**Literary Lecture: The Making of Literature**

The Making of Literature in Medieval English Manuscripts

Wed 9:00–11:45 (with intermittent break), Z 207

Lecturer: Karáth Tamás PhD habil. ([tamas.karath@gmail.com](mailto:tamas.karath@gmail.com))

Office hours: Mon 15:45–16:15, Wed 11:45–12:30 (Z 105)

Welcome to this course on the making of literary texts. This last course of the MA English literature specialization will focus on an aspect that earlier courses of the specialization have not yet investigated: what makes literature for the contemporary audience in terms of both its material making and reception? The context of the course will be the Middle Ages. In order to cope with medieval literary works, the course will also introduce you to Middle English (the stage of the English language between the 11th and 16th century). Finally, everyone will work on an individual manuscript project.

**Methods**

The course is a lecture, and it will be concluded with an exam. However, to profit maximally from the workshop size of the class, the course will be built on the preparation of individual research projects. The first part of the course will provide a general overview of Middle English language and literature, while the second part will help you to advance with the research projects in frames of individual consultations.

**Requirements**

Attendance: maximum absence is three sessions. Participating in the workshop is mandatory (prepare with outline or ppt)

The exam requirements are described in the next section.

**Exam procedure**

The course will be concluded by an exam consisting of a written and an oral part:

1. Written exam: A written test based on the readings of the course
2. Oral exam: Presentation of individual research project based on the study of a manuscript.

**Assessment of the exam**

The exam grade will be the average of the written and the oral exams.

**Course calendar**

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| Week | Discussion topics and readings |
| 12 Feb | Introduction to course contents, requirements, assessment and projects |
| Middle English Module 1: Chaucer’s English (“The General Prologue” of *The Canterbury Tales*, ll. 1-12, provided on handouts) |
| 19 Feb | Theory: “Medieval Manuscript Manual” (CEU Medieval Studies)  <http://web.ceu.hu/medstud/manual/MMM/> |
| Middle English Module 2: Geoffrey Chaucer, “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue” from *The Canterbury Tales,* ll. 509–48 (The Wife’s fifth husband)  librarius.com (ed. by Sinan Kökbugur), with glossary by Larry D. Benson:  <http://www.librarius.com/index.html> |
| 26 Feb | Theory: Simon Horobin, “What Was Middle English?” in *Chaucer’s Language.* McMillan, 2012, 27–50. |
| Middle English Module 3: *The Book of John Mandeville* (ed. by Kohanski and Benson), “Preface and Prologue”, ll. 589–625  <https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/kohanski-and-benson-the-book-of-john-mandeville> |
| 4 Mar | Theory: Wendy Scase, “Re-inventing the Vernacular: Middle English Language and Its Literature” in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Literature, 1100–1500.* Ed. by Larry Scanlon. CUP, 2009, 11–23. |
| Middle English Module 4: *The Book of Margery Kempe* (ed. Lynn Staley), Book I, Chapter 11  <https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/staley-book-of-margery-kempe-book-i-part-i> |
| 11 Mar | Theory: Alexandra Gillespie, “Production and Dissemination” in *A Concise Companion to Middle English Literature.* Ed. by Marilyn Corrie. Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, 99–119. |
| Middle English Module 5: Excerpt from the Middle English bestiary (British Library, Arundel MS 292): “The Whale” (to be provided on copies) |
| 18 Mar | Theory: Andrew Taylor, “Authors, Scribes, Patrons, and Books” in *The Idea of the Vernacular.* Ed. by Jocelyn Wogan-Browne et al. Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999, 353–65. |
| Middle English Module 6: “The Dietary”  <https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/shuffelton-codex-ashmole-61-dietary> |
| 25 Mar | Project consultation 1 |
| 8 Apr | **Easter holidays** |
| 15 Apr |
| 22 Apr | Project consultation 2 |
| 29 Apr | Project consultation 3 |
| 6 May | Project consultation 4 |
| 13 May | Project workshop |

**Manuscript projects**

(1) British Library, Additional MS 37049

<http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_37049>

(2) British Library, Arundel MS 292

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=7736>

1. British Library, Harley MS 941

<http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_941>

*Enjoy the course!*