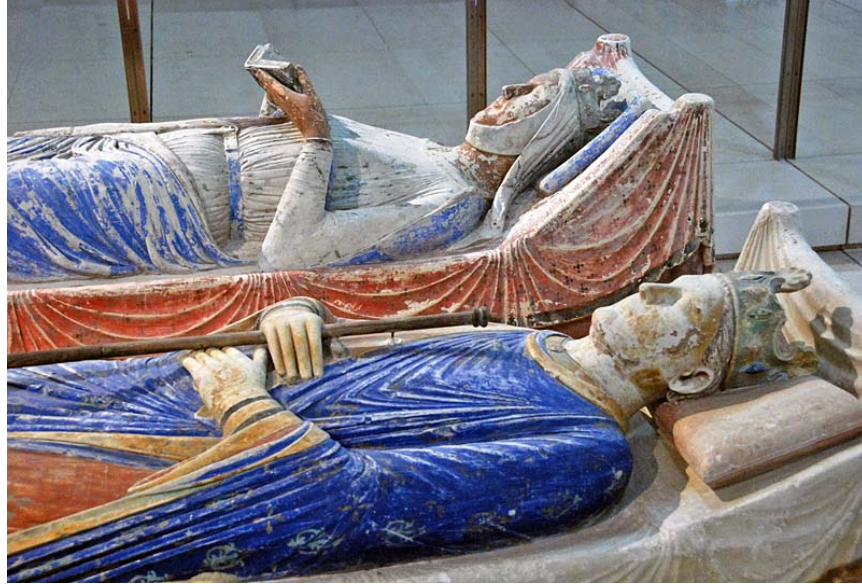


HISTORY 221: THE MEDIEVAL LEGACY



Course Information: History 221-01 (CRN 10032). Time: MWF 9:00-9:50. Room: MHRA 1215

Professor's Information:

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Course Description:

This course explores the rich legacy of Medieval Europe. The Middle Ages lasted from the collapse of the Roman Empire in the west (around 500 AD) until the so-called Renaissance (14th to 16th centuries AD). This is an enormous time span, and I have no intention of trying to cover every event and every aspect of the Middle Ages. Rather, we will focus on the central core of the Middle Ages, from circa 750-1300. In so doing we will further subdivide our period into the Early Middle Ages (750-1050) and the High or Central Middle Ages (1050-1300). But the course will not primarily be about mastering a body of material; rather it will concern itself with learning to think like a historian, particularly by interpreting texts. As such we will be concerned not to present a narrative or synthesis, but rather to consider a series of problems of interpretation. Some of them are related to fundamental questions of epistemology, or how we know what we know: how do we know about the Middle Ages? What types of evidence exist, and of what quality is each category of evidence? What sorts of things does this evidence let us know about the Middle Ages, and what sorts of things does the evidentiary corpus prevent us from learning? Another broad category of questions involve the historian who asks the questions. Historians shape history by asking particular questions. Thus, if a historian asked "What powers did kings have in 11th-century France?", the sort of history that she would produce would necessarily rely on certain categories of evidence, and would produce certain kinds of answers. If another historian asked, however, a different question, such as

“how did the culture of the Early Middle Ages differ from that of the High Middle Ages?”, then he might well look to different sources (evidence) and might produce a ‘history’ that looks very different from that produced by the first historian. Clearly we cannot ask every question that is possible of our sources in a single semester, but we will try to explore a variety of different approaches, each with somewhat different questions, sources, and subsequent histories.

What is history?

History is a process, and one of interpretation to boot; it is not merely the location and recitation of some inert set of objective facts. Historians - whether professors or students - must actively engage with sources by asking questions of them. Without a question, there cannot be an interpretation, and there cannot therefore be history. “Facts” are not objective, since “facts” must be selected by some person, and the process of selection (as well as that of interpretation) is subjective, not objective. There is no ‘natural’ or ‘objective’ reason why one ‘fact’ is more important than others. Whether you find the fact that Charlemagne was crowned Emperor in 800 more significant than the fact that Frankish kings practiced polygyny is only a reflection of what questions you are interested in (one fact concerns politics, the other social and legal practice); neither is ‘objectively’ more important.

