states. His work evinces an acoustic quality that arises from the interplay of various dimensions of aurality. Finally, Richard Methley (d. 1527/1528), an avowed "disciple" of Richard Rolle, attempted to encapsulate sounds with textual and graphic strategies in his spiritual diaries. The mystics' speculations of auditory phenomena will be discussed in the context of models of voices prevalent in the Middle Ages.

PLENARY TALK 3

Thijs Porck

Leiden University

ENGAGING WITH OLD ENGLISH IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE: METHODS, MOTIVATIONS AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY

In the 19th century, Old English poems were claimed as cultural heritage by various non-Anglophone nations, including Scandinavians, Germans and Dutch. These competing nationalistic, cultural appropriations happened against the backdrop of a growing interest in early medieval English language and literature across the European continent. This lecture will explore the multi-faceted European reception of Old English language and literature and thus offer a new perspective on the 19th-century foundations of Old English Studies.

The paper builds on ongoing research in the ERC-funded **EMERGENCE project**, which seeks to identify and analyze engagements with early medieval English across 19th-century Europe. The project, powered by a bibliographical and relational database, aims to reveal new, insightful materials, uncover intellectual networks and put forgotten protagonists in the limelight. With regard to the latter, this lecture also hopes to pay some attention to early Polish engagements with Old English.

Artur Bartnik

John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

LEFT-DISLOCATION IN MIDDLE ENGLISH

Left-dislocated structures have been examined in Old English (Traugott 2007, Bartnik 2019) and in Early/Late Modern English (Perez Guerra and Tizón-Couto 2004) but the Middle English period remains largely unexplored. A quantitative analysis reveals an uneven distribution of Middle English left-dislocations: while texts like *The Ormulum* and *Ayenbite of Inwyt* contain over one hundred examples, others like *Kentish Sermons* include fewer than ten. This talk explores factors contributing to such discrepancies, including text type, genre, dialect, and manuscript date. Qualitatively, left-dislocations exhibit distinct properties: (1) nominal heads modified by relative and adverbial clauses; (2) animate and often quantificational dislocated material; and (3) resumptive elements (pronominal and demonstrative) linked to discourse functions such as topic continuity/shift, contrast, or referent reintroduction introduced after a long gap. The following examples illustrate some of these properties:

(1)   And <u>ihesu crist þet for us wolde an erþe bi bore</u> (…) **he** yeue us his grace
        and Jesus Christ that for us would on earth be born   (..) he gives us his grace
        'and Jesus Christ that intended to be born for us on earth, he gives us his grace'
                                                                        (ID CMKENTSE,216.56))

(2)   <u>þe proude ouerwenere yef me him wiþnimþ</u> **he** him defendeþ
        the proud arrogant if one him   rebukes he him defends
        'the proud arrogant, if one rebukes him, he defends him'
                                                                        (ID CMAYENBI,22.332))

Data from the Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English (Kroch and Taylor 2000), supplemented by medieval dictionaries, will inform the analysis. Findings will be interpreted within the generative tradition, highlighting correlations between discourse strategies and the syntactic choices of medieval authors.

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Magdalena Bator

WSB Merito University in Poznań
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Marta Sylwanowicz

University of Warsaw

LEXICAL FIXEDNESS IN MEDIEVAL MEDICAL JARGON

The proposed paper aims to conduct a corpus-driven examination of the medieval English vocabulary used in texts representing three traditions of medical writing (surgical treatises, specialised texts, and remedy books). It is argued that formulaicity in medical jargon depended on the text type. We focus on binomials, defined as "words or phrases belonging to the same grammatical category having some semantic relationship and joined by some syntactic device such as 'and' or 'or'" (Bhatia 1993: 108). Apart from the investigation into the correspondence between the use of binomials and the text type, the analysis involves exploring their frequency, origin, the type of relationship between their components, and the (ir)reversibility of these elements. The study delves into the purpose of using binomials in the examined texts and addresses such key questions as: to what extent was the Middle English medical language formulaic; whether lexico-syntactic patterns of binomials were repeated across particular types of texts; and whether there was any stability in the structure of the binomial phrases.

The material used for the analysis is the electronic corpus of *Middle English Medical Texts* (*MEMT*), containing a representative collection of medical texts (of half-a-million words) from c. 1375 to c. 1500. We adopt the typology and methodology used by Kopaczyk (2013), Mollin (2014), and Kopaczyk and Sauer (2017).

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Bartłomiej Błaszkiewicz

University of Warsaw

THE MOTIF OF THE TRINITY IN MIDDLE ENGLISH ALLITERATIVE POETRY

The argument is designed as a comparative study which presents an overview of the varying ways in which the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is incorporated into the narrative texture of some prime examples of Middle English alliterative verse. The analysis will focus on selected passages from three poetic works: the anonymous poem *Joseph of Arimathie* (aka: *The Romance of the Seint Graal*), where the image of the Trinity is developed in the miraculous vision of the three-stem tree experienced by king Evalak of Sarras during Joseph's sojourn at his court, the passage from the second narrative part of *Cleanness* which contains a retelling of the biblical episode when Abraham and Sarah play hosts to a three-person divine visitor, and the allegorical vision of the Trinity developed in Passus XVII of *Piers Plowman.*

The aim of the argument is to relate those passages to the three principal sources which arguably determined the conceptualization of the notion of the Trinity during the Middle Ages: St. Augustine's treatise *De Tinitate*, Richard of St. Victor's Books III and IV of *De Trinitate,* and St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 29-36.

The thrust of the argument is to account for the distinct approach to the literary presentation of the motif of the Trinity by the respective authors and consequently to argue for a close relatedness between the idea of the Holy Trinity and the emergence of the notion of "person" as well as the subsequent modern sense of the concept of "personalitas/personality".

Maria Błaszkiewicz

University of Warsaw

THE TRADITION OF ODYSSEAN STORY IN J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* AND ZOFIA KOSSAK'S *THE CRUSADERS*

The paper traces a surprising structural and thematic similarity between Tolkien and Zofia Kossak through the analysis of the topos of the hero's return seen in the context of Milan Kundera's reinterpretations of the figure of Odysseus.

Both Tolkien and Kossak create a monumental work deeply inspired by the traditions of the European epic (including the romance epic of the Italian Renaissance) and both decide to (at least partially) contrast the grand events of the plot with the humble perspective(s) of the focaliser(s). However significant the differences between the works, the final alienation of the humble focaliser is astonishingly similar. The return of the hero is steeped in his inability to communicate and confront the wealth of experience with the mentality of home. Thus the homecoming is marred by the insurmountable linguistic and cultural breach between the transformed hero and untransformed home. Since the roles of the heroes/focalisers in Tolkien and Kossak significantly differ, the resulting conclusion cannot be the same, but the parallels of the endings of their works deserve attention.

Sylwia Borowska-Szerszun

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A MEDIEVALIST AFTERLIFE OF KING ALFRED THE GREAT IN FANTASY LITERATURE: GUY GAVRIEL KAY'S *THE LAST LIGHT OF THE SUN*

Guy Gavriel Kay is a contemporary Canadian author whose novels are usually described as historical fantasy – a hybrid combining the elements of the fantastic and the mimetic modes. Drawing on real historical events, yet employing the elements of the fantastic in order to detach a given narrative from a narrow context and make it more relatable to a broader spectrum of popular readers, Kay's novels can also be seen as a medium of cultural memory about the Middle Ages, a period crucial for the formation of many national foundational myths. Set in the time of the Viking invasions into Saxon England and alluding to the reign of King Alfred the Great, Kay's *The Last Light of the Sun* (2004) offers a stimulating example of the early twenty-first (re)construction of the image of this particular king – frequently remembered as the one who saved his country from destruction and established the foundations of a united English kingdom.

Understanding popular medievalism as a form of cultural memory (in Ian Assman's nomenclature), in this presentation I intend to examine the depiction of Alfred the Great in *The Last Light of the Sun.* Discussing historical inspirations behind the novel and situating it within the tradition of nineteenth-century medievalist representations of King Alfred, I aim to demonstrate the ways in which Kay's depiction of the monarch both adheres to and diverges from these narratives. Finally, I propose that Kay's fantasy take on history can be read as an attempt to challenge, or at least question, a cultural memory of the early Middle Ages of the British Isles in order to present the period as much more diverse than the popular imagination holds.

