

EN 378X-01 ARTHURIAN LEGEND

Professor: Baragona Office: Scott Shipp 224

Hours: MWF 1:00-1:50 TR 1:00-2:30

TEXTBOOKS:

Norris Lacy/Geoffrey Ashe, eds. Geoffrey of Monmouth	<i>The Arthurian Handbook</i> <i>History of the Kings of Britain</i> (Penguin edition)
Chrétien de Troyes	<i>Yvain, or the Knight with the Lion</i> <i>Lancelot, or the Knight of the Cart</i> <i>Perceval, or The Story of the Grail</i> (all trans. by Ruth Harwood Cline)
Norris Lacy, ed. Thomas Malory	<i>The Lancelot/Grail Reader</i> <i>Le Morte Darthur</i> (ed. by Helen Cooper)

THE COURSE

In the endeavor to identify cultures of the world and the components and practices that distinguish them from others and to appreciate a culture's distinctiveness either through texts or experiential contact, one of the best starting places is the Western medieval tradition. Medieval culture is the foundation of the modern West and can be both recognizable and alien as seen through modern eyes, but it also has much in common with cultures in the Middle East and Far East that did not experience the Western Humanist revolution.

The purpose of this course is to study the most enduring tradition in English literature, perhaps in all Western literature, the story of King Arthur, primarily to give a sense of its development in the Middle Ages. The centerpieces of the course are Chrétien de Troyes, who represents the beginning of Arthurian Romance, and Sir Thomas Malory, who represents the culmination of the medieval tradition, and who is the source of virtually all modern treatments. As we work through these versions of the Arthur story, we will consider what appeal the legend had for different eras, for different societies, and for individual authors. In the process, I hope that you will find the story holds an appeal of some kind for you.

REQUIREMENTS AND DUE DATES:

Friday, 3/8	Hour Test:	15%
Friday, 3/22	Paper:	20%
Monday, 4/29 CAD	ePortfolio:	15%
	Final:	30%
	Quizzes:	10%
	Participation:	10%

TESTS: The hour test will consist entirely of short answer, fill in the blank, and matching questions covering the reading, lectures and discussion up to that point. The final exam will consist of two parts. Part 1 will be like the hour test in format and will cover material from the entire course. Part 2 will be an essay that requires you to write about Chrétien and Malory. You will have a choice whether to write about Geoffrey and *The Lancelot-Grail Cycle*, as well.

PAPERS: You will write two papers for this course. One will be a reflective essay for your ePortfolio (see below), and the other must deal in some respect with either Chrétien or Malory. The assignments will afford you as much flexibility as I can devise and still provide some guidance, and they'll give you a chance to pursue any aspect of your interest in the Arthurian legend, historical, literary or otherwise. See paper assignments below.

READING QUIZZES: The two biggest challenges in this course are 1. keeping up with the reading, and 2. keeping the different versions of the Arthurian story straight (which you can't do if you haven't kept up with the reading). Consequently, doing the reading on time is a minimum requirement for passing this course. You will take frequent reading quizzes, and **you must have a passing average on these quizzes, that is, a minimum of 60%, to pass the course, no matter how good your other grades are.** The quizzes will test knowledge only of the content of the texts, will be multiple choice, and will be **open note, though not open book.** While you read, you should take notes in a separate notebook or section of your course notebook. Write down the names of the main characters and the most significant events of the stories. **I will not drop the lowest quiz grade, but quizzes you miss because of absences do not count against you.** If you do the reading on time and take good, basic notes, there is no reason you shouldn't get a passing grade overall on the quizzes. This should also help you remember information for the hour test and exam, as well as improve your participation grade.

