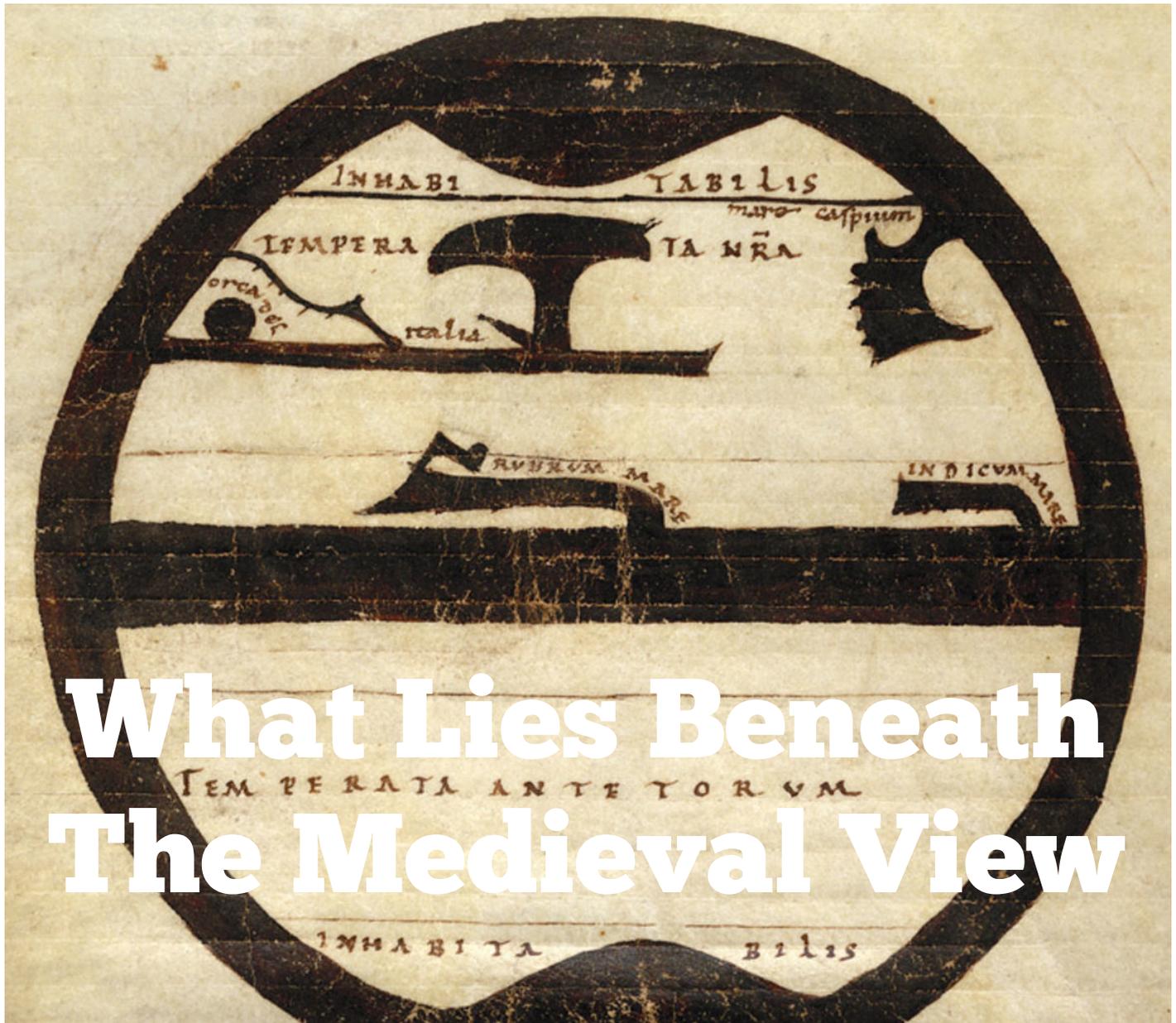


The Medieval Magazine

Volume 2 Number 16

May 16, 2016



What Lies Beneath The Medieval View

Medieval and Roman
Archaeological Mystery



The Mayor of London



The Bishop Cat

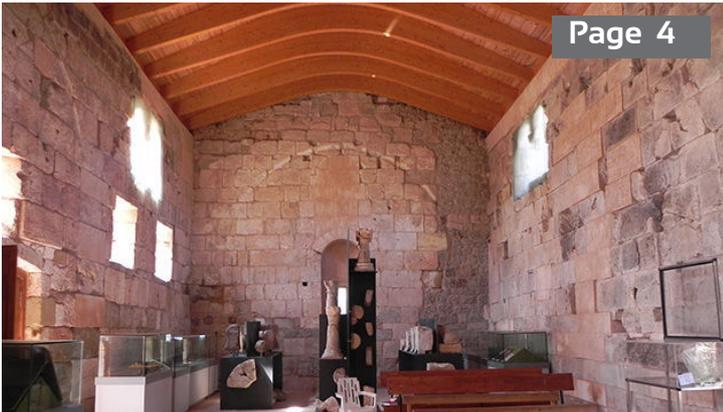


4

27

38

Reports from the International Congress on Medieval Studies



Page 4

Investigating a Medieval and Roman Archaeological Mystery

Examining the use of gravestones from a Spanish town.



Page 21

Erik Kwakkel on How and Why to Be an Online Medievalist

Daniele Cybulskie reports from the International Congress on Medieval Studies.



Page 24

What Lies Beneath: The Medieval View

Peter Konieczny reports on the Kzoo2016 paper by Scott Bruce on 'Imagining Subterranean People and Places in the Middle Ages'.



Page 33

The Funeral of Anne of Brittany

Susan Abernethy examines the post-life of a late-medieval Queen.

Table of Contents

- 4 Investigating a Medieval and Roman Archaeological Mystery
- 7 1,600-year-old treasures discover off coast of Israel
- 9 History Meets Legend at Tintagel Castle
- 11 Magic mountains and sea serpents: the secrets of early Arctic maps
- 15 The real-life origins of the legendary Kraken
- 18 How did medieval people dance?
- 21 Following the Leader: Erik Kwakkel on How and Why to Be an Online Medievalist
- 24 What Lies Beneath: The Medieval View
- 27 The Mayor of London: The First, The Cursed, and the Worst Mayor in London's History
- 33 The Funeral of Anne of Brittany
- 38 The Bishop Cat: A Fable from Marie de France

THE MEDIEVAL MAGAZINE

Editor: Peter Konieczny

Website: www.medievalists.net

This digital magazine is published each Monday.

Cover Photo: Macrobius, a world map dating from the 9th century. British Library Harl.MS 2772, fol. 70v.



Medieval News

Investigating a Medieval and Roman Archaeological Mystery

By Rachel Esterline Perkins

Beneath the soil in Nájera — a small town in northern Spain — sits an untouched Jewish Quarter left in ruins after the Jews were expelled in 1492. And, just a couple of valleys west in the modern village of San Vicente, stands a church with walls containing Roman and medieval gravestones.

These are two mysteries studied by Central Michigan University assistant professor of art and design Scott de Brestian and his team.

De Brestian is co-director of the **Najerilla Valley Research Project**, an international multidisciplinary endeavor investigating the medieval and Roman era mysteries of the city

of Nájera. The project, sponsored by CMU, is a collaboration between de Brestian and Victor Martinez of Arkansas State University. "We are trying to deconstruct the inner life of the city over time," de Brestian said. "The Jewish Quarter, located along the Najerilla River, was one of the biggest and wealthiest Jewish communities in Spain."



San Vicente church - photo courtesy Central Michigan University

To create a digital, three-dimensional model of the terrain and the cultural remains of the region, de Brestian uses photogrammetry, drawings and historic maps — including a map from 1763 showing churches no longer in existence. Photogrammetry uses photography in surveying and mapping to measure distances between objects.

The Jewish Quarter has never been studied and its size adds to the city's political and religious significance, de Brestian said. Nájera is located on the Catholic pilgrimage road to Santiago de Compostela and home of the Santa María la Real, an influential monastery founded by the kings of Navarre where it is believed that the Qur'an was first translated into a western language.

De Brestian describes the San Vicente church built with gravestones as a time capsule involving various stages of the community's past. For many years, the town's residents thought it was only a few hundred years old — a common sight in Spain. But, after it caught fire, a mystery was uncovered beneath the cracked plaster.

Within the walls are about 100 gravestones, dating from the first to 13th centuries. The nearest known Roman site is about eight miles away, which was a great distance at the time for moving large stone blocks across valleys without modern equipment.