Magdalena Charzyńska-Wójcik

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THE EVENTFUL AFTERLIFE OF A NICHE TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS CHARTERED BY THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES

The study focuses on the Seven Penitential Psalms as represented in twenty sources, including three hitherto unknown manuscript witnesses. The items selected for the examination represent English prose translations of the Vulgate issued between 1599 and 1704 in the Bible, devotional aids, and as a stand-alone Psalter. Because the analysed Psalms were translated from the same source and into the same language over the span of barely over a century, the texts are bound to be similar. This led researchers to positing contradictory claims concerning the affinities obtaining between the (known) texts. An important factor contributing to the differences of opinion and the difficulty in tackling them is the absence of explicit or implicit methodology these assessments are based on.

The objective of this contribution is a comparative analysis of the selected texts with a view to verifying the conflicting opinions and establishing the textual tradition(s) of the three newly discovered witnesses. In order to accurately classify mutual relationships in a large number of inherently similar translations, I have searched for a sound methodology sensitive to word-order, lexical selection, and grammatical choices. All these parameters of comparison are captured by cosine similarity measurements based on word-level N-grams performed on texts with previously unified orthography. The advantages of digital humanities in studies of textual affinities consist not only in offering a sensitive tool registering all the distinctions but also in expressing them in objective mathematical terms, uniquely positioning all texts with respect to each other.

The obtained results receive additional support from extralinguistic evidence coming from the study of a unique diary as well as the inventory of exilic convents' libraries. A philological reassessment of the previously (mis)classified translations confirms the correctness of cosine similarity scores and the usefulness of the proposed methodology in assessing textual affinities.

Anna Cichosz

University of Łódź

LIGHT VERB CONSTRUCTIONS IN OLD ENGLISH: THE POTENTIAL BEHIND THE *VARIOE* DICTIONARY

Light verb constructions (LVCs) are restricted collocations consisting of a semantically light verb such as *to have*, *to do*, *to make* or *to perform* followed by an object carrying the semantic weight of the whole construction (Quirk et al. 1985: 750-2), e.g., *to take a look*, *to make an effort* or *to have an argument*. It is known that LVCs have been present in English in all of its historical stages, but existing studies of their use in the Old English (OE) period are limited. The pioneering analysis by Akimoto & Brinton (1999) focuses on the OE equivalents of the most frequent light verbs used in Present-Day English, while Ronan (2014) analyses a small corpus consisting of 45,000 words from four OE texts and identifies 93 light verb tokens. Her most interesting observation is that the most frequent OE light verbs (*fremman* 'to make', *niman* 'to take', *habban* 'to have', *wyrcan* 'to make, to work', *don* 'to do' and *sellan* 'to sell, to give') only partially overlap with PDE ones.

This study explores the capabilities of the online VARIOE dictionary of OE collocations (Pęzik & Cichosz 2021), using it as the basis for the extraction of previously unidentified LVCs. Since VARIOE is based on the YCOE corpus of OE prose (Taylor et al. 2003), the material is much more comprehensive compared to Ronan (2014) and it should allow for better recall. The aim of the investigation is to create an effective procedure of LVCs identification in OE, to produce a complete list of OE LVCs, to analyse their distribution and function, as well as to conduct a comparative analysis with PDE data. In the end, the results will contribute to ongoing discussions on the reasons for the diachronic increase in frequency of LVCs observed in many languages including English.

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Anna Czarnowus

University of Silesia

TEUTONISM IN CHARLES WILLIAM PURNELL'S *THE MODERN ARTHUR* (1912)

Teutonism, also called Anglo-Saxonism on the English-speaking ground, is a medievalist political doctrine that claims the superiority of Germanic peoples (and Anglo-Saxons in England) over the Romanic ones. Overtones of Teutonism can be found in Charles William Purnell's poem *The Modern Arthur* (1912), where New Zealand is hailed as a land close to the South Pole and a place where two cultures similar to Old Norse culture can be found. One of them is the culture of white settlers from Britain, who feel like polar explorers when they settle there. The other is the culture of Maōri, who are seen as similar to Vikings. In the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century antipodean culture of white settlers, both in New Zealand and Australia, Maōri are likened to Vikings as medieval Europeans with all their brutality, but they are seen also as great warriors and navigators, again like early medieval Scandinavians. Nevertheless, Teutonism is ultimately turned against Maōri: white settlers as supposedly descendants of Anglo-Saxons (despite the role that the Irish and Scots played in the settlement) are superior to the indigenous people, even if the latter are modern-day Vikings for Purnell and other writers. In *The Modern Arthur* real Viking-like exploration is conducted by Maōri and Maōri are limited to being cannibals and childish people.

Maria Flaksman

Otto-Friedrich University of Bamberg

LOSS OF GERMANIC ONOMATOPOEIAS IN MIDDLE ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY

Onomatopoeic words (words imitating sounds, or words with iconic correlation between form and meaning) are common in languages across the globe (Körtvélyessy & Štekauer 2024). They are found in ancient and reconstructed languages as well, as evidenced by etymological dictionaries (KROON, VAAN, VRIES, HOLT, LEHM). While compiling An Etymological Dictionary of English Imitative Words (Flaksman 2024) I came across the fact that the majority of the Old English words which can be classified as 'onomatopoeic', 'mimetic', etc. did not survive until Present-day English (see Author 2022).

The purpose of this research is to study a sample of OE (Germanic) onomatopoeic words which became obsolete in (late) Middle English or shortly after in order to establish the reasons for their disappearance.

Thus, the following words will be analyzed (BT/MED): (1) OE dreám 'harmony, melody, song'; ME drēm-2 'the sound of a bell, trumpet, etc.'; (2) OE galan 'to sing, enchant'; ME galen 'to cry out, shout'; (3) OE hryscan 'to make a noise'; possible ME hǒurshen 'to rush noisily', (4) OE sweg 'modulated sound'; ME swei 'sound, noise, din'; (5) OE wóp 'a cry of grief; ME wope 'weeping'. The entire OE data were obtained from HOLT.

I hypothesize that obsolescence (and replacement) of OE imitative words were caused by a combination of internal (linguistic) and external (socio-cultural) factors: changes in syllable structure (Lutz 1997), replacement due to de-iconization (see Flaksman 2024, Rudskoger 1952: 422), loss of OE literary genres, influence of French and Latin, changes in semantic frames.

The methods of the research are: etymological analysis, comparative semantic analysis (including frame semantics), phono-semantic analysis (Flaksman 2024, after Voronin 2006 [1982]), text analysis, and analysis of the words in historical dictionaries and corpora of English (BT, OED, DOE, MED, TOE, DOEC, YCOE, HEL, PLAEME, PPCME2) for genre, frequency, and geographical distribution.

The results of this sample study reveal that the leading causes for obsolescence of these words in ME vary: galan appears mainly in poetic texts in OE (DOEC), hryscan has lost the hr-initial cluster relevant for sound imitation, and dream has first changed its primary reference from 'a mingle of voices' to 'sound of musical instruments' (this change reflects the new practice of hiring professional musicians in late Middle Ages) and then (as I suggest) was replaced by French clamour, etc. These and other findings will be discussed in the talk.

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Przemysław Grabowski-Górniak

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KING ARTHUR THE PLANTAGENET

Since Geoffrey of Monmouth counted him among the English monarchs, King Arthur has been a transformative presence in the English perception of kingship. As one of the Nine Worthies, King Arthur was elevated throughout the medieval Europe as a paragon of Christian sovereignty, while the popularity of the Arthurian romance engrained the chivalric exploits of his Knights of the Round Table in the collective consciousness of the public. But not all medieval Arthurs are alike. In fact, the late Middle Ages witnessed a resurgence and redefinition of Arthur through the lenses of the uniquely Middle English approach, most distinct in the much celebrated accomplishments of the Alliterative Revival. It is widely known that King Edward III aimed to style his own royal persona after Arthur, but in the context of the Middle English Arthurian romance the connection was not one-sided. As Edward III set forth to recover what he saw as his rightful possessions from the French, so did the English romancers reclaim Arthur and his court, with a special focus on the much mistreated Gawain. Upon reviewing the contents of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* in reference to the chronicles and documents of the time, one may notice striking resemblance between chronicle depictions of the real-life members of the late-medieval English royalty and the characters of the poem. The aim of this paper is to highlight the possible references to English monarchs contained within the romance, offer comparisons with their representation in the non-fiction sources of the time, and showcase how real and fictional Arthurianisms might have mutually influenced each other.

Alpo Honkapohja

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"ÞATT LATIN BOC": CONTEXTUALIZING ORRM'S LATIN USAGE, REFERENCES, AND QUOTATIONS

The *Ormulum* is a famous witness to Early Middle English, because of its author's unusual spelling habits. However, it is often overlooked that Orrm was active in a predominantly Latin written culture. Orrm not only references his *latin boc* several times but also wrote a major section of his work—more than 4000 words—in Latin. This encompasses a numbered list of Latin incipits, referring to passages in the Bible, spanning five folios (ff. 5r-9v), which serves as a list of contents for the work. These references are repeated at the beginning of each section of the poem.