PARTICIPATION: Please note that attendance and participation are not the same thing. You don't participate just by showing up. On the other hand, almost any noise you make in class does constitute participation (excluding laughter, applause, if any, rude noises, etc.). Questions, comments, *pertinent* wisecracks (that make me laugh) all count. Remember also that, because I will have to get to know who you are in order to credit you with a noise, you will have to make your presence felt in class early, strongly and often, so that I learn to associate your face with your name. Moreover, I am genuinely interested in your opinion. **SHYNESS IS NO EXCUSE.**

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: I am happy to work with you to make this a successful semester. Please introduce yourself and tell me about your strengths and learning needs. To determine eligibility for accommodations, contact the Office of Disabilities Services in the Miller Academic Center as soon as possible. VMI policy states that students must give instructors at least 72 hours notice before a test on which they plan to use the extended time accommodation.

ONLINE RESOURCES: The syllabus, all your handouts, grades, and links to web resources, including the course home page are available on Angel (<https://angel.vmi.edu>). You should keep track of your quiz grades there. You will also use Angel to create your ePortfolio for your first paper.

ABSENCES POLICY: If you miss more than 30% of the class meetings (9 or more classes) for excused, as well as unexcused absences, you automatically receive an F for the course.

LATE SUBMISSIONS POLICY: All work assigned outside of class must be submitted in order for you to pass the course. I will accept late papers *only* if you ask for permission in advance, unless, in my judgment, an emergency prevents you from doing so. Otherwise, I will not accept late work, which will result in an automatic F for the course. Late papers that I do accept may be penalized, depending on your reasons. If you miss in-class writing assignments, you do not have to make them up, but you are responsible for knowing all material covered in your absence. For your e-Portfolio weekly journal, see below.

INSTITUTE WORK FOR GRADE POLICY

Development of the spirit as well as the skills of academic inquiry is central to the mission of VMI's Academic Program. As a community of scholars, posing questions and seeking answers, we invariably consult and build upon the ideas, discoveries, and products of others who have wrestled with related issues and problems before us. We are obligated ethically and in many instances legally to acknowledge the sources of all borrowed material that we use in our own work. This is the case whether we find that material in conventional resources, such as the library or cyberspace, or discover it in other places like conversations with our peers.

Academic integrity requires the full and proper documentation of any material that is not original with us. It is therefore a matter of honor. To misrepresent someone else's words, ideas, images, data, or other intellectual property as one's own is stealing, lying, and cheating all at once.

Because the offense of improper or incomplete documentation is so serious, and the consequences so potentially grave, the following policies regarding work for grade have been adopted as a guide to cadets and faculty in upholding the Honor Code under which all VMI cadets live:

Cadets' responsibilities

"Work for grade" is defined as any work presented to an instructor for a formal grade or undertaken in satisfaction of a requirement for successful completion of a course or degree requirement. All work submitted for grade is considered the cadet's own work.

"Cadet's own work" means that he or she has composed the work from his or her general accumulation of knowledge and skill except as clearly and fully documented and that it has been composed especially for the current assignment. No work previously submitted in any course at VMI or elsewhere will be resubmitted or reformatted for submission in a current course without the specific approval of the instructor.

In all work for grade, failure to distinguish between the cadet's own work and ideas and the work and ideas of others is known as **plagiarism**. Proper documentation clearly and fully identifies the sources of all borrowed ideas, quotations, or other assistance. The cadet is referred to the VMI-authorized handbook for rules concerning quotations, paraphrases, and documentation.

In all written work for grade, the cadet must include the words **"HELP RECEIVED"** conspicuously on the document, and he or she must then do one of two things: (1) state "none," meaning that no help was received except as documented in the work; or (2) explain in detail the nature of the help received. In oral work for grade, the cadet must make the same declaration before beginning the presentation. Admission of help received may result in a lower grade but will not result in prosecution for an honor violation.

Cadets are prohibited from discussing the contents of a quiz/exam until it is returned to them or final course grades are posted. This enjoinder does not imply that any inadvertent expression or

behavior that might indicate one's feeling about the test should be considered a breach of honor. The real issue is whether cadets received information, not available to everyone else in the class, which would give them an unfair advantage. If a cadet inadvertently gives or receives information, the incident must be reported to the professor and the Honor Court.