De Brestian said it is common to find Roman gravestones used in churches throughout Spain because of their rectangular construction. But, the use of medieval gravestones is unusual.

"Part of what we are trying to do is reconstruct history," he said. "We can look at how they were reusing gravestones over time. The big, architectural blocks were used in the earlier phases. Then they used the rectangular gravestones. Later on, they used the medieval gravestones."

About 80 medieval gravestones were used to build a room in the church after its original construction. De Brestian said they must have been desperate for building materials because the medieval gravestones have a round top and a long bottom, making them more difficult to use in building.

The medieval gravestones have a round top and a long bottom, making them more difficult to use in building. Photo courtesy Central Michigan



This summer, de Brestian and his team will continue to create a picture of the region across a 1,500-year period in history using modern techniques including photogrammetry, reflectance transformation imaging and possibly drone photography. Reflectance transformation imaging enables the viewer to display objects under varying lighting conditions.

techniques into a medieval city where they haven't been used before," he said. Idren, Brittany went to her direct heirs.

Our thanks to Central Michigan University for this article

"We're introducing and expanding the

1,600-year-old treasures discover off coast of Israel



A fortuitous discovery by two divers in the ancient port of Caesarea in the Caesarea National Park in Israel has led to the exposure of a large, spectacular and beautiful marine cargo of a merchant ship that sank 1,600 years ago.

As soon as they emerged from the water divers Ran Feinstein and Ofer Ra'anana of Ra'anana contacted the Israel Antiquities Authority and reported the discovery and removal of several ancient items from the

sea.

A joint dive at the site together with IAA archaeologists revealed that an extensive portion of the seabed had been cleared of sand and the remains of a ship were left uncovered on the sea bottom: iron anchors, remains of wooden anchors and items that were used in the construction and running of the sailing vessel. An underwater salvage survey conducted in recent weeks with the assistance of many divers from the Israel

Antiquities Authority and volunteers using advanced equipment discovered numerous items that were part of the ship's cargo.

Many of the artifacts are bronze and in an extraordinary state of preservation: a bronze lamp depicting the image of the sun god Sol, a figurine of the moon goddess Luna, a lamp in the image of the head of an African slave, fragments of three life-size bronze cast statues, objects fashioned in the shape of animals such as a whale, a bronze faucet in the form of a wild boar with a swan on its head, etc. In addition, fragments of large jars were found that were used for carrying drinking water for the crew in the ship and for transportation at sea. One of the biggest surprises in particular was the discovery of two metallic lumps composed of thousands of coins weighing about 20 kilograms which was in the form of the pottery vessel in which they were transported.

This discovery comes a year after the exposure of a treasure of gold Fatimid coins by divers and the Israel Antiquities Authority, which is currently on display for the public in the "Time Travel" presentations in the Caesarea harbor.

According to Jacob Sharvit, director of the Marine Archaeology Unit of the Israel Antiquities Authority and Dror Planer, deputy director of the unit, "These are extremely exciting finds, which apart from their extraordinary beauty, are of historical significance. The location and distribution of the ancient finds on the seabed indicate that a large merchant ship was carrying a cargo of metal slated recycling, which apparently encountered a storm at the entrance to the harbor and drifted until it smashed into the seawall and the rocks".

A preliminary study of the iron anchors suggests there was an attempt to stop the drifting vessel before it reached shore by casting anchors into the sea; however, these broke – evidence of the power of the waves

and the wind which the ship was caught up in". Sharvit and Planer stress, "A marine assemblage such as this has not been found in Israel in the past thirty years. Metal statues are rare archaeological finds because they were always melted down and recycled in antiquity. When we find bronze artifacts it usually occurs at sea. Because these statues were wrecked together with the ship, they sank in the water and were thus 'saved' from the recycling process".

Sharvit and Planer added, "In the many marine excavations that have been carried out in Caesarea only very small number of bronze statues have been found, whereas in the current cargo a wealth of spectacular statues were found that were in the city and were removed from it by way of sea. The sand protected the statues; consequently they are in an amazing state of preservation – as though they were cast yesterday rather than 1,600 years ago".

The coins that were discovered bear the image of the emperor Constantine who ruled the Western Roman Empire (312–324 CE) and was later known as Constantine the Great, ruler of the Roman Empire (324–337 CE), and of Licinius, an emperor who ruled the eastern part of the Roman Empire and was a rival of Constantine, until his downfall in a battle that was waged between the two rulers

According to Sharvit and Planer, "The range of finds recovered from the sea reflects the large volume of trade and the status of Caesarea's harbor during this time, which was known as period of economic and commercial stability in the wake of the stability of the Roman Empire. The crew of the shipwreck lived in a fascinating time in history that greatly influenced humanity – the period when Christianity was on its way to becoming the official religion of the Roman Empire."

History Meets Legend at Tintagel Castle

A bronze sculpture inspired by the legend of King Arthur and Tintagel's royal past is the centrepiece of new interpretation which explores the history of the Cornish castle.



The new visitor interpretation at Tintagel Castle, which opened last month, explores the history of the Cornish castle and the role legends have played in shaping the site visitors see today.

The new outdoor interpretation is designed to complement the castle's indoor exhibition,

which opened last summer, to explore the rich history of Tintagel.

Jeremy Ashbee, English Heritage's Head Curator, said: "With our exhibition and with this new interpretation, visitors to Tintagel can now get a complete overview of its history - from the artefacts discovered there



Photo courtesy English Heritage

to the legends associated with it.

"You cannot understand Tintagel's history without understanding how the legends shaped it. Our new interpretation explains this and places these legends within the context of Tintagel's overall history and significance."

A series of panels around the 18 acre site explore 1,500 years of Tintagel's history - from royal stronghold, to thriving trading port, to a castle of romantic legend.

Tintagel is also a place which has inspired stories and legends for centuries, and the project has sought to represent this side of the castle's history too. A highlight of the new interpretation is Gallos (meaning 'power' in Cornish), an eight foot bronze sculpture inspired by the legend of King Arthur and Tintagel's royal past, created by artist Rubín Eynon.

Elsewhere, a stone compass points to places connected with the legend of King Arthur (popularised by Geoffrey of Monmouth in the 12th-century). Engraved stepping stones around the island garden tell the tragic love story of Tristan and Iseult, a medieval tale set at Tintagel. On the beach, close to Merlin's Cave, a carved face represents Merlin, who has been associated with the site since the 12th century and immortalised by the poetry

of Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

Believed to have been the seat of early Cornish kings, by the 5th century Tintagel was an important royal stronghold of the kingdom of Dumnonia. Several thousand pieces of Mediterranean pottery have been found at Tintagel, which suggests it was one of the most important economic settlements in Britain, importing luxury goods from North Africa and the Mediterranean.

This settlement may have inspired the early legends about the site. It became known as the location for the love story of Tristan and Iseult, and for Geoffrey of Monmouth's 12th-century description of the conception of King Arthur. These legends in turn led Richard, Earl of Cornwall to choose this location as the site of his medieval castle in the 1230s. Much later, after a revival of interest in Arthurian stories during the Victorian period, writers, artists and tourists were inspired to visit the dramatic ruins.

**Click here to visit the
Tintagel Castle
website**

Magic mountains and sea serpents: the secrets of early Arctic maps

By Tom Harper

What comes to mind when you think of the Arctic? Ice, I imagine, polar bears, a barren cold landscape. And most would assume that these associations have remained the same for a pretty long time, given that it's only relatively recently that the Arctic was explored. It is generally believed that the earliest maps reflected this ignorance, showing a vast blank expanse waiting to be filled with geographical content by explorers.

This is not the case. That came much later, in the 18th century, when myths and hearsay had been overridden by the rigour of scientific investigation. In fact, when the Arctic first begins to be shown in detail on maps in the 16th century, it's teeming with life and activity.

Let's start at the beginning. The earliest appearance of the Arctic in maps is as a frigid northern region in the climatic maps of Macrobius from the fifth century. "Inhabitabilis" it is labelled, in common with its southern counterpart. Not only was the Arctic unknown in the Middle Ages, it was felt by scholars to be unknowable.

In medieval world maps the extreme north, as with the south, became the area where legends could be placed. You might see on a late medieval *mappamundi*, for example, the giants Gog and Magog from the Alexander Legend at the northern area of modern Siberia. You might see deformed creatures with big feet or faces in their chests populating the southern rim of the world. You would certainly see mythical islands and places that do not exist next to places that do.

