

Medieval Europe

History 140 A

Fall 2009

Wednesday and Friday, 2:35 pm-3:45 pm

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 9 am – 11 am (and by appointment)

This course covers the foundational period in European history from ca. 500 to ca. 1500, a time that would later be dubbed “the Middle Ages.” This is an unfortunate term that compares it unfavorably with ancient and modern greatness. Many modern observers condemn the medieval age as one of darkness, ignorance, brutality, and intolerance. Yet the people of this time saw their era as history’s latest and greatest accomplishment, and historians have studied the many political, religious, cultural, and artistic advancements that characterized the time. Our work together will allow us to hear the voices of the men and women who lived during this period, and to learn how to evaluate the broader historical significance of medieval Europe.

Topics covered in this class include the transition from the Roman to the early medieval world; the formation of Byzantine and Islamic societies; the emergence of Barbarian kingdoms; Viking invasions; feudalism; European expansion; late-medieval government; the disasters of the late Middle Ages; religious thought and practice; women’s roles in medieval society; the highlights of medieval and Renaissance culture; and the legacy of the Middle Ages. The assignments will focus on texts and other material produced by medieval civilization.

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Goals of the Course

- This is an 100-level history course, which fulfills the M1 Learning in Common requirement.
- To gain a greater understanding of the major events and trends of the history of Europe from ca. 500 to ca. 1500.
- To practice the art of an historian: that is, to learn the defining characteristics of a period and how they changed over time, to read the sources upon which historical evaluations are based, and to form interpretations about the period from reading.
- To learn the difference between primary and secondary sources, and how to analyze and evaluate primary texts and other materials produced by medieval civilization.
- To improve the ability to read, discuss, and write about the past.

Required Texts

- Barbara H. Rosenwein, *A Short History of the Middle Ages*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009). ISBN 978-1442601048.

- Patrick Geary, *Reading in Medieval History*, 3rd ed. (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2003). ISBN 978-1551115504.
- Gerald of Wales, *The History and Topography of Ireland*, trans. John O'Meara (New York: Penguin Classics, 1983). ISBN 978-0140444230.
- Additional material will be made available to students enrolled in the course.

Please note:

- While you are free to purchase the books on the Internet, make sure you find the same editions listed here.
- These books have also been put on reserve at Reeves Library.
- Be sure to bring assigned reading to class for discussion.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class and to be punctual. It is the students' obligation to take notes on lectures; I do not produce written copies of lectures. Much of the information and methods presented in class, which will form part of the material that will appear on exams and papers, cannot be found in the textbook. In addition, students will not be able to gain any credit for participation if they do not attend class sessions.

In the cases of *documented* illness or family emergency that will make it impossible for students to attend class or complete assignments, students are urged to get in touch with the instructor.

Academic Honesty Policy

Students are expected to adhere to Moravian College's Academic Honesty Policy for all assignments in this course. It is imperative that you familiarize yourself with the definition of plagiarism, which (even when done inadvertently) is considered a serious offense. I expect that all exams and papers are *your own work*. Any time that you use someone else's ideas in a paper, you must give credit to the person. For further information, see the appropriate pages in the Student Handbook or come speak with me.

Schedule of Classes and Reading

Wednesday, 9/2/09: Introduction to the Middle Ages

Friday, 9/4/09: End of the Roman World

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 21-40

P. Geary, readings 2, 3 (pp. 48-60, 61-68)

Wednesday, 9/9/09: Barbarians at the Gates?

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 40-56

P. Geary, readings 4, 6 (pp. 69-82, 118-19)

Friday, 9/11/09: The Byzantine World in Transition

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 61-70, 101-8, 139-47

Online: Seven sources from the Medieval Sourcebook under "Justinian" at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/pgc.asp?page=sbook1c.html#Justinian>

- Procopius, “On Justinian.”
- Procopius, “On the Racing Factions.”
- Procopius, “On the Nika Revolt.”
- Procopius, “The Roman Silk Industry.”
- Procopius, “The Plague.”
- Procopius, “The Reconquest of Africa.”
- Procopius, “Description of Hagia Sophia.”

*Wednesday, 9/16/09: **The Rise and Flowering of Islam***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 70-75, 108-17, 147-51

Qur’ān, surahs 1, 3, 8, 30, 47. There are several reliable online versions, including:
<http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/crcc/engagement/resources/texts/muslim/quran/>

*Friday, 9/18/09: **The Emergence of the Franks***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 75-87

P. Geary, readings 7-9, 11 (pp. 120-38, 162-67)

*Wednesday, 9/23/09: **Italy at the Crossroads***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 90-99

P. Geary, reading 12 (pp. 168-98)

The First Roman Ordo (to be distributed to enrolled students)

*Friday, 9/25/09: **Medieval Ritual***

Assignment: First paper due by 5 pm on 9/25.

