Late Medieval English Literature Ph.D. Reading List
I: Middle English Texts and Medieval Literature in Translation
Department of English
Western Michigan University

Based on the Reading List format approved by the English Department Graduate Committee in 2011, the Medieval Studies faculty has created the following reading list of ten required texts and textual corpora. Please note that the following list represents a minimal foundation for graduate study in this field and should be used as a guide for professional development, etc. All selections indicated here are based on sound pedagogical, editorial, and scholarly principles.

A) Required Middle English texts:

1) Chaucer & Gower


--------. The Canterbury Tales
--------. Troilus and Criseyde
--------. House of Fame
--------. Parliament of Fowles
--------. Book of the Duchess
--------. Legend of Good Women
--------. Short poems (selections)

2) Gawain/Pearl-Poet

Pearl, ed. Sarah Stanbury (2001)

3) Langland: Piers Plowman

4) Lydgate & Malory

5) Medieval Women Writers
The Book of Margery Kempe, ed. Lynn Staley (1996)
In addition, please choose three texts from the list of non-English Medieval Women Writers provided below.

6) Medieval Drama
Please choose five texts from the list of Medieval Drama below. Choices should include examples of the following genres: liturgical, morality, miracle, saints’ plays, a complete mystery cycle, and interlude.

7) Medieval Romances
Please choose five romances from the list of Middle English Literature (TEAMS/METS editions) below.

8) Medieval Lyrics
Please choose 30 lyrics, making sure to include examples of different genres from the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries from the list of editions of Medieval Lyrics below.

9) Mystical Writings and Religious Prose
Please choose two texts from the list of Middle English Literature (TEAMS/METS editions) below.

10) Medieval Literary Theory/Criticism & Medieval Literature in Translation

a) From The Norton Anthology of Theory & Criticism, gen. ed. Vincent B. Leitch (second edition 2010), please read the sections by Plato, Aristotle, Longinus, Augustine, Maimonides, Macrobius, Thomas Aquinas, Dante, Boccaccio, and Christine de Pizan

b) From the list of Medieval Literature in Translation below, please choose three texts, each representing a different genre.

B) Full Selection of Recommended Medieval Texts

Middle English Literature

The following editions are available online at the TEAMS/METS website; print editions are published by Medieval Institute Publications (MIP), Kalamazoo, MI.

Four Middle English Romances; Sir Isumbras, Octavian, Sir E Glamour of Artois, Sir
The Kingis Quair and Other Prison Poems, ed. Linne R. Mooney and Mary-Jo Arn (2005)
Lancelot of the Laik and Sir Tristrem, ed. Alan Lupack (1994)
The Middle English Breton Lays, ed. Anne Laskaya and Eve Salisbury (1995)
Middle English Legends of Women Saints, ed. Sherry L. Reames (2003)
Richard the Redeless and Mum and the Sothsegger, ed. James M. Dean (2000)
Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales, ed. Stephen Knight and Thomas Ohlgren (1999)
Sentimental and Humorous Romances, ed. Erik Kooper (2006)
Six Ecclesiastical Satires, ed. James M. Dean (1991)
Three Middle English Charlemagne Romances, ed. Alan Lupack (1990)


Non-TEAMS/METS selections/editions

*Layamon’s Arthur: The Arthurian Section of Layamon’s Brut* (lines 9229-14297), ed. and trans. W. R. J. Barron and S. C. Weinberg

**Medieval Drama**


*York Corpus Christi Plays*, ed. Clifford Davidson (2011)

*Digby Mary Magdalene*, ed. Theresa Coletti (2011)


*Medieval Drama*, ed. David Bevington (Boston, 1975)

**Medieval Women Writers**

Birgitta of Sweden, *Revelations*, trans. Marguerite Tjader Harris


Christine de Pizan, *Book of the City of Ladies*, trans. Earl Jeffrey Richards
--------- The Selected Writings of Christine de Pizan, trans. Kevin Brownlee
Dhouda, Handbook for William, trans. Carol Neel
Hildegard of Bingen (selections), trans. Mark Atherton
Marie de France, Lais, trans. Judith P. Shoaf
--------- The Fables, trans. Mary Lou Martin, and/or Saint Patrick’s Purgatory,
trans. Michael J. Curley
Letters of Abelard and Heloise, trans. Betty Radice

Medieval Literature in Translation
The Nibelungenlied, trans. A. T. Hatto
Reynard the Fox, trans. D. D. R. Owen
Silence, trans. Sarah Roche-Mahdi
The Song of Roland, trans. Glyn S. Burgess
Boccaccio, On Famous Women, trans. Virginia Brown
Dante, Commedia, trans. Allen Mandelbaum
--------- La Vita Nuova, trans. David R. Slavitt
Petrarch, Africa, trans. Thomas G. Bergin and Alice S. Wilson
--------- Selections from the Canzoniere and Other Works, trans. Mark Musa
Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, Roman de la Rose, trans. Charles
Dahlberg
Letters of Abelard and Heloise, trans. Betty Radice
Abelard & Heloise: The Letters and Other Writings, trans. William Levitan
Wace, Roman de Brut, trans. Judith Weiss
Gottfried von Strassburg, Tristan, trans. A. T. Hatto
Wolfram von Eschenbach, Parzival, trans. Cyril Edwards
Chrétien de Troyes, Lancelot: Knight of the Cart, trans. Ruth Harwood Cline
--------- Yvain: Knight of the Lion, trans. Burton Raffel
--------- Perceval, trans Nigel Bryant
-----. *Erec and Enide*, trans. Ruth Harwood Cline


Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe

Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Garry Wills

-----. *City of God* (excerpts), trans. R. W. Dyson

**Medieval Lyrics**


*One Hundred Middle English Lyrics*, ed. Robert D. Stevick (1994)


Background reading should include Roman authors such as Virgil: *Aeneid*, *Georgics*, *Eclogues*, Ovid: *Metamorphoses, Heroïdes, Ars Amatoria, Remedia Amoris*, Statius: *Thebaid, Achilleid, Plautus and Terence* (selections), Cicero, Horace, *Ars Poetica, Boethius, Consolation of Philosophy*; Greek authors such as Homer, Sappho, Euripides, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Scriptural texts from *Genesis to the Apocalypse* (*Revised Standard Version* or *Dhouy-Rheims* or *Biblia Sacra*) and select writings of Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, and Gregory the Great.
Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism


Plato, *Republic, Phaedrus*

Aristotle, *Poetics, Rhetoric*

Augustine of Hippo, *On Christian Doctrine, The Trinity*

Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* (excerpts)


Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*

Cicero, *De Republica* (Scipio’s Dream)

Hugh of St. Victor, *Didascalicon*

Plotinus, *Fifth Ennead*

Dante, *Il Convivio, Letter to Can Grande*

Boccaccio, *Genealogy of the Gentile Gods* (excerpts)