It is thus the historian’s job to read many sources, thereby awakening questions that he or she may then use to form interpretations based on those sources. Good history is thus about persuading others of the plausibility of one’s interpretation - doing so requires one to a) formulate good questions; b) locate and master ‘good evidence’; c) interpret that evidence in the light of the question(s) one has asked; and d) communicate those interpretations in writing (or sometimes orally). Since this is an introductory course, many of the questions will have been pre-selected by me. I have also provided you with a body of evidence (your primary source readings) with which to address those questions and, hopefully, provoke some new ones.

Your task is to read the evidence in the light of the questions I have posed and formulate an interpretation of that evidence. To accomplish this well, you will need to read the material and come to lecture. Lecture will provide the context, some facts, most of the questions and some of the interpretations - without it, you will have trouble deciding what to do with the readings. If you don’t do the readings, however, you will undoubtedly fail, since you will not be able to provide the evidence needed to support the interpretations that you must make on exams, quizzes, and so forth. I am mostly interested in seeing you master the methods of the historian - the ability to present a plausible interpretation of evidence in a logical and coherent fashion.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to do the following:

1. Define a suite of political, religious, and social characteristics that characterize the period after 500 CE as ‘medieval’. Some of these include kingship, secular and religious clergy, lordship, peasants, crusading, and chivalry. (SLO-A1, SLO-B3)
2. Identify and explain changes to these political, religious and social characteristics over the period 500 to 1500, by paying attention to the number, quality, and content of primary sources available for interpretation. (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1, SLO-B2)
3. Compare and contrast modern assumptions about political, religious and social institutions and structures with those encountered in sources from the Middle Ages; recognize and explain events, movements, and belief structures of the past using terms and contexts appropriate to the period under study. (SLO-A1, SLO-B3)
4. Recognize and evaluate salient features of primary source (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1, SLO-B2). These features include authorial subjectivity as shaped by social and geographic considerations, differences in generic structures and expectations (that is, formal characteristics of genres), and interpretive value as compared to other comparable sources.
5. Recognize and practice some of the techniques used by historians in analyzing the past, including some of the following: locating sources in the library, evaluating the utility of several sources to a given project, making use of the apparatus of scholarly publications, understanding the content of footnotes, learning how to make footnotes, and identifying an academic argument (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1)

6. Sift, select, and synthesize a variety of sources in order to address, in writing, a problem connected to one of the classic questions of historical analysis, namely comparison, change over time, and/or causation. (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B2)

7. Recognize and employ specific methodological approaches to the interpretation of the past, including (but not limited to) chronology, periodization, comparison/contrast, continuity/change, class, and gender. (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1, SLO-B3)

TEACHING METHODS

This course is a lecture class. My lectures will be punctuated with moments for questions and discussion. Students must read the required readings, as we will have quizzes on them and moments of intentional discussion.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Quizzes** (20%) (SLOs: A1, A2, B1, B2, B3; Course Learning Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7)

A weekly objective quiz on the assigned reading is required. Quizzes will be taken online, through the CANVAS course management system. Typically each quiz will involve about 10 multiple-choice, true-or-false, or other short-format objective questions. The quizzes are unapologetically designed to encourage students to complete the assigned reading. That means that the multiple choice questions on the quiz should be easy for anyone who has done a good job reading the assigned material. Quizzes will open on Wednesday of each week and will be due before class on Friday.

2. **Midterm Exam** (25%) (SLOs: A1, A2, B1, B2, B3; Course Learning Outcomes: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7)

The midterm exam comes in two parts, an in-class part and a take-home part. The in-class part will require students to answer a series of short answer questions, in the form of IDs, explanations of quotations, explanation of the significance of persons, events or images, etc. For the take-home part, students must write a 3-4 page essay responding to a question provided at least 10 days in advance; the essay must be submitted at the time of the in-class portion of the midterm.

