

Investigating Medieval Religion

History 299

Spring 2010

PPHAC 338

Monday and Wednesday, 8:55 am – 10:05 am

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Office Hours: Monday, 10:15 am – 11:15 am; Tuesday, 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm; Wednesday, 10:15 am – 11:15 am; Thursday, 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm (and by appointment)

Whether they dismiss it as superstitious or interpret it sympathetically, modern historians have always been interested in the role of religion in the Middle Ages. Yet they have adopted different methodologies in their study and arrived at distinct conclusions. This course explores the writings of medieval historians on religion through a combination of lecture and discussion. Students will read, discuss, present on, and write about articles and books from historians whose work reflects the major academic concerns in this field. Topics include the religious experience of women; sacred violence; ritual expressions; the relationship between the dead and the living; reform in the Church; and the interaction between folk culture and high religion. This course will give students the opportunity to study and evaluate some of the most significant scholarly discussions about medieval religion, and practice their critical thinking skills.

We will first study the basic historical outline of religion in the Middle Ages, from ca. 500 to ca. 1500. This work will build the basis for our joint discussion of the historiography of the period – the ways in which historians have approached (and often disagreed about) important issues about medieval religion. Students will be expected to read, discuss, and analyze the merits of the work of historians in these areas, and produce their own research paper that engages with secondary sources.

Students are not expected to have any previous knowledge of the Middle Ages.

Goals of the Course

- To gain a greater understanding of the major events and trends of the history of religion in Western medieval Europe from ca. 500 to ca. 1500.
- To learn the difference between primary and secondary sources, and to study in particular how to analyze and evaluate secondary sources.
- To discover the most significant areas of debate in the history of medieval religion and the historians doing work in these areas.
- To learn the basic tools of researching and writing about secondary sources.
- To improve the ability to read, discuss, write, and present about the past.

Required Books - Available for Purchase in the Bookstore

- R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990). ISBN-13: 978-0140137552.

- John H. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief in Medieval Europe* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2005). ISBN-13: 978-0340807866.
- *Medieval Religion: New Approaches*, ed. Constance Hoffman Berman (New York: Routledge, 2004). ISBN-13: 978-0415316873.
- *Monks & Nuns, Saints & Outcasts: Religion in Medieval Society: Essays in Honor of Lester K. Little*, ed. Sharon Farmer and Barbara H. Rosenwein (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2005). ISBN-13: 978-0801486562.

Please note:

- Two copies of R. W. Southern, *Medieval Religion*, and *Monks & Nuns* have also been placed on reserve at Reeves Library.
- While you are free to purchase the books on the Internet, please find the same editions listed here.
- Be sure to bring assigned readings to class for discussion.
- Additional material will be made available to students enrolled in the course, and two books will be accessed on reserve.

Additional Books on Reserve

- Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
- Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400-c. 1580* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992).

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class and be punctual. It is the students' obligation to take their own notes. Much of the information and methods covered in class, which will form part of the material that will be tested on the exam, quizzes, and papers, cannot be found in the reading. In addition, students will not be able to gain any credit for participation, the midterm, and quizzes 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 Readings

Monday, 1/18/10: Introduction

Wednesday, 1/20/10: Dividing the Periods of Religious History

Reading: R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church*, pp. 13-52, 91-100.

Monday, 1/25/10: The History of the Papacy

Reading: R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church*, pp. 100-69.

Wednesday, 1/27/10: Bishops and Abbots

Reading: R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church*, pp. 170-240.

Monday, 2/1/10: Late-Medieval Religious Orders

Reading: R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church*, pp. 240-99.

Wednesday, 2/3/10: Beyond the Hierarchy

Reading: R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church*, pp. 300-60.

Monday, 2/8/10: Religious Belief

Reading: John H. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief*, pp. 1-57.

Wednesday, 2/10/10: Midterm Exam

Monday, 2/15/10: Acculturation and Intercession

Reading: John H. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief*, pp. 58-117.

Wednesday, 2/17/10: Exclusion and Identity

Reading: John H. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief*, pp. 118-78.

Monday, 2/22/10: Self and “the Other”

Reading: John H. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief*, pp. 178-231.

Wednesday, 2/24/10: Methods of Research with Secondary Sources

Reading: W. C. Booth, G. G. Colomb, and J. M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, pp. 68-101.

NB: This session will meet in Reeves Library and it will be led by librarian Beth Fuchs.

Monday, 3/1/10: Evaluating Secondary Sources

Assignment: First paper due in class and discussion.

Wednesday, 3/3/10: Loving Mothers and Crusades

Reading: Introduction to the volume and Part I (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 1-19).

Caroline Walker Bynum, “Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother” (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 20-48).

Jonathan Riley-Smith, “Crusading as an Act of Love” (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 49-67).

Monday, 3/15/10: Ordering Society and Gender

Reading: Giles Constable, “The Orders of Society in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries” (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 68-94).

Introduction to Part II (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 95-101).

