

ENGLISH 9122: The *Gawain*-Poet and the Middle English Alliterative Revival
Tuesdays, 9:30-12:30
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Course Description:

The fourteenth century saw an astonishing revival of alliterative verse, a poetic form which flourished in Anglo-Saxon England but had all but disappeared from the written record by 1300. The undisputed jewel of this revival is BL MS Cotton Nero A.x, an unassuming manuscript which contains *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Pearl*, *Cleanness* (or *Purity*) and *Patience*. These four poems, probably by the same poet, will form the core of this course. We will explore each individually, the collection as a literary whole and the manuscript as the unique witness to the texts. In the second term, as students work on major research projects, we will place the collection firmly within the intellectual and poetic traditions of the revival by exploring contemporary works such as *The Awntyrs of Arthure* and *The Parliament of the Thre Ages*.

Texts:

The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript. 5th ed. Ed. Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron.
Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.

The Cotton Nero A.x Project. <http://gawain.ucalgary.ca/>

Schedule:

- Sept. 9 Getting to know you, getting to know the manuscript
- Sept. 16 *Pearl*
Read: *Pearl* 1-540
Moorman, Charles. "The Role of the Narrator in *Pearl*." *Modern Philology* 53.2 (1955): 73-81. (JStor)
- Sept. 23 *Pearl*
Read: *Pearl* 541-1212
Wood, Ann D. "The *Pearl*-Dreamer and the 'Hyne' in the Vineyard Parable." *Philological Quarterly* 52 (1973): 9-19. (JStor)
- Sept. 30 *Pearl*
Read: Olmert, Michael. "Game-Playing, Moral Purpose, and Structure of *Pearl*." *The Chaucer Review* 21.3 (1987): 383-403. (JStor)
Macrae-Gibson, O.D. "*Pearl*: The Link-Words and the Thematic Structure." *Neophilologus* 52 (1968): 54-64. (ProQuest)
Duggan, H.N. "Meter, Stanza, Vocabulary, Dialect." In *A Companion to the Gawain-Poet*." Ed. Derek Brewer and Jonathan Gibson (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997), 221-42.

Translation Test 1

- Oct. 7 *Cleanness*
 Read: *Cleanness* 1-1148
 Coley, David. "Remembering Lot's Wife / Lot's Wife Remembering: Trauma, Witness, and Representation in *Cleanness*." *Exemplaria* 24.4 (2012): 342-63. (EBSCOhost)
- Oct. 14 *Cleanness*
 Read: *Cleanness* 1149-1812
 Doob, Penelope. "Nebuchadnezzar and the Conventions of Madness." In *Nebuchadnezzar's Children: Conventions of Madness in Middle English Literature* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1974) 81-7.
 Frantzen, Allen J. "The Discourse of Sodomy in *Cleanness*." *PMLA* 111 (1996): 451-64. (JStor)
- Oct. 21 *Patience*
 Read: *Patience* 1-530 (i.e. the whole poem)
 Moorman, Charles. "The Role of the Narrator in *Patience*." *Modern Philology* 61 (1963): 90-95. (JStor)
 Benson, C. David. "The Impatient Reader of *Patience*." In *Text and Matter*. Ed. Robert J. Blanche, et al. (Troy, NY: Whitson, 1991), 147-61.
- Oct. 28 *Patience*
 Read: Anderson, J.J. "Rhetorical Strategies in *Cleanness* and *Patience*." *Leeds Studies in English* n.s. 29 (1998): 9-17. (PAO Collection)
Translation Test 2
- Nov. 4 *Sir Gawain*
 Read: *Sir Gawain* 1-1125
 Silverstein, Theodore. "*Sir Gawain*, Dear Brutus, and Britain's Fortunate Founding." *Modern Philology* 62 (1965): 189-206. (JStor)
- Nov. 11 *Sir Gawain*
 Read: *Sir Gawain* 1126-2530
 Stevens, Martin. "Laughter and Game in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*." *Speculum* 47 (1972): 65-78. (JStor)
- Nov. 18 *Sir Gawain*
 Read: Heng, Geraldine. "Feminine Knots and the Other in *SGGK*." *PMLA* 106 (1991): 500-514. (JStor)
 Morgan, Gerald. "Medieval Misogyny and Gawain's Outburst against Women." *Modern Language Review* 97 (2002): 265-87. (JStor)

- Nov. 25 Unity of the poems (?)
 Read: Hilmo, Maidie, “The Power of Images in the Auchinleck, Vernon, Pearl, and Two Piers Plowman Manuscripts.” In *Opening up Middle English manuscripts*. Ed. Kathryn Kerby-Fulton (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2012), 153-206.
 Watson, Nicholas. “The *Gawain*-Poet as a Vernacular Theologian.” In *A Companion to the Gawain-Poet*.” Ed. Derek Brewer and Jonathan Gibson (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997), 293-313.
- Dec. 2 Unity of the poems (?)
 Read: TBD by class interest
- Dec. 9 **Paper 1 due**
- Exam period We won’t have an exam**
- Jan. 6 *Awntyrs off Arthure*
 Read: *The Awntyrs off Arthure*
 2ndary source TBD
- Jan. 13 *Awntyrs off Arthure*
 Read: *The Awntyrs off Arthure*
 2ndary source TBD
- Jan. 20 *Parliament of the Thre Ages*
 Read: *Parliament of the Thre Ages*
 2ndary source TBD
- Jan. 27 *Three Dead Kings*
 Read: *Three Dead Kings*
 2ndary source TBD
- Feb. 3 *Saint Erkenwald*
 Read: *Saint Erkenwald*
 2ndary source TBD
- Feb. 10 Research Paper Seminars
 Statements of intent / interest
- Feb. 17 Conference week
- Feb. 24 Research Paper Seminars: Early Notes and Drafts
- Mar. 3 Research Paper Seminars: Early Notes and Drafts
- Mar. 10 No Tutorial: Individual Meetings throughout week

Mar. 17 Research Paper Seminars: Peer Review of Drafts
Mar 24 Research Paper Seminars: Peer Review of Drafts
Mar. 31 Research Paper Seminars: Peer Review of Drafts
April 7 No tutorial, unless we're behind. I'll be around for individual meetings.
April 14 **Paper 2 due.**

Grade Breakdown:

First term seminar leader:	6%
Paper 1 (15 pages, 4500 words)	25%
Translation tests (2 in first term)	5%
Second term seminar leader:	6%
Research Papers Drafts (1 st and 2 nd)	5%
Peer review commentary	6%
Paper 2 (23 pages, 7000 words)	40%
Seminar contribution	7%

Statement on Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf