

**Medieval Europe (History 221)**  
**Fall 2004**

Instructor: Anne Barton  
Class: M,W, F 10-10:50  
Room: McIver 232

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by appointment

Welcome to medieval history! In our romantic imaginations, the history of the Middle Ages is concerned primarily with knights in shining armor, damsels in distress, and quests after such items as the “Holy Grail.” While the nobility, women, and Christianity will all play a part in our course, the sources we examine and the questions we ask of them will bear little resemblance to scenes from King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Instead, we will be looking at a wide variety of sources to see 1) how the exercise of government changed over this period as kings and nobles struggled to exert their authority; 2) how the beliefs, practices, & institutional functions of Christianity changed over this period; 3) how women participated in various facets of medieval culture; and 4) how individuals were defined by the various groups to which they belonged. The Middle Ages - roughly the period from 500 (the end of the Roman Empire in the West) to 1400, or 1500, or 1600 (depending on when the Renaissance occurred in a particular location) – could be described as a period in which people were engaged in defining who was “in” and who was “out” of various groups. In order to create such a definition, each person’s role in medieval society had to be defined, and further, so did each aspect of his or her role. Thus, we will look at changes in the history of law & government, the history of Christianity, and the history of women through the prism of a society that was attempting to codify precisely what it meant to be a part of that society. It would also be useful for you to keep in mind that while for many historians the Middle Ages marks the beginning of modern history, for others the Middle Ages is a period characterized primarily by its differences from the modern (or post-modern) world in which we live. We will be engaged in a search for modern institutions which have their origins in the medieval period, but we will not be blind to the differences that exist between that age and our own.

To formulate our own conclusions about these questions, we will be using primary sources (those written during the Middle Ages). In order to make good oral and written evaluations of the sources, you must always consider the biases, both positive and negative, of the author and the nature of the source. All historical sources are not created equal; you’ll need to make informed judgments about each of them. Since this is a history course, the topics of our discussions will be roughly chronological, but we will be more concerned with analytical methods than with strict chronology. In other words, you will spend more time in this class reading and analyzing primary source materials than you will spend memorizing names and dates.

For the purposes of evaluation (grading), we will focus on three interrelated skills. The first, active discussion of the materials, involves reading the material before the day of the

discussion so that you can contribute both comments and informed questions to that discussion. The second, identification questions, focuses on accurately identifying a term (person, place, idea, date) and relating that term to a larger theme of the course using both information from lecture and primary source evidence when possible. Periodically, you will have to write a one-page identification at the beginning of class. Identification questions will appear on the in-class portions of the two midterms and the final. The third skill, creation of an analytical essay, will form the major part of all three of the exams and will be written at home. For this exercise, you will build an argument in a 3-4 page essay which answers a question I have posed, again using primary source material wherever possible. You will write one essay for each of the midterms and three essays for the final. Further instructions will accompany each assignment.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course you will be able to:

- explain the significance of terms (people, events, places, dates) as they relate to the four aspects of medieval society we will examine.
- construct an analytical essay using related primary source material as evidence to support an argument in answer to a specific historical question.
- understand which elements in medieval society can be seen as origins for modern beliefs or institutions and which cannot.

### **For Your Information**

Attendance: If you miss more than six classes, you will automatically fail the course.

Honor code: Any violation of the honor code (such as plagiarism or cheating) will be dealt with according to UNCG's academic integrity policy. For specific explanations, see the Student Affairs website at <http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/conduct/policies/academic.integrity.html>.

Assignment completion: Failure to complete any part of the course – in-class identifications/discussions, first midterm, second midterm, or final – will result in an “F” for the course.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Discussion	10%
In-Class Identifications	10%
First Midterm	25%
Second Midterm	25%
Final	30%

## **Required Texts**

*The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, ed. Betty Radice (Penguin, revised edition 2003) ISBN 0-140-44899-3.

Jean Froissart, *Chronicles*, ed. And trans. Geoffrey Brereton (Penguin, 1968) ISBN 0-14-044200-6.

Patrick Geary, *Readings in Medieval History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Broadview, 2003). ISBN1-55111-550-6.

C. Warren Hollister and Judith Bennett, *Medieval Europe: A Short History*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition (McGraw-Hill, 2002). ISBN 0-07-112109-9.

## **Lecture Schedule**

Monday, August 16: Introductions/Source Interpretation

Wednesday, August 18: Roman Origins: legacies of empire

Friday, August 20: Christian Origins: Gospels & Statements of Faith

Readings: Geary – *Theodosian Code* (1-28); Hollister & Bennett – 5-48; Handout – Nicene Creed & St. Vincent of Lerins-Definition of Orthodoxy

Monday, August 23: Christian Origins II: Sanctity in Late Antiquity

Wednesday, August 25: Germanic Origins: the Successor States

Friday, August 27: St. Benedict & Early Medieval Monasticism

Readings: Geary – *The Passion of Saint Perpetua and Felicity* (61-68); *The Rule of Saint Benedict* (168-198); Hollister & Bennett – 65-85

