MEDIEVAL STUDIES

Humanities Quadrangle, Rms. 431 & 438, 203.432.0672
http://medieval.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair and Director of Graduate Studies
Emily Thornbury

Core faculty Tarren Andrews, Lucas Bender, R. Howard Bloch, Jessica Brantley, Ardis Butterfield, Raymond Clemens, Stephen Davis, Maria Doerfler, Adam Eitel, Marcel Elias, Hussein Fancy, Paul Freedman, Frank Griffel, Valerie Hansen, Felicity Harley, Samuel Hodgkin, Jacqueline Jung, Volker Leppin, Ivan Marcus, Vasileios Marinis, Christiana Purdy Moudarres, Emily Thornbury, Shawkat Toorawa, Kevin van Bladel, Jesús Velasco, Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, Travis Zadeh, Anna Zayaruznaya

Additional affiliated faculty Adel Allouche (Emeritus), Felisa Baynes-Ross, Gerhard Bowering (Emeritus), Marcia Colish (Emerita), Orgu Dalgic, John Dillon, Carlos Eire, Roberta Frank (Emerita), Walter Goffart (Emeritus), Harvey Goldblatt (Emeritus), Eric Greene, Dimitri Gutas (Emeritus), Peter Hawkins (Emeritus), Subhashini Kaligotla, Christina Kraus, Traugott Lawler (Emeritus), Noel Lenski, Ahuva Liberles, Giuseppe Mazzotta (Emeritus), Alastair Minnis (Emeritus), Robert Nelson (Emeritus), Carla Neuss, Morgan Ng, Barbara Shailor (Emerita), Jane Tylus

FIELDS OF STUDY
Fields in this interdisciplinary program include history, history of art, history of music, religious studies, languages and literatures, linguistics, and philosophy.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE
Students are required to demonstrate proficiency in at least one medieval language of scholarship (Arabic, classical Chinese, classical Persian, Greek, Hebrew, or Latin) and in two modern languages appropriate to their field of study. Language proficiency may be demonstrated either by passing a departmental examination within the first two years of study, or by achieving at least a High Pass in an advanced language or literature course, as approved by the DGS.

Students will design their programs in close contact with the director of graduate studies (DGS). During the first two years, students take fourteen term courses, and must receive an Honors grade in at least four term courses the first year. Students take an oral examination, usually in the fifth term, on a set of three topics worked out in consultation with the DGS. Then, having nurtured a topic of particular interest, the student submits a dissertation prospectus that must be approved by the end of the third year. Upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus, students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. What remains, then, is the writing, submission, and approval of the dissertation during the final two years.

Students in Medieval Studies participate in the Teaching Fellows Program, usually in the third year and one year thereafter.
MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. See degree requirements under Policies and Regulations. The M.Phil. degree may be requested after all requirements but the dissertation are met.

M.A. Students may apply for a terminal master’s degree in Medieval Studies. For the M.A. degree, students must successfully complete either seven term courses or six term courses and a special project. One course must have a focus on the study of original manuscripts or documents. There must be at least one grade of Honors, and there may not be more than one grade of Pass. Students must maintain a minimum average of High Pass each term. Students must take two consecutive terms of a language relevant to the study of the medieval period, appropriate to the student’s particular needs and interests. Students must also demonstrate knowledge of one or more of Arabic, classical Chinese, classical Persian, Greek, Hebrew, or Latin, as relevant to their research. Doctoral students who withdraw from the Ph.D. program may be eligible to receive the M.A. degree if they have met the above requirements and have not already received the M.Phil. degree.

For more information, please visit the program website: http://medieval.yale.edu.

COURSES

MDVL 519b / ENGL 519b / MHHR 500b, Medieval Manuscripts and Literary Forms  Jessica Brantley
This course investigates the relation between manuscript studies and literary criticism. It includes an introduction to working with medieval manuscripts (no prior experience required) and continues with a series of case studies that examine what thinking about material texts can contribute to scholarship in medieval—or any—literature. Manuscripts to be considered include the Beowulf MS, the St Albans Psalter, the Ellesmere Chaucer, Cotton Nero A.x. (the Gawain MS), the Book of Mergery Kempe, and the manuscript of the N-Town plays.

MDVL 535a / CPLT 555a / ENGL 535a, Postcolonial Middle Ages  Marcel Elias
This course explores the intersections and points of friction between postcolonial studies and medieval studies. We discuss key debates in postcolonialism and medievalists’ contributions to those debates. We also consider postcolonial scholarship that has remained outside the purview of medieval studies. The overall aim is for students, in their written and oral contributions, to expand the parameters of medieval postcolonialism. Works by critics including Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Leela Gandhi, Lisa Lowe, Robert Young, and Priyamvada Gopal are read alongside medieval romances, crusade and jihad poetry, travel literature, and chronicles.

