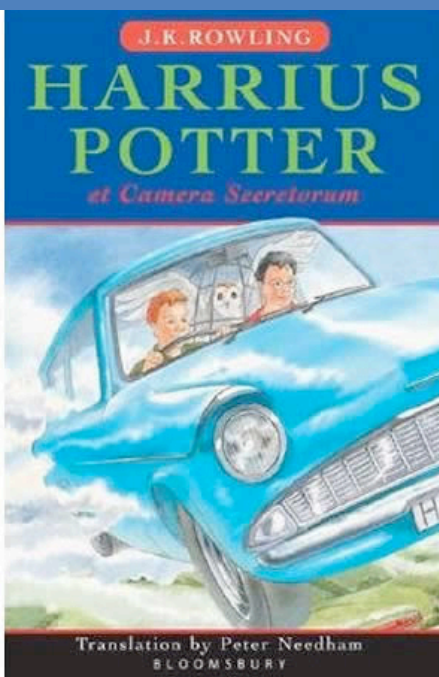
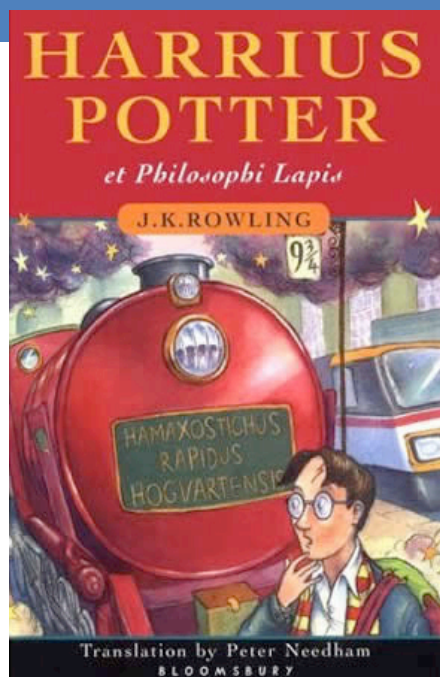


Mirabile dictu!

The Newsletter of the Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (CMEMS) at the University of Colorado



Olim erant quattuor cuniculi parvi: Latin Children's Classics

by Professor Scott G. Bruce

Mirabile dictu!

Over the past few decades, a handful of professors of Latin and other enthusiasts have contributed to an unusual literary phenomenon: the translation of classic works of children's literature from English into Latin. If you are the only Latinist in your family, chances are that you have received one or more of these quaint little books as a Christmas or

birthday gift. Have you ever read them or used them in teaching or are they simply novelties that adorn a distant, dusty shelf in your study or office? If you are unfamiliar with the genre, keep reading to find out more about this curious literary tradition.

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Invited Speaker Profile: Professor Renée Trilling

Leading Anglo-Saxonist will speak on subjectivity and the body in Old English literature.

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Two New Courses Illuminate Medieval England

Learn Old English and study the history of medieval English law in Spring 2014!

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Jerome and the Monastic Clergy and Jerome's Epitaph on Paula

Two new critical commentaries by Professor Andrew Cain (Department of Classics).

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SPEAKER PROFILE: RENÉE TRILLING

Renée Trilling is Associate Professor of English, Medieval Studies, Criticism and Interpretive Theory, and Comparative and World Literature at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, where she teaches medieval English language and literature and critical theory. She earned her Ph.D. at the University of Notre Dame in 2004. Her publications include *The Aesthetics of Nostalgia: Historical Representation in Old English Verse* (Toronto, 2009); and *A Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Studies* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), which she co-edited with Jacqueline Stodnick.



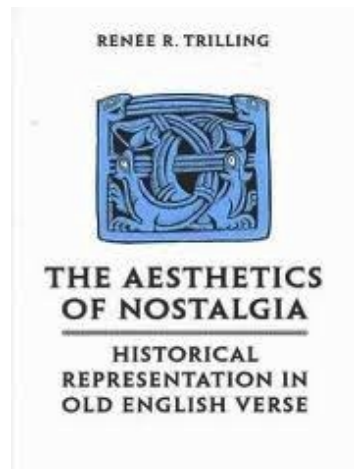
Renée Trilling, Associate Professor of English, Medieval Studies and Critical Theory, is a leading expert on Anglo-Saxon language and literature.

With the appearance of her widely praised first book – *The Aesthetics of Nostalgia in Old English Verse* (Toronto, 2009) – Professor Trilling emerged as an influential voice in the field of Anglo-Saxon literature. "Elegantly written and unwaveringly intelligent," this book examines the character of historical melancholy in Anglo-Saxon culture. Examining a wide range of sources, from well-known works like Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* and *Beowulf* to the lesser-known poems of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Professor Trilling attempts to understand "how the aesthetics of nostalgia function to produce a historical consciousness that works precisely against the demands of linear teleology" (p. 22). The result is a rich and elegantly crafted study that one reviewer has called "one of the best and most important books in Anglo-Saxon studies in the past decade."

