

Lars Boje Mortensen

Born 1958, Professor of Ancient and Medieval Cultural History, Dept. of History, University of Southern Denmark (Odense); head of the Centre for Medieval Literature (Odense and York, sdu.dk/cml).

After my training in classical and medieval Latin philology (Copenhagen) I published both within editorial philology and literary aspects of medieval and Renaissance Latin texts. My PhD dealt with early medieval historiography in Italy; chronicles from Antiquity to the Renaissance, in their highly different historical contexts, have been a major field of research since then. I had the opportunity to pursue manuscript studies in major European libraries which brought a book-historical dimension to my work; this has in turn shaped my view of pre-print texts.

After my appointment as professor of medieval Latin at the University of Bergen (1992), I gradually moved into the field of saints' lives and saints' cults, thus opening my studies more towards sociology of religion and sociology of learning. I also became interested in the rich Old Norse literature and the dynamics holding between the Latin and vernacular in Europe in general. At Bergen, I formed part of a Norwegian Centre of Excellence in 2003 and a similar Nordic Centre in 2005 in which I began to explore, with various international research groups and on my own, new ways of writing literary history. Alongside this I also pursued studies of Nordic medieval Latin literature, taking the initiative for a comprehensive multi-authored website of authors and texts (published online), a field I have kept up with recently by contributing to various handbooks with a chapter on Nordic medieval Latin literature (chapters to be published in 2023 and 2024).

I have spent time abroad as guest researcher/professor or on research leave in London (1989), Bologna (1998-99), Gothenburg (2000), Helsinki (2009), Naples (2018) and as guest professor at the University of Siena in spring 2022 where I taught an MA-course on "Letteratura imperiale e la ricezione dei classici Latini c. 1050-1200".

In 2007 I moved to my current post in Odense (SDU) for teaching medieval history and ancient literature in translation and in Latin. I continued to be occupied with the interdisciplinary field of large scale literary history and its problematic relations to the fields of history and comparative literature; together with Elizabeth Tyler (York) I established the international group Interfaces. Through this collaboration and with my SDU byzantinist colleague Christian Høgel, the Centre for Medieval Literature (CML, Odense/York) emerged in 2012 thanks to a long-term grant from the Danish National Research Foundation. The ambition of CML was to contribute to a theoretical framework for integrating the study of the European Medieval Literatures. My own contributions in this research programme concern both theoretical and practical aspects of literary history on the large scale (macro-literary history) and, more specifically, book- and intellectual history in papal Europe between c. 1050 and 1300. A brief overview of our work in CML 2012-22 can be found here: <https://cml.sdu.dk/about/annual-reports>

I continue to study the reception of the Roman classics especially in the 12th century; here I am currently publishing on the reception of Curtius Rufus and on the Danish chronicler Saxo Grammaticus about whom I have edited a Brill Companion together with my SDU colleague Thomas Heebøll-Holm (in print).

At SDU I teach classics in translation, Latin, and ancient and medieval history.

I am also engaged in theoretical discussions about cultural heritage, in particular the undecided status of textual heritage (see my recent blogs). I am co-PI in a EU-funded project on rituals and heritage, NetMAR, led by Stavroula Konstantinou (Cyprus, 2021-23). I am also involved in an Erasmus+ program for teaching medieval European literature led by the University of Iceland, and in a collaborative Nordic project (CODICUM) on the large medieval fragment collections held by Nordic archives and libraries, for which we are currently seeking funds (2023).

I am the editor-in-chief of the Diamond Open Access Journal: Interfaces - A Journal of Medieval European Literatures (published by the University of Milan), and I work to promote the view that high-quality DOA journals do not have to be costly.

I am a member of the Academia Europea and The Norwegian Academy of Sciences as well as a number of Nordic and international societies.