This paper examines Orrm's Latin orthography, grammar, abbreviations, and a single instance of code-switching from Middle English to Latin. It also compares Orrm's Bible quotations with the Vulgate translation, the older *Vetus Latina*, and databases of medieval chants such as *Medieval Music Manuscripts Online* (MMMO) and *Cantus: A Database for Latin Ecclesiastical Chant*.

The results show that Orrm's Latin is less idiosyncratic than his Middle English, adhering to spelling conventions common in both medieval and classical Latin (e.g., *senex*, *cum*, *pater*, *noster*, rather than **senexx*, **cumm*, **paterr*, **nossterr*). Notable features include occasional insertions of <p> into *sompniis* (cf. Classical *somnis*) or writing <eo> or <ea> as <e>, which are common medieval spellings. Regarding the sources for Bible quotations, Orrm primarily follows the Vulgate. However, in some instances, he opts for shorter wordings (e.g., Orrm: *Postquam impleti sunt dies purgationis Mariae* (Luke 2:22-23). Intriguingly, some of these resemble phrasings found across continental manuscripts, suggesting that Orrm drew from forms used in liturgy rather than working directly from the Bible.

The use of Latin for referencing and bibliographical purposes was firmly established in the Middle Ages. While Orrm wrote in the vernacular, so that "the souls of Englishmen" could have "access to the gospels in their own language" (Johannesson 2013: 83), he aimed to make his work practical and accessible for his Augustinian brothers by employing familiar Latin reference conventions.

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Marta Kapera

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REWRITING CHAUCER'S "THE FRIAR'S TALE" IN POLISH: REFRACTION AND ENTENTE

My paper aims to discuss some examples of highly divergent strategies of translating medieval English literature into Polish in terms of André Lefevere's "rewriting" and "refraction", and to investigate how ideology and poetics impact the nature of the translator's interference with the original work and its resultant rewritten shape. For that purpose, three Polish versions of Chaucer's "The Friar's Tale" are examined — by Jan Kasprowicz (1907), Helena Pręczkowska (1963), and Jarosław Zawadzki (2022) — in their respective historical and cultural contexts which were markedly different: the Polish translations were produced several decades apart, the most recent of them being over a century younger than the first one.

Kasprowicz's version demonstrates "refraction" at its strongest: it loses sight of many theological and sociological aspects due to its maimed narrative structure and simplistic treatment of culture-specific items. In its mangled form, arguably, the tale acquires a new generic label, that of a *fabliau*. Pręczkowska's rewriting, reliant on historical accuracy and archaic diction, cannot be fully appreciated (notwithstanding her effort in the domain of poetics) as it was published in a censored, abridged edition of *The Canterbury Tales*, the selection of which was ideologically motivated. With major ideological obstacles conveniently absent, Zawadzki's translation concentrates on the comprehensibility of Chaucer's language, forsaking archaisation and vacillating between fluency and prolixity. Regardless of those vast differences, all the translations share a lack of focus on *entente*, one of key concepts in Chaucer's entire *oeuvre*.

Each of these versions refracts "The Friar's Tale" in a unique way, so this classic medieval story is mediated to the Polish reader and transplanted to Polish culture by three idiosyncratic rewritings.

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EXPLORING THE PREFIX *GE-* IN OLD ENGLISH VERBS OF PERCEPTIONS: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY

The aim of this paper is to examine the distributional, contextual and functional characteristics of Old English (OE) verbs of perception containing the prefix *ge-*.

The prefix *ge-* derives from Proto-Indo-European and originally meant 'together'. It is one of the most characteristic prefixes in the Germanic language family. The prefix occurred frequently in Old English and marginally in Middle English (ME), but eventually disappeared from the language. When still a productive morpheme, *ge-* was most common in conjunction with verbs, which is why it has been traditionally associated with the function of changing grammatical or lexical aspect into perfective/telic (Grimm 1819, Streitberg 1891, Scherer 1964, Lindemann 1965). However, there are data indicating that the prefix was used in atelic verb forms or where its use seems to bring about no change in meaning. A particularly interesting group of OE verbs are verbs of perception, e.g. *geseon* ('to see'), *gehyran* ('to hear'), *gehrinian* ('to touch'), because, contrary to the rest of OE verbs whose basic forms are simplex, their most frequent forms contain the prefix *ge-*. In view of the fact that in OE the overall frequency of *ge-* + VERB is considerably lower than the frequency of simplex verbs, the use of *ge-* should imply more restricted or specialised contexts, but OE verbs of perception indicate that this might not be the case.

This study thoroughly examines this verb group in order to identify possible explanations as to why the distribution of *ge-* in conjunction with such verbs significantly diverges from the general distribution of the prefix in the OE language.

The study is corpus-based and makes use of the York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose. In the quantitative part of the analysis corpus variables such as genre, authorship, assumed composition date or translation status will be taken into consideration. The results will be interpreted within the Construction Grammar framework.

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DATIVE EXPERIENCER SUBJECT IN OLD ENGLISH: A DISTRIBUTIONAL ANALYSIS

The loss of impersonal structures with oblique objects has been a topic of research, with the majority of studies focusing on the morphological and syntactic causes of this phenomenon in Middle English (Allen 1995, Fischer and Van Der Leek 1983). However, more recent studies have explored the evolution of these structures in a range of other languages, including Old English. The aforementioned languages demonstrate a shared Germanic inheritance, as evidenced by studies conducted by Barðdal and Eythórsson (2009), Barðdal et al. (2016), Barðdal, Pat-El, and Carey (2018), and Bruno and Kerkhof (2020).

The phenomenon can be attested across a variety of languages, not solely within the Indo-European family. In Old English, verbs such as *lician* (meaning 'to please'), *ofhreowan* ('to cause grief') and *sceamian* ('to be ashamed') can take a dative subject, as evidenced by the example 'I am ashamed' (Ælfc. Gr. 33; Som. 37). (24) "It grieves me" or … and *him gelicade hire þeawas … and þancode Gode* (ChronD (Cubbin), 1067.1.835) "and her virtues pleased him … and he thanked God".

In light of the most recent research on the subject and the advances in corpus linguistics, it is worthwhile to revisit Old English verbs that select for potential dative subjects. This paper will focus on the distribution of dative experiencers across the Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus, as well as the competition with non-dative subjects, based on the proximity search for the verbs appearing in the list of potential candidates in Middeke (2022). Godden (1978: xxii) observes that Ælfric appears to have endeavoured to standardise impersonal constructions in favour of the more prevalent dative, which suggests that the semantic distinctions had become so subtle as to be obscured by the mid-10th century. The preliminary research has indicated that Wulfstan displays a greater degree of hesitation. It is evident that this subject merits further investigation. The concept of anticausativation (Barðdal 2014; Barðdal et al. 2020) as applied to Old English will also be subjected to further examination.

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MEDIEVALIST SPATIALITIES IN EMMA DONOGHUE'S *HAVEN* AND TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY NOVELS OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Place and space serve a prominent role in a large group of contemporary novels centring around the theme of medieval spirituality and religious life, from Robert Glück's *Margery Kempe* (1994) to Samantha Harvey's *The Western Wind* (2018) and Benjamin Myers' *Cuddy* (2023). Despite the considerable diversity in terms of genre and narrative strategies, this type of medievalist fiction shares a distinctive approach to (re)creating medieval settings, informed by both medieval and modern understanding of spatial categories. Integrating key theoretical perspectives on medievalism (D'Arcens; Alexander; Matthews) with studies of spatiality (Foucault; Tally), this paper examines spatiotemporal dimensions of Emma Donoghue's *Haven* (2022), particularly the interplay between the depiction of a historical site (Cluain Mhic Nóis in the seventh century) and the representation of individual and collective identity. In contrast to many earlier instances of medievalism in Irish fiction, the novel does not rely on extensive intertextual references to Celtic mythology; instead, it constructs an imaginary medieval space in which modern resonances of isolation, religiousness, and the human relationship with the environment are rendered visible. Drawing upon medievalism's complex temporality, *Haven* also foregrounds the inherent interrelation of time and space while situating the Middle Ages as a site of cultural memory and establishing a connection between medieval heritage and the present-day social reality. The study tests the hypothesis that the exploration of individual and collective identity in medievalist fiction is frequently mediated through spatial relations, including the fictional worlds' geography, the incorporation of symbolic spaces, and the depiction of specific physical locations. The paper combines contextualised close reading with elements of theoretical investigation, building upon previous conceptualisations of space in medievalist works. The analysis further indicates that *Haven* not only reimagines monastic culture of medieval Ireland but also interrogates the continued relevance of the cultural legacy of the Middle Ages for contemporary discussions of issues such as history, community, and difference.