*Wednesday, 9/30/09: **Anglo-Saxon England***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 87-90

P. Geary, readings 15-17 (pp. 224-81)

*Friday, 10/2/09: **The Age of Charlemagne***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 101-35

P. Geary, reading 18 (pp. 282-96)

*Wednesday, 10/7/09: **Invasions and Response***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 152-55

“Master and Slave Even Until Death” (to be distributed to enrolled students)

Online: Three sources from the Medieval Sourcebook under “External Attacks” at
[http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1i.html#External%20Attacks:](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1i.html#External%20Attacks)

- “The Annals of Xanten, 845-53.”
- “Three Sources on the Ravages of the Northmen in Frankland.”
- “Abbo of Fleury, The Martyrdom of St. Edmund, King of East Anglia.”

*Friday, 10/9/09: **Midterm Exam***

*Wednesday, 10/14/09: **Lords and Vassals***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 156-72

P. Geary, readings 25-27 (pp. 386-406)

*Friday, 10/16/09: **Popular Religion and Church Reform***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 177-93

P. Geary, readings 20-21, 39-40 (pp. 321-35, 608-35)

*Wednesday, 10/21/09: **European Expansion***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 193-202

P. Geary, reading 28 (pp. 407-42)

*Friday, 10/23/09: **Twelfth-Century Renewal***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 203-216

P. Geary, readings 23-24 (pp. 350-85)

*Wednesday, 10/28/09: **Ruling and Administering England***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 219-29

P. Geary, readings 49-52 (pp. 766-800)

*Friday, 10/30/09: **Strength and Weakness in the Holy Roman Empire***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 229-37

P. Geary, readings 41-42 (pp. 636-62)

*Wednesday, 11/4/09: **New Cultural Developments in the Late Middle Ages***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 237-51, 286-301

P. Geary, reading 36 (pp. 545-66)

*Friday, 11/6/09: **The Ascendant Church***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 252-59

P. Geary, readings 29-31 (pp. 443-77)

*Wednesday, 11/11/09: **The Mongol Threat and Strengthened Monarchy***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 263-79

P. Geary, readings 44-45 (pp. 686-715)

*Friday, 11/13/09: **Crisis in the Church***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 280-86, 324-27

P. Geary, readings 47, 56 (pp. 742-57, 815-23)

*Wednesday, 11/18/09: **Changing Women's Roles Across the Middle Ages***

Reading: P. Geary, reading 37 (pp. 567-99)

*Friday, 11/20/09: **Joan of Arc***

Assignment: Second paper due by 5 pm on Tuesday, 11/24

*Wednesday, 12/2/09: **The Hundred Years' War (And Other Disasters)***

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 305-24

P. Geary, reading 46 (pp. 716-41)

Friday, 12/4/09: Renaissance Italy

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 327-41

P. Geary, readings 55, 57-58 (pp. 813-14, 824-51)

Wednesday, 12/9/09: End of the Middle Ages and their Legacy

Reading: B. Rosenwein, pp. 342-49

Letters and Documents of John Hus in *John Hus at the Council of Constance*, trans. Matthew Spinka (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), pp. 237-42, 257-59, 260-69, 275-76, 288-9, 295-98 (to be distributed to enrolled students and also available on reserve).

Please see the college schedule for the time and place of the final exam.

Grading

First paper (4-5 pp.), due on 9/25	15%
Midterm, on 10/9	20%
Second paper (8-9 pp.), due on 11/24	25%
Final exam, as per college schedule	25%
Participation	15%

Requirements

- The first paper (4-5 pp., due by 5 pm on 9/25) will construct an argument based upon Jordanes' *History of the Goths* (P. Geary, reading 5, pp. 83-117) or Gregory of Tours' *History of the Franks* (P. Geary, reading 10, pp. 139-61).
- The second paper (8-9 pp., due by 5 pm on 11/24) will construct an argument based upon Gerald of Wales' *History and Topography of Ireland*. Students may also choose their own sources, but *only in consultation with the professor*.
- Late papers will be penalized one "step" per day late (e.g., an A paper would become an A-; an A- paper would become a B+; and so on).
- Descriptions of the format for both papers will be distributed in class and discussed. Both papers should employ footnotes for references, and use the Chicago Manual of Style format. You might want to consult your copy of Diana Hacker's *The Bedford Handbook* for further information on this format.
- Papers must be submitted in hard copy.
- Students who would like help with their writing are encouraged to take advantage of the resources of the Writing Center.
- Please note that it is within my purview as an instructor to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades. I will do my utmost to be fair and consistent.
- The midterm will demonstrate knowledge of significant events, figures, and terms of the period, and an ability to synthesize the primary sources analyzed in class. To be taken in class on 10/9.
- The final will require a similar mastery of significant events, figures, terms, and sources of the period. The material on the exam will focus on what has been

covered after the midterm, but certain essay questions will require you to reflect on themes we have studied throughout the entire course.

- The format for the midterm and final will be discussed in class.
- There are no make-up examinations, save for documented emergencies.
- Participation grades are assigned based upon your contributions in lectures and class discussion. It is imperative that you prepare the reading assigned for each day before class and are ready to talk about them. Simply attending class does not guarantee you a high participation mark.
- There are no extra-credit assignments in this course.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities who need special facilities or consideration should present the appropriate documentation from Disability Support Services to the instructor.