3. **Historian's Toolbox Assignments** (20%) (SLOs: SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1; Course Learning Outcome: 5)

Doing history does not merely entail memorizing facts about the past. It requires you to locate, evaluate, criticize, and evaluate multiple kinds of evidence. For this set of assignments, students will perform tasks designed to familiarize themselves with some of the techniques that historians must master (and that professors sometimes take for granted). Among these will be locating sources in the library, evaluating which of several potential sources is most useful to a particular topic, recognizing the argument of a modern author, understanding what is contained in footnotes as well as how to make your own footnotes, recognizing the components of a printed academic work, learning how to annotate your reading, evaluating web sites, and assigning significance. While that sounds like a lot to do, keep in mind that these assignments are intended a) to dovetail with Historian's Toolbox Moments presented in lecture, and b) to be completed with a minimum of time and effort (indeed, most of them will require as a 'product' only a couple of sentences). I anticipate that there will be 5-10 of these assignments, but the assignment sheet delivered the first week of class will provide full details.

4. **Modern Moment** (10%) (SLOs: B3; Course Learning Outcome: 3)

Modern American popular culture bursts with references to the Middle Ages, whether it be in film, television, literature, song, art, architecture, or poetry. Each student is required to locate two examples of modern use of medieval ideas, images, persons, events, or whatever and, for each example, to write a brief (300-500 word) explanation of how and why modern society has appropriated medieval culture. One example should derive from or connect to the Early Middle Ages (material through February 17), while the other example should derive from or connect to the High or Late Middle Ages (Feb. 19 or later). The easiest way to accomplish this linkage is to look for modern use of medieval persons or modern discussion of medieval events (e.g., a film about Saladin); while those are acceptable, you should also think about how medieval ideas or basic viewpoints may well be expressed or modified in modern culture (e.g., a newspaper article about 'medieval mindsets' in the Middle East, or a modern item that seems to reflect medieval chivalry). I will look favorably on those examples that demonstrate real thoughtfulness about how to link medieval attitudes or ideas to the modern; that is, while it is obvious that Game of Thrones represents some sort of medieval-ism, I'll be more impressed with those who are able to dig up more esoteric examples of modern appropriation of the medieval. Grading will take into account specifics (e.g., more than simply 'Game of Thrones depicts a version of the middle ages'. How? What

specifically?) and will be impressed by students' ability to link the modern to specific documents or texts that we have studied.

5. **Final Exam** (25%) (SLOs: A1, A2, B1, B2, B3; Course Learning Outcomes: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7).

The final exam comes in two parts, an in-class part and a take-home part. The in-class part will require students to answer a series of short answer questions, in the form of IDs, explanations of quotations, explanation of the significance of persons, events or images, etc. For the take-home part, students must write a 3-4 page essay responding to a question provided at least 10 days in advance; the essay must be submitted at the time of the in-class portion of the final.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

The weight of the final course grade represented by each of the various assignments is indicated as follows:

Quizzes	20%
Midterm	25%
Historian's Toolbox Assignments	20% (total)
Modern Moments	10% (5% each)
Final Exam	25%

Grading Scale:

100-97% = A+	89-87 = B+	59 or lower = F
96-93 = A	86-83 = B	
92-90 = A-	82-80 = B-	
79-77 = C+	69-67 = D+	
76-73 = C	66-63 = D	
70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-	

REQUIRED BOOKS (available in the UNCG Bookstore)

- Patrick Geary, ed., *Readings in Medieval History*, 4th edition (University of Toronto Press, 2010) [ISBN:9781442601208]
- Keynes, Simon and Michael Lapidge, *Alfred the Great. Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources* (Penguin, 1983). ISBN 978-0140444094.
- Suger, *The Deeds of Louis the Fat* (Hopkins, Catholic U of America, 1992). ISBN 978-0813207582.

RECOMMENDED BOOK

- Wim Blockmans and Peter Hoppenbrouwers, *Introduction to Medieval Europe, 300-1550*, 2nd edition (Routledge, 2014). [ISBN: 9780415675871]

This is one of the best single-volume textbooks on the history of Medieval Europe. Some of you may not need to read it, provided you take good notes in lecture and on the other readings. Many, however, will find it useful to have a resource that supplements the lectures; it may well help contextualize other readings. I do not require that you buy it, and thus will not examine you on what it says, but I do recommend it.

READING ADVICE

Because most of the original sources (and much of the content) will be totally unfamiliar to you, I recommend taking notes on them as you read. It is also useful to write a brief summary (2-3 sentences) of each document/source so that you can remember the basic gist of it for class discussion. It's much easier to note down important points as you read than it is to go back and find those points again once you've finished reading. Finally, I recommend reading each document more than once. Sometimes it will take two readings for something to make sense to you. Because the amount of reading for our course is fairly small, you'll have plenty of time for re-reading.