Jo Ann McNamara, "Canossa and the Ungendering of the Public Man" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 102-22).

Wednesday, 3/17/10: Wives and Religious Lives

Reading: Dyan Elliott, "The Priest's Wife" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 123-55).

Maureen C. Miller, "Secular Clergy and the Religious Life" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 156-82).

Monday, 3/22/10: Nuns and Contemplatives

Reading: Introduction to Part III (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 209-16).

Constance Hoffman Berman, "Were There Any Twelfth-Century Cistercian Nuns?" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 217-48).

Katherine Ludwig Jansen, "Mary Magdalen and the Contemplative Life" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 249-71).

Assignment: First quiz.

Wednesday, 3/24/10: Relations between Sexes and among Faiths

Reading: Fiona J. Griffiths, "'Men's Duty to Provide for Women's Needs'" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 290-315).

Introduction to Part IV (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 317-24)

Dominique Iogna-Prat, "The Creation of a Christian Armory against Islam" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 325-46).

Anna Sapir Abulafia, "Bodies in the Jewish-Christian Debate" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 347-62).

Monday, 3/29/10: Anti-Jewish Measures

Reading: Miri Rubin, "Desecration of the Host" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 363-76).

David Nirenberg, "The Two Faces of Secular Violence against Jews" (*Medieval Religion*, pp. 377-408).

Wednesday, 3/31/10: Prayer and Memory

Reading: Introduction (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 1-15).

Patrick J. Geary, "Monastic Memory and the Mutation of the Year Thousand" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 19-36).

Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Perennial Prayer at Agaune" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 37-56).

Wednesday, 4/7/10: Gender, Society, and Miracles

Reading: Allison I. Beach, "Claustration and Collaboration between the Sexes in the Twelfth-Century Scriptorium" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 57-75).

Robert Brentano, "Sulmona Society and the Miracles of Peter of Morrone" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 79-96).

Luigi Pellegrini, "Female Religious Experience and Society in Thirteenth-Century Italy" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 97-121).

Assignment: Second quiz

Monday, 4/12/10: Oral presentations on material for second paper

Wednesday, 4/14/10: Oral presentations on material for second paper

Monday, 4/19/10: Saints, Beggars, and Lepers

Reading: Lisa M. Bitel, "Saints and Angry Neighbors" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 123-50).

Sharon Farmer, "The Beggar's Body" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 153-71).

Catherine Peyroux, "The Leper's Kiss" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 172-88).

Wednesday, 4/21/10: Building up and Burning Down

Reading: Amy G. Remensnyder, "The Colonization of Sacred Architecture" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 189-211).

Thomas Head, "Saints, Heretics, and the Fire" (*Monks & Nuns*, pp. 220-35).

Monday, 4/26/10: Themes in Medieval Religion

Assignment: Second paper due in class and discussion.

Wednesday, 4/28/10: New Approaches to Ritual

Reading: Eamon Duffy, *Stripping the Altars*, pp. 91-130.

Michael S. Driscoll and Susan Guise Sheridan, "Every Knee Shall Bend: A Biocultural Reconstruction of Liturgical and Ascetical Prayer in V-VII Century Palestine," *Worship* 74 (2000): 453-68 (to be forwarded electronically to enrolled students).

Assignment: Third quiz

Grading

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|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Midterm, on 2/10 | 15% |
| First paper (5-6 pp.), due on 3/1 | 20% |
| Quizzes, on 3/22, 4/7, 4/28 | 5% (all equal weight) |
| Second paper (11-12 pp.), due on 4/26 | 30% |
| Oral presentation (4/12, 4/14) | 5% |
| Participation | 25% |

Requirements

- The midterm will demonstrate knowledge of significant events, figures, and terms of the Middle Ages, which will facilitate our work with secondary sources. To be taken in class on 2/8. The format of the midterm will be discussed in class.
- The first paper (5-6 pp., due in class on 3/1) will discuss John H. Arnold's *Belief and Unbelief* and the secondary sources used to construct it.
- Quizzes will require students to demonstrate knowledge of secondary sources that they have prepared for class. To be taken at the beginning of class on 3/22, 4/7, and 4/28.
- The second paper (11-12 pp., due in class on 4/26) will be an historiographical paper on medieval religion, either discussing the work of a significant medieval historian who is primarily interested in religion or a theme of interest in medieval religion. A session of class will be devoted to discussing the methods of doing secondary research (2/24).
- 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.
- 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.
- Participation grades are assigned based upon your contributions in class discussion. It is imperative that you prepare the readings assigned for each day before class and are ready to talk about them. Simply attending class does not guarantee you a high participation mark.
- Students will deliver oral presentations in class on 4/12 and 4/14 on the topic of their second paper, and we will discuss your results as a class. The format of the oral presentations will be discussed in class.
- 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.
- There are no make-up exams or presentations, save for documented emergencies.
- There are no extra-credit assignments in this course.
- Please note that this schedule is subject to change when circumstances make it necessary. Students will be made aware of any modifications as soon as possible.

Disabilities

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