

AMAES – Medieval English Studies / Etudes Médiévales Anglaises

Numéro 100 – Le Temps / Time

The French Journal of Medieval English Studies *Études Médiévales Anglaises* is seeking submissions for its 100th anniversary issue focusing on the notion of “time”. The papers, written in French or English, should be submitted to Fanny Moghaddassi and Martine Yvernault by 10 January 2022 (see more information below). Authors who wish to submit a paper are advised to get in touch and submit a title with a brief description of content as soon as convenient.

As the foundation of human experience, time unites natural and cultural phenomena. In 1977, Jacques Le Goff (*Pour un autre Moyen Âge*, 75) posited that “time related to natural cycles, agrarian activities and religious practice was the essential medieval timeframe”. Medieval societies organized working hours and prayers and liturgical celebrations – Church time – in connection to, and sometimes in contrast with, the necessities of natural and agricultural temporalities. Medieval time – unlike Early Modern time – was not constrained by measure and accuracy, but experienced as a flow, marked by cyclical agricultural activities, and the articulation of daily life with exceptional events, in the form of rituals and celebrations, which often included music and its both specific and complex relation to the measuring of time.

Yet Le Goff also stressed that the rise of “commercial capitalism” (*Pour un autre Moyen Âge*, 47) led to a partition in the medieval conception of time: Church time, “ruled by God only” spread in linear fashion towards God (Gourevitch defines such a movement as “fusion with eternity”, *Catégories de la culture médiévale*, 96), became distinct from merchant time, structured by dates, deadlines, context, anticipation, or, reversely, economic and weather accidents. From an ecocritical perspective, the desired, actual or dreaded domestication of natural environments acted as temporal landmarks, namely reflected in medieval literature.

In pagan polytheist cultures before the advent of Christianity, a mythological approach to the world structured conceptions of time and space, which were centered on the past and organized in cycles (Gourevitch). Christianity, grounding time on an only God, introduced the notion of eternity while still preserving some of the forms and landmarks of pagan time. Both Le Goff and Gourevitch showed that merchant time and productive time stemmed from the rise of cities and the development of a new approach to the world, and to time. Townhalls started to display clocks as secular time, anchored in activity and production, started to challenge theological time, regulated by churches. Now partition and measure came to draw a clear line between material and theological times (Schmitt, « *Le temps. ‘Impensé’ de l’histoire ou double objet de l’historien ?* », 46-7). The growing gap between these conceptions of time induced by galloping industrialization in the 18th and 19th centuries led thinkers, artists and writers to invent and romance a pre-productive medieval period.

Gourevitch also pointed to the links that exist between space and time, as experienced both objectively and subjectively. According to him, man’s relation to time and space evolved dramatically from ancient times to the medieval period, from the Early Modern age to modern day, as life rhythms accelerated and the world seemed to narrow in the context of its discovery and exploration (*Catégories*, 34-5). Paul Ricoeur stressed a similar correspondence between (“experienced, geometric, lived-in”) space and time, which for him was equally dialectically divided in “lived time”, “cosmic time” and “historical time”, as the effort at dating mirrored a corresponding need for localization (Ricoeur, *La mémoire, l’histoire, l’oubli*, 191).

Medieval conceptions and practices of time have always been the focus of critical attention, in historical, theological, philosophical and literary fields alike. Recent publications testify to an interest for gender-related practices of time and to an effort at tracing specifically female experience of time, for instance in childbirth rituals and daily life (E. Cox, L.H. McAvoy & R. Magnani, 2015). The reconstruction of the historical past in the medieval period (Rouse, 2005), the complex articulation of memory and the future (Critten, 2019), and conceptions of the future (Boyle, 2015) have also been scrutinized by recent criticism.

On the occasion of its anniversary issue, *Études Médiévales Anglaises* invites papers on the measuring of time, as well as on the marginal treatment of time in ritualized celebrations which punctuate daily life, sometimes subverting its usual hierarchies, as in the case of carnival and misrule. Papers can consider material representations of time and its measure, as well as the subtle representation of past, present and future in medieval literature: romance worlds often conflate several layers of time which coexist in the mind of the reader. (Rouse, 2019, 163).

Études Médiévales Anglaises invites papers from all disciplinary backgrounds on time in the medieval British Isles, including:

- Conceptualising time
 - Measuring time, technical approaches to time.
 - The ages of man.
 - Seasons and nature.
 - Academic divisions of medieval time: defining the medieval period in Anglo-saxon and French historiographies.
- Expressing Time
 - Time-related formulas.
 - Expressing memory, scrutinising traces. Conversely, observing the ephemeral and the forgotten, and the future.
 - Narrated time.
- Medieval practices of time
 - Contrasting practises of time in daytime and night-time, for instance in monastic and urban contexts.
 - Escaping daily time through rituals and celebrations.
 - Contesting time, marginal time (carnival, disorder and misrule).
 - Time and the otherworld.

The papers, written in English or in French, must be sent before 10 January 2022 to Fanny Moghaddassi f.moghaddassi@unistra.fr and Martine Yvernault martine.yvernault@unilim.fr. *Études Médiévales Anglaises* uses double-blind peer review. The stylesheet to be used may be found on our website: <https://amaes.jimdo.com/submit-a-paper/>

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