

# PROCLAMATION !

The AMRS department will soon be hosting its annual Holiday party! There will be grilled sandwiches and home-made soup! Faculty are invited to make their own soup to share!

Stop by Sturges 105 on December 11th between 12 - 1 pm and celebrate with us!

## THE STAFF OF THE TRIDENT

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Want to write a story? Have ideas for the next issue?  
Complaints? Send them to [jlidinovo@owu.edu](mailto:jlidinovo@owu.edu).



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## THE CODPIECE PIECE

By Josephine DiNovo

A few months ago, I visited the Tower of London and discovered a suit of armor with a large codpiece. Like any good 20-year-old, I photographed it. I thought it was some sort of oddity—after all, in the modern world we tend not to draw attention to our genitals, why would suits of armor do so?

However, this suit of armor reflected a widespread Renaissance fashion. Yes, fashion featured huge codpieces. On purpose.

This fashion may not have started as a means to draw attention to penises, but rather to cover them. As the 15<sup>th</sup> century progressed, the long tunics men wore grew shorter. This would not have been a problem, except the hose men wore were not connected like pants we wear today, but instead were two separate pieces that were often tied together at the top. The combination of the shortening shirts and the hose that didn't meet in the middle left men exposed. This nudity necessitated the small strip of fabric to cover the men's genitals—the codpiece was born!

Soon men and tailors of the time embellished this accessory. Some codpieces were comically large (by comically,

I mean impossibly) and others features faces or other decorations like gemstones.

Scholars have several theories about the increasing use of codpieces. Some, like C.S. Reed in his article “The codpiece: social fashion or medical need?”, suggest that the large codpieces were meant to disguise the bulky bandages used in the treatment of syphilis. Rapidly spreading during the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Syphilis causes pussy drainage and swollen groin tissue, both of which create an unavoidable bulge normal tunics and doublets could not disguise. The extra-large codpieces offered a way to transform the swelling and bandages into a normal piece of attire.

Other scholars suggest that the codpiece was a clear display of masculinity, reasserting a man's authority and superiority. The codpiece could simultaneously display fertility and martial skill. The decorations drew attention to this area—although one could not mention penises in polite society. On the battlefield they could display a man's prowess while also protecting V.I.P.s—very important parts.

Regardless of why the codpiece grew—literally and in popularity—it is hilarious in hindsight.

the use of Latin (*The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*), and not the Norse-speaking Scandinavians. The helmets of the Goidels are often described as the “four-cornered, ridged [or “crested”] battle-helm”; this style of construction speaks much more to the earlier late-Roman Intersecta type helmet, where four plates are joined together by narrow bands of metal to make a bowled-shape, with a raised crest of metal running from front to back (Stephen Johnson, *A Late Roman Helmet from Burgh Castle*), rather than the Viking helmets. . In the *Tain Bo Cualnge*, when the hero Cuchulain is using his sling to throw rocks at the enemy army, they raise a “canopy of shields” for protection against missiles, and this tactic also appears in *Battle of Magh Muccuimhe* and *A Tale of Ailill Moshalaum*; while the Romans had similar tactics into the end of the Empire (Philip Rance, *The Fulcrum: The Late Roman and Byzantine Testudo*), there doesn't seem to be any parallel in viking warfare from which this could have

come.

There is also reason to believe that the Goidels were used to long campaigns and hard-fought battles rather than quick raids, with evidence from literary texts such as *The War of Fergus and Conchobar*, which features the assault of multiple castles as well as open battles, and historians believe the battle of Magh Rath in the 7th century may have lasted many days (Ian Adamson, *The Battle of Moira*).

Evidence in pre-Viking Ireland—archaeological, linguistic, and literary—all speak to Goidelic warfare of the Medieval Period coming not from the Viking period but rather an earlier tradition, drawing from the Romans and immediate post-Roman peoples. This would also place early medieval Ireland as being just as up-to-date and advanced as the other European peoples, rather than the backwoods and out-dated people that is frequently imagined.

attributed to Viking influence have a much stronger resemblance to those of the earlier Roman and immediate Post-Roman period. Chainmail armor is commonly thought to have been a Viking introduction, is mentioned many pre-Viking Irish battles poems, such as *The Chase of Sid na mBan Finn and the Death of Finn*, *The Battle of Magh Rath*, and *The Battle of Cath Crinna*. If we include cases of armor in Ireland being used that, while not explicitly called mail, but is described in ways that suggest it, the list grows. The spark-giving armor of *The Battle of Gabhra* and the “smooth grey glittering corselets” in the *Battle of Cumair* being prime examples. When chainmail is mentioned by name, it is called “*luirech*” or “*luraig*”, which comes from the Latin “*lorica*”, rather than the Norse word for chainmail armor, “*byrnja*”, (Brian Gerard, *The Early Medieval Goidel*), implying that the armor itself was adopted from either the Romans or the pre-viking people of Britain, which Bede says were united through



## THE PIGEON AND THE PEACOCK

A Fable Inspired by Marie de France's Fables

By Christine Mendiola

The Pigeon strolled along the street  
Up to the castle for to meet  
Some friends it had arranged to see.  
Also walking, along there be  
A Peacock bright blue, black,  
and green  
Boasting and making a big scene,  
“The King does love me most  
of all.  
His queen has planned for me a ball.  
What bird has more glory than me?”  
As Pigeons are so apt to be,  
The bird replied dumb and naïve,  
“Who will you take, do you believe?  
Oh, I would volunteer gladly!”  
The Peacock laughed and said,  
“Sadly,  
A musky street bird like yourself  
Wouldn't fit in on a castle shelf.”  
“I don't see why!” the Pigeon cried.  
“I'm blue, black and green  
with pride.