Monday, August 30: Italy under the Lombards: the papacy of Gregory the Great

Wednesday, September 1: Gregory of Tours: the Franks

Friday, September 3: Early Medieval Saints: the case of St. Balthild

Readings: Geary – Gregory the Great *Dialogues* (199-220); *The Tomb of Childeric: Father of Clovis* (120-128); *Salic Law* (129-136); Gregory of Tours *History of the Franks* (139-161); *Life of Saint Balthild* (162-167); Handout – Gregory of Tours on Frankish Queens

Monday, September 6 Labor Day -- no classes

Wednesday, September 8: Charlemagne & the Carolingian Empire

Friday, September 10: the Carolingian Renaissance

Readings: Einhard, *Life of Charles the Great* (282-296); Selected Capitularies (297-320); Hollister & Bennett – 102-124

Monday, September 13: The Vikings in England & France

Wednesday, September 15: Anglo-Saxon England: the case of King Alfred

Friday, September 17: the Empire to the East: Byzantium

Readings: Geary – Texts about King Alfred (236-261); Hollister & Bennett – 49-64; 125-139

Monday, September 20: Islam

Readings: Handout – excerpts from the *Qu’ran*

Wednesday, September 22: First Midterm: the Early Middle Ages

Friday, September 24: Aristocratic Power: Lords and Vassals

Readings: Geary – Fulbert of Chartres *Letter to William of Aquitaine* (386); Hugh of Lusignan *Agreement between Lord and Vassal* (387-392); Galbert of Bruges *The Murder of Charles the Good* (393-406); Hollister & Bennett – 141-154; 182-187

Monday, September 27: Banal Lordship: Peasants and their Lords

Wednesday, September 29: Medieval Monastic Reforms: Cluny & Clairvaux

Friday, October 1: Investiture Controversy I: The Early Stages

Readings: Geary – Cluniac Charters (321-327); Pope Gregory VII and King Henry IV *The Investiture Controversy* (609-634); Hollister & Bennett – 160-172; 197-210

Monday, October 4: Investiture Controversy II: Compromise?

Wednesday, October 6: The First Crusade

Friday, October 8: At the Church Door: 12<sup>th</sup>-century marriage reforms

Readings: Geary – *The Concordat of Worms* (635); *The First Crusade, Four Accounts* (407-442); Hollister & Bennett – 227-229; 243-248; Handout – marriage documents

Monday, October 11 Fall Break -- no class

Wednesday, October 13: Twelfth Century Renaissance: Heloise & Abelard

Friday, October 15: Heloise & Abelard: part 2

Readings: Abelard *Historia calamitatum*: Abelard to a Friend: *The Story of His Misfortunes*; Heloise & Abelard *The Personal Letters*

Monday, October 18: “A White Mantle of Churches”: Gothic Architecture

Wednesday, October 20: Heresy? Waldensians & Cathars

Friday, October 22: The High Medieval Papacy: Innocent III

Readings: Geary – *Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council*; Hollister & Bennett – 256-261; 302-308

Monday, October 25: The Mendicants: Dominic, Francis, and Clare

Wednesday, October 27: Royal Centralization: the Example of England

Friday, October 29: Magna Carta: part 1

Readings: Geary – *The Rule of Saint Francis of Assisi* (470-473); Clare of Assisi *Testament* (474-477); Canonization Process of St. Dominic (478-492); Domesday Book (758-765); Richard Fitz Nigel *Dialogue of the Exchequer* (766-775); Magna Carta (776-793); *The Huntingdonshire Eyre of 1286* (794-797); Hollister & Bennett – 210-215; 269-279

Monday, November 1: Magna Carta: part 2

Wednesday, November 3: Expanding Economy: Growth of Towns & Guilds

Friday, November 5: Second Midterm: High Middle Ages

Readings: Hollister & Bennett – 176-182; Handout – Town and Guild Charters

Monday, November 8: The Late Medieval Papacy: Babylonian Captivity

Wednesday, November 10: The Late Medieval Papacy: Schism & Conciliarism

Friday, November 12: Catherine of Siena, Saint or Pest?

Readings: Geary – Marsilius of Padua *Discourses* (545-566); Dialogues of Catherine of Siena (815-821); Hollister and Bennett – 264-266; 280-289; 336-345; Handout – Excerpts from the correspondence of Catherine of Siena

Monday, November 15: The Hundred Years' War & Social Unrest

Wednesday, November 17: Joan of Arc

Friday, November 19: the Black Death: Boccaccio's *Decameron*

Readings: Froissart - *Chronicles*; Geary – The Trial of Joan of Arc (742-757); Hollister & Bennett – 323-226; 346-356; Handout – Excerpt from Boccaccio's *Decameron*

Monday, November 22: the Inquisition of Jacques Fournier – Montaigne

Wednesday, November 24 – Thanksgiving Holiday – no class

Friday, November 26 – Thanksgiving Holiday – no class

Readings: Geary – Jacques Fournier *Inquisition Records* (524-544)

Monday, November 29: Late Medieval Women – Chaucer's *Wife of Bath* and Margery Kempe

Wednesday, December 1: Defining In & Defining Out – the Rise of the Other in the Late Middle Ages

Friday, December 3: Periodization – Petrarch – Medieval or Renaissance Man?

Readings: Geary – The Book of Margery Kempe (567-599); Handout – Geoffrey Chaucer *Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale*

Monday, December 6: Periodization: What were the Middle Ages?

Wednesday, December 8 – 12:00 – Final Due in my office (25 Foust)