Each cadet bears the responsibility for familiarizing himself or herself thoroughly with the policies stated in this section, with any supplementary statement regarding work for grade expressed by the academic department in which he or she is taking a course, and with any special conditions provided in writing by the professor for a given assignment. If there is any doubt or uncertainty about the correct interpretation of a policy, the cadet should consult the instructor of the course. There should be no confusion, however, on the basic principle that it is never acceptable to submit someone else's work, written or otherwise, formally graded or not, as one's own.

The violation by a cadet of any of these policies will, if he or she is found guilty by the Honor Court, result in his or her being dismissed from VMI. Neither ignorance nor professed confusion about the correct interpretation of these policies is an excuse.

* Departmental policies must include a statement on whether tutors and peers may offer cadets **critical comments** on their papers. Offering **critical comments** means giving general advice on such matters as organization, thesis development, support for assertions, and patterns of errors. It does not include proofreading or editing.

Proofreading means correcting errors (e.g., in spelling, grammar, punctuation). It is the last step taken by the writer in the **editing** process. In addition to the corrections made in proofreading, **editing** includes making such changes as the addition, deletion, or reordering of paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words. **A cadet may not have his or her work proofread or edited by someone other than the instructor. [Instructors may grant exceptions to this rule only if they have received written permission from the department head for a particular assignment.]**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND FINE ARTS
STATEMENT OF POLICY CONCERNING WORK FOR GRADE

The following points apply to work done for courses taught in the Department of English and Fine Arts:

1. Tutoring

Unless directed otherwise in writing by the instructor, Cadets may receive **critical comments*** from tutors on written assignments provided they explain the exact nature of this assistance in their Help Received statements. Cadets may seek assistance from tutors in both understanding course material and preparing for tests, and they do not need to cite this help in their Help Received statements.

2. Peer Collaboration

Unless directed otherwise in writing by the instructor, Cadets may receive **critical comments*** from peers on written assignments provided they explain the exact nature of this assistance in their Help Received statements. Cadets may seek assistance from peers in both understanding course material and preparing for tests, and they do not need to cite this help in their Help Received statements.

3. Computer Aids

Cadets may use electronic spelling, style, and grammar checkers, and they do not have to cite this assistance in their Help Received statements.

4. Documentation Format

Cadets must use the MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation format when writing essays for courses in this department.

***Definitions from the VMI Work for Grade Policy:**

“Offering **critical comments**” means giving general advice on such matters as organization, thesis development, support for assertions, and patterns of errors. It does not include proofreading or editing.

Proofreading means correcting errors (e.g., in spelling, grammar, and punctuation). It is the last step taken by the writer in the **editing** process. In addition to the corrections made in proofreading, **editing** includes making such changes as the addition, deletion, or reordering of paragraphs, phrases, sentences, or words. **A cadet may not have his or her work proofread or edited by someone other than the instructor.**”

READING SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

W 1/16 Opening Class: **Introduction to Questions of the Historical Arthur**

F 1/18 **Early References:** *Arthurian Handbook*, 1-35

WEEK 2 (NO CLASS MONDAY FOR INAUGURAL PARADE)

W 1/23 **Introduction to the Chronicle Tradition:** *Arthurian Handbook*, 36-46, 309-311

F 1/25 Geoffrey of Monmouth Dedication (51-2), Parts 4, 5 & 6 (149-211)

WEEK 3

M 1/28 Geoffrey of Monmouth cont'd.

W 1/30 Geoffrey of Monmouth Part 7 (212-261)

F 2/1 Geoffrey of Monmouth cont'd.

WEEK 4

M 2/4 **Introduction to the Romance Tradition:** *Arthurian Handbook*, 57-77

W 2/6 Chrétien *Yvain, or the Knight with the Lion*, 1-133 (line 4480)
(There are useful endnotes beginning on p. 195 keyed to line numbers, but the text does not indicate when there is a note.)