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RIVERS OF FRESH WATER AND FILTH

Drawing on archaeological findings, historical maps, and contemporary accounts, this paper examines the transformation of the Fleet and Walbrook rivers from essential waterways in Roman Londinium and the early Middle Ages to polluted, neglected channels by the 14th century. The aim is to contribute to a deeper understanding of how these rivers – now both subterranean – played pivotal roles in shaping the city's identity and economy over centuries.

These two tributaries of the river Thames were central to the city's early growth. The Walbrook, running through the heart of Londinium, was integral to its urban planning and infrastructure, its banks attracted workshops and industries, and – as evidenced by archaeological findings – it also held cultural and religious significance. In contrast, the Fleet, which flowed outside the city walls, assumed a different role. While it also developed into an important hub for industries and trade, the river was a vital conduit for transportation, and as a natural boundary, it contributed to Londinium's defense.

During the early Middle Ages, the Fleet and Walbrook remained integral to London's urban life and economy. However, as the population grew and industries proliferated along the riverbanks, pollution became a significant problem. By the late Middle Ages, they began to function as open sewers: trash was dumped into them, and latrines emptied into their waters. Both rivers became heavily polluted over time, and as London expanded, they were gradually covered. Today, they flow through culverts, and are integrated into the city's sewer system.

The paper reconstructs the physical and social landscapes these rivers once shaped. It examines their decline and offers insights into the evolving relationship between natural and built environments as London grew from a Roman outpost to a major city by the late Middle Ages.

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O IF I MIGHT BUT DRINK A DRAUGHT FROM THE WELL AT THE WORLD'S END!: THE QUEST MOTIF IN *THE WELL AT THE WORLD'S END* BY WILLIAM MORRIS

This paper will concentrate on the quest motif and its role in communicating the vision of the presented reality in William Morris' *The Well at the World's End*. The quest implies a journey, which in turn is an important factor modelling the artistic space, as understood by Yury Lotman, in a literary text. In Morris' novel - contrary to most medieval romances - space does not consist of a number of discrete points, *loci*, each marked by an adventure and independent of one another. Instead, there is a tendency to present space as a continuous entity, filling the gaps between particular *loci*, and to endow space with a map-like quality (foreshadowing e. g. Tolkien's texts). The protagonist leaves the unfamiliar surroundings to explore the unknown - not only in the geographical sense but in an ontological one as well - the faraway world that appears to be full of marvels and wonders. Paradoxically, the further the protagonist goes the more often the existence of the goal is put to doubt - in spite of numerous testimonies of the successful questers. The accomplishment of the quest functions in a similar way, as providing the gap-filling topographical details: the world is made more complete due to binding together several subplots analogous to the main plot. Another binding factor is the protagonist himself. Far from being a perfect knight at the outset of his journey, he not only gains experience but also - consciously or not - eliminates the evil which mars the places he passes, thus a network of relations on an ethical level is created, the quester being its central point. The reality that Morris communicates in his novel thus reveals itself as a closely knit one, where the seemingly independent "points" - places, characters, subplots and the like - are eventually woven into a consistent, complete and ordered whole.

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A SLAVIC BEOWULF: THE JARL BRONISZ SAGA AND RELATED HISTORICAL ISSUES

On the wave of the growing popularity of *Beowulf*, witnessed ever since J. R. R. Tolkien's reappraisal of the poem in *The Monsters and the Critics* (1936), a number of modern retellings and adaptations have appeared that link the poem's hero to different cultural contexts. For example, Michael Crichton's novel and film *The 13th Warrior* (1999) recount Beowulf's adventures from the perspective of a Muslim Arab ambassador to the king of the Volga Bulgars, who is enlisted by the Viking Buliwyf to accompany him and his warriors on their quest north. *Saga o jarlu Broniszu* (1946-47), a historical trilogy by the Polish novelist Władysław Jan Grabski that has been repeatedly reissued in Poland, is a novel-legend or novel-folktale, as labelled by the author himself, centred round a Beowulf-like protagonist in the service of the first Polish king, Bolesław the Brave. Medieval northern sagas call the Polish ruler Burisleif, describing him as the leader of the Wends, the Slavic inhabitants of northeast Germany. In the Preface to his trilogy, Grabski confessed that his intention was to provide the Poles with their own medieval hero, comparable to Roland of the Franks or Igor of the Russes. Although Grabski never mentions *Beowulf* in this context, I would suggest that he knew or at least knew about and was influenced, whether consciously or subconsciously, by the Old English poem. I will point to striking parallels that exist between the characterization of Bronisz and that of Beowulf. I will argue, too, that the narrative construction of the Polish saga, especially in its opening sections, recalls the Old English poem. Time permitting, I would also like to consider a Polish presence behind the historical *Beowulf*, both as far as the oral circulation of the poem's constitutive stories is concerned and in connection with the production of the single surviving *Beowulf* manuscript in the early decades of the 11th c.

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THE HARPER THAT REMEMBERS: MEDIEVALISM IN GEORGE MACKAY BROWN'S WRITING

In the opening of the short story "The Stone Rose" from the collection *The Masked Fisherman and Other Stories* (1991), George Mackay Brown speaks of "the little kings of Pictland" that "sent bands of men against each other" (141), thus introducing the world of the long-lost early medieval period. He offers to explore this topic with the instantly disclosed licentia poetica, through the perspective of a harper who laments the loss of lives in battle. Brown's numerous works, like short stories, novels, literary-cultural guidebooks, poems and plays, reveal that he is invariably interested in the medieval world, testing how literature and storytelling can give access to what is gone but what, as he suggests, is not completely lost. This means for him not just the facts of history but also the recovered (through the process of storytelling or artistic creation) and reverberating (in the process of reception) system of values and sensibilities that are connected to the embodied experience of ecopoetic reality. The fictional and poetic worlds of Brown's texts are peopled with characters who are aware of this process and comment on it in various ways, like the Pictish leader who encourages his warriors to fight, asking them to grip their weapons, but also to draw their strength from the environment and from their lore: "The sea loch has cradled and kept us since the time of the stories" (152). Using the methodology of post-classical narratology enriched by interdisciplinary scholarly perspectives, the paper will explore Brown's conceptualizations of literature/song/storytelling as offering, firstly, insight into the mimetic, medievalist detail of fictional he-stories and her-stories, and secondly, the aesthetically achieved power of poetic historiography activated through sensory experience. It will discuss the roles of Brown's artist/poet figures in establishing various aspects of the aesthetic experience through artistic activity that serves commemoration. This commemoration is, for Brown, related to the Latin root of the word that means 'bringing to remembrance'. It is, therefore, a realization of the activity of remembering, in the sense of re-membering, allowing the addressee some intersubjective experience of reality that is recovered through creative effort that reconnects the past with the present through sensory/bodily aesthetics. The crucial role of the motifs of quotidian artistry of some community members will be considered as a demonstration of the self-referential aspects of the creation of meaning in Brown's oeuvre.

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MOOD IN LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN SERMONS

The objective of the paper is to investigate the choice and distribution of moods in dependent clauses in four sermon samples (each of approximately 3500 words) transcribed from the 15th- and 17th-century manuscripts in the collections of the Durham University Libraries. The study will use two sermon samples for both medieval and early modern periods and offer their synchronic and diachronic analysis. Since in all accounts of diachronic distribution of moods, especially the subjunctive, specific clause types are viewed (or not) as their typical situ, this is also the starting point adopted in the paper. Due to their moralising character, sermons are a text-type conducive to the use of the subjunctive, whose presence, however, was at the time already shrinking as a result of the competition with the indicative and modal verbs. The percentage participation of moods in each of the clause types in the four samples will be the subject of discussion and analysis in the remainder of the paper and the results obtained in the course of this examination will be contrasted with the results of similar studies presented in i.e. Moessner (2020, a corpus study on texts representing different genres) and Lis (2021, 2023, case studies on different text types).