In addition to her monograph, Professor Trilling has made significant contributions to the field of Anglo-Saxon studies as the author of numerous learned articles, including "The Order of Things in Anglo-Saxon Studies: Categorization and the Construction of a Discipline," *Literature Compass* 5.3 (April 2008): 472-492; and "Ruins in the Realm of Thoughts: Reading as Constellation in Anglo-Saxon Poetry," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 108.2 (April 2009): 141-167 (available for your reading pleasure on the CMEMS Academia.edu page). Lastly, she has recently co-edited (with Jacqueline Stodnick) *A Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Studies* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), which explores the interplay between Anglo-Saxon studies and critical theory in eighteen original essays on key theoretical terms such as "gender," "literacy" and "time."

On September 12, Renée Trilling will present a paper entitled "Where Body Meets Soul: Materiality and Eschatology in Anglo-Saxon England."

On Thursday September 12 at 5pm in HUMN 250, Professor Trilling will give a public lecture entitled "Where Body Meets Soul: Materiality and Eschatology in Anglo-Saxon England." This paper informs a new book project entitled *Ecce Corpus: Beholding the Body in Anglo-Saxon Literature* that draws on recent trends in neuroscience to rethink definitions of materiality and to explore the role of the body in the production of subjectivity in Anglo-Saxon literature.



Spring 2014 Courses Explore the Language and Legal Traditions of Medieval England



Two new courses offered by the Departments of English and History in the spring of 2014 explore the language and legal traditions of medieval England.

The first is “An Introduction to Old English” taught by Professor Tiffany Beechy (Department of English). In her own words: “*Hwæt!* English looked a lot different 1300 years ago. Older than Shakespeare, older than Chaucer, Old English feels a lot like German mixed with Swedish. This is our ancestral tongue! Old English and Anglo-Saxon culture, furthermore, are the bases for Tolkien’s Middle Earth. This course will introduce students to the grammatical system and vocabulary of Old English so that they may translate Old English texts and experience the poetic quality of the original language. Knowledge of Old English grammar will also increase students’ mastery of Modern English grammar.”

The second is “Law and Society in Pre-Modern England, 1066-1688” taught by Professor Anne E. Lester (Department of History). In her own words: “This course explores the development of English law and the English legal tradition from the Norman Conquest through the English Revolution within its social context. What was the context for the creation of the Magna Carta? What is the nature of sovereign power? How well did Shakespeare know the law? We will begin by tracing the impact of the Norman conquest of England and examining the origins and developments of English legal and political institutions such as kingship, the common law, the evolution of legal procedure, and the court and jury system. We will also consider specific aspects of the law and its effects including the treatment of aliens, women, heirs, traitors and the legal framework for the emergence of the English Church in the fifteenth century. The implications of these institutions for developments in contemporary American and English legal systems will also be addressed.”

(continued from p. 1)

Winnie Ille Pu

By far the most influential and successful translation of any classic of children's literature into Latin was Alexander Lenard's *Winnie Ille Pu*, which was published in 1960. This charming rendering of A.A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* is the only book in Latin to have appeared on the New York Times best seller list, where it remained for a remarkable 20 weeks. A review in *The Chicago Tribune* boasted that "it does more to attract interest in Latin than Cicero, Caesar and Virgil combined." *Time Magazine* was a touch more cynical, saying that it was "the very book that dozens of Americans, possibly even 50, have been waiting for." In fact, *Winnie Ille Pu* was a surprise hit, selling out its first printing in a matter of days. By 1984, when the *New York Times* ran a story to mark the 25th anniversary of its publication, *Winnie Ille Pu* had sold a staggering 125,000 copies in 21 printings. That number is surely much greater by now.

Translator Alexander Lenard was a Hungarian polymath who lived in Brazil. Fluent in twelve languages, his rendering of Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* into Latin is clear and easy to read and pleasingly adorned with alliteration and rhymes. One could certainly use it in an upper-division Latin class. *Winnie Ille Pu* remains the gold standard of Latin translations of children's literature. It inspired a host of imitations, but its virtuosity and originality have never been equalled.