Schedule of Classes and Readings

Week 1

January 11: Course Introduction

January 13: History, Historians, and Historiography

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 1-11

January 15: Evaluating Sources

Reading: Canvas: A Medieval Document: Juhel of Mayenne Finds a Priory

Reading: Canvas: Some Medieval Objects (the Tomb of Childeric)

Week 2

January 18: **No Class: MLK Jr. Day**

January 20: Europe in 800: Geo-political Contours

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 15-27 (these pages are optional), and 27-43
(recommended)

January 22: Einhard and Charlemagne

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 103-117

Reading: Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, in Geary, 266-279

Week 3

January 25: Early Medieval Christianity: Beliefs, Bishops and Priests

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 50-85

January 27: Monks and Nuns

Reading: the Benedictine Rule (in Geary, 159-188). Pay special attention to chaps. 4-7, 22, 23, 33, 38-40, 48, 59, 63-64, 68-73. Make sure you know what Benedict means by 'God's Work' [Lat. *Opus dei*].

January 29: Saints and Miracles

Reading: the Miracles of St Foy (in Geary, 322-328)

Week 4

February 1: Early medieval Society: Class and Gender

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 86-103

February 3: A Renaissance in the Ninth Century?

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 257-269

Reading: General capitulary on the missi, 802, in Geary, 296-300

Reading: Charlemagne's letter to Baugulf, in Geary, 290

Reading: (Canvas): "Letters of Alcuin," from *Carolingian Civilization*, ed. Paul Dutton, (Broadview, 1993), 106-119. Selections TBA

February 5: the Later Carolingians and the End of the Empire

Week 5

February 8: Early Medieval Britain, including Archaeology

February 10: the Vikings

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 117-125

February 12: Asser and Alfred of Wessex

Reading: *Alfred the Great*, p. 67-110

Week 6

February 15: Alfred of Wessex and his Successors

Reading: *Alfred the Great*, 113-120, 123-130, 163-172, 182-186, 189-191

February 17: Comparative Fate of Post-Carolingian Kingdoms

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 154-155

February 19: Three Orders? Medieval Society from 1000-1300

DUE: **First Modern Moment Assignment**

Week 7

February 22: Demographic, Urban and Economic Take-off

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 129-134, 240-256, 297-316

Reading: The Beauvais Dossier, on Canvas

February 24: A Localized World: Manors, Peasants and Lords

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 134-143, 150-152

February 26: **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

Week 8

February 29: Inter-Aristocratic Relationships: Lordship

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 143-150

Reading: Fulbert of Chartres, Letter to William of Aquitaine (in Geary, p. 376)

Reading: Hugh of Lusignan, Agreement between Lord and Vassal (in Geary, 377-381, but only read pp. 377-379 to get a taste for this complicated case)

Reading: Galbert of Bruges, excerpts from *The Murder of Charles the Good* (in Geary, 382-393)

Reading: Canvas: Theobald of Blois charter

March 2: Aristocratic Society: Castles and Power

March 4: Aristocratic Society: Chivalry, Ladies and Love

Reading: chivalry selection (Canvas)

Week 9

March 7 – 11: **No Class: Spring Break**

Week 10

March 14: Church Reform: Monks, Popes, and Kings [Cluny, Citeaux, Ministerium, Simony]

March 16: the Investiture Contest

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 189-199

Reading: Pope Gregory VII and King Henry IV [of Germany], Letters, in Geary, pp. 562-586. Geary has arranged these letters strangely: I recommend reading only these letters, and in this order:

a. Gregory VII to Henry IV, Admonishing him, pp. 563-565

b. Henry IV, letters of early 1076, p. 578 up to the end of 1st column on p. 581

c. Gregory VII, Roman Lenten Synod of 1076 and Excommunication of Henry IV, pp. 565-566

d. Gregory VII, to all Faithful in Germany (Sept 1076), pp. 571-572

e. Henry IV, Promise (1076), Surrender (1076), and Vow at Canossa (1077), pp. 582-584

f. Gregory VII, Account of Canossa (1077), p. 572

March 18: Innocent III and Christendom

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 199-217

Reading: Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council, in Geary, 430-455, focusing on these canons: numbers 1, 3, 6-8, 10, 11, 13, 14-18, 21, 27, 29, 32, 38, 42-46, 51-52, 62, 67-70

