Graduate Seminar: The Interaction of Text and Image in Late-Medieval France
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Course Description
This course introduces students to the illuminated manuscript, an important form of artistic, literary and cultural expression in the Middle Ages. We will use one textual case study, Octovien de Saint-Gelais’ translation of the Heroides circa 1497, the XXI Epistres d’Ovide (Ovid’s Twenty-One Epistles). An in-depth examination of this series of fifteen manuscripts will give students the tools to describe, analyze and interpret medieval manuscripts more broadly in both textual and visual contexts. The focus of this course, then, is the interaction of text and image, and the collaboration of these two traditionally separate academic disciplines in one material object, the illuminated manuscript.

Course Format
The course meets twice a week, with each week focusing on one topic concerning manuscript production, reception, and interpretation. Students are assigned one chapter of the XXI Epistres d’Ovide each week, in addition to scholarly articles dealing with the topic to be discussed in seminar. The manuscript versions of the XXI Epistres are employed in digital format as specific case studies. The first session of each week will consist of a lecture; the second, a specific case study or targeted class discussion.

Aims and Objectives
This course is aimed at first-year graduate students desiring an introduction to the production and transmission of meaning in the Middle Ages, or more advanced undergraduate students with an interest in French literature and/or art history ca. 1500, or questions of gender and cultural production in the Middle Ages. At the end of the course, you will have specific knowledge of:
- manuscript production in late medieval France
- royal (and especially, female) patronage in late medieval France
- visual and textual reception by medieval readers
but also, more generally:
- an understanding of the different components of an illuminated manuscript, how it is made, and how it was read, viewed, and interpreted
- the ability to describe, analyze and interpret these objects
- the ability to develop an argument concerning the ways in which the different components of medieval manuscripts collaborated and interacted to create singular or multiple meanings and reading experiences.

Course Requirements and Grading Policy
Attendance is mandatory. Grading will consist of student participation (30%), one in-class presentation (30%), and one final paper (40%).
The presentation will be an analysis of one manuscript version of the *XXI Epistres*. Students are expected to meet with me at least once before their scheduled class session to discuss their proposed interpretation of how text and image combine in their chosen manuscript.

The final paper must be at least 6000 words for graduate students, and 3000 for undergraduates. It will address one of the topics listed at the end of this document.

**A note on office hours**
Office hours exist to increase contact between students and professors. In other words, come see me! If my scheduled office hours are not convenient, email me to set up another time.
Schedule of Lectures and Discussions

Week 1
Session 1

Introduction to the material object

Readings:

  Full contents available online at: http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/glossary.asp

Session 2

Saint-Gelais’ Prologue and the concept of medieval auctoritas

Readings:

- *Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide*, Prologue


Week 2
Session 1

The medieval reading/viewing experience

Readings:

- *Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide*, Penelope (first half)


Session 2

Manuscript case study: BnF fr. 873

Readings:

- *Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide*, Penelope (second half)

**Week 3**

**Session 1**

*Mouvance* and scribal intervention: the example of BnF fr. 874

**Readings:**
- *Les XXI Épistres d’Ovide*, Phaedra (first half)


**Session 2**

**Discussion:** The medieval reader as interpreter

**Readings:**
- *Les XXI Épistres d’Ovide*, Phaedra (second half)


**Week 4**

**Session 1**

Secular books for aristocrats

**Readings:**
- *Les XXI Épistres d’Ovide*, Phyllis (first half)


**Session 2**

Ownership and provenance: the example of Oxford, Balliol ms. 383

**Readings:**
- *Les XXI Épistres d’Ovide*, Phyllis (second half)


- Elizabeth A.R. Brown and Thierry Claerr, “Fraude, fiction, et ‘faulseté’ à la fin du Moyen Âge : les sombres affaires de Jean de Chabannes, comte de Dammartin,


**Week 5**

**Session 1**

**Parisian manuscript production**

**Readings:**

- Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide, Hypermnestra (first half)

-JJG Alexander, Medieval Illuminators and Their Methods of Work (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), chapters 1 and 2

**Session 2**

**Parisian manuscript production continued**

**Readings:**

- Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide, Hypermnestra (second half)


**Week 6**

**Session 1**

**Manuscripts for women**

**Readings:**

- Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide, Dejanira (first half)


**Session 2**

**Female patronage: the example of Louise de Savoie**

**Readings:**

- Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide, Dejanira (second half)

