

Editor's Foreword



Memory is a complex concept, encompassing not only how individual minds store and recall the past, but how societies remember, perceive, and invent histories that extend beyond lived experience. In recent decades, memory—particularly cultural memory—has been widely theorised in medieval and early modern studies to deepen our understanding of ritual behaviour, art, literature, and other mnemonic artefacts. In proposing the theme ‘memory’ for *Ceræ*’s tenth anniversary volume, the editorial committee aimed to gather research that demonstrated this breadth of inquiry, showcased the continued vibrancy of memory studies within the medieval and early modern disciplines, and highlighted avenues for further investigation. We have not been disappointed and are proud to present volume 10 of *Ceræ*.

In our opening article, Lydia H. Hayes approaches the matter of ritual, one of the central elements of cultural memory, and turns to the that most widely observed ritual of medieval Christendom: the Eucharist. Hayes’ paper takes as its focal point the blood on the snow scene in Chrétien de Troyes’ *Perceval* and argues that Chrétien uses Blancheflor’s image as a symbol for the Eucharist to foreshadow Perceval’s absolution. Hayes suggests that this motif was specifically coded for an audience that was not simply familiar with the Eucharistic rite, but was entrenched within a cultural

context that had burgeoning interests in affective piety and Marian literature. Literature is a prominent theme in the volume's articles, the second of which examines the fourteenth-century poem *The Awntyrs off Arthur*. In it, Jacob Herrman considers how cultural memory shaped the poem's depictions of Anglo-Scottish relations. Deploying an ethno-historical lens, Herrman proposed that the poem's two primary episodes—a prophecy of the fall of the Arthurian empire, and an account of an Anglo-Scots land dispute—accessed and shaped memory of the borderlands through themes of imperial temporality and political instability. In so doing, Herrman argues, the poem promoted a model of peaceful subjugation of the Scots.

The volume's third article moves away from matters of author and audience to topics of reception and transmission. Rosemary Kelly undertakes to assess some of the earliest modern English translations of *Beowulf*, examining how the language of emotion and violence in these redactions inject a sense of English nationalism. In particular, Kelly considers how these translations reconstructed the masculinity of key characters to ensure that it adhered to the cultural expectations of a heroic ideal then in vogue in Victorian England, but far removed from the poet's own cultural milieu. Kelly argues that these early translations continue to effect modern *Beowulf* scholarship. In our final themed article, Kimberly Lifton moves away from written literature to carved literature: graffiti. In her examination of the graffiti of Carlisle Castle keep Room 22, Lifton analyses how the corpus of graffiti represents attempts by those garrisoned the castle to situate themselves in their political environment by identifying with the political networks within which they were involved.

In addition to these themed articles, Sophie Tarakes offers a full-length study of the poem *Pearl* that proposes an innovative methodological approach to its depiction of mourning through the use of photographic theory. Finally, Leandro César Santana Neves and Luiz Felipe Anchieta Guerra supply a *varium* on the rise and fall of the Study Group of Medieval History based at the State University of Montes Claros in Brazil.

Our greatest debt is, as ever, is to our peer-reviewers for offering their time and expertise and for providing our authors with feedback that has been at once critical and collegial. Thanks must also go to our committee of volunteers whose efforts in running the journal have kept this project alive for the past decade. I am personally indebted to my deputy editor, Ashley Castelino, for his help in processing the submissions received for this volume. And finally, congratulations to our authors on the publication of the fruits of their research. Working as *Ceræ's* editor for the past two years has been a very rewarding experience and I am confident the journal will continue to go from strength to strength as Ashley takes the helm.

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