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FROM RULER TO METAPHOR: ON THE LEXICOGENESIS INVOLVING THE LEXEME *KING* ACROSS CENTURIES

The present study examines the historical and cognitive processes of lexicogenesis involving the lexeme *king*. These processes, defined by Geeraerts (1997, 2002), are analyzed using data recorded in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), with special attention given to metaphorical transfers. Grounded in historical linguistics, lexicology, and cognitive linguistics, this study examines the formation of over 250 lexical and phrasal formations, spanning occurrences from Old English to the modern period. Representing authority and dominance, KING serves as a source domain for metaphorical mappings into the domain of NATURE as in *kingfisher* (1440), *kingcup* (1538), *king crab* (1612) or *good King Henry* (1640), the domain of HIERARCHY as in *kingpin* (1673), *kingmaker* (1595), *kinglet* (1603) and *kingling* (1603) as well as ENTERTAINMENT, e.g., *king play* (1469) or *king ale* (1472). The study highlights the transformation of *king* metaphors from reflecting feudal hierarchies (e.g., DOMINANCE IS KINGSHIP, LARGENESS IS KINGSHIP) to embodying more modern domains like industry, economy, and science. This shift underscores the adaptability of *king* as a semantic core in evolving cultural contexts. An analysis of the first occurrences reveals an uneven distribution of such new formations across centuries, with a rather surprising trend, i.e., metaphorical productivity involving *king* increased significantly after the decline of the political and societal prominence of monarchy (cf. Bogdanor 1995; Maddicott 2005). The medieval period shows limited lexical innovation involving the term *king*, whereas the 16th and 17th centuries exhibit a marked rise in its lexicogenesis, following the disintegration of feudal structures. This paradox might suggest that as the literal role of monarchy waned, the symbolic versatility of *king* expanded, allowing broader metaphorical applications and conceptual reimaginings. By analyzing the intersection of linguistic innovation and socio-historical dynamics, this study reveals how the lexeme *king* has served as a productive source for the development of metaphorically related lexemes and phrasemes, reflecting broader cultural and conceptual shifts over time.

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HOW DID THE *BIRD* REPLACE THE *FOWL*?

In Old English the general word was *fugol* with cognates found in all the Germanic languages (e.g. Goth. *fugls, OHG fogal*, OD *vogel*, ON *fugl*, from PGmc **fuglaz)*, which usually rendered the Latin *avis*, e.g.*:Æ*Gl 307.2: *auis* oððe *uolatilis* **fugel**. The word *bridd* of obscure origin and no other Germanic cognates was originally used in the sense 'nestling, baby bird'. First instances of *brid* as a general word appeared in the 13th c. In the 14th c. *brid* was more common for small birds, while *fowl* for the big and the wild ones, but both appear to be still synonymous, as is best illustrated by Chaucer's poem alternative titles *The Parlement of Briddes or Assemble of Foules*. There is relatively little *bird – fowl* manuscript variation; if so, southern dialects tend to have *fowl* more commonly, and alliteration does play a role in poetry.

From the late 14th c. onward one can observe the gradual generalization of *brid* at the expense of *foul*, which in turn underwent specialization found in the Present-day English senses of *fowl,* now only a mass noun. This wholesale semantic change is accompanied by phonetic processes: the 15th c. *brid>bird* metathesis (earlier in the North) and the13th c. *fugel>fowl* diphthongization resulting in homophony with *foul* and *fool*. This might have contributed to the lower frequency of *fowl.* The word *bird* simply became a better, unambiguous item in this lexical competition.

The lexicographic data from the *Dictionary of Old English,* the *Middle English Dictionary* and the *Oxford English Dictionary* will be confronted with the *Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse* data in terms of frequency of occurrence of both items and their dialectal distribution. Special attention will be paid to the manuscript variation and the differences in translated texts.

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A LAND OF OAK FORESTS, WIDE RIVERS, ROLLING HILLS, AND WATERY FENS: SOURCES OF NOSTALGIA IN RETELLINGS OF BEOWULF FOR ADULTS

The literary afterlife of *Beowulf* is deeply involved in current discourses on important social and cultural issues. Contemporary relevance of the texts inspired by the Old English poem is evident in their recurrent questioning or even aggressive deconstruction of their hypotext's chosen social rules or moral tenets in accordance with the values gaining importance in the 20th and 21st centuries. However, within the corpus of literary appropriations of *Beowulf* there are also novels that evince an opposite approach to *Beowulf* as they recreate the world of the poem with nostalgic longing, as well as texts that combine nostalgia with criticism. Relying on cultural memory studies and psychological research, the paper argues that these texts' nostalgia, like the nostalgia of the Old English poem itself, responds to various aspects of cultural anxiety and identity crises of their audiences. The paper identifies the sources of nostalgic longing for the past within the retellings in question in the contemporary crisis of masculinity, the emergence of the culture of victimhood, and the anxiety of cultural dilution. Consequently, this paper reads the nostalgic mood of several retellings of *Beowulf* as another manifestation of presentism permeating the literary afterlife of the poem, and an attempt to endow the story of an early medieval monster-killing hero with greater contemporary relevance.

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HOW DID THE SYSTEMS OF SPACE AND TIME PROGRESS IN CHAUCER? A DISCOURSE AND REGISTER PERSPECTIVE

The purpose of this paper is to conduct a discourse-pragmatic analysis of the spatio-temporal systems in Chaucer's language along the lines of historical pragmatics and discourse analysis (Taavitsainen and Jucker 2015). The text used for analysis consists of *The Canterbury Tales* (fiction) and *A Treatise on the Astrolabe* (handbook) based on the Riverside edition (Benson 1987) to compare different registers.

Language is equipped with spatio-temporal systems by which the speakers judge how distant the situations they wish to express are from their domain. Such relationships are embodied by spatio-temporal elements such as pronouns, demonstratives, adverbs, tense forms and modals, with a proximal (close) and distal (distant) distinction. These elements can be related to each other to take either a proximal or a distal perspective. The speakers may maintain the same perspective, or alternate different perspectives, in discourse.

This research integrates both qualitative and quantitative analyses of how the systems of space and time in Chaucer progress in discourse. A preliminary analysis demonstrates that *The Tales* assume a slight tendency toward distal, while *The Astrolabe* shows a strong preference for proximal.

This paper then addresses the following questions: 1) How does the perspective change as the discourse progresses? 2) What factors are relevant to this change in discourse? 3) How does the proximal-distal ratio change in discourse? and 4) How do these factors and changes vary depending on registers? My analysis displays that in *The Tales*, the speakers employ a wide variety of elements which impact the systems in discourse and perspective alternations may occasionally be quick and dramatic. In *The Astrolabe*, by contrast, such elements are less likely to occur, and the same perspective is likely to be maintained.

In conclusion, this paper shows how Chaucer managed the spatio-temporal systems in discourse, advancing our understanding of communication in the past.

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SIC OBIIT VIR NOBILIS: THE POIGNANT DEPICTION OF BYRHTNOTH'S LAST STAND AND HEROIC DEATH IN *THE BATTLE OF MALDON*

No matter what we may think about Byrhtnoth's death, it cannot be denied that the entire structure of the *Maldon* poem (with or without the opening and closing *lacunae*) relies heavily upon the passage which depicts his last stand at the battle of Maldon (lines 130-184). Not surprisingly, the passage is much more than a mere matter-of-fact account of the aged ealdorman's death. It is a detailed poetic veneration of his merits, an apt epitaph for the great leader and a lasting memorial to Anglo-Saxon heroism in general. For this very reason, it seems, Byrhtnoth's last stand is depicted as though in slow motion. The whole passage appears to stretch in time, constituting roughly a sixth of the poem's length, and thus having absolutely no parallel in *The Battle of Maldon*. This was evidently meant to enable the audience to experience the entire drama with astoundingly detailed precision, an early medieval equivalent for the oft-used cinematic technique of 'overcranking' (also known as 'slow motion'). The effect is strikingly reminiscent of modern action films where numerous subtle nuances would surely go unnoticed were it not for the occasional glimpses of the hero's face, doubtlessly meant to reveal his feelings about the dramatic situation at hand. Understandably, in the Old English poem there are no spectacular 'close-up shots' of blood trickling down Byrhtnoth's wounded arm, or the look on his worn out face. There was clearly no need for that in the requirements of Anglo-Saxon narrative tradition. Instead, the scene becomes focused upon a solitary figure of the struggling ealdorman and his three successive duels, each of which takes him one step closer to the glory of heroic death in battle and a promise of the afterlife. The proposed paper will explore the poem's above-described narrative thread, paying close attention to the way in which Byrhtnoth's *ante mortem* struggles are portrayed, along with the underlying notions of heroism and, in the end, Christian piety, as the dying ealdorman turns his eyes towards heaven. This is hoped to demonstrate that the whole scene is a true masterpiece of early medieval storytelling, in many ways comparable to the analogous passages in the European narrative tradition.

