

# Editor's Foreword



In 2013, a group of graduate scholars founded a journal named *Ceræ*, named after the ubiquitous wax tablets of ancient, medieval, and early modern societies. Considering the malleable and flexible nature of wax, it is fitting that the theme of volume 11 is ‘Metamorphosis, Transformation, and Transmutation’. If the last few years have taught us anything, it is that change and transformation are universal features of the human experience, as well as of the wider living world. At this current moment of great flux, we are proud to present a volume of research that expertly captures the significance of these themes in the medieval and early modern worlds.

Our journal itself continues to transform and grow. In April this year, *Ceræ* launched its inaugural online conference, a continuous single stream held over 28 hours to provide equitable access to participants across the world. Pairing the theme of the conference with the journal meant that we received a number of article submissions from conference presenters, two of whom (Russell and Styrt) are a part of the present volume. We plan to replicate the success of this conference next year and hopefully for years to come.

The three articles of this volume all approach the theme of Metamorphosis, Transformation, and Transmutation in very different contexts. Szilárd Kováč considers historiographical transformation in 14th-century Bohemia, exploring how a number of different chronicles diverged in the narratives they constructed about Břetislav I. Kováč demonstrates that although chroniclers consistently paid attention to the same stories about Břetislav I, the meaning drawn from these stories evolved and was refined according to contemporary political concerns. James Russell shifts focus to Pope Alexander VII's extensively annotated copy of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* incunable. By analysing the Pope's remarkable marginalia, Russell reframes the text as a three-dimensional architectural dreamspace upon which the Pope mapped his own experiences. In the final article, Philip Goldfarb Styrt applies the terminology and approaches of online fanfiction to Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* and Robert Greene's *Pandosto*. In doing so, Styrt presents an innovative case study in using the rich analytical language of fanfiction to reconsider the relationship between play, source, and audience.

In addition to these excellent articles, it is an honour to feature two creative *varia* by Roxanne Bodsworth and Sam Corradetti. Bodsworth's *Meet Me in My World* is a feminist prosimetric reconstruction of the eighth-century Irish tale, *Aislinge Óenguso* (*The Dream of Óengus*), that foregrounds the feminine experience to bring a new understanding to the early-medieval tale. Next, Corradetti's 'Retrograde' is the short story of a sapphic couple set during California's struggle for marriage equality

in the 2000s and imagined with strong alchemical themes in the style of Chrétien de Troyes' chivalric romance, *Cligès*.

The remainder of this volume comprises 19 book reviews that would surely put to rest any concerns about the strength or diversity of medieval and early modern studies. Subjects of books being reviewed range from pre-Roman Italy to the early colonial Americas, from Old Norse-Icelandic literature to Arabic science, with titles in English, French, and Italian. I commend Amanda Burrows-Peterson and Maria Gloria Tumminelli for taking on the gargantuan task of compiling and editing these reviews with great efficiency.

This journal would not be able to function without our dedicated network of internal preliminary reviewers and external peer reviewers, who volunteer their time, effort, and expertise to help our authors develop their work. I am extremely grateful to them and to the larger *Ceræ* committee, especially Erica Steiner and Michele Seah for keeping the *Ceræ* ship steady. I must above all thank Deputy Editors, Lindsay Church and Ayaka Nguyen, for their invaluable assistance in putting this volume together. Finally, many congratulations to all the authors in this volume for their hard work and excellent scholarship. Preparation for volume 12 is already well underway and I look forward to watching *Ceræ* continue to flourish under the new committee.

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