But to the people who made and looked at these maps the places were real, whether they existed or not. This is the great power of maps, a power that has not diminished over



Macrobius, a world map dating from the 9th century. British Library Harl.MS 2772, fol. 70v.

time. The island of Frisland, for example, appears like a second mini-Iceland, and even occasionally part of the southern tip of Greenland. Frisland originated with the Greeks and had a mystical allure – a sort of northern Eldorado. A similar allure comes to characterise that “mariner’s philosopher’s stone”, the Northwest Passage.

As the geography of the north became better defined from the end of the 15th century, features quickly populated it on maps.

Reindeers, polar bears and other creatures litter the Olaus Magnus map of Scandinavia.

One of the most interesting Arctic features first appeared in Martin Behaim’s globe of 1492. This is an extraordinary North Pole with four rivers running symmetrically from the pole. This feature was repeated in various maps for decades after, including Gerard Mercator’s famous world map of 1569 and



Carta Marina, drawn by Olaus Magnus in 1527-39

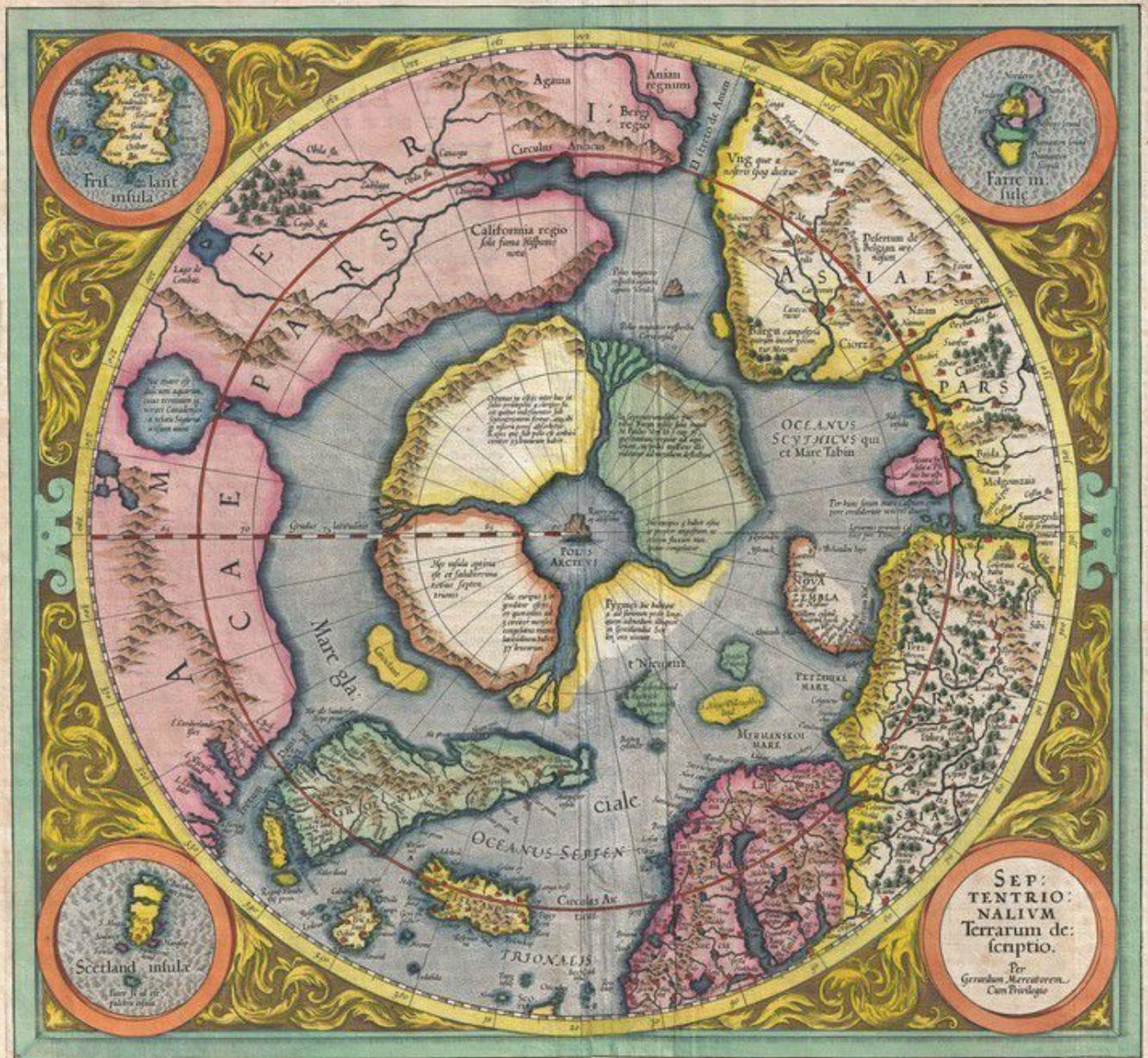
atlas map of 1595.

Another bizarre feature added to early maps was the appearance of a vast magnetic mountain at the top of the world – myths often hold a grain of truth! Early sailors found that their mariner’s compasses began to show bizarre readings in northern climes and this certainly may have had something to do with this addition to the maps. The legend more directly derived from a journal of an Arctic voyage supposedly made by a Dutchman named Jacobus Cnoyen, who witnessed these and other peculiarities. Any sources, spurious or not, were treated seriously by European states looking to expand their gaze and their empires.

For Britain in the 16th century, the promise of a northern shortcut to the Pacific Ocean and the riches of China meant that considerable thought and resource would be

poured into the Arctic, to explore geographies real or otherwise. Geographical features appeared and disappeared on maps, mountains rose and fell, channels and straits, based on seemingly unimpeachable sources, were cut through North America.

The tale of the search for the Northwest Passage is a compelling one – and one which illustrates how tangible things can be when there is the will to believe them, and when they are shown on maps.



Septentrionalium Terrarum Descriptio Gerard Mercator / Jodocus Hondius, 1595 (1606)

Tom Harper is Curator of Antiquarian Mapping, British Library

This article was first published in The Conversation

The real-life origins of the legendary Kraken

By Rodrigo Brincalepe Salvador

The Kraken is perhaps the largest monster ever imagined by mankind. In Nordic folklore, it was said to haunt the seas from Norway through Iceland and all the way to Greenland. The Kraken had a knack for harassing ships and many pseudoscientific reports (including official naval ones) said it would attack vessels with its strong arms. If this strategy failed, the beast would start swimming in circles around the ship, creating a fierce maelstrom to drag the vessel down.