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THE MIDDLE ENGLISH *PHYSIOLOGUS* – UNIVERSAL OR REGIONAL

The text of the *Physiologus* contained in the British Library MS. Arundel 292 is the only translation into Middle English of a very popular text, which originated in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, but quickly spread to the western area, too. In this paper I will analyse the difference between the Middle English version and the original Latin one (*Physiologus Theobaldi Episcopi*). There are some obvious differences regarding the structure (as the *Physiologus Theobaldi* is versified while the Middle English *Physiologus* is in prose) and the number of chapters (as the Middle English translation added a final chapter which seems to be a theological conclusion). These texts are now available both in reliable modern English translations and in their original languages (Latin and Middle English), which makes it possible to have a rigorous analysis of each work. The first results show that the Middle English version is more organized and expresses the allegorical *significatio* more clearly than the Latin original.

I will also compare the structure of the Middle English *Physiologus* with other contemporary Latin versions that circulated in England, and which represented the starting point for the text of the well-known English Latin bestiaries. The analysis will try to ascertain the specificity of the Middle English text, that is, whether one can talk about the localization of the *Physiologus* text. It appears that the text of the English Latin bestiaries is more coherent and less fragmented, with fewer biblical quotations. In addition, it seems that there are several situations when these bestiaries present the allegorical interpretation more clearly. Summing up these partial conclusions, it seems possible to prove a certain degree of specific adaptation of the universal *Physiologus* to the Anglo-Norman area.

Jacek Olesiejko

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

VISION, BLINDNESS, ALTERITY, AND PSYCHOGEOGRAPHICAL VOYEURISM IN THREE OLD ENGLISH VERCELLI POEMS: *ANDREAS, FATES OF APOSTLES, AND ELENE*

Sight and blindness are underlying metaphors in a number of Old English texts. In three poems, *Andreas, The Fates of Apostles,* and *Elene,* all found in the Old English *Vercelli Book,* the last of two bearing the signature of Cynewulf, blindness, whether physical and spiritual, appears to be one of central themes that inform a series of oppositions in these poems' narrative and symbolic structures. I would like to argue that the narrative collocation of the themes of vision, blindness, and distant geographical location is marshalled in these poems as an ideological navigational tool for outlining and fixing conceptual centres and peripheries. As Nicholas Howe has argued in his studies on space in Old English literature, the purpose of such representations was to establish a political and conceptual closeness of early English Christianity to Rome conceived of both as a geographical location and the symbolic centre of Christianity (Howe 2008). Fabienne L. Michelet (2006), Nicholas Howe (2008), Nicole Guenther Discenza (2017), Rachel A. Burns (2022) and others have discussed the significance of representations of foreign landscapes in Old English and Anglo-Latin writings. The present paper aims to elucidate the function of peripheral locations in the representations of cultural and religious alterity in *Andreas*, *The Fates of Apostles,* and *Elene.*

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Justyna Rogos-Hebda

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MAKING SENSE(S) IN THE MIDDLE AGES: MANUSCRIPTS, MULTIMODALITY AND MEANING

This talk points to the ways in which the multimodality framework can be instrumental in unpacking the multilayered meanings of texts that predate both the digital and the print revolutions and to which our cognitive access is limited. Relying on Kress' (2010) and Kress and Van Leeuven's (2001) definitions of multimodality, as well as Carroll et al.'s (2013) visual pragmatics framework and Sebba's (2012) visual code-switching model, the presentation will juxtapose visual, textual, spatial and linguistic resources utilized in a range of manuscripts of secular and religious English literature of the later Middle Ages (monolingual English, Latin as well as bilingual ones) to argue that the multimodal approach, ever more frequent in English historical linguistics (see e.g. Włodarczyk et al. 2023), is well-equipped to open up new vistas for studying the "visual texts" (see Peikola et al. 2017) of the pre-modern era and making sense of the communicative functions of both linguistic and non-linguistic elements on the manuscript or printed page. From Richard Rolle's religious prose, through John Gower's and John Lydgate's popular literary works, the paper will address issues of multilingualism, multimodality, and meaning (linguistic and otherwise) as expressed via scribes' dynamic interactions with the visual layer of their texts.

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Dominika Ruszkiewicz

Ignatianum University in Cracow

IMMERSIVE REALITIES IN THE HOUSE OF FAME

There are many occasions in Chaucer's poems that facilitate engagement with his text. Spatial immersion is encouraged in dream visions, in which the poet creates the feel of a visionary landscape, while spatio-temporal immersion is at work in *The Canterbury Tales*, where the storytelling narrators reduce the distance between the listeners and their present location, on the one hand, and the characters and the narrative situation, on the other. Emotional immersion, in turn, is promoted in poems such as *Troilus and Criseyde*, which engages the reader in the fate of the characters.

This paper is going to be concerned with a different means of pulling the reader into the text, which becomes most apparent in *The House of Fame* and is achieved by situating an individual in relation to their own self. I will explore the immersive realities in the poem, beginning with the intellectual engagement in study exemplified by the figure of the bookish narrator, through visual immersion in what the narrator 'sees' in his vision, to the poem's most immersive experience, represented by the topos of the celestial flight. Situating the narrator's celestial voyage in the context of Stoic practice, I will show that it contains traces of an exercise referred to as 'the view from above,' which enables an individual to review their lives by immersing themselves in the totality of the cosmos. I will argue that Chaucer's creative use of this topos seems motivated by a belief in the power of philosophy to tear an individual away from their habits and social prejudices, facilitating a complete reorientation of their perceptions and expectations, including the understanding of their own place in the universe.

Hanna Rutkowska

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EARLY MODERN ENGLISH MORPHOLOGICAL SPELLING: BORROWED AFFIXES IN THE EDITIONS OF *THE SCHOOLE OF VERTUE*

Morphological spelling, that is consistent spelling of morphemes, was among the key proposals of the English early modern spelling reformers, beside phonetic orthography, the distinction between homophones, etymological spelling, and the indication of vowel length (Salmon 1999: 21). It is often assumed that the originally Latin morphemes borrowed into English, became almost totally regularised orthographically by 1700, as a result of the adoption of the recommendations of the seventeenth-century scholars by the printers (Brengelman 1980: 347, Salmon 1999: 18). However, even in the late seventeenth century, not all of the morphemes, including affixes, had fully regularised spellings and, even more importantly, seventeenth-century scholars did not seem to always agree on which spellings they recommended (Rutkowska 2013, 2016).

The comparative (quantitative and qualitative) corpus study reported in this presentation examines the extent of the morphological spelling with regard to the non-native affixes recorded in all the editions of *The Schoole of Vertue*, available at EEBO, published between 1557 and 1687. The morphemes under consideration comprise the suffixes {-al}, {-ance}, {- ity}, {-our}, {-sion} and {-tion}, as well as the prefix {in-/en-}. In this study I also compare the actual usage in the relevant editions with the recommendations of the contemporary theoreticians, including, e.g., Mulcaster (1582), Coote (1596), Evans (1621), Coote (1640), Syms (1644), Hodges (1649, 1653), Wharton (1654), Ellis (1660), Price (1668), Coles (1674), as well as lexicographers, e.g., Huloet (1552), Huloet and Higgins (1572), Cawdry (1604), Cockeram (1623), Blount (1656).

The analysis of the graphemic representations of the affixes available in the corpus reveals that the spellings of individual morphemes became regularised at different times, with {-sion} spelt consistently already in 1557, {-ance} and {-tion} in 1582, {-ity} in 1626 and {-al} in 1670, whereas the graphemic forms of {-our} and of the prefixes remained highly unstable throughout the period under consideration. Expectedly, the more recent a given edition of *The Schoole of Vertue* is, the more regular the overall orthography of the affixes it exhibits, but the comparison with the recommendations provided in the normative writings does not always allow to identify clear correlations with or the influence on the printers' practice in specific editions.

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Paulina Rybińska

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YOL OR *CRISTE-MAS*? A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MIDDLE ENGLISH NAMES OF HOLIDAYS

Numerous authors dealing with Middle English dialectology (Kaiser 1937; Black 2000; Fisiak 2000; Carillo-Linares & Garrido-Anes 2008) have raised the issue of Middle English word geography not being profoundly investigated (certainly not as thoroughly as other aspects of Middle English dialectology). In the study of Middle English word geography, various approaches to data collection and analysis have been developed (Peters 1988). For example, some researchers who hypothesised that texts from different dialect areas possess their own characteristic regional vocabulary, e.g. Rolf Kaiser, the pioneer in this area (1937), decided to analyse one text which exists in different regional copies. Following his line of thought, my previous research on Middle English word geography (Rybińska 2024) was based on two copies of the Late Middle English travelogue *Mandeville's Travels* – Egerton and Cotton MSS. Interestingly enough, in the course of the comparative analysis it has been noticed that the scribes used different lexemes denoting holidays in exactly the same contexts:

a. *And þai fast noȝt þe Seterday na tyme of þe ȝere, bot it be **ȝole** euen or **pask** euen*.

