

Mirabile dictu!

The Newsletter of the Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (CMEMS) at the University of Colorado



Thesauri Linguae Latinae: Dictionaries of Medieval Latin

by Professor Scott G. Bruce

Mirabile dictu!

Winter has arrived in Colorado and what better way to spend a frigid evening than cozying up with a medieval Latin text. At CU Boulder, we do our best to provide opportunities for our undergraduate and graduate students to read medieval Latin on a regular basis. In addition to Latin readings related directly to graduate coursework, we have an informal weekly Latin group (*Sub arboribus*) reading the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, as well as two teams of

students who are preparing more ambitious editing and translating projects (we will share news about these projects in a future newsletter). We are often asked about the best Latin dictionaries for students of medieval history to use and how to find them. This month's newsletter considers the utility of some of the most valuable instruments of reference for medieval Latin.

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*CMEMS Invited Speaker
Addresses Medieval Marvels*

Professor Michelle Karnes presents on "Marvels in the Medieval Imagination."

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Medieval & Renaissance Assoc.*

The 2015 meeting of our regional association takes place in scenic Cedar City, Utah.

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**SPEAKER PROFILE:
MICHELLE KARNES**

Michelle Karnes is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Stanford University. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 2004 and has taught at Stanford since 2008. She specializes in medieval literature, which she studies alongside philosophy and theology. Her first book, *Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages* (University of Chicago Press, 2011), explores the role of imagination in medieval meditations and theories of cognition. Her current project studies figurative language in Middle English literature and medieval philosophy of language. At Stanford, she teaches courses on Chaucer, Langland, medieval mysticism, the *Pearl*-poet, Arthurian romance, medievalism, the history of the English language, and the Bible.

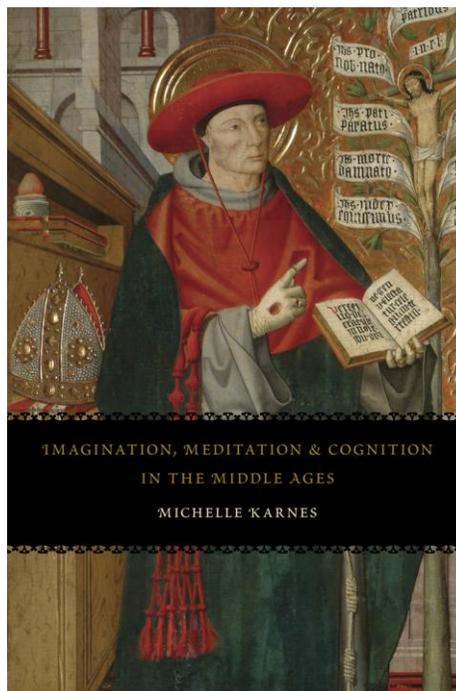
A specialist on medieval English literature and cognitive theory, Michelle Karnes is Assistant Professor of English at Stanford University

It is well known that medieval philosophers sought to work out the natural mechanisms of marvels, but the common reliance on imagination in their accounts has received little scholarly attention. Professor Karnes' paper details the proximate origins and early development of imagination's association with marvels in the Latin West. Starting with Al-Kindi in the ninth century and ending with Nicole Oresme in the fourteenth century, it surveys medieval theories of marvels and investigates the role of imagination within them. It focuses particularly on veridical

dreams, prophecy, demonic possession, bewitchment, and magic. Based on the observation that imagination obscures the distinction between mental representations and extramental objects, Karnes argues that an assortment of marvels rely on it to produce their indeterminacy and import.

Please join us on Thursday November 13 for what promises to be a scintillating talk by a scholar who is truly interdisciplinary in her approach to understanding the medieval past. Please encourage your colleagues and students to attend!

On Thursday November 18, CMEMS Invited Speaker Michelle Karnes will give a public lecture entitled "Marvels in the Medieval Imagination."



On Thursday November 13 at 5pm CMEMS is proud to present Professor Michelle Karnes (English, Stanford University), who will give a public lecture entitled "Marvels in the Medieval Imagination." The event will take place in Hale 240. The talk is free and open to the public. Refreshments (coffee, tea and sweets) will be served. The talk will last for 45 minutes, to be followed by a Q&A with Prof. Karnes. This is our last major event of the Fall semester, so please do join us and share your thoughts and ideas about CMEMS and premodern studies on the CU Boulder campus!

National Humanities Medal Winner Professor Teofilo F. Ruiz to Visit CU Boulder Campus

The CU Mediterranean Studies Group and the CU Translation Initiative is bringing Professor Teofilo F. Ruiz (Department of History, UCLA) to the CU Boulder campus on 17 November 2014. Our medieval community is very excited about this visit, as Professor Ruiz is one of the most renowned medieval historians in North America.