-Kathleen Wilson-Chevalier and Mary Beth Winn. “Louise de Savoie, ses livres, sa bibliothèque.” (forthcoming)

**Week 7**

**Session 1**

**Louise de Savoie, Robinet Testard (illuminator), and BnF fr. 875**

**Readings:**

- *Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide*, Ariadne (first half)


**Session 2**

**Jean Pichore (illuminator) and BnF fr. 873 and 874**

**Readings:**

- *Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide*, Ariadne (second half)


**Week 8**

**Session 1**

**Female patronage continued: the example of Anne de Bretagne**

**Readings:**

- *Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide*, Medea (first half)

- Cynthia J. Brown “Celebration and Controversy at a Late Medieval French Court: A Poetic Anthology For and About Anne of Brittany and Her Female Entourage.” *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance*, LXXII, no. 3 (2010), 541-573.

**Session 2**

**Discussion: Anne de Bretagne and San Marino, Huntington manuscript 60**

**Readings:**

- *Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide*, Medea (second half)

Week 9

Session 1
**From manuscript to print**

**Readings:**
- *Les XXI Épistres d’Ovide*, Paris (first half)


- Kathrin Giogoli and John Block Friedman, "Robinet Testard, Court Illuminator: His Manuscripts and his Debt to the Graphic Arts," *Journal of the Early Book Society*, 8 (2005): 143-188.

Session 2
**Discussion: Medieval manuscripts in the “Digital Age”**

**Readings:**
- *Les XXI Epistres d’Ovide*, Paris (second half)


Week 10

Session 1
**Helen across time and space: the evolution of an iconographical tradition and a literary myth**

**Readings:**
- *Les XXI Épistres d’Ovide*, Helen (first half)

- Excerpts from Homer, Virgil, Aristophanes, Euripides, Herodotus, and Ovid

Session 2
**Discussion: Digital Mimesis?**

**Readings:**
- *Les XXI Épistres d’Ovide*, Helen (second half)

Essay Topics

Choose one topic from the following list. Essays should include footnotes, and use Chicago style, OR follow MLA guidelines; consult the Chicago Manual of Style or the MLA Style Manual and Guide. Proofread your work, and include a word count on the first page of your paper. These topics are merely suggestions; the diligent student will be consistently considering any seminar topic that interests them throughout the course as a possible essay topic. For each essay topic, I will provide a selected bibliography to help familiarize you with the key scholarship in the discipline.

1. Compare and contrast two manuscript versions of the *XXI Epistres*, or of another text.* How do each manuscript’s images modify readings of the text, or bear on the interpretation of the message as a whole? How do textual variations or paratextual additions complicate this situation?

2. Conduct an in-depth analysis of the *mise-en-page* of one specific manuscript. Consider factors such as rubric-image relationship, the position of the image on the page, marginalia, historiation, and color. How does the manuscript highlight an important moment in the text? How do certain illuminations “narrate” the text? How does the text introduce the image, or vice versa?

3. Construct a narrative surrounding the ownership and provenance of a single manuscript.* How and why was the manuscript produced? Did the illuminators and scribes direct their work towards a specific individual? How did the manuscript’s owner(s) personalize the book or indicate their role in its production or their ownership?

* Students wishing to use another text should meet with me well in advance of the end of the quarter to discuss.

* This manuscript cannot contain the *XXI Epistres*. I advise you also to choose a manuscript containing interesting features that may designate ownership (annotations, erasures, coats of arms, and ex libris are just a few examples).
Resources

The most important thing to do when studying manuscripts is to look at manuscripts. Many libraries and museums have digitized and made available these manuscripts for you online. The following is a list of various digital editions of selected texts, and instructions on how to find digital images of manuscripts through some major libraries.

Digital Editions
Jean Froissart, Chroniques, [http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/onlinefroissart/](http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/onlinefroissart/)
Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung, Le roman de la rose, [http://romandlarose.org/](http://romandlarose.org/)

Major libraries

Versions of the XXI Epistres d'Ovide available online

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), français (fr.) 873
Paris, BnF fr. 874
Paris, BnF fr. 875
Paris, BnF fr. 876-877
Paris, BnF fr. 1641
Oxford, Balliol College 383
San Marino, Huntington Library 60
Paris, Chambre des Députés 1466*

* Students wishing to view images of this manuscript should speak to me directly.