F 2/8 Chrétien *Yvain, or the Knight with the Lion*, 133-193

WEEK 5

M 2/11 Chrétien *Yvain, or the Knight with the Lion*, cont'd.

W 2/13 Chrétien *Yvain, or the Knight with the Lion*, cont'd.

F 2/15 Chrétien *Yvain, or the Knight with the Lion*, cont'd.

WEEK 6

M 2/18 Chrétien *Lancelot, or the Knight of the Cart*, 1-140 (line 5043)
(Stars in the lines indicate endnotes, which begin on page 197.)

W 2/20 Chrétien *Lancelot, or the Knight of the Cart*, 140-196

F 2/22 Chrétien *Lancelot, or the Knight of the Cart*, cont'd.

WEEK 7

M 2/25 Chrétien *Perceval, or the Quest of the Holy Grail*, 1-125

W 2/27 Chrétien *Perceval, or the Quest of the Holy Grail*, 126-167

F 3/1 Chrétien *Perceval, or the Quest of the Holy Grail*, 168-244

WEEK 8

M 3/4 Chrétien *Perceval, or the Quest of the Holy Grail*
Introduction, ix-xxii and notes, esp. #20-30 & 41 (pp. xxvii-xxix)

W 3/6 *Perceval, or the Quest of the Holy Grail* cont'd.

F 3/8 **HOURLY TEST**

SPRING FURLOUGH

WEEK 9

M 3/18 *Lancelot-Grail Reader*, 50-92

W 3/20 *Lancelot-Grail Reader*, 94-119, 180-216

F 3/22 *Lancelot-Grail Reader*, cont'd.

WEEK 10

M 3/25 *Lancelot-Grail Reader*, 235-241, 283-317

W 3/27 **Introduction to the English Tradition and Malory:**
Arthurian Handbook, 121-133 and Cooper Introduction to Malory vii-xxii

F 3/29 Malory *From the Marriage of King Uther Unto King Arthur*, 3-81

WEEK 11

M 4/1 **NO CLASS FOR EASTER FURLOUGH**

W 4/3 Malory *A Noble Tale of Sir Lancelot du Lake*, 95-119

R 4/4 **MONDAY CLASSES MEET**
Malory *A Noble Tale of Sir Lancelot du Lake*, cont'd.

F 4/5 Malory *The Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkney*, 120-168

WEEK 12

M 4/8 **NO CLASS FOR SPRING FTX**

W 4/10 Malory *The Book of Sir Tristram de Lyonesse*, 169-208

F 4/12 Malory *The Book of Sir Tristram de Lyonesse*, 209-227

WEEK 13

M 4/15 Malory *The Book of Sir Tristram de Lyonesse*, 281-309

W 4/17 Malory *The Book of Sir Tristram de Lyonesse*, cont'd.

F 4/19 Malory *The Tale of the Sangrail*, 310-356

WEEK 14

M 4/22 Malory *The Tale of the Sangrail*, 357-402

W 4/24 Malory *The Tale of the Sangrail*, cont'd.

F 4/26 Malory *The Book of Sir Lancelot and Queen Guenivere*, 403-467

WEEK 15

M 4/29 Malory *The Book of Sir Lancelot and Queen Guenivere*, cont'd.
ePORTFOLIO DUE by TAPS

W 5/1 Malory *The Death of Arthur*, 465-527

F 5/3 Malory *The Death of Arthur*, cont'd.

PAPER #1 TOPICS

You have a choice between two broad approaches: 1) historical research that gives a context for the literary works you've read in class or 2) literary criticism. While the research paper may seem more time consuming, a thorough literary analysis, even without secondary sources, can take just as much effort. Choose a category according to what you think you will enjoy the most and will be best at.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH TOPICS