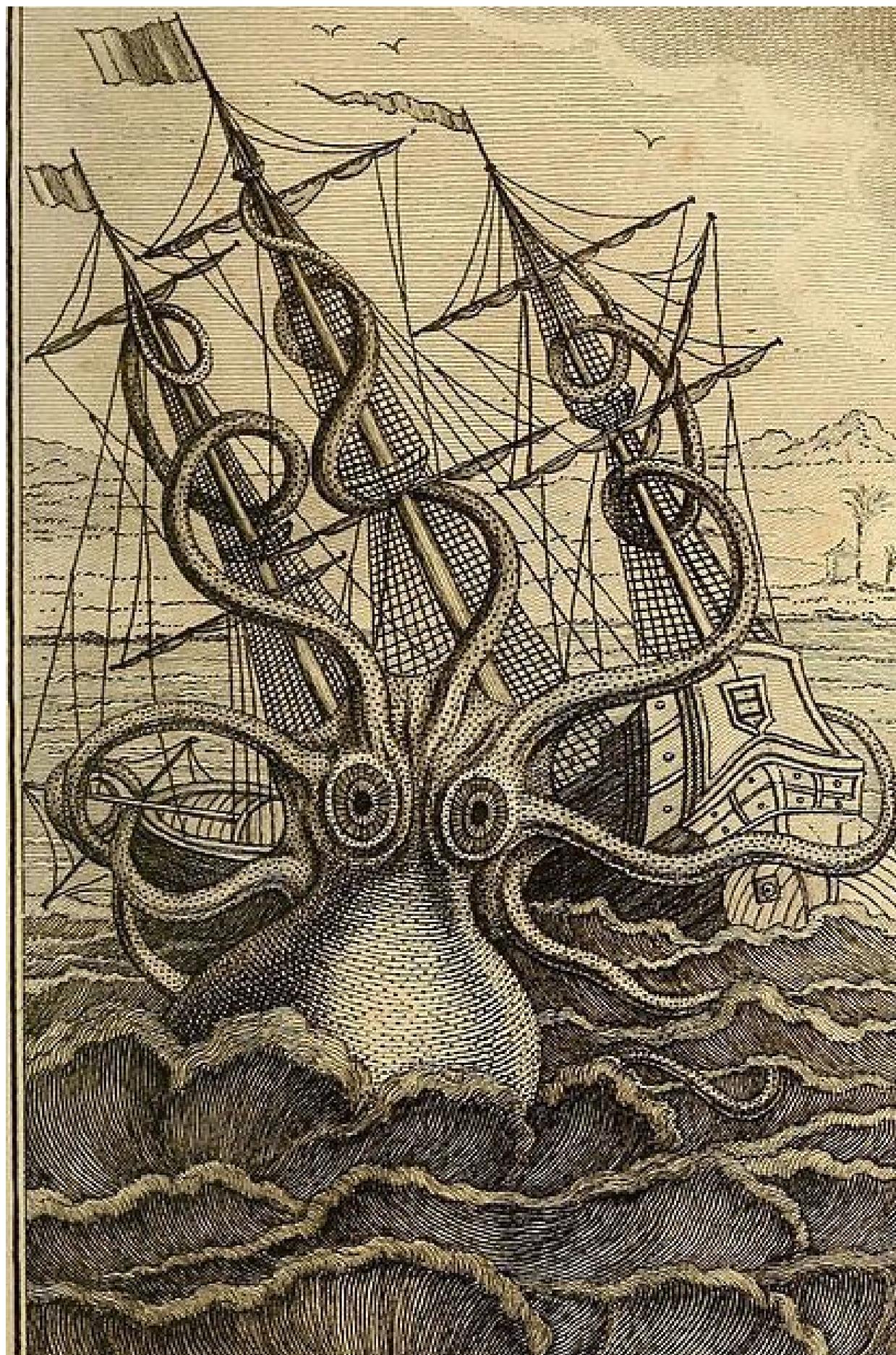
Of course, to be worth its salt, a monster needs to have a taste for human flesh. **Legends** say that the Kraken could devour a ship's entire crew at once. But despite its fearsome reputation, the monster could also bring benefits: it swam accompanied by huge schools of fish that cascaded down its back when it emerged from the water. Brave fishermen could thus risk going near the beast to secure a bounteous catch.

The **history of the Kraken** goes back to an account written in 1180 by King Sverre of Norway. As with many legends, the Kraken started with something real, based on sightings of a real animal, the giant squid. For the ancient navigators, the sea was treacherous and dangerous, hiding a horde of monsters in its inconceivable depths. Any encounter with an unknown animal could

gain a mythological edge from sailors' stories. After all, the tale grows in the telling.

The strength of the myth became so strong that the Kraken could still be found in Europe's **first modern scientific surveys** of the natural world in the 18th century. Not even Carl Linnaeus – father of modern biological classification – could avoid it and he included the Kraken among the cephalopod mollusks in the first edition of his groundbreaking *Systema Naturae* (1735).

But when, in 1853, a giant cephalopod was found stranded on a Danish beach, Norwegian naturalist Japetus Steenstrup recovered the animal's beak and used it to **scientifically describe** the giant squid,



Colossal Octopus drawing by malacologist Pierre Dénys de Montfort, 1801

Architeuthis dux. And so what had become legend officially entered the annals of science, returning our image of the Kraken to the animal that originated the myths.

After 150 years of research into the giant squid that inhabits all the world's oceans, there is still much debate as to whether they represent a **single species or as many as 20**. The largest *Architeuthis* recorded reaches **18 metres** in length, including the very long pair of tentacles, but the vast majority of specimens are much smaller. The giant squid's eyes are the largest in the animal kingdom and are crucial in the dark depths it inhabits (up to 1,100 metres deep, perhaps reaching 2,000 metres).

Like some other squid species, *Architeuthis* has pockets in its muscles containing an ammonium solution that is less dense than sea water. This allows the animal to float underwater, meaning that it can keep itself steady without actively swimming. The presence of unpalatable ammonium in their muscles is also probably the reason why giant squid have not yet been fished to near extinction.

Hunter or prey?

For many years, scientists debated whether the giant squid was a swift and agile hunter like the powerful predator of legends or an ambush hunter. After decades of discussion, a welcome answer came in 2005 with the unprecedented film footage from Japanese researchers **T. Kubodera and K. Mori**. They filmed a live *Architeuthis* in its natural habitat, 900m deep in the North Pacific, showing that it is in fact a fast and powerful swimmer, using its tentacles to capture prey.

Despite its size and speed, *Architeuthis* has a predator: the sperm whale. The battles between these titans must be frequent, since it is common to find scars on whales' skins left by the squids' tentacles and arms, which have suckers lined with sharp chitinous

tooth-like structures. But *Architeuthis* doesn't have the muscles in its tentacles to use them to constrict prey and it can never overcome a sperm whale in a "duel". Its only option is to flee, covering its escape with the usual cephalopod ink cloud.

Although we now know it is not just a legend, the giant squid remains perhaps the most elusive large animal in the world, which has greatly contributed to its aura of mystery. Many people today are still surprised in learning that it really exists. After all, even after so much scientific research, the Kraken is still alive in popular imagination thanks to films, books and computer games, even if it sometimes turns up in the wrong mythology, such as the 1981 (and 2010) ancient Greek epic *Clash of the Titans*. These representations have come to define it in the public mind: a beast lurking in sunken ships waiting for reckless divers.

Rodrigo Brincalepe Salvador is a PhD student in Paleontology, University of Tübingen

This article was first published in The Conversation

How did medieval people dance?

When trying to understand the Middle Ages it is sometimes the aspects of daily life that are most difficult to research. Few writers from the period left detailed descriptions of the games they played or what they did to entertain themselves.

For example, historians have known that medieval people enjoyed dancing, but they did not know exactly how they danced. A recent book by Robert Mullally is answering a part of this question, detailing one of the most popular dances of the Middle Ages.

In his book, *The Carole: A Study of a Medieval Dance*, Mullally pieces together a wide variety of literary sources that mention the Carole, one of the main dances of Western Europe in the 12th and 14th centuries. He reveals that it was a relatively simple dance done by men and women together: to do the carole, a group of people, usually an even number of both men and women, would form a circle, sometimes around an object like a tree. They would each hold hands (sometimes they would hold each other by their fingers) in this circle and move to the left (in a clockwise direction). By moving sideways to the left, the dancers would start their step with their left foot, and then join the right foot to the left. The sources often describe it as the right foot striking against the other. It was considered an elegant and graceful manoeuvre. The various sources never mention any other kind of moves with the Carole. Mullally adds, "the very simplicity of the dance explains why no written choreography or dance manual was required."

The music of the Carole would be sung by the dancers themselves. Usually it would be one of the dancers, or a small group of them, who would begin the singing. After



Dancing in the 14th century - British Library MS Royal 20 A XVII

a few songs, they would give way to another dancer, who would then sing while the group continued their dance, and so on. Some sources talk about those dancing the carole would be able to go on for hours (one imagines that some people would leave or join the circle as the dance went on).

There were many different songs that could be sung for the carole, but we only have a few examples of their lyrics. They include:

- 1) "You do not go the way I do, nor would you go that way." (Vous n'a les mie tout en si que je fais. Ne vous, ne vous n'i saries aler, Ne vous, ne vous n'i saries aler.)
- 2) "Love me, my sweet blonde, love me, and I shall not love anyone but you." (Amez moi, blondete amez / Et je n'amerai se vos non!)
- 3) "If I have great joy in my heart, do not ask whence it comes! Gallyenne, my sweet sister, if I have joy in my heart, I do not want anyone at all to know about it! That I love with all my heart, you know full well. If I have joy in my heart, [do not ask whence it comes!]