A student of Joseph R. Strayer, Professor Ruiz received his Ph.D. from Princeton University in 1974 and has taught at Brooklyn College, the CUNY Graduate Center, the University of Michigan, the Ecole des hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, and Princeton University (as the 250th Anniversary Visiting Professor for Distinguished Teaching) before he came to UCLA in 1998. An historian of the social and cultural history of late medieval and early modern Castile, Ruiz is the author of innumerable articles and scholarly reviews and has recently published three books: *Spain's Centuries of Crisis, 1300-1474* (2011); *The Terror of History: On the Uncertainties of Life in Western Civilization* (2011); and *A King Travels: Festive Traditions in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (2012). Over the course of his career, Ruiz has accumulated many honors, including membership at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton (1983-1984), an NEH Fellowship (1983-1984), being named U.S. Professor of the Year (1994-1995) by the Carnegie Foundation, and a Guggenheim Fellowship (2007-2008). Lastly, in 2011, President Obama presented Ruiz with the National Humanities Medal for his many contributions to the study of the humanities.

Two events are taking place during Professor Ruiz's visit to Boulder. First, at noon Ruiz will lead a lunch seminar for graduate students on the theme of "Royal Entries in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain." Registration is obligatory and lunch will be provided. To register for this event, please contact Tyson Martinez (tyson.martinez@colorado.edu). Second, Ruiz will deliver a public lecture entitled "The Politics of Language in the Medieval Western Mediterranean: From Unity to Fragmentation" at 5pm in HUMN 250. This lecture is free and open to the public. Please encourage your students to attend.

Ruiz is a legendary teacher, but in his own words, as lecture time approaches: "I am in an absolute panic even after thirty-nine years of doing this. And then something possesses me for one hour and fifteen minutes and I cannot stop. I am like the Energizer Bunny."

We look forward to seeing you at these extraordinary events!



(continued from p. 1)

There is no single comprehensive Latin dictionary that does the job for a medieval Latinist, so you will have to have at least a few tools in your linguistic toolbox when you are tackling an unfamiliar text for the first time. Start with:

Lewis & Short

By far the most popular Latin dictionary used by students and professors of medieval Europe is *A Latin Dictionary*, first published in 1879. Commonly known as “Lewis & Short” after the names of its editors Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, this venerable dictionary of classical Latin retains its utility among medievalists for two reasons. First, many of its entries provide examples of word usage from “late Latin” and “ecclesiastical Latin.” For example, definitions of *diabolus* refer to works by Tertullian and Paulinus of Nola, while the definition of *monacha* directs the reader to a letter of Jerome. In contrast, the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (OLD), which was compiled over the course of the twentieth century as a replacement to Lewis and Short, only considers authors writing before 200 CE and thus has limited value to medievalists. Second, *A Latin Dictionary* is available in an inexpensive abridged edition entitled *An Elementary Latin Dictionary*, first published in 1890 and still in print today. This was my very first Latin dictionary and I still use it on a regular basis. While nothing beats leafing through a Latin dictionary, Lewis and Short is available online in a searchable format from the Perseus Project (www.perseus.tufts.edu)

Niermeyer

Lewis and Short is a solid starting place for common Latin words and some examples of late Latin usage, but where does one go to find the meaning and use of Latin words particular to the Middle Ages? Your first stop should always be J. F. Niermeyer's *Mediae latinitatis lexicon minus*. This hefty book is not a comprehensive dictionary like Lewis and Short or the OLD, but rather a work of reference that highlights words particular to medieval Latin and classical Latin terms whose meanings have changed by the Middle Ages. A few weeks ago, my students and I found Niermeyer invaluable when we encountered a word in an eleventh-century manuscript that looked like *quantus*, which made no sense in the context. We realized that the word was in fact *gauntus*. You will not find this word in Lewis and Short, but Niermeyer will direct you to *wantus* for the meaning “glove.”

DMLBS

Niermeyer is an excellent compliment to Lewis and Short, but there are many other resources out there, including the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (DMLBS). This massive Latin dictionary comprises seventeen volumes of Latin words used by British authors residing in England and abroad from Gildas (540 CE) to Camden (1600). With more than 58,000 entries, the DMLBS is certainly the most comprehensive Latin dictionary of our time. The last volume appeared in print in 2013, accompanied by a flurry of retrospective pieces about the century-long project. The challenge for the DMLBS is getting the work online and finding an interface that does justice to the tremendous achievement that the completion of this huge dictionary represents. You can find more information about the DMLBS and its digital future on their website: dmlbs.ox.ac.uk

Species
1275
S.P.M.C. II p. 136
Species ut de gingibere ce toward
et de aliis minutis speciebus ad
valenciam ix vol. quas — J. ad
seldam — R. secum portaverat
contra pacem domini et ballivorum

4 Spices — Is this the
derivation of our
word? Cf. Fr. 'Spice'

Continued...



