

The Medieval Period, Day Six

The Life of St. Margaret



Website Use Survey results:

- Of 21 students, about 50% have used the site, and about 50% have not used the site.
- 100% will use the site before Tuesday to get the required checklist for the assignment, yes?
- Can we use website for more than an easy way to distribute materials, and post announcements and syllabi updates?

How do you want to use our course website?

- The choice of how to use the student profiles space could be left undefined—each student could do what he or she thinks would contribute most to both personal and classmates' learning
- Each student could use her or his profile space to keep a running log of responses to and questions about each week's reading, and comment on each others' logs
- Each student can choose and assemble an on-line presentation of a relevant topic

The Life of St. Margaret

■ Language

- Old English (but it's a 12th-c. manuscript! Why?)

■ Genre

- Hagiography (but also... Romance?)

“Keep me steadfast in your sweetest love, because to you now is and ever was and through your help ever shall be my joy and my hope and my true love”

“I am betrothed to him who is worshipped throughout all this world and in all worlds”

Margaret as Model

■ Model of Power?

“Listen to me you wretched people, whether you are men or women, boys or girls, and hold fast in your heart that which I say to you and know”

“I promise and assure you that you shall find rest for your souls with God and with his chosen in the joy of Paradise”

■ Or Runway Model?

“My sword shall entirely cut to pieces the whole of your fair body and your body will be entirely cut to pieces”

“have mercy on your beautiful body”

“we see you sitting so naked and your fair body so wounded”

“I shall happily suffer... Do you imagine that I grieve about the suffering of my body? I know that my soul is the purer with God”

Margaret as Model

■ Porn?

“Hagiographical texts about women are deeply voyeuristic, dressing up in a pious framework the most horrific attacks on women, which the women in question are portrayed as welcoming. Certain scenes, when abstracted from their context, have much in common with modern pornography depicting bondage and mutilation...” –Simon Gaunt

■ Or Power?

“I would argue such readings privilege the pagan gaze... The martyrs’ bodies may be spectacles, but they are spectacles on their own terms. The virgins take control of the sights of their naked bodies, subverting the meanings intended by their persecutors. Olibrius, Eleusius and Maxentius think to shame the martyrs, as women, by displaying them naked; they fail to understand that the virgins... [have] no reason to be ashamed of their nakedness” –Sarah Salih

The Object of the Outsider

- Fitting Mission of the Misfit: ‘The Other’ is the answer to the distance between a “corporatist vision and the factual society split by antagonistic struggles”—Slavoj Zizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*
- “*blessed Margaret was the daughter of Theodosius who worshipped the devil and she worshipped God and all his saints*”

The Object of the Outsider

Margaret: A Healer or A Hater?

- *“He whom your ancestors hung... she loves the God whom your ancestors hung on the cross”*
- *“Be quiet, wretch! You have done nothing to me but you are totally foul, and you shall go into the ninth hateful hell”*
- *“I took plenty of people who believed in God: from some I took their speech, from some their hearing; from some their feet, and from some their hands, and they became crippled... I seized the sight of some, and from some their wits...some through battle and some in peace; some because of murder, and some because of adultery with other men’s wives; some performed sex with four-footed animals because of my will; and some reviled elders in speech”*
- *“That within their house no disabled child be born: neither crippled nor dumb nor deaf nor blind nor mentally ill”*
- *“Gods of gold and silver which were dumb and deaf and blind” “dead gods engraved by the hands of men”*

Wholeness and Holiness:

- “pure servant” “undefiled” “soul is not defiled” “defile my pure body” “virginity defiled” “you cannot defile me”
- “un-hal” (unwhole)
“hale and gesunde”(whole and sound)
- “cut into pieces the whole of your fair body and your body will be entirely cut into pieces, and I shall completely burn your bones”
- “they wish to reduce my body to bits”



Audience and Agenda

- Why tell the story of Margaret?
 - Emphasize individual relation with God?
 - Reconnect with past?
 - Cement social bonds post-Danish post-Norman conquest?
 - Model for lay (female) behavior?

Remember: First Assignment due Tuesday, 11:30 a.m. Use the Checklist!

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address <http://www.litandwriting.umb.edu/engl401-1/fall06/resources.htm>. The page has a blue header with the word "Resources" and a small image of books. On the left is a vertical navigation menu with icons and labels: Home, Assignments, Writing Room, Media Room, Resources, and Help. The main content area lists several resources:

- Our Course Website**
<http://www.litandwriting.umb.edu/engl401-1/fall06/home.htm>
- The Quick Grade-Improver Checklist!**
Download a copy, check off each item, and attach it as a cover for each written assignment.
- Healey Library**
<http://www.lib.umb.edu/>
Reference Desk Phone: 617.287.5940
Information Literacy Tutorial with Virtual Library Tour
<http://www.lib.umb.edu/reference/NewTutorial/introduction.html>
Library E-resources
<http://www.lib.umb.edu/databases/index.cfm>
Oxford English Dictionary
MLA Bibliography
ITER Gateway to the Middle Ages and Renaissance
- Academic Support Services**
<http://www.academicsupport.umb.edu>
Campus Center 1-1100 to 1-1300
Phone: 617.287.6550
- Ross Center for Disability Services**
<http://www.rosscenter.umb.edu/>
Campus Center 2-2010
Phone: 617.287.7430
TTY: 617.287.7436

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer window displaying a document titled "The Medieval Period" by Fall 06. The document is a "Quick Grade-Improver Checklist for Written Work." It begins with a paragraph: "Before you hand in an academic assignment, there are a number of formatting considerations to face. Making a habit of proper formatting will ensure your work is taken seriously in an academic setting and will also prepare you for the expectations of formal presentation and publication beyond the classroom. Be sure to check every item on this list *before* you hand in your assignment." Below this is a list of formatting requirements:

- Identity** Your name, the course number, the instructor's name, and the date should all appear in the top left corner of your first page.
- Title** Every assignment should be titled. The title should be relatively short, but not too short; one or two word titles often reveal nothing about the contents of your assignment. Aim for a title which is both descriptive and compelling. Center your title.
- Font/Margins** Use a 12-point Times New Roman font. Papers should have 1" margins on all sides.
- Spacing** Double-space all text. Indent new paragraphs and long quotations.
- Page Numbers** Your pages should be numbered with arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.). The first page need not be numbered.
- Stapled** Always staple your pages in the top left corner. Staple this checklist on top

What Next? Middle English Romance

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