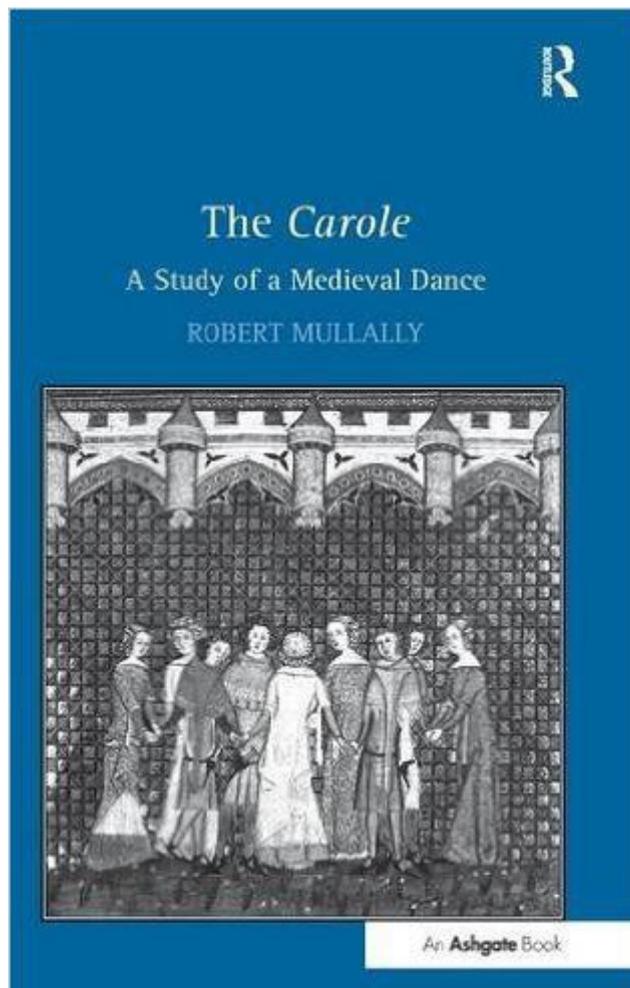
*Se j'ai grant joie enz enz mon cuer
Ne demandez dont elle vient!
Gallyenne, tres douce suer,
Se j'ai grant joie ens enz mon cuer*

*Ne veul que nuls en sache fuer!
Que j'iang du cuer vous saves bien.
Se j'ai grant joie enz enz mon cuer
[Ne demandez dont elle vient!]*

While a few descriptions of a carole also involved an instrument accompanying the music, such as a drum or horn, for the most part instrumental music would be used with other types of dances, such as the *hove danse*.

For about three centuries the carole remained a popular dance with all segments of society, from nobility to the peasants. Not everyone was happy with this dance, however, as a few religious moralists bitterly complained about it (their writings also offer some of the best descriptions of these dances). Jacques de Vitry, a French theologian from the 13th century, said that the dance "is a circle whose centre is the Devil, and in it all turn to the left, because all are heading towards everlasting death. When foot is pressed to foot or the hand of the woman is touched by the hand of a man, there the fire of the Devil is kindled." Meanwhile, the author of the *Mireour du monde* found that "all those men and women who carole sin in every member of their bodies by turning elegantly and by moving and shaking their arms, by singing, and by speaking dishonourably."

The Carole: A Study of a Medieval Dance was published by Ashgate in 2011.



KZ002016

Following the Leader: Erik Kwakkel on How and why to Be an Online Medievalist

By Danièle Cybulskie

One of the best presentations I saw at the International Congress on Medieval Studies this year was by Erik Kwakkel from Leiden University. Chances are, you may already have encountered Kwakkel's work on medieval manuscripts via his popular blog, his interviews in the media, his academic scholarship, or his lessons at the Khan Academy. He was at the ICMS this year to speak on the topic of how to bring medieval digital manuscripts to the people, how to keep them interested, and (most importantly) why it's vital to do so.



Erik Kwakkel speaking at the International Congress on Medieval Studies

Kwakkel started his work as an online medievalist as an experiment on that very theme: how do we take scholarly research and make it accessible and interesting for people outside of academia? With a grant, some graduate students, and an open mind, Kwakkel started a multi-year project to share fascinating bits of information about medieval manuscripts across many platforms, including a **blog**, **Twitter**, and **Tumblr**. Not every post was an instant success, not every idea worked out, but in that space of experimentation, Kwakkel's knowledge grew, as did his following.

The focus of his talk, though, was not on his personal or collective successes. Instead, Kwakkel was there to encourage and help other academics to make the same leap. His personal mission is to show the world how smart, how pretty, and how modern medieval manuscripts are because that's where his passion lies. Any academic, he insists, can do the same with their own field of interest. All

that being a public medievalist really requires is the courage to get started.

To draw a wide and consistent audience to your online scholarship, according to Kwakkel, requires many of the same things which (I would argue) make any website, or even classroom presentation, attractive: lots of visuals, solid scholarship, and your own personal voice. (For Kwakkel, this means a sense of humour.) It also requires a bit of planning as to who your target audience should be, and how much time you want to devote to your online work. This shouldn't be daunting, though, because it should be a natural extension of your own personality – being yourself is a critical component of being successful online. As Kwakkel says, being yourself means people who like the same things will be attracted to your online presence, while people who don't, won't. It also means that it's easier to create consistent content, especially across multiple platforms.

There were a couple of points which Kwakkel made that were more specific to the academic crowd, especially graduate students just starting out: don't engage the trolls, and don't post your work online before you publish it. Following these two rules will keep academics from tarnishing their professional reputations in heated exchanges, and will protect their unpublished work from being hijacked by unethical scholars. These two small caveats leave a wide open field for engaging fruitfully and positively with an interested public, though (as well as online colleagues from across the world), and for sharing peripheral research that is really interesting, but not enough to build an article or book around.

All this is important, solid information which will lead to online success, but the most brilliant part of Kwakkel's talk (and his work) comes down to his personal philosophy around scholarship and the public. For Kwakkel, the scholar has a duty to bring his/her work to the people, to give them information that they can learn, use, and spread widely for everyone's benefit. No more hiding in libraries: scholars need to hit the Internet to share the information they love with the people who are clamouring for it because knowledge is fundamentally meant to be shared. Kwakkel doesn't just preach this; he lives it. And he believes anyone else can – and should – do the same. For those who don't know where to start, he's more than happy to show the way.

As you might imagine, Erik Kwakkel and I are

Danièle Cybulskie is a weekly columnist for Medievalists.net. You can follow her on Twitter @5minmedievalist

in complete agreement when it comes to bringing medieval scholarship to a wider public. It's important, it's easy (with some practice and an open mind), and everyone should give it a try in the way that suits them best. To see, learn from, and be inspired by Kwakkel's example, check out his **blog**, or follow him on **Twitter** or **Tumblr**.



Kz002016

What Lies Beneath The Medieval View

By Peter Konieczny

One of the most interesting papers I heard at last week's International Congress on Medieval Studies was given by Scott Bruce from the University of Colorado, Boulder. In 'Imagining Subterranean People and Places in the Middle Ages' he examines some fascinating stories of what medieval people thought might exist beneath the Earth.

Most readers will know of Jules Verne's 1864 novel *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, where the main characters descend through a volcano and find themselves entering underground civilizations. But the idea that the earth might be hollow and habitable existed at least two centuries earlier, and as Bruce points, even in the Middle Ages there was some speculation over this notion.

The most important way medieval people viewed the underground was that it was the home of the dead - in particular hell. Ancient Greek writers often placed the land of Hades as being somewhere underground, which

could be entered through by caves. The Old Testament noted Jewish beliefs of Sheol, the permanent place of the dead, which was said to exist underground. These ideas continued on in Christianity, with scholars such as Augustine believing that hell was under the ground. Moreover, the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, the most widely read apocryphal text of the Middle Ages, includes a section where Jesus Christ descends into hell.

Meanwhile, medieval sources also suggest that some people believed that living individuals also could dwell under the earth, and provided two examples from the 12th



15th century depiction of a hellmouth coming from out of the ground. Image from MS WLB Stuttgart, Cod. brev. 12, fol. 70v

century. One is the story of the Green Children of Woolpit, reported on by two English chroniclers. In their accounts, two children were found in the forest outside of the village of Woolpit in Suffolk - they were a brother and a sister who were in green in

colour and could not speak the local language. While the boy died soon after, the girl lived on and even married. According to William of Newburgh, this is how they described where they had come from:



Scott Bruce speaking at the International Congress on Medieval Studies

after they had acquired our language, on being asked who and whence they were, they are said to have replied, 'We are inhabitants of the land of St Martin, who is regarded with peculiar veneration in the country which gave us birth. ' Being further asked where that land was, and how they came thence hither, they answered, 'We are ignorant of both those circumstances; we only remember this, that on a certain day, when we were feeding our father's flocks in the fields, we heard a great sound, such as we are now accustomed to hear at St Edmund's, when the bells are chiming; and whilst listening to the sound in admiration, we became on a sudden, as it were, entranced, and found ourselves among you in the fields where you were reaping.' Being questioned whether in that land they believed in Christ, or whether the sun arose, they replied that the country was Christian, and possessed churches; but said they, ' The sun does not rise upon our countrymen; our land is little cheered by its beams; we are contented with that twilight, which, among you, precedes the sun-rise, or follows the sun-set. Moreover, a certain luminous country is seen, not far distant from ours, and divided from it by a very considerable river.' These, and many other matters, too numerous to particularize, they are said to have recounted to curious inquirers.