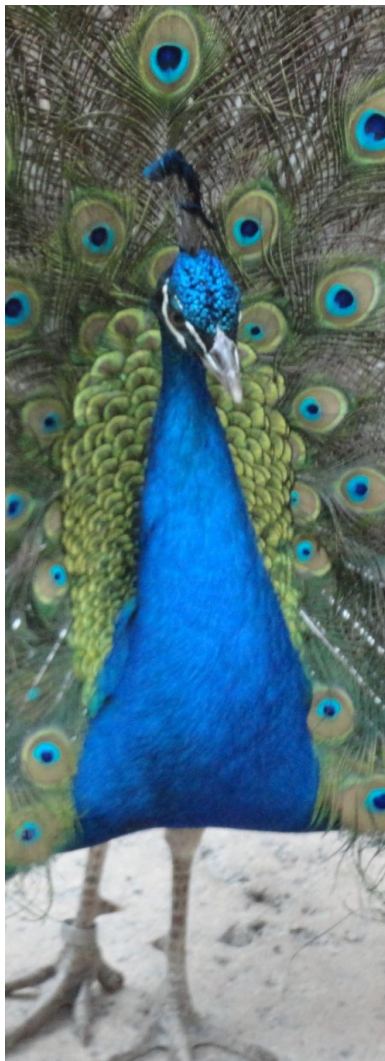
My beauty is myself confirmed,  
Not by some royalty affirmed!  
So whose glory is more secure?”  
He left to find birds more mature.  
The Peacock sat there all alone  
And to his ball he lonely flown.  
Until the King tired of him  
And the Peacock's feathers did dim.  
What we can learn from this small tale  
Is the beauty and glory scale  
Is made more sturdy from within  
Than with the fickle weights of sin.  
The excess pride from others gained  
Is poison that makes many vain.

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Marie de France was a 12<sup>th</sup> century French poet and is most famous for her *lais*—or short narrative romances—but also wrote a collection of fables. Taking inspiration from Marie de France’s fables translated by Harriet Spiegel, my poem is written in iambic octosyllabic rhyming couplets just like Marie’s French fables. It also takes thematic inspiration from the many bird fables that she wrote between species of birds like, “The Eagle and the Crow,” “The Doves and the Hawk” and “The Crow in the Peacock’s Feathers.” With a modern moral of promoting self-love and condemning vanity, I tried to maintain the light-hearted yet stern feeling of the original fables.

Reference:  
Marie de France. *Fables*.  
Trans. Harriet Spiegel. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1987. Print.



WHAT HAVE THE VIKINGS EVER DONE FOR  
US? ORGANIZED WARFARE IN GOIDELIC  
IRELAND

By Colin McGarry

Many scholars believe that during the Viking Age the Scandinavian raiders and settlers brought into Ireland a new style of warfare, introducing concepts like total war and formation fighting into Ireland, which previously fought in small raids as its form of waging war. However, this theory disregards the large amount of evidence that the Goidels of Ireland were in constant communication with Britain and Continental Europe throughout the earlier periods, and would have evolved the same styles of warfare as those regions to deal with them.

It is easy to show Ireland’s connection to Roman warfare. There is mounting evidence that Rome was active in Ireland, such as the Roman fort in Drumanagh and burials on Lambay Island. Roman literary evidence also suggests military actions taken into Ireland, such as when the poet Juvenal says that Roman arms

have been taken “beyond the shores of Ireland” (*Satires*) or how Marcellianus’s *Histories* tells us that the Goidels of Ireland were “tribute-paying” to Rome. Both the Irish and the Romans also mention that Irish princes would go to Rome for help to reclaim lands (John Morris, *The Age of Arthur*).

There are just as many connections between Ireland and Europe after the fall of Rome. Trade routes through the Shannon River were frequented by Gallic and Frankish (Cecil O’Rahilly, *Ireland and Wales*). Many Irish kings conquer British land, such as Muiretach mac Erca and Fergus Clendar (John Morris, *The Age of Arthur*) and the kings of Dyfed come from Irish roots (Cecil O’Rahilly, *Ireland and Wales*).

Not only were the Goidels often involved in Europe and it’s war style well before the coming of the Vikings into Ireland, many of the battle tactics and equipment usually

The Cedar Forest, which scholars previously believed was like a serene glade popular in Abrahamic traditions, is actually shown to be full of the cries of animals. Cicadas, birds, and monkeys all perform for the entertainment of Humbaba. This intense description of natural locations is exceptionally rare in Babylonian poetry, or at least in the poems that we do have.