Fabula de Petro Cuniculo

The success of *Winnie Ille Pu* led to many more Latin translations of classic children's literature throughout the 1960s and 1970s, including *Regulus vel pueri soli sapiunt* [*The Little Prince*] (1961); *Ferdinandus Taurus* [*Ferdinand the Bull*] (1962); *Alicia in Terra Mirabili* [*Alice in Wonderland*] (1964); and *Domus Anguli Puensis*, a Latin translation of Milne's *The House on Pooh Corner* by Brian Gerrard Staples (1980). My favorite work from this busy era is E. Peroto Walker's *Fabula de Petro Cuniculo*, a translation of Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Like Lenard's *Winnie Ille Pu*, Walker's translation has the virtue of being very accessible even to beginning students because the Latin cleaves closely to the original English, which is simple and elegant. The Latin edition published by Penguin also includes Potter's gorgeous watercolors.

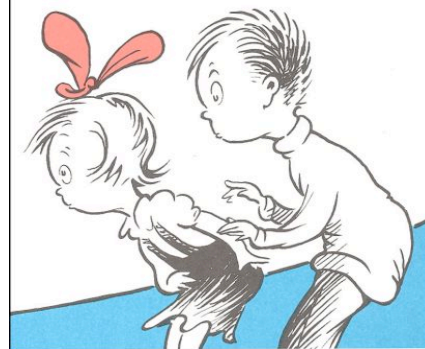
Tela Charlottae

Latin renditions of children's literature slowed somewhat in the 1980s and 1990s, but the translations themselves were more ambitious in several ways. Translators took on longer projects, most notably E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web*, which appeared as *Tela Charlottae* in 1985; and Frank L. Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, which appeared the next year as *Magus Mirabilis in Oz*. The translation of White's classic story was the retirement project of Professor Bernice Fox, who taught English, Latin and Greek at Monmouth College from 1947 to 1981. Unlike other works of this genre, Fox generously included two appendices to her

book to aid the reader: a vocabulary list of Latin words and their English equivalents as well as tips on grammar. In contrast to Fox's effort to make *Tela Charlottae* accessible even to students with very little Latin training, the translators of several books by Dr. Seuss moved in the opposite direction. Between 1988 and 2003, Jennifer and Terence Tunberg have translated *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (*Quomodo invidiosulus nomine Grinchus Christi Natalem abrogaverit*); *Cat in the Hat* (*Cattus Petasatus*); and *Green Eggs and Ham* (*Virent ova! Virent perna!*). Their aim has been to capture the rolling cadence of Seuss' rhymes, but the result is a Latin text that requires a significant amount of *ruminatio* to read.

Cattus dicit, "Noli, care
Piscis, te nunc agitare,
Quia nostra geminata
Bene quidem sunt morata!
Student ut iam rideatis,
Multis iocis gaudeatis,
Quamquam pluit tam constanter."
Duo palpat peramanter.

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Continued...

Harrius Potter

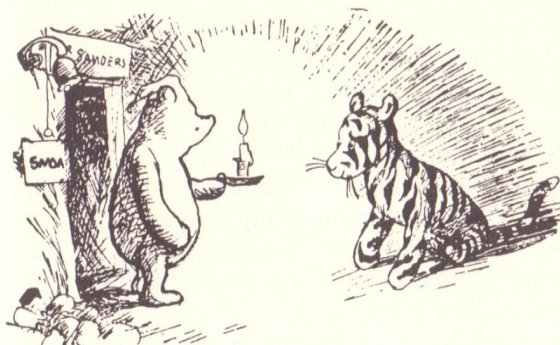
Given the worldwide popularity of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series, it should come as no surprise that these books would quickly find their way into Latin. Two volumes have appeared to date: *Harrius Potter et philosophi lapis* [Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone] in 2003; and *Harrius Potter et camera secretorum* [Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets] in 2007. Both are the work of Peter Needham, a veteran teacher of Latin and Greek at Eton in England. Rowling herself is no stranger to Latin. She studied Classics at the University of Exeter and her books are filled with Latinate names and classical allusions. An "ancient" Greek translation of the first Harry Potter volume modeled on the second-century author Lucian has also appeared. Given the length of these books, it is hard to imagine anyone reading them from cover-to-cover, but countless Harry Potter collectors will have received them as gifts or purchased them for the novelty of owning their cherished stories in ancient languages that they cannot read.

Hobbitus Ille

The most recent Latin translation of a classic of children's literature is *Hobbitus Ille*, a rendering of J.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy masterpiece *The Hobbit*, by Mark Walker (2012). I had always hoped that someone would undertake this translation, but unfortunately Walker's *Hobbitus Ille* has been more roundly criticized for its outright errors, stylistic infelicities and odd translation choices than any previous work of Latin children's literature. While it is too soon to suggest that the twilight of this genre is at hand, one wonders how many more "classics" remain to be translated. I'm going to get to work on *Goodnight Moon* right now!

