

THE MEDIEVAL GIFT AND THE CLASSICAL TRADITION

This interdisciplinary study explores how classical ideals of generosity influenced the writing and practice of gift giving in medieval Europe. In assuming that medieval gift giving was shaped by oral ‘folk models’, historians have traditionally followed in the footsteps of social anthropologists and sociologists such as Marcel Mauss and Pierre Bourdieu. This first in-depth investigation into the influence of the classical ideals of generosity and gift giving in medieval Europe reveals to the contrary how historians have underestimated the impact of classical literature and philosophy on medieval culture and ritual. Focusing on the idea of the gift expounded in the classical texts read most widely in the Middle Ages, including Seneca the Younger’s *De beneficiis* and Cicero’s *De officiis*, Lars Kjær investigates how these ideas were received, adapted and utilised by medieval writers across a range of genres, and how they influenced the practice of generosity.

LARS KJÆR is Senior Lecturer in Medieval History at the New College of the Humanities. His previous publications include, as co-editor, a special volume of the *Journal of Medieval History* entitled ‘Feasts and Gifts of Food in Medieval Europe: Ritualised Constructions of Hierarchy, Identity and Community’ (2011).

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THE MEDIEVAL GIFT AND THE
CLASSICAL TRADITION

*Ideals and the Performance of Generosity in Medieval England,
1100–1300*

LARS KJÆR
New College of the Humanities



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ABBREVIATIONS

CLR	<i>Calendar of Liberated Rolls</i>
CPR	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
CCCM	<i>Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis</i>
CCSL	<i>Corpus Christianorum Series Latinae</i>
Cicero, <i>De amicitia</i>	<i>M. Tulli Ciceronis. De re publica. De legibus. Cato maior de senectute. Laelius de amicitia</i> , ed. J. G. F. Powell, OCT (Oxford, 2006), 317–65.
Cicero, <i>De legibus</i>	<i>M. Tulli Ciceronis</i> , ed. Powell, 155–266.
Cicero, <i>De officiis</i>	<i>M. Tulli Ciceronis. De officiis</i> , ed. M. Winterbottom, OCT (Oxford, 1994).
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
Horace, <i>Epistles</i>	<i>Q. Horati Flacci. Opera</i> , ed. E. C. Wickham, rev. H. W. Garrod, OCT (Oxford, 1912).
Juvenal	<i>Juvenal and Persius</i> , ed. and trans. S. M. Braund, Loeb Library (Cambridge, MA, 2004), 128–511.
Lucan	<i>M. Annaei Lucani Belli civilis libri decem</i> , ed. A. E. Housman, OCT (Oxford, 1927).
Martial	<i>Martial. Epigrams</i> , ed. and trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, Loeb Library, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1993).
MTB	<i>Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury</i> , ed. J. C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard, Rolls Series, 7 vols. (London, 1875–85).
OCT	<i>Oxford Classical Texts</i>

List of Abbreviations

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|------------------------------------|--|
| Ovid, <i>Amores</i> | <i>P. Ovidi Nasonis. Amores. Medicamina faciei femineae. Ars amatoria. Remedia amoris</i> , ed. E. J. Kennedy, <i>OCT</i> (Oxford, 1961), 1–108. |
| Ovid, <i>Ars amatoria</i> | <i>P. Ovidi Nasonis</i> . ed. Kennedy, 117–219. |
| Ovid, <i>Remedia amoris</i> | <i>P. Ovidi Nasonis</i> . ed. Kennedy, 221–61. |
| Publilius Syrus | <i>Publilius Syri Sententiae</i> , ed. E. von Wölfflin, Teubner (Leipzig, 1869). |
| Sallust, <i>Bellum Catilinae</i> | <i>Sallust. The War with Catiline. The War with Jugurtha</i> , ed. and trans. J. C. Rolfe, rev. J. T. Ramsey, Loeb Library (Cambridge, MA, 2013), 1–147. |
| Sallust, <i>Bellum Jugurthinum</i> | <i>Sallust</i> , ed. and trans. Rolfe, rev. Ramsey, 166–417. |
| Seneca, <i>De beneficiis</i> | <i>L. Annaei Senecae. De beneficiis libri VII. De Clementia libri II</i> , ed. C. Hosius, Teubner, 2nd edn. (Leipzig, 1914), 1–209. |
| Seneca, <i>Epistulae morales</i> | <i>L. Annaei Senecae. Ad Lucilium epistulae morales</i> , ed. L. D. Reynolds, <i>OCT</i> , 2 vols. (Oxford, 1965). |
| Seneca, <i>De vita beata</i> | <i>L. Annaei Senecae. Dialogorum libri duodecim</i> , ed. L. D. Reynolds, <i>OCT</i> (Oxford, 1977), 167–97. |
| Statius, <i>Thebaid</i> | <i>Statius</i> , ed. and trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, Loeb Library, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 2003). |
| Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> | <i>P. Vergili Maronis Opera</i> , ed. R. A. B. Mynors, <i>OCT</i> , rev. edn. (Oxford, 1972), 103–422. |

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