This tablet thus acknowledges the moral grey areas of the lives of heroes, as well as the importance of nature. The lines show more attention to natural forms than scholars had reasonably expected, and so our entire concept of Babylonian interaction with the environment has to be shifted. This tablet is monumental in altering our sense of ancient Babylon, and it does so in only half the length of this article.



## THE OHIO RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL

By Ashley Vassar

If you visit its website, you will find that The Ohio Renaissance Festival runs annually from September to October and takes place in Wilmington, OH. Having lived in Ohio for the past eight years, this is also a fact I know by heart. From a young age, I knew that Renaissance Festivals existed. I don't remember how I knew, but I did. It wasn't until I was 11 and my family moved to a suburb outside of Phoenix, Arizona that I was actually able to attend one in person. I was fascinated by the time period I imagined to be the Renaissance even before I could read. (My guess is that Disney movies, *Quest for Camelot*, and *The Swan Princess* are to blame.) It would take a number of years after attending my first Renaissance Festival before I realized that the Renaissance wasn't just any time period before the 1800s. Eleven Renaissance Festivals later, I'm relatively certain that many of the attendees and shop owners still haven't figured that out. (Or maybe, in the spirit of good fun, they just don't care.)

This year, I attended the festival for more than just fun. I

figured that I may as well marry two of the things I love—my AMRS studies and my yearly visits to the Renaissance Festival. This time around, I was looking with a more critical eye and I realized the Renaissance Festival has become an amalgamation of cultural memories that isn't exactly accurate. It's idealized and it combines what the general public imagines to be the best parts of the renaissance with the practices they find most fascinating.

The festival features jousting tournaments, fake royalty, and many vendors selling arts and crafts. There are artisans who blow glass and craft swords using traditional methods while festival attendees observe. There are festival games that allow attendees to throw axes, shoot bows and arrows, and sword fight with padded swords. There are also entire outfits made of leather, chain-mail bikinis, a stall dedicated entirely to modern board games, and a coffee shop designed to look like a "renaissance" Starbucks. Despite these inaccuracies, it is something that draws large crowds and takes place in many states across the country.

As annoying as the cultural inaccuracies may be, the spirit of community at the Renaissance Festival is overpowering. This year, in particular, I was astounded by the sheer number of people who had chosen to spend their Saturday at an event celebrating our distant past. Some attended in period clothing, others dressed as characters from video games or popular movies and TV shows, and still others simply wore plain clothes.

In the end, the experience wasn't about whether or not the other attendees knew that much about the accuracy of the merchant stalls or whether their period clothing was really something that would have been worn in the Renaissance. For me, it was about the same drive that led me to be obsessed with knights, princesses, dragons, and magic before I could read and being around other people that shared something akin to that drive. I was surrounded by people who were also fascinated with the medieval and renaissance enough to attend The Ohio Renaissance Festival. Not everyone may study Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance topics, but there is something about them that is still widely appealing to most people.

I think part of the appeal comes simply from the idea that the past has led us to where we are today. It's the reason a lot of people choose to study history. Learning about the past can help inform us about our modern culture. On another level, I'm sure some of the fascination comes from modern dramas and fantasy series, such as "Game of Thrones", "Vikings", "The Tudors", etc; however, that comes back to a shared fascination with the past.

Regardless of each person's individual reasoning for attending the Renaissance Festival, I'm glad I attended this year with the goal of writing about the experience. I think the most important thing I took away from my visit was that I'm not alone in my passions for the past. Seeing the sheer number of people who celebrated the past, and (even when certain aspects were inaccurate) morphed parts of past into something new and fascinating, reinforced what I already believe— Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance topics are still important and there are a variety of reasons to study them.

## NEW LINES OF THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH DISCOVERED!

By Christopher Shanley

Earlier this October, a small unassuming cuneiform tablet went on display in the Sulaymaniyah Museum in Slemeni, Iraq. This piece of fired clay is no bigger than your hand, yet contains one of the most exciting discoveries for ancient scholars in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The museum purchased the tablet in 2011 from a smuggler who looted it from Baghdad in 2003. It contains 20 lines from the Epic of Gilgamesh that were previously undiscovered. The tablet was not fully translated until this past year, even though it was recognized as being from the Epic of Gilgamesh as soon as it was purchased. The Epic of Gilgamesh is considered to be the first great work of literature, the first version of which dates to the 1700 and 1600 BCE. A complete copy has never been found, so we have always known that more fragments would show up. Yet the discov-

ery still blew away scholars, as it presented them with new source material to consider as they form theses about the Epic.

But what do the lines actually say? They come from the fifth chapter out of twelve and depict the protagonists, Gilgamesh and Enkidu, in new ways. The lines show internal conflict that Gilgamesh and Enkidu suffer after they kill the guardian of the Cedar Forest (the home of the gods). The heroes ventured to the forest to cut down the trees and take them home to Babylonia. One of the new lines also suggests that Gilgamesh felt remorse for performing such an act, and was worried it would upset the gods. This ecological mindfulness is rare in any ancient society, but especially so in poetry.

The guardian they slew, Humbaba, is also portrayed as more of a protecting king rather than the gruesome monster the other passages we have suggest.