Week 11

March 21: Visual Evidence: the Battle of Hastings and the Bayeux ‘Tapestry’

March 23: Interpreting the Bayeux Tapestry

Reading: Article on Bayeux Tapestry to be determined, available on Canvas

March 25: **No Class: Spring Holiday**

Week 12

March 28: Kingdoms, 900-1300, part I

Reading: Suger, *Deeds of Louis the Fat*, 21-80

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 167-178

March 30: Kingdoms, 900-1300, part II

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 182-187

Reading: Suger, *Deeds of Louis the Fat*, 81-162

April 1: discussion: Suger

Week 13

April 4: King John and Magna Carta,

Reading: Magna Carta, in Geary, p. 739-746 (Geary prints several versions of the document; only read this one). Pay special attention to the following clauses: 2-9, 12, 14, 15, 20, 28, 38, 39, 40, 52, 54, and 61

April 6: High Medieval Culture: Abelard and Heloise

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 269-288

Reading: “Letter 1”, from the Letters of Abelard and Heloise, on Canvas

April 8: the Crusades

Reading: “The First Crusade, Four Accounts,” in Geary, 394-406 (only Fulcher of Chartres)

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 221-235

Week 14

April 11: the Late Middle Ages: Plague and Insurrection

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers: 327-343, 347-354

Reading: Selections on the arrival of the plague, and on contemporary explanations for it, from *The Black Death*, ed. Rosemary Horrox, on Canvas

April 13: The Hundred Years War

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 357-363, and 380-383

Reading: Froissart, the Crécy Campaign, excerpted from *Chronicles*, on Canvas

April 15: Spirituality: Mysticism

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 398-420

Due: Second Modern Moment

Week 15

April 18: Church Developments: the Papacy

Reading: Decrees of the Council of Constance (1414-18), on Canvas

April 20: Joan of Arc and Alison of Bath: Late Medieval Women

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers 343-346

Reading: The Trial of Joan of Arc, in Geary, 701-715

April 22: Parliament and Parlement

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 380-396

Week 16

April 25: the Case of Richard II of England

Reading: The Deposition of King Richard II, on Canvas

April 26 (Tuesday, but follows Friday schedule): Summing Up the Middle Ages

April 27: **No Class:** Reading Day

Week 17

Final Exam: Monday, 2 May, 8-11 AM

Academic Integrity Policy

Students are expected abide by UNCG's Academic Integrity Policy <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected at all class meetings. Missing more than 2 lectures without prior permission will result in a one-point deduction from the final grade average for each subsequent absence.

Additional Requirements and Advice

1. In case later consultation should prove necessary, students should keep copies of all graded assignments until the end of the semester (at least).
2. All course requirements must be completed to receive a grade for the class.
3. Late Work: Assignments are due on the date and at the time listed on the syllabus; if a crisis (such as illness) arises, it is your responsibility to contact me. If you do not contact me, the work (when eventually received) will be penalized, usually at the rate of 1/3 of a letter grade per day.

CANVAS SITE

All materials for the course (except for the required books) will be posted on the Canvas site for the course. This is particularly important for announcements and E-Reserves. It is a good idea to check the Canvas site regularly. You can get to Canvas from the UNCG homepage (click 'Blackboard', then the option for Canvas).

TECHNOLOGY AND HISTORY 221

1. Email: I prefer to communicate by email (rebarnton@uncg.edu). Please be advised, however, that I generally do not check email at night. I will try to respond to all email within 24 hours. If you haven't had a response by then, try again. On the flip side, I can communicate with you only by your UNCG email account (that is the email linked to Canvas, for instance); make sure you check your UNCG email regularly.
2. Laptops in the Classroom: we will start the semester allowing laptops to be used in lecture for note-taking purposes only. If I detect that students are using laptops for other purposes, the privilege of using laptops will be removed for all students.
3. Phones: Please turn your phones off before class. If your phone rings during class, you will be counted as absent for that class period. If I detect that you are using your phone to text (or surf) you will also be counted as absent for that day. Subsequent offenses will be treated with increasing severity.