While this story has been much discussed

among scholars, Bruce notes that it shows that people of this time could conceive of an underground civilization which was populated by Christians.

Bruce also found a reference to people dwelling underground in the Life of Bernard of Thiron, an 11th/12th century hermit who founded Tiron Abbey and the Tironensian Order. One of the anecdotes in his Vita explains that he and his monks were so shabby in appearance that when local villagers saw them they believed these were Saracens that had come up through caves to spy on them. This idea might have originated in the stories related to the kidnapping of Saint Majolus of Cluny in the 10th century. He was captured by Muslim raiders in the mountainous regions of southern France, and accounts of this episode often feature the Muslims making use of a network of caves as their bases for attacking Christians.

Bruce believes there are probably more stories from medieval writers in which people or other creatures dwelled under the Earth. You can read more of his works on his Academia.edu page.

The Mayor of London: The First, The Cursed, and the Worst Mayor in London's History

By Sandra Alvarez

London is an old city, with over 2,000 years of history under its belt. When did London have its first mayor? Who were some of London's best loved, most reviled, and scandalous mayors from days gone by? The role of mayor has a long and rich history going back over 800 years to the reign of Richard the Lionheart (1157-1199). We're hoping back in time to take a look at three of London's more memorable mayors.

A Little Background...

This month, Londoners went to the polls and voted to elect their next mayor. On Friday, May 6th, Labour incumbent, Sadiq Khan, won that coveted title. One week later, we're taking a look at the history behind the Mayors of London.

First off, it's important to know that the position Sadiq Khan won last Friday wasn't "Lord Mayor of London", he won Mayor of London. Sound a bit strange? It can be a bit confusing, but it's an important distinction. London technically has two mayors:

1.) The Mayor of London: a publicly elected official with a political affiliation, who oversees the day-to-day working of the Greater London Area., i.e., Mr. Khan.

2.) The Lord Mayor of London: apolitical, appointed at Common Hall on Michaelmas (September 29th), beginning the job on the Friday before the second Saturday in November. It is now considered a mainly ceremonial post that consists of meeting with dignitaries and promoting the city to stimulate business. The Lord Mayor also hosts fun historic events like the annual **Lord Mayor's Show** held in early November that displays the pageantry, pomp and history of



Statue of Henry Fitz-Aillwin de Londonestone, first mayor of London. The Holborn Viaduct. Photo from Wikimedia Commons

of the role. The current Lord Mayor of London is Jeffrey Richard de Corban Evans, 4th Baron Mountevans.

The role of the Mayor of London, as a freely

elected official, didn't actually exist until a referendum was held by the Greater London

Authority in 1998. In 2000, London finally had its first officially elected Mayor. So what came before that? The Lord Mayor of London did, and to make it more confusing, before 1300, they were just styled as mayors. Then in the fourteenth century, the title reverted to Lord Mayor once again. Many of these men came from mercantile families, and had former positions as Drapers, Goldsmiths, Fishmongers, Grocers, and Mercers (merchants who dealt in the trade of luxurious goods like silk, velvet and expensive wool). During the Middle Ages, the Lord Mayor wasn't just a ceremonial role; it was once the most coveted job in the city.

The Good: The First Mayor of London

So who was the first mayor of London? London's first mayor was Henry Fitz-Ailwin de Londonestone (1135-1212). The position was created in 1189 by King Richard the Lionheart (1157-1199), in exchange for vast sums of money to fund his wars. Fitz-Ailwin de Londonestone served an impressive twenty-four terms as mayor until his death in 1212. Sadly, in spite of his long tenure, relatively little is known about him. What we do know is that he married, had four sons, and was an alderman prior to becoming mayor. He is best remembered for settling boundary disputes between neighbours, and ensuring Londoners used materials in the construction of buildings that were made of stone in order to prevent death and damage from fire.

On neighbours:

In the year of Our Lord 1189, in the first year, namely, of the reign of the illustrious King Richard, Henry Fitz-Aylewin (who was the first Mayor of London) being then Mayor, it was by the discreet men of the City [thus] provided and ordained, for the allaying of the contentions that at times arise between neighbours in the City touching boundaries made, or to be made, between their lands, and other things; to the end that, according

to the provisions then made and ordained, such contentions might be allayed. And the said Provision and Ordinance was called an "Assize."

On building in stone:

It should be remembered, that in ancient times the greater part of the City was built of wood, and the houses were covered with straw and stubble, and the like. Hence it happened, that when a single house had caught fire, the greater part of the City was destroyed through such conflagration; a thing that took place in the first year of the reign of King Stephen, (as (fn. 10) set forth in the Chronicles before-written in this Book,) when, by reason of a fire that broke out at London Bridge, the Church of Saint Paul was burnt; from which spot the conflagration extended, destroying houses and buildings, as far as the Church of Saint Clement Danes. After this, many of the citizens, to the best of their ability to avoid such a peril, built stone houses upon their foundations, covered with thick tiles, and [so] protected against the fury of the flames; whence it has often been the case that, when a fire has broken out in the City, and has destroyed many buildings, upon reaching such houses, it has been unable to do further mischief, and has been there extinguished; so that, through such a house as this, many houses of the neighbours have been saved from being burnt. Hence it is, that in the aforesaid Ordinance, called the "Assize," it was provided and ordained, in order that the citizens might be encouraged to build with stone, that every one who should have a stone-wall upon his own land sixteen feet in height... ~Chronicles of the Mayors and Sheriffs of London 1188-1274, Additions to the Chronicles: Assize of buildings (Richard I).

While not exactly salacious, or exciting, Fitz-Ailwin de Londonestone certainly had a long, illustrious, and a solid career as London's first mayor. Today, you can find his stoney visage gracing the Holborn Viaduct near Farringdon Street.



Richard II meeting with the rebels of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. Jean Froissart, Chroniques

The Bad: Cursed by Connection

Sometimes, cronyism won't always save you, and connections can be a curse. You can stack the decks, and make friends in high places, but Lady Fortune has a way of surprising even the most self-assured figures, like one Sir Nicholas Brembre (d.1388). Clearly not everyone who became Mayor of London enshrined the principles of decency and ethical behaviour. One of these less-than-upstanding mayors was Nicholas Brembre. We don't know much about his early life, but we do know that during his time as mayor, he

was embroiled customs corruption and accused of fixing elections to place his friends in lucrative positions. He was the Sheriff of London, and then in 1376, became an Alderman. Interestingly enough, Brembre hired none other than Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400) to be his comptroller while he ran customs. Brembre seemed to have run London like medieval Tony Soprano, and in the end, made more enemies than friends, ultimately leading to his demise.

Brembre lived during a tumultuous time in London. He was involved in the ill-fated Peasant's Revolt, helping his friend and defender, Richard II (1367-1400) quell the rebellion. For his assistance, he was rewarded with a knighthood by the king. Unfortunately, his close ties with the Richard would be his undoing. He made enemies of the Lords Appellant, a group of nobles who brought down Richard's court favourites, Brembre being one of them. Brembre was seized and accused of treason. He was sentenced to death by hanging on February 20, 1388. Brembre, a knight, asked for Trial by Combat, which was his right, but he was so detested by Richard's opponents that his request for an honourable end was denied and he was promptly sent to the gallows. Richard tried, but even he couldn't save Brembre. Richard had him exonerated posthumously when he exacted his revenge on the Appellants in 1397.

The following is an excerpt from the *Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office : Richard II, 1385-1389*, detailing Brembre's arrest and the charge of treason brought against him.

