

**The Middle Ages
Winter, 2007**

**Comp. Lit. 164 A
Brenda Deen Schildgen**

MWF 11-11:50
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Focusing on the formal development of medieval literary genres as the foundation for “modern” literary forms, this course discusses the major topics, themes, and conventions (love, God, vision, nature, history and politics, sign theory) of the period. The course will explore the question of cultural hybridization in the medieval mixture of philosophical, religious, and literary traditions, particularly the intermingling of Islamic, ancient Greco-Roman, Hellenistic-Hebraic roots and medieval Christian civilization.

Texts:

The Letters of Abelard and Heloise (Penguin)

Giovanni Boccaccio, **The Decameron** (Penguin)

The Lais of Marie de France (Penguin)

Arthurian Romances of Chretien de Troyes (Penguin)

The Celestina, trans. Lesley Byrd Simpson (University of California Press)

Geoffrey Chaucer, **The Canterbury Tales** (Bantam).

Christine de Pizan, **The Book of the City of Ladies**, trans. Earl Jeffrey Richards (Persea Books)

Dante, **Vita Nuova** (New Life) (Penguin)

Requirements: 3 five page papers (65%), one of which is a take-home final exam due on the day of the final (Friday March 16, at 6PM [25%]). You may submit the final paper on line at bdschildgen@ucdavis.edu (by attachment). Since I want to conduct this class more like a seminar than a lecture course, classroom participation is a significant part of the grade (10%), so you are expected to come to class ready to discuss the works assigned.

Jan. 3 Introduction: Digital slides/MAPS

<http://www.euratlas.com>

Jan. 5-8 “Historia calamitatum,” in Letters of Abelard and Heloise (57-106).

Jan. 10-12 Marie de France, “Prologue,” “Guigemar,” “Le Fresne,” “Bisclavret,” “Lanval,” Yonec,” “Le Laustic.”

Jan. 15 is a holiday

Jan. 17-22 Arthurian Romances (Yvain) (3 classes)

Jan. 24-26 Dante, Vita Nuova

Jan. 29 First paper due.

Jan. 29-Feb.9 Boccaccio, Decameron

Jan. 30 Preface, Introduction. Day I: 1,

Feb. 2 Day 1:2,3. Day 2:3,6,7,8; Introd. to Day 3, 3:1,8,10, and conclusion.

Feb. 5 Day 4: Introduction; Day 4:1,5,7.

Feb.7 Decameron, Day 5: 7,8,9; Day 7: 2,3,10; Day 9:2,3,4, and 9.

Feb. 9 Decameron, Day 10: 3,9, and 10.

Feb. 12-16 Digital slides/Late Middle Ages

Chaucer, Canterbury Tales, The Prologue, “The Knight’s Tale.”

Feb. 19 Holiday

Feb. 21-March 5 Christine de Pizan, Book of the City of Ladies.

March 7-14 The Celestina

March 14 Second Paper Due

Medieval Web Sites:

http://historylink101.com/middle_ages_europe/middle_ages_maps.htm

<http://www.euratlas.com>

Also, the following Dante web site <http://dante.itl.columbia.edu/new/images/index.html> has much material related to both Dante and the Middle Ages.