1. Debate still continues over whether Arthur was an historical person. Research the latest proposed models (e.g. Arthur was Lucius Artorius Castus; Arthur was Riothamus; Arthur was Cerdric, etc.), pick **one** and write a paper in which you summarize and evaluate the theory. In addition to your *Arthurian Handbook* and *The Arthurian Encyclopedia*, searching the Arthurnet Logs for "historical Arthur" is a good place to start: <http://lists.mun.ca/archives/arthurnet.html>. Remember, however, that postings to Arthurnet are off the cuff remarks and not always by scholars, so you should use them to guide you to publications on the topic.
2. King Arthur allegedly lived in 5th- or 6th-century Britain, but our picture of him as a courtly king really begins with the 12th century. Research **one** aspect of the following social, political, or military conditions of the 5th and 6th centuries and compare them to the depiction of Arthur in **either** Geoffrey of Monmouth **or** Chrétien de Troyes: the idea of kingship; military organization, tactics or technology (e.g. armor or siege machinery); the social position and role of women or of commoners; the position of the Church. Be sure at all times to connect your research to the literary works. This isn't a history paper; it's meant to shed light on the literature.
3. The 12th century of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Chrétien de Troyes was a time of enormous change in European culture, and many of these changes are reflected in these authors' works. Choose **one** of the following topics and discuss how **either** Geoffrey **or** Chrétien's depiction of them illustrates changes in 12th-century society: kingship, knighthood, the status of women. As with Topic 2, be sure at all times to connect your research to Arthurian Legend so that you are shedding light on the literature.
4. Earlier in the century, it was common practice to treat tales of Arthur and his knights as Christianized remnants of pagan myths (this was usually the approach of anthropologists and literary scholars interested in anthropology). Usually, Celtic paganism was identified as the original source of the Arthur story or elements of it. Most recently, Arthurian scholars have downplayed or rejected the alleged pagan origins of the Arthurian story and concentrated on the medieval Christian content, especially its allegorical elements. Write a paper in which you choose a single element of the Arthur story (a character, episode, symbol, motif, e.g., Morgan le Fay, Excalibur, the Grail, Arthur himself), and discuss both its possible pagan and Christian origins. *The Arthurian Encyclopedia* and the Arthurnet Logs are good places to start.
5. Any other similar topic you can think of having to do with the legend's historical or literary background is fine as long as you discuss it with me well in advance of beginning research.

LITERARY CRITICISM TOPICS

1. Do a character study. This gives you a wide range of choices:

a) Choose a single character in Geoffrey or in one of Chrétien's works and study anything that seems significant (e.g. role in the plot, importance to themes, growth of personality, if any).

b) Choose a single character that appears in two or more of Chrétien's works and *compare* the treatment in each work.

c) Compare the treatment of an individual character by both Geoffrey and Chrétien. This will probably require you to talk about more than one work by Chrétien but not necessarily. Sir Kay, for example, is pretty much the same in all three of his works, so one work would be enough to highlight the differences with Geoffrey's Kay. Gawain would probably require discussion of two works by Chrétien. King Arthur is more complicated as you move from one of Chrétien's works to another, so you might have to include all three.

2. Do a thematic study. Options are similar to those in #1. Trace a theme in Geoffrey or in a single work of Chrétien or compare treatment of the same theme by both authors or in two works by Chrétien.

3. Do a study of the use of a **symbol** or **motif** in Geoffrey or in one or more of Chrétien's works. For this choice, it is especially important to make sure you understand the use of these literary terms. Even if you have done such a paper in the past, review their meaning in a literary handbook, e.g., Hugh Holman's *Handbook to Literature*.

4. Discuss the treatment of women in Chrétien (you may also include Geoffrey as a point of reference, but the focus should be on Chrétien).

GUIDELINES TO AVOID PET PEEVES

1. Use class lecture or discussion as a starting point for further exploration. **Don't merely repeat what I said in class.**

2. NEVER spell Arthur "Author."

3. Always capitalize "Middle Ages" (not a rule, just my preference).

4. The adjective to refer to the period is "medieval," not "Middle Aged." Please learn to spell it; it is not "midevil." Note that "medieval" does not have to be capitalized.