(Egerton MS)

b. *And þei faste not on the saterday no tyme of the ȝeer but it be **cristemass** euen or **Ester** euen*.

(Cotton MS)

The aim of the present study is to compare the distribution of the Middle English names of holidays, such as *Yol*, *Criste-mas*, *Nouel*, *Pask*, or *Ester* in Middle English texts from the *Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse*, in order to investigate if their appearance is motivated by region or any other variables (such as genre, time, or register).

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James Shanahan

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IMAGE CLASSIFICATION AS A PALAEOGRAPHY TOOL

The increasing availability of digitized manuscript collections coupled with progress in artificial intelligence presents new possibilities for the field of palaeography. Scragg's 2012 *Conspectus of Scribal Hands Writing English, 960–1100* contains numerous uncertainties regarding the number of scribal hands involved in certain manuscripts and the locations in which they were produced. Scragg himself refers to "contrary arguments among authorities" with regard to hands and refers to location as "a most vexed subject". As a response, this paper proposes a series of tests employing image classification as a palaeographic tool to analyze multiple instances of the 'm' grapheme. This approach builds upon existing palaeographic evidence, considering factors such as script type and the period in which the writing was produced (mainly the 11th century). Gathering datapoints is performed manually due to the various conditions of the manuscripts but further processing is automated where possible. Datapoint normalisation procedures like binarization and noise removal are employed to minimize bias while factors of variation like viewpoint, scale or occlusion also have to be considered. Test results (and the confusion matrices generated within the models) confirm that image classification performs well in this type of task, even across script types that are very similar (English Vernacular minuscule, Caroline minuscule and Square minuscule) and can complement traditional palaeography methods to further our understanding of mediaeval manuscript production. Additionally, the close nature of extracting and processing samples revealed three distinct allographs of the 'm' grapheme.

Liliana Sikorska

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THE DYING KINGDOM(S): THE PORTRAIT OF A "KNIGHT ERRANT" IN CLAIRE KILROY'S *THE DEVIL I KNOW*

In the final part of Claire Kilroy's novel *The Devil I Know* (2012), its protagonist, Tristram Amory St. Lawrence, the thirteenth Earl of Howth, walking along the quays of the Liffey muses on the transience of human life and his own family's demise. Hovering between life and death, as the plane crash which supposedly left him stranded in Dublin might have been fatal, he gives a deposition concerning a shady deal with a local developer carried out on the instigation of his mysterious employer, the devious Mr Deauville. Acutely aware of the affinity between his ancestor, Sir Amoricus St Lawrence, reputedly a descendent of the original Tristan, member of the Round Table, and himself, Tristram narrates the events accelerating the destruction of the Celtic Tiger Ireland, indirectly evoking the disintegration of Camelot. By having Tristram think "*Sir Tristram passencore rearrived*" (Kilroy, p. 335), Kilroy brings to focus Joyce's *Finnegans Wake,* but, by tailoring the main character into a knight errant, she also re-appropriates Celtic Arthurian romances in the context of contemporary Ireland. The present paper analyzes the images of the dying kingdoms, the medieval and the contemporary, and the portrait of Sir Tristram Amory St. Lawrence erring in his judgment of reality, which ultimately consigns him to eternal wandering through his self-created purgatory, hitherto the rising republic of Ireland.

Erzsébet Stróbl

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church

THE IMAGE OF A PRAYERFUL MONARCH: THE REPRESENTATION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH AT ST. FAITH CHURCH, GAYWOOD

The central upstand of a panel in St. Faith Church, Gaywood, King's Lynn portrays Queen Elizabeth in prayer. Placed in the conventional position of a patron saint of a medieval altarpiece, the Queen is shown above a broad central section depicting a secular theme: the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. This, in turn, stands on top of a painted predella displaying the Queen's words. The visual echo of the East Anglian medieval ecclesiastical tradition is obvious in this composition. However, the work dates to the early seventeenth century, and it belongs also to the emerging providentialist narrative of the Church of England.

Elizabeth Tudor's public image was connected from the very earliest period to the virtue of godliness. Starting with publishing her translations of devotional texts during her brother's reign and continuing with her first public speech in the form of a prayer during her coronation entry to London in 1559, the Queen was constantly shown as a monarch elected by God and ruling as God's "handmaid". Elizabeth's posthumous image at Gaywood is part of this popular godly representation of the Queen. However, this paper will claim that it stands at the crossroads of two traditions: one looking back to the Middle Ages and one projecting a secular image of Elizabeth as a national icon, the saviour of her nation.

Anna J. Szymańska

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"A PARIAH KING" AND "SPIRIT OF FIRE": ARCHETYPAL TYRANTS IN *BEOWULF* AND IN J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S *THE SILMARILLION*

Although the portrayals of ideal kings in Old English literature, and in J. R. R. Tolkien's legendarium – along with the connections between them – have been thoroughly analysed by scholars, less has been written about the ways in which the opposite depictions – those of the condemnable monarchs – have been tackled in those works. This paper focuses on the depictions of two such characters – Heremod in the Old English poem *Beowulf* and Fëanor in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Silmarillion*, both of whom can be seen as archetypal tyrants. The paper enumerates the characteristics which would permit such classification, analyses the spheres of the characters' rules, and investigates the ways in which the ideas from the earlier work have been reworked and developed in the later one. The analysis is primarily based on the definition of the tyrant archetype proposed by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and its placement within the concept of monomyth (a universal core present in diverse mythologies, and later stories – including *Beowulf* and Tolkien's legendarium), as well as on the concepts from the area of political studies. Additionally, my analysis of Fëanor's tyranny refers to other writings by J. R. R. Tolkien (primarily his letters) and relies on his concept of subcreation – a secondary process of creation performed by humans based on the divine creation of the world – as presented in his essay "On Fairy Stories". Focusing on *Beowulf's* Heremod fragment and Hrothgar's speech, and on the story of Fëanor and his Oath, the paper demonstrates that both Heremod and Fëanor fit the archetype of a tyrant, characterised by egoism, unjust cruelty, greed and – most importantly – excessive pride, as they treat the power and achievements bestowed on them by a higher force as their own. Their reigns are depicted as disastrous, not only to their subjects but also to themselves, their pursuits ending in failure and sorrow.

Jacob Thaisen

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SUPERREGIONAL FORMS IN *MILLER'S TALE* TEXTS

This paper addresses superregionalisation, which involves the convergence of linguistic forms as dialectal variation diminishes in favour of a more uniform language represented by the usage of influential areas. It asks whether a particular corpus provides evidence of superregionalisation at the levels of orthography, morphology, and phonology. The corpus comprises the 58 fifteenth-century texts that survive of Chaucer's *Miller's Tale* (Robinson 2004), which can be grouped into chronological bins on extralinguistic criteria. With the exception of Horobin's (2003) analyses of a very similar corpus, the surviving texts of Chaucer's *Wife of Bath's Prologue,* studies of how the early stages unfolded in the standardisation of English have been based on more diverse materials, making it harder for scholars to isolate the geography variable and having to normalise frequency data to enable comparison. Separately for each text, I have already compiled a full profile of what forms occur for every item included in the LALME questionnaire (McIntosh *et al* 1986) to base the investigation on, but analysis is incomplete at the time of writing. My next steps will be to trace the chronological spread or decline of specific forms, and to investigate whether the superregional forms represent innovation or retention, bearing in mind that texts with the A or B tale order are associated with eastern dialects, while those with the C or D order are linked to western dialects, at least in part due to their transmission history. Earlier accounts emphasised Chancery Standard as the driving force behind standardisation in late medieval English, itself an example of superregionalisation. The past decade has seen scholars increasingly undermining and abandoning this view of a unidirectional process, paying greater attention to the role of social networks in disseminating particular linguistic forms and showing that multiple standardising varieties coexisted. I expect my analysis will affirm those recent views.