February 15. To the constable of the Tower of London and to his lieutenant. Westminster. Order by advice of the council to cause Nicholas Brembre knight, who by virtue of the king's writ was delivered in the king's name to the constable's custody it is said, to come before the king and council at Westminster in this parliament on Monday next; as order was lately made by the king and council that the said Nicholas, who is appealed by Thomas duke of Gloucester, Henry earl of Derby, Richard earl of Arundell, Thomas earl of Warrewyk and Thomas earl of Notyngham before the king and the great council of treasons affecting the king and the estate of the realm, should for a time be kept in custody in the Tower, and the king commanded the constable and lieutenant to receive and so keep him until further order of the king and council, as they would answer for his body. By

K. and C.

To the constable of the Tower of London and his lieutenant. Order to receive Nicholas Brembre knight and, as they will answer for his body, to keep him in safe custody in the Tower until further order of the king and council; as Thomas duke of Gloucester etc. {as above} have appealed him before the king and the great council etc., wherefore order is made by the king and council that he be kept for a time in custody in the Tower. By K. and C.

The Worst: Fire! Fire! Wait no...Let's Just Pee on it and Go Back to Bed...

While Nicholas Brembre was corrupt, and a royal crony, there have been worse mayors in London. Jumping forward a little to the Early Modern period, we have Sir Thomas Bloodworth (1620-1682). Like many mayors before him, he also had a merchant upbringing; his family belonged to the London Company of Vintners. Prior to becoming Mayor of London, he had a strong career in the city. Bloodworth was a prominent timber merchant, a member of the famous East India company, an MP for Southwark, a Sheriff, and an Alderman! Quite the career before taking the helm as London's mayor in 1665. Bloodworth seemed poised to retire from a solid political career except for one poor decision, on one fateful, night that wiped away all his previous efforts and achievements.

In the middle of the night, on September 2, 1666, a fire broke out in the home of baker, Thomas Farriner. As the fire began ravaging the city, efforts were made to stop it by destroying buildings in the path of the flames to create pockets that would deprive the fire of further fuel. Since buildings were to be levelled, Bloodworth, as mayor, was asked to give his permission to destroy them. Bloodworth said no. He didn't deem the fire a great enough threat and was more concerned about the amount he would have to pay to the building owners than about

stopping the fire in its tracks. That “no” cost Bloodworth dearly. London diarist, Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) famously jotted down Bloodworth’s failure to act and save the city. Pepys himself went to see King Charles II (1630-1685) and only after the king commanded Bloodworth to destroy the buildings, did he make his move. Alas, it was too late, the flames decimated 75% of the city. Pepys captured his ineptness for all time in the following passages of his diary:

September 2, 1666

At last met my Lord Mayor in Canningstreet, like a man spent, with a handkercher about his neck. To the King’s message he cried, like a fainting woman, “Lord! what can I do? I am spent: people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses; but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it...They seemed much troubled, and the King commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor from him, and command him to spare no houses, but to pull down before the fire every way.

Friday September 7, 1666

People do all the world over cry out of the simplicity of my Lord Mayor in generall; and more particularly in this business of the fire, laying it all upon’ him.

Bloodworth was blamed for allowing the fire to get out of control due to his refusal to act when he had the chance. He tried to put it behind him and continued on in politics but was never able to live the stigma down. When Parliament met after the fire, Bloodworth was a laughing stock, and was named to the committee, “...’for providing utensils for the speedy quenching of fire’, no doubt ribald references to the lord mayor’s chamber-pot, and to recommend tax abatements for the stricken metropolis. His own house and stock in Gracechurch Street had been destroyed, but he was able to build himself a splendid replacement in Maiden Lane.” He is now forever remembered as the infamous mayor

who let London burn on the night of the Great Fire in 1666.

Hopefully, London’s newly minted mayor will read this and opt for a more Fitz-Ailwin de Londonestone mayoralty, and less of a Brembre and Bloodworth approach to city management. London remains ever watchful, ever hopeful, and always judgemental! Good luck Mr. Khan, your city awaits!

The Funeral of Anne of Brittany

By Susan Abernethy

Anne, Duchess of Brittany had been crowned twice as the Queen of France. She married King Charles VIII and when he died, she married King Louis XII. She suffered through a long and complicated pregnancy history with only two daughters surviving. One of her daughters, Claude, would also be Queen of France. When Anne was thirty-six, she began to suffer from kidney disease. In the last days of 1513, she was extremely ill and in pain for about ten days before she died. Many said the doctors who took care of her were ignorant and incompetent.

Anne died on Monday, January 9, 1514 in the Castle of Blois. Her body lay in her room until Friday. Surgeons and apothecaries embalmed the body. She had asked that her heart be extracted which they did, enclosing it in a golden box. Because she was an anointed queen, her body would be buried in the royal mausoleum at Saint Denis. But it was her wish that her heart be buried in Nantes in the tomb of her parents and in the country of the Breton people.

King Louis XII was grief stricken at her death. It was recorded that he wept for eight days and requested that the tomb in Saint Denis be made large enough for two. For five days after her death, mendicant friars encircled the body and intoned the office of the dead. On that Friday night, the body was taken to the State room in the newly built area of the castle. The room was hung with silk tapestry

depicting the destruction of Jerusalem. The lower parts of the walls were hung with black velvet decorated with Anne's escutcheon and her device of a golden girdle. The Queen's body had been dressed in royal garments and placed on a State bed covered in cloth of gold bordered with ermine. On her head was her crown and her scepter and wand of justice were placed on cushions of cloth of gold by her side.

The Queen lay in the State room with her face uncovered from Saturday until Monday evening. She was surrounded by monks who ceaselessly said Masses and prayers for the dead. Many visitors came to pay their respects dressed in mourning including princes and princesses of her family, her ladies and maids of honor and all the officials



Funeral of Anne, Queen of France from an illuminated manuscript in the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice, Italy

and members of her household. There was much crying, sobbing and piteous lamentation. On Monday evening, a veil was laid over her face and her body was placed in a wooden coffin lined with lead. The coffin was then covered in copper and a long epitaph was engraved on it.

The funeral ceremonies would last for fifteen days. Each day, four high Masses were performed by the prelates and choir of the royal chapel in addition to those said by the monks. The King took part in all the ceremonies. On Friday, February 3, at two o'clock in the afternoon, the Queen's body was borne by officers of her household from the State room of the castle to the Church of St. Sauveur, just outside the Castle. The coffin was preceded and followed by a large procession of clergy, monks, the poor of the town, members of her household, officials of the Duchy of Brittany and the Grand Master of King Louis' household. The royal princes and princesses also followed including François d'Angoulême, the heir to the throne (the future King François I). François was dressed in a long mourning garment with a train more than three yards long.

After Mass the following morning, the Queen's confessor Guillaume de Parvi spoke the first part of the funeral oration. The oration would consist of commending the Queen's thirty-six virtues, one for each year of her life. Around two o'clock in the afternoon, the coffin was laid on a four-wheeled carriage, and then covered with a black velvet pall which was crossed with white stain that hung down to the ground. The carriage was drawn by six fine-looking horses which were dressed in black velvet and white satin decorative coverings and only their eyes could be seen.

Two knights on horseback rode at the front of the bier with six of the King's archers on either side to keep the crowd from approaching too near. The Swiss guards lined the way. The cortège stopped and services

were held at all the important towns along the route. Crowds of people knelt on the road and prayed as she passed while her almoners distributed money to the poor of the towns and villages. On Monday, February 13, the body rested at the abbey of Nôtre-Dame-des-Champs just outside the gates of Paris. On Tuesday, the procession started again heading towards the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame.

The streets of Paris were hung with black, tan or blue and the inhabitants set lighted torches before their homes. Each square and street on the route leading to Saint Denis was guarded to prevent overcrowding. The provost's archers, town criers, watchmen, monks and clergy joined the procession. The royal relatives came from Blois mounted on little black mules decorated with velvet while the Queen's ladies and maids of honor rode on horses led two by two by a groom on foot. The coffin was borne into the cathedral by officers of her household with the four corners of the pall carried by the four presidents of Parliament.

The porch and the interior of the cathedral were hung with black cloth embroidered with the arms of the Queen. All the altars were draped in black velvet and white silk. There were three thousand eight hundred candles burning on these various altars. Inside the choir, a small chapel had been erected and lit by twelve hundred candles and this is where the body was placed.

On Wednesday, February 15, a solemn Mass was said by the Cardinal of Mans and then the next part of the funeral oration was given. Afterwards, there was a dinner. In the afternoon, twenty-four criers made their way through the town saying:

Honorable and devout persons, pray for the soul of the most noble, most powerful, very excellent, generous, and benevolent Princess Anne, in her lifetime by the Grace of God, Queen of France, Duchess of Brittany who



Cardiotaph of Anne of Brittany exposed in the Musée de Bretagne, Rennes. Photo by Pymouss / Wikimedia Commons

died at the Castle of Blois on the 9th day of January, and now lies in the church of Nôtre Dame. Say your paternosters that God may have mercy on her soul.

