

Instructor:
Alexandra Gillespie

Course number:
ENG462H5F

Course title:
Medieval Dream Vision Poetry

Course Description:

In this course, we will read some medieval and modern dream theory: Macrobius's commentary on Cicero's *Dream of Scipio*; early exegetes on Biblical dreams; Zizek on Lacan's ideas about dreams and the "traumatic Real." We will then turn to literary texts: we will discuss the strange vision of the Holy Cross described by an Anglo-Saxon poet-dreamer in the *Dream of the Rood*; Langland's satire of the corrupt institutions of late medieval society in *Piers Plowman*; Chaucer's flight, in the claws of a giant eagle, to a house of whirling, winged rumours in *The House of Fame*; the garden, the dead Pearl-maiden, and the celestial Jerusalem in *Pearl*; and the bottomless bag of censored and censurable books in *Mum and the Sothsegger*.

Required Reading:

Selections of theoretical writings (supplied in class); *Dream of the Rood* (ed. Rambaran-Olm); Langland, *Piers Plowman* (ed. Schmidt); Chaucer, *House of Fame* (ed. Benson); *Pearl* (ed. Stanbury); *Mum and Sothsegger* (ed. Dean).

First Three Texts/Authors to be Studied:

Theoretical readings (supplied in class); *Dream of the Rood* (ed. Rambaran-Olm); Langland, *Piers Plowman* (ed. Schmidt).

Method of Instruction:

Seminar

Method of Evaluation:

Weekly close reading exercises; short presentation to class on passage from set text; 8-12 pp. essay