5. Finally, refer to Geoffrey of Monmouth and Chrétien de Troyes by their *first* names and alphabetize them on your Works Cited page that way, too.

DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 22

LENGTH: 4-6 PAGES (DOUBLE SPACED, STANDARD MARGINS, 12 POINT TIMES NEW ROMAN FONT)

ePORTFOLIO

See the separate documents, “ePortfolio Instructions Spring 2013” and “Guidelines for the ePortfolio Reflective Essay Spring 2013” (available on Angel).

COMPLETED PORTFOLIO DUE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24 BY CAD

You should post your Reflective Essay to your Angel Drop Box, then import it and any journal entries you chose to refer to in the paper into Angel ePortfolio. After constructing the ePortfolio, be sure to send an e-mail invitation both to me and MAJ Howard Sanborn. I will not consider the submission of your ePortfolio completed until you have sent *both* invitations, and you must submit the ePortfolio to pass the course.

From the Civilizations and Cultures Committee:

“Students must submit ePortfolios to their instructors by the specified due date. Students who fail to do so will receive a grade of F for the course. (Note: the purpose of the ePortfolio is to assess Civilizations and Cultures courses. While you must submit an ePortfolio that adheres to the guidelines in order to pass the course, the assessment does not influence your instructor’s evaluation of your performance in the course.)”

Arthurian Legend Final Exam Study Sheet

The final exam will consist of two parts, a comprehensive objective section and an essay, each worth 50%.

I. The objective section will cover all information from the reading assignments in Lacy and Ashe's *Arthurian Handbook* and in the literature and from class lectures, discussion and handouts, but it will concentrate more on the material we've studied since the midterm than on the earlier material. You should be familiar with 1) the historical development of Arthurian tradition from the *Gododdin* to the present time (with emphasis on the medieval, up to Malory), 2) the political, social, biographical and literary backgrounds of Geoffrey, Chrétien, *The Lancelot-Grail Cycle*, and Malory, and 3) the plots and most important characters of all six works you have read for class. The number of questions you will be required to answer will probably be between 33 and 50. They will include fill in the blanks, multiple choice, matching, and short answer (a few sentences). Use the midterm as a model for the kind of questions (some of the questions, in fact, will be repeated, though in different form), and, as before, you should pay special attention to the "firsts" (or earliest surviving instances) of important features of the Arthurian tradition. In addition, concentrate on the biography of Malory and the cultural background of all the writers, as well as details from the works themselves, of course.

II. You will be given **one** of the **three** topics below. For each topic, you must write about **four** of the six works you've read. **One** must be Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, and **one** must be any of Chrétien de Troyes's romances. The other two can be your choice. Please spell the author's names correctly and get the titles right, whether you use the English translations or the original: Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain (Historia Regum Britanniae)*; Chrétien de Troyes, *Yvain, or the Knight with the Lion (Le Chevalier au Lion)*, *Lancelot, or the Knight of the Cart (Le Chevalier de la Charette)*, *Perceval, or the Story of the Grail (Le Conte del Graal)*; *The Lancelot-Grail Cycle*; Thomas Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*.

Choice 1

Trace the development of the character of King Arthur, not only his role as a king but his personality, from the 12th century to the 15th. Take into account as many facets as possible of Arthur, both as a monarch and as a man, in himself and in relation to the other characters in the tradition. Consider the different purposes of each author or work in relation to the different depictions of King Arthur.

Choice 2

The prominence of the literary tradition of Arthurian Legend corresponds almost exactly to the rise and dominance of the Gothic cathedral as a medieval art form, beginning in the 12th century and culminating in the late 15th. Discuss each work's use of the Gothic technique of symmetrical structure (parallels) to organize complicated strands of narrative, illuminate characters, and elucidate themes.

Choice 3

Although considered a secular tradition, even in the Middle Ages, most Arthurian stories deal with some kind of moral issues, especially in terms of the uneasy relationship among the three branches of chivalry, war, religion, and love. Discuss how each work wrestles with moral questions that were important to medieval people.