MDVL 571a / CLSS 601a, Introduction to Latin Paleography  Agnieszka Rec
Latin paleography from the fourth century CE to ca. 1500. Topics include the history and development of national hands; the introduction and evolution of Caroline minuscule, pre-gothic, gothic, and humanist scripts (both cursive and book hands); the production, circulation, and transmission of texts (primarily Latin, with reference to Greek and Middle English); advances in the technical analysis and digital manipulation of manuscripts. Seminars are based on the examination of codices and fragments in the Beinecke Library; students select a manuscript for class presentation and final paper.
MDVL 590b / HIST 590b / JDST 764b / RLST 777b, Jews in Muslim Lands from the Seventh through the Sixteenth Century  Ivan Marcus
Introduction to Jewish culture and society in Muslim lands from the Prophet Muhammad to Suleiman the Magnificent. Topics include Islam and Judaism; Jerusalem as a holy site; rabbinic leadership and literature in Baghdad; Jewish courtiers, poets, and philosophers in Muslim Spain; and the Jews in the Ottoman Empire.

MDVL 596a / HIST 596a / JDST 761a / RLST 773a, Jews and the World: From the Bible through Early Modern Times  Ivan Marcus
A broad introduction to the history of the Jews from biblical beginnings until the European Reformation and the Ottoman Empire. Focus on the formative period of classical rabbinic Judaism and on the symbiotic relationships among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Jewish society and culture in its biblical, rabbinic, and medieval settings.

MDVL 603b / HIST 603b / JDST 806b / RLST 616b, How the West Became Antisemitic: Jews and the Formation of Europe, 800–1500  Ivan Marcus
This seminar explores how medieval Jews and Christians interacted as religious societies between 800 and 1500.

MDVL 611a, A Survey of Medieval Latin  John Dillon
This is an introductory reading course in Late Antique and Medieval Latin that is intended to help students interested in Christian Latin sources improve their reading ability. The primary objective is to familiarize students with Medieval Latin and improve their proficiency in reading and translating Medieval Latin texts. Students come to recognize the features (grammatical and syntactical) that make Medieval Latin distinct, improve their overall command of Latin by reviewing grammar and syntax, and gain an appreciation of the immense variety of texts written in Medieval Latin. Prerequisite: basic knowledge of Latin grammar and syntax, equivalent to the elementary Latin grammar courses offered by the Classics department (LATN 110, LATN 120).

MDVL 615a / FREN 610a, Old French  R Howard Bloch
An introduction to the Old French language, medieval book culture, and the prose romance via study of manuscript Yale Beinecke 229, The Death of King Arthur, along with a book of grammar and an Old French dictionary. Primary and secondary materials are available on DVD. Work consists of a weekly in-class translation and a final exam comprised of a sight translation passage, a familiar passage from Yale 229, and a take-home essay. No previous study of Old French necessary, although a knowledge of French is essential. Conducted in English.

MDVL 665a / ENGL 500a / LING 500a, Old English I  Emily Thornbury
The essentials of the language, some prose readings, and close study of several celebrated Old English poems.

MDVL 712a, History of Early Christianity: Origins and Growth  Teresa Morgan
This course introduces students to early Christianity from apostolic times through the eighth century. It examines the social, political, and religious context of early Christianity; its expansion and Imperial adoption; the character of its life, worship, and mission; the formation of the Christian scriptures; the articulation and defense of a central body of doctrine; church councils and creeds; the monastic movement; and early Christian art. In conversation with influential theologians of the period, we ask questions about ways in which early Christian identities are formed and explore
how power is used and distributed in this process. Students are exposed to a range of primary sources and modes of historical study. This course serves as essential preparation for the study of Christian history and theology in later historical periods. Above all, it provides an opportunity to consider early Christianity on its own terms and to discover how it continues to shape the lives of Christian communities today.

**MDVL 745a, Byzantine Art and Architecture**  Vasileios Marinis
This lecture course explores the art, architecture, and material culture of the Byzantine Empire from the foundation of its capital, Constantinople, in the fourth century to the fifteenth century. Centered around the Eastern Mediterranean, Byzantium was a dominant political power in Europe for several centuries and fostered a highly sophisticated artistic culture. This course aims to familiarize students with key objects and monuments from various media—mosaic, frescoes, wooden panels, metalwork, ivory carvings—and from a variety of contexts—public and private, lay and monastic, imperial and political. We give special attention to issues of patronage, propaganda, reception, and theological milieux, as well as the interaction of architecture and ritual. More generally, students become acquainted with the methodological tools and vocabulary that art historians employ to describe, understand, and interpret works of art.

**MDVL 955a / HSAR 584a, The Cult of Saints in Early Christianity and the Middle Ages**  Vasileios Marinis and Felicity Harley
For all its reputed (and professed) disdain of the corporeal and earthly, Christianity lavished considerable attention and wealth on the material dimension of sainthood and the “holy” during its formative periods in late antiquity and the Middle Ages. Already in the second century Christian communities accorded special status to a select few “friends of God,” primarily martyrs put to death during Roman persecutions. Subsequently the public and private veneration of saints and their earthly remains proliferated, intensified, and became an intrinsic aspect of Christian spirituality and life in both East and West until the Reformation. To do so, it had to gradually develop a theology to accommodate everything from fingers of saints to controversial and miracle-working images. This course investigates the theology, origins, and development of the cult of saints in early Christianity and the Middle Ages with special attention to its material manifestations. The class combines the examination of thematic issues, such as pilgrimage and the use and function of reliquaries (both portable and architectural), with a focus on such specific cases as the evolution of the cult of the Virgin Mary.