Thesaurus Linguae Latinae

There are two other remarkable resources for medieval Latinists that deserve mention. The first is the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (TLL), a sprawling dictionary of the Latin language from its beginnings to the time of Isidore of Seville (early 7th century). What makes this particular work so valuable is its detailed treatment of the history of each and every Latin word, from its first use to the beginning of the Middle Ages. Work on this project, which is based in the Bavarian Academy of Sciences in Munich, has been slow and methodical. It began in 1894 and remains incomplete; the most recent volume (“P”) came out in 2010. Other volumes representing the last letters of the alphabet are still in progress, but the entire TLL is not likely to be completed until about 2050.

Du Cange’s Glossarium

The grandfather of all medieval Latin dictionaries is Charles du Fresne, sieur du Cange’s *Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis* (known simply as “Du Cange”), which was originally published in 1678. There were many later editions, the most common of which is the 10 volume edition published in Niort between 1883 and 1887. This dictionary is a treasure trove of the meanings of the most obscure medieval Latin words by one of the most celebrated medieval historians of the seventeenth century. One of the quirks of Du Cange for modern readers is that he only provided definitions in Latin, but the utility of this reference work is second to none when you are faced with an unusual medieval Latin word. For example, during a recent reading of Gregory of Tours’s *Historiarum libri decem*, I came across a vanishingly rare word: *ballomer*. I could not find it in Lewis and Short or Niermeyer, but sure enough I found it in Du Cange (vol. 1, col. 539c), where he defines it as “falsus dominus pseudo-princeps, veteribus Francis.” Fortunately, the text of Du Cange is now available online and searchable with an easy-to-use interface. You can find it here: ducange.enc.sorbonne.fr

Looking Ahead to December

December will be a quiet month for CMEMS, a much needed rest from our very busy autumn schedule. In our next issue of *Mirabile dictu!*, Professor Anne E. Lester will contribute an editorial reflection on our hugely successful conference on *Medieval Materiality*, which took place on the CU Boulder campus in late October. Thank you to everyone who made that event so memorable!

In the meantime, stay warm!

Servus,
SGB

About the Director: Professor Scott G. Bruce, Department of History



Scott G. Bruce earned his B.A. in History and Latin *summa cum laude* (1994) at York University in Toronto, Canada. He pursued his M.A. (1996) and Ph.D. (2000) in History at Princeton University, where he concentrated on topics in religion and culture in the early Middle Ages and wrote his dissertation under the supervision of Professor Giles Constable.

A specialist on the history of the abbey of Cluny, SGB has published widely on many aspects of medieval monastic culture and literature. He also serves as an editor of *The Medieval Review* (TMR) and plays an active role in the Medieval Academy of America (MAA). For more information, including a complete list of publications, please visit: www.colorado.academia.edu/ScottBruce

CFP: Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association 2015 Conference in Cedar City, Utah (August 3-5).

The 2015 annual meeting of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association will be held in conjunction with the Wooden O Symposium at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, Utah (August 3-5). The Wooden O Symposium, sponsored by the Utah Shakespeare Festival and Southern Utah University, is a cross-disciplinary conference focusing on the text and performance of Shakespeare's plays. Both the RMMRA and Wooden O Symposium will organize sessions in this year's joint conference. The RMMRA invites all approaches to the Middle Ages and Renaissance, welcoming scholars in a broad range of disciplines including history, literature, art history, music, and gender studies, with special consideration given to paper and panel proposals that investigate this year's theme: "The Functions and Dysfunctions of the Medieval and Renaissance Family."

Abstracts for consideration for the RMMRA sessions should be sent to Program Chair Jenn McNabb at JL-Mcnabb@wiu.edu. The deadline for proposals is 1 May 2015. For more details about the conference, please visit: rowdy.msudenver.edu



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IMAGE SOURCES:

The image on p. 4 is one of countless research slips used in the compilation of the DMLBS.

The portrait of Charles du Fresne on p. 5 comes from Charles Perrault's *Les hommes illustres* (1696).

The portrait of William Shakespeare by Gerard Soest (above) was made around 1667. You can see it in The Shakespeare Center in Stratford-upon-Avon.

The portrait of Christ to the right can be found in Matthew Paris' 13th-century *Chronica Maiora* (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).