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Tomasz Wiącek

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TRANSPOSING THE LANGUAGES OF LOVE AND CONTRACTING IN ADAPTATIONS OF *SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT*

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is a 14th-century alliterative poem considered to be one of the finest English Arthurian romances. Drawing from folk motifs and French literary traditions, this Middle English tale of chivalry describes challenges of knightly virtues as well as intricate codes of behaviour, loyalty and courtly love. There have been several modern attempts to adapt the story to various forms of screen productions, such as Stephen Week's motion picture of 1973, his own later remake of 1984, a TV production by John Michael Phillips of 1991, and the most recent movie by David Lowery, released in 2021, as well as several animated adaptations. In most of these works the creators, while attempting to transpose the romanticized world of medieval chivalry, courtly love, and knightly virtues into the new medium, through extensive modifications, proximations, editions or amplifications of the essential elements of the plot, have implemented considerable changes to the original themes of chivalric romances, especially in the context of the languages of contracting and courtly love that govern *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, in particular. As a result, the crucial motifs of chivalry and courtship, of class relations and codes of conduct, have been either modified or completely excluded. The aim of this presentation is to demonstrate, through the scope of studies of adaptation and of medieval romances and medieval legal traditions, how the applied strategies and the changes implemented to the languages of contracting and courtly love modify the hypotext, as well as to consider their interpretative consequences for the source text and the target viewer. The findings will show that while in some productions the extensive changes have questionable results at best, several aspects of live action and animated adaptations manage to not only reproduce the main themes and ideas of chivalric romances, but also quite successfully transpose those aspects of the hypotext into a new medium.

Andrzej Wicher

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THE QUESTION OF J.R.R.TOLKIEN'S ESSAY *ON FAIRY STORIES* AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO FOLKTALE STUDIES AND MEDIEVAL STUDIES

Tolkien's famous essay *On Fairy Stories* occupies a somewhat paradoxical place in the scholarly reflection on folktales. Max Lüthi, at the end of his book *The European Folktale*, includes his appraisal of Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*. His final sentence is: "Propp's structural analysis and my stylistic analysis complete each other". But Tolkien's essay, even though it also manages to say something important about fairy tales, is neither a primarily stylistic nor structural analysis. In other words, it does not focus either on the narrative patterns on which folk tales are based or on the way they use language, so it is neither the syntagmatic nor paradigmatic aspects of the fairy tale that are of particular interest to Tolkien.

One possible answer is that the essay belongs to the school of criticism known as reception theory, or reader-response theory. This may be deduced out of the three questions that he asks at the beginning of his essay: "What are fairy stories? What is their origin? What is the use of them?"

Another possibility is that *On Fairy Stories* is influenced, consciously or subconsciously, by medieval and Biblical learning and medieval criticism, with which Tolkien, as a medieval scholar of high competence, could have been acquainted. In St Augustine's seminal work *De Doctrina Christiana*, we find the statement that "All knowledge and prophecy are subservient to faith, hope, and love" (I.37). The notions of faith, hope and love, with their Biblical origin, may be parallel to Tolkien's triad of recovery, escape and consolation. But what seems even more important here is the emphasis on usefulness (*utilitas*) and profit (*fructus*) as basic categories of criticism, that is, thinking in terms of the text's intention and final cause (*causa finalis*).

Paulina Zagórska

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LATE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY EROTIC LEXICON ON THE EXAMPLE OF *THE SCHOOL OF VENUS, OR THE LADIES DELIGHT*

The School of Venus, or the Ladies Delight was originally published in France in 1655; the English translation appeared in 1680. Considered the first libertine novel, it takes the form of two dialogues between two cousins, Katherine and Frances, who discuss various sex-related topics, including male and female genitalia, the mechanics of sexual intercourse, and sex positions, among others. This "uninhibited manual of sexual technique and an erotic masterpiece of the first order" (Thomas 1971) showcases a literary genre known as whore dialogues, i.e. erotic fiction popular in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, in which an older, sexually experienced woman educates a young virgin about all matters related to sex. As such, the genre is the predecessor of the eighteenth-century pornographic novel.

Given that "almost all pornography is written by men and for men" (Marcus 2017: 213) – which is also the case with *The School of Venus* – whore dialogues offer a valuable insight into contemporary men's ideas about female sexuality. Even though historical erotic and pornographic literature has attracted considerable scholarly attention, linguistic analyses – especially from the perspective of gender studies – are few and far between. Therefore, the present study aims to catalogue late seventeenth erotic lexicon based on *The School of Venus* within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, focusing especially on metaphorical conceptualizations and what they reveal about contemporary conceptualizations of gender and gender relations.

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SPECIAL SESSION: MANUSCRIPTS

The special session dedicated to manuscripts and manuscript fragments will feature several events spread across the first and second day of the conference.

DAY 1
venue: University of Warsaw Library, Dobra 55, room 316, 3 floor

- Guest Lecture by **M. Jane Toswell** (University of Western Ontario, Canada)
  The layouts of vernacular psalters in early medieval England

- Presentation of the **N-Psalter research project**: fragments of the Old English Psalter in *Bibliotheca Meienreisiana* (Elbląg) – **Monika Opalińska** (University of Warsaw) – read more about the project

- Presentation of exhibits related to the project, along with artefacts from the University of Warsaw Library

DAY 2
venue: Faculty of Modern Languages, Dobra 55, room 0.110 (Co-Working Zone), ground floor

- Workshop by **Barbara Wagner** and **Anna Wojtyś** (University of Warsaw)
  Mediaeval scientific illustrations: Geoffrey Chaucer's A Treatise on the Astrolabe

Organized in cooperation with University of Warsaw Library (BUW)

M. Jane Toswell

University of Western Ontario

THE LAYOUTS OF VERNACULAR PSALTERS IN EARLY MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

A major feature of the N-Psalter as it continues to emerge from newly-disassembled books from about the year 1600 is the spaciousness of its layout. The Latin of the psalter is very large, and the gloss in Old English might be an opportunistic one (not lined for in the manuscript) but it is similarly expansive. This paper will compare this remarkably expansive layout with the layout of some other eleventh-century psalters from England with vernacular glosses, notably the Vitellius Psalter and the Stowe Psalter. Some consideration will be given to the content, but the principal concern is the mise-en-page and the choices the scribe and compiler made to highlight these texts critical to the Christianity of every individual using the manuscript. Some manuscript layouts are clearly intended for scholars who want to think through various options for translation and for nuances of meaning (notably the Lambeth Psalter), while others prioritize the Old English for reasons that still remain a bit opaque today (the Cambridge Psalter). The question of layout also connects to issues of style and elegance; several scholars have pointed to royal and secular connections for some psalters. T.A. Heslop famously suggested that Canute gave splendid gospel-books, and perhaps also psalters, as gifts to fellow monarchs (following the example of Charlemagne). E.G. Stanley believed firmly that the Paris Psalter, a bilingual psalter in two columns with both prose and poetic versions, was an homage to the commissioning noble's ancestor King Alfred (who had perhaps translated the prose material: see Gameson for a wide- ranging analysis of these questions). Rebecca Rushforth points to entries in the Bury Psalter which commemorate the family of Edward the Exile, and Daphne Stroud suggests that the Salisbury Psalter was done for noblewomen as well. And, of course, to come full circle, various scholars have tied the N-Psalter to Gunnildis (Gunhild), the sister of Harold Godwin who fled to Flanders with her mother after the Norman Conquest of England.

Gameson, R. 1995. "Alfred the Great and the destruction and production of Christian books," *Scriptorium* 50: 180-210.

Heslop, T.A. 1990. "The production of de luxe manuscripts and the patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma." *Anglo-Saxon England* 19: 151-195.

Rushforth, R. 2005. "The Bury Psalter and the descendants of Edward the Exile," *Anglo-Saxon England* 34: 255-61.

Stroud, D. I. 1979. "The provenance of the Salisbury Psalter," *The Library* 6: 225-235.

Presentation of exhibits related to the **N-Psalter research project**
Monika Opalińska (University of Warsaw)

in the conservation workroom at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Nicolaus Copernicus
University, Toruń: fragments of the N-Psalter removed from the early printed book
of Samuel Meienreis
(Photos: prof. Barbara Wagner; conservator: dr Dorota Jutrzenka-Supryn)

Barbara Wagner
Anna Wojtyś

University of Warsaw

MEDIAEVAL SCIENTIFIC ILLUSTRATIONS:
GEOFFREY CHAUCER'S *A TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE*

Chaucer's *A Treatise on the Astrolabe* was planned as a manual on the structure and uses of one of the most important mediaeval astronomic instruments. Of the surviving manuscripts, eight contain a number of illustrations of various completeness, which show the author's idea of having each chapter illustrated with a diagram. Across the manuscripts, the diagrams differ both as regards their content and execution revealing a different degree of expertise of their creators.

The workshop will use the diagrams from *A Treatise on the Astrolabe* as a basis for a discussion on the design and rendition of mediaeval scientific illustrations. The participants will have an opportunity to discover the differences between the diagrams found in various manuscripts, the planning of a layout of the illustrated pages, as well as the tools needed at different stages of the drawing process. The second part of the workshop will focus on practical exercises, such as copying diagrams from Chaucer's texts as well as drawing them based on the treatise's instructions. Participants will also prepare their own iron-gall ink for the illustrations.