The procession began again making its way to Saint Denis. The princes and princesses walked on foot as far as the church of St. Lazare outside the city walls where they mounted their mules. At the royal abbey, the

body was placed on a catafalque in the choir of the church. On the next day, a solemn Mass was performed and Guillaume de Parvi spoke the rest of the funeral oration. Afterwards, the Cardinal de Mans gave the benediction. He wore on his shoulders a magnificent jeweled cope which had been embroidered by Anne and her ladies and given to the church of Saint Denis. After the absolution, the coffin was lowered into a vault before the high altar. The vault measured eight feet by eight feet and in a niche at one end was a statue of the Virgin Mary with the arms of France on one side and the arms of Brittany on the other. The coffin was laid on iron bars two feet above the ground.

The Cardinal threw in a small amount of earth and then the Champagne King-at-Arms came forward, calling three times for silence and asking the Bretagne King-at-Arms to do his duty. The Breton then called out: "The most Christian Queen-Duchess our Sovereign Lady and Mistress is dead. The Queen is dead. The Queen is dead". The King-at-Arms then summoned the Gentleman Usher who approached bearing the rod of justice, the Grand Master of Brittany brought the scepter and the Master of Horse brought the crown. After they each kissed the insignia, they gave them to the Bretagne King-at-Arms who also kissed them and then placed them on the

coffin.

The people were allowed to come forward and kneel and say a short prayer. For the whole next whole day, crowds made their way down the road from Paris to Saint Denis to visit the royal tomb. On Saturday, the 18th of February, the funeral feast began. Many notables attended including the President of Parliament and all the officials of the Queen's household. Anne's natural brother, Jean de Bretagne Baron d'Avaugour presided over the banquet in his capacity as Grand Master of Brittany. He addressed those present, telling the household they had served Anne loyally and she loved them for it. He told them they could work for the King or his daughters now. He said Anne's household no longer existed and he then broke the household staff.

King Louis ordered Pierre Choque, the Brittany King-at-Arms and devoted servant of Queen Anne, to write a detailed account of the obsequies. He authorized Choque to have several copies made of his description. Each copy contained eleven miniatures of the principal scenes from the funeral painted by Jean de Paris. The numerous ceremonies of this funeral would serve as a guide for the court on other similar occasions.

Further reading

A Twice Crowned Queen: Anne of Brittany, by Constance Mary Elizabeth (London, 1906)

Queens and Mistresses of Renaissance France, by Kathleen Wellman (Yale, 2013)

Susan Abernethy is the writer of The Freelance History Writer. Follow Susan on Facebook at The Freelance History Writer, and at Medieval History Lovers, and on Twitter: @SusanAbernethy2

The Bishop Cat

A Fable from Marie de France

Marie de France lived around the 12th and early 13th centuries, but we actually know very little about her life. She may have been born in France, and lived in England, and was perhaps connected to the court of the English king Henry II. But we do know that she was a great poet, writing in Anglo-Norman French, and has left us several works. This includes her *Fables*, which offers over a hundred short stories written in verse. Here is one of our favourites: *The Bishop Cat*

There sat a cat upon a stove,
waiting and spying from above.
He saw a vole and mouse; to each
he spoke in fair and honeyed speech.
He was their bishop, so he said:
through bad advice they've been misled,
no confirmation had they had!
But the mouse made reply; he said:
"I'd rather die! It would be worse
to be beneath those claws of yours!"
Mouse and vole fled, the cat, intent,
came chasing after on the hunt.
The rodents reached the wall: inside
they thought it preferable to hide
crouched in the wall, move not at all,
than heed the bishop and his call
- his confirmation, terrible! -

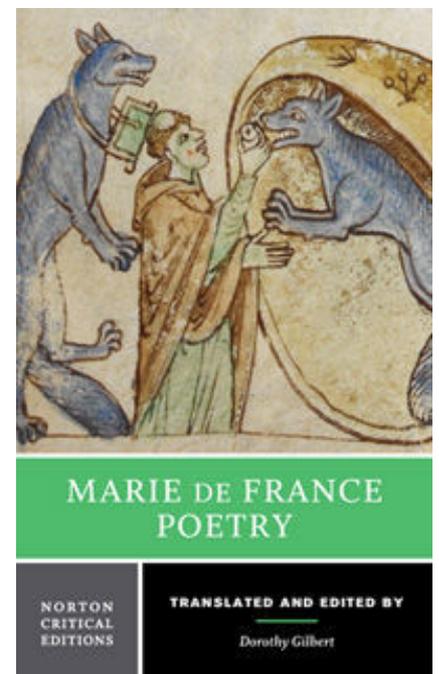


Cat and mouse depicted in British Library MS Harley 928 f. 44v

they knew that cat was criminal!

So here we can a moral fit:
To someone's power one can't submit
if their intent's an evil one;
shun them, and then no harm is done!

You can read this and more in the new book Marie de France Poetry, New Translations, Backgrounds and Contexts Criticism, by Dorothy Gilbert. This Norton Critical Edition was published in 2015 - learn more at <http://books.wwnorton.com/books/webad.aspx?id=4294985395>

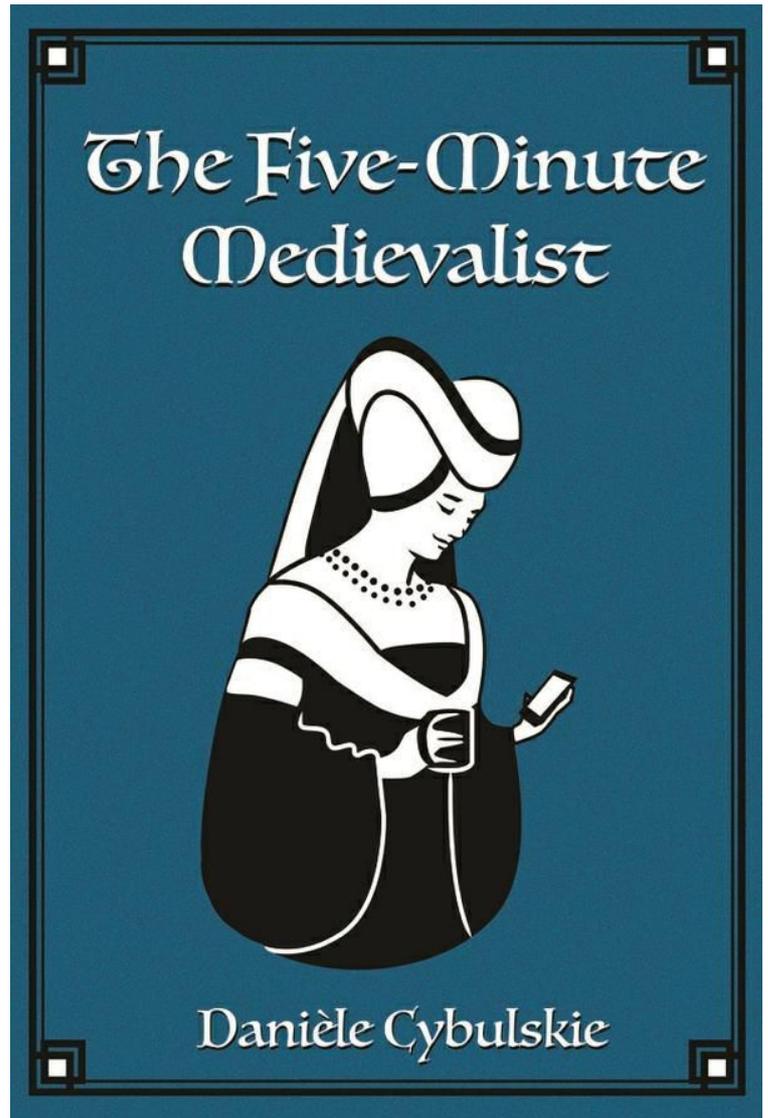


The Five-Minute Medievalist

By Danièle Cybulskie

Funny, informative, and down-to-earth, this ebook features thirteen of the most popular articles from Medievalist.net's Five-Minute Medievalist, Danièle Cybulskie. Readers will learn about everything from the Templars, to popular movie myths, to love and lust advice from a 12th-century priest. Exclusive content includes two never-before-published articles on quirky medieval words we still use every day, and the surprising sexual secrets of the Middle Ages. Unlock the mysteries of the medieval world, five minutes at a time.

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