'Ego sum Pu,' dixit Pu.

'Ego sum Tigris,' dixit Tigris.



'Ah!' dixit Pu, quia tale animal numquam antea viderat. 'Christophorusne Robinus tui conscius est?'

Looking Ahead to October

October is an especially exciting month for CMEMS. On October 29, Professor William Chester Jordan (Princeton University) will visit the CU Boulder campus to deliver the very first James Field Willard Lecture in Medieval History. The October issue of *Mirabile dictu!* will feature an article on Professor Jordan's research as well as a preview of more new course offerings in the Spring of 2014. And we are very pleased to announce that CMEMS now has a formal emblem: the adorable thirteenth-century hedgehog pictured at the bottom of the page. More on our new mascot and the Getty Museum manuscript in which we found him in the next issue of *Mirabile dictu!*

Servus,
SGB

About the Director: Professor Scott G. Bruce, Department of History

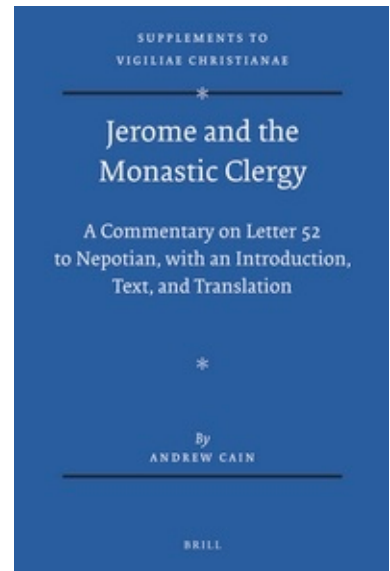


Scott G. Bruce earned his B.A. in History and Latin *summa cum laude* (1994) at York University in Toronto, Canada. He pursued his M.A. (1996) and Ph.D. (2000) in History at Princeton University, where he concentrated on topics in religion and culture in the early Middle Ages and wrote his dissertation under the supervision of Professor Giles Constable.

A specialist on the history of the abbey of Cluny, SGB has published widely on many aspects of medieval monastic culture and literature. He also serves as an editor of *The Medieval Review* (TMR) and plays an active role in the Medieval Academy of America (MAA). For more information, including a complete list of publications, please visit: www.colorado.academia.edu/ScottBruce

Andrew Cain, Associate Professor of Classics, Publishes Two New Commentaries on Letters of Jerome

Andrew Cain, Associate Professor of Classics, has had a busy year. In 2013, he published not one, but two interpretive commentaries on important letters of Jerome of Stridon (c. 347-420). *Jerome and the Monastic Clergy: A Commentary on Letter 52 to Nepotian, with an Introduction, Text and Translation* (published by Brill) provides the first full-scale commentary on the famous Letter to Nepotian, in which Jerome articulates his radical plan for imposing a strict ascetic code of conduct on the contemporary clergy, while *Jerome's Epitaph on Paula: A Commentary on the Epitaphium Sanctae Paulae with an Introduction, Text and Translation* (published by Oxford University Press) examines an elaborate eulogy commemorating the life of Paula, a wealthy Christian widow from Rome who renounced her social status and embraced a lifestyle of ascetic self-discipline and voluntary poverty. Both of these commentaries provide revised critical Latin texts with new facing-page English translations as well as lengthy introductions that situate them in the broader context of Jerome's life and work. Taken together, these new commentaries build on Cain's previous work on Jerome and establish him as a leading authority on this late antique author.



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IMAGE SOURCES:

The little figure on p. 2 is from The Book of the Deer, a gospel book from Aberdeenshire dated to the first half of the tenth century, which was perhaps the earliest surviving manuscript produced in Scotland. It is MS li.6.32 in Cambridge University Library. You can leaf through it online at: <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-II-00006-00032/1>

The illuminations of the Dream of King Henry I on p. 3 come from an early twelfth-century manuscript of the Chronicle of John of Worcester (Corpus Christi College, Oxford, MS 157, fol. 383r).

And our awesome hedgehog to the right comes from a Franco-Flemish manuscript dated around 1270 now in the possession of the J. Paul Getty Museum. More on this next time!

Postscriptum: Thanks to all of you who have taken the time to like us on Facebook and follow us on Academia.edu. As of August 30, we have 68 “likes” on Facebook and over 1000 profile views on Academia.edu, where we boast 337 followers from over a dozen countries. Remember that CMEMS posts news about premodern history on Facebook and archives *Mirabile dictu!*, event announcements and ancillary documents on Academia.edu, so please visit us at both sites. We look forward to seeing you there!

