

For students taking this module as fully assessed or 50/50: please submit a **5000 word essay** in answer to one the following questions, during the Seminar in week 2, term 2 (Wed 18 Jan / Thu 19 Jan).

1. Arthurian romances are often structured as narratives of exile and return, exclusion and reintegration. Compare how at least two texts employ and modulate this paradigm.
2. At the heart of the problems raised by Arthurian texts, we often find a tension between private aspirations and public duty. Examine at least two texts in this respect.
3. In what ways do authors use Arthurian materials to construct a national history and/or a group identity?
4. How does Arthurian romance invite us to explore, understand, and possibly critique different forms of erotic desire? Discuss at least two texts.
5. Examine the use of the supernatural in at least two different texts.
6. Arthurian romances simultaneously invite and frustrate interpretation. In what ways is this a fundamental defining feature of the romance genre?
7. Arthurian chivalry and Christianity are odd bedfellows. Discuss how this tension is negotiated (either resolved and/or exacerbated...) in at least two different texts.
8. Discuss the theme of transformation or metamorphosis in at least two texts.
9. The climax of an Arthurian knightly quest is often either erotic or mystical/religious. To what extent are the erotic and the mystical experiences of romance heroes similar or even analogous, despite their obvious differences? Discuss at least two texts.
10. Discuss the relevance of land and territory (local, regional, and national) in two Arthurian texts, including at least one Middle English Gawain-romance.

If you would prefer to define your own topic, please do get in touch with me to discuss suggestions and possibilities. Please also get in touch about any advice on structure, argument, bibliography – anything really !

All best wishes!

Marco