

History 271: The Later Middle Ages
University of Kentucky, Spring Term, 2001

Information

MWF 2-2:50, CB 204
Prof. Nathaniel L. Taylor
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OH: Mondays, 10-12 & by arrangement

Course Objective

This course offers a survey of medieval European history and civilization from the Millennium through the fifteenth century. A companion course, History 270, surveys the Early Middle Ages from the Late Antique period through the Millennium.

Books available for purchase at UK Bookstores

Brian Tierney and Sidney Painter, *Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, 6th ed. (McGraw-Hill, 1999).
R. W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (Yale, 1953).
Peter Abelard, *Story of Abelard's Adversities*, ed. J. T. Muckle (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1964).
Patrick Geary, *Sources in Medieval History*, vol. 2: *Later Middle Ages*, 2d ed. (Broadview, 1998).

Additional Texts

Additional primary texts in translation can be found in Paul Halsall's on-line *Internet Medieval Sourcebook* <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html>>. From time to time individual on-line texts or handouts will be *added* to the week's reading.

Requirements

There will be one mid-term hour exam on Monday, February 26, and the final exam on Monday, April 30. There will also be a short response paper due early in the term, and one essay of eight pages in length (date and assignment to be set). Participation is counted as not merely attendance but active engagement in discussion, particularly of primary source readings, which will be concentrated on the Friday class hours. Attendance is assumed; students who are frequently absent from Friday discussion classes risk **failing** the course.

Grade components

Response paper	10%
Midterm	20%
Term Essay	30%
Final Exam	30%
Participation	10%

Schedule of Meetings and Readings

I. Romanesque Europe

Wed., Jan 10: Introduction

Fri., Jan 12: Discussion: *medieval conceptions of space and time*

Reading: Begin Tierney, chs. 1, 2, 7; Raoul Glaber's account of the Year 1000:
<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/glaber-1000.html>>

Mon., Jan 15: **Martin Luther King Day (no class)**

Wed., Jan 17: From the Fall of Rome to Charlemagne

Fri., Jan 19: Discussion: *Charlemagne*

Reading: Tierney, chs. 1, 2, 7; Charlemagne (handouts)

Mon., Jan 22: Europe of the Millennium

Wed., Jan 24: Feudalism

Fri., Jan 26: Discussion: *feudalism?*

Reading: Tierney, ch. 8-9; Southern, ch. 2; Geary, nos. 1, 5, 6.

Mon., Jan 29: kingdoms and empires

Wed., Jan 31: Western Europe and her neighbors

Fri., Feb 2: Discussion: *the lay of the land*

Reading: Tierney, chs. 10, 12; Southern, ch. 1.

Mon., Feb 5: The Medieval Church

Wed., Feb 7: The Papacy and Gregorian Reform

Fri., Feb 9: Discussion: *a medieval 'Reformation'*

Reading: Tierney, ch. 11; Southern, ch. 3; Geary, nos. 18, 19.

Mon., Feb 12: The Renaissance of the 12th century: Social & Political

Wed., Feb 14: Learning and secular culture

Fri., Feb 16: Discussion: *a medieval 'Renaissance'*

Reading: Tierney 14-15; Southern, ch. 4; *Story of Abelard's Adversities* (entire); Geary, nos. 2-4; troubadour poems (handouts).

Mon., Feb 19: The First Crusades

Wed., Feb 21: Discussion: *the Crusades*

Fri., Feb 23: Review

Reading: Tierney, ch. 13; Urban II: speeches (handout); Geary, no. 8.

Mon., Feb 26: **Midterm Exam**

II. The Later Middle Ages

Wed., Feb 28: Popular religion, heresy, and new orders

Fri., Mar 2: Discussion: *medieval heresy and dissent*

Reading: Tierney, ch. 17; Geary, nos. 10-13, 15.

Mon., Mar 5: From lordship to government

Wed., Mar 7: Magna Carta

Fri., Mar 9: Discussion: *Magna Carta*

Reading: Tierney, 16, 18; Geary, nos. 24, 28, 29.

Spring Break

Mon., Mar 19: The Gothic age

Wed., Mar 21: Thirteenth-century culture

Fri., Mar 23: Discussion: *the Gothic age*

Reading: Tierney, ch. 19, 20; Geary, nos. 9, 14; Southern, ch. 5; Gothic cathedrals (handouts, web pages).

Mon., Mar 26: The medieval city

Wed., Mar 28: the later medieval economy

Fri., Mar 30: Discussion: *the urban world*

Reading: Tierney, ch. 25; Geary, nos. 31, 32, 34.

Mon., Apr 2: The Black Death

Wed., Apr 4: Other crises of the 14th Century

Fri., Apr 6: Discussion: *'bring out your dead!'*

Reading: Tierney, ch. 21-22; Geary, nos. 15, 16; Black Death readings (handouts)

Mon., Apr 9: The Hundred Years' War

Wed., Apr 11: Later Medieval Government

Fri., Apr 13: Discussion: *Medieval warfare and society*

Reading: Tierney, ch. 18, 23, 24 (parts. 80-81); Geary, no. 25-26.

Mon., Apr 16: The papacy and schisms

Wed., Apr 18: Fifteenth century piety & culture

Fri., Apr 20: Discussion: *the ending of the Middle Ages*

Reading: Tierney, chs. 24 (parts 82-83), 27; Geary, no. 17, 33.

Mon., Apr 23: The Waning of the Middle Ages?

Wed., Apr 25: Review

Fri., Apr 27: Review

Reading: your notes.

Mon., Apr 30 at 10:30 AM: **FINAL EXAM**



History 271: the Later Middle Ages
First Essay Assignment: reading a medieval narrative
(*the Murder of Charles the Good*)

On March 2, 1127, Count Charles ‘the Good’ of Flanders was murdered in church in his city of Bruges. Galbert, a notary of that city, wrote a detailed narrative of the murder, events leading up to it, and its aftermath. There is a long excerpt from the beginning of the work in Geary, no. 7, pp. 63-73.

We have already seen one significant biographical portrait of a medieval ruler (Einhard’s *Life of Charlemagne*). Galbert writes at length about his subject—the count—as a ruler and a victim. He provides splendid detail on the crime, the perpetrators and their motives, which are entwined in broader and divisive issues of social change and the imposition of authority in the county. Write a succinct essay (of 800-1000 words, or about 4 pages) exploring Galbert’s motives and perspectives on the murder, the count, and the murderers.

While your essay **must** be rhetorically constructed around a **single thesis question of your own crafting**, you may find it useful **in preparing the essay** to consider some or all of the following questions: How does Galbert describe and praise the count? What did the count do for his county? What was the social position of the murderers? What did they have in common? While considering the victim and murderers, do not neglect the writer. What techniques of writing does Galbert use to color the account? What are his motives in the account?

This essay is due in class Wednesday, February 7, at 2:00 pm.



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Term Paper assignment (Final deadline: Friday, April 20)

This project is open-ended: you are invited to delve into a particular high-medieval primary source and analyze some part of it. The essay should not summarize a text, or simply report 'facts' based on a text, but should ask and answer a coherent question about medieval society based on that text. Whatever the thesis question, be sure to ground the essay in close textual analysis, quoting or citing specific passages using a consistent citation format. Avoid generalizations; if you seek and use additional sources (which is acceptable but certainly not necessary for a good essay), be sure to cite them properly, and maintain the essay's primary focus on use of the primary text for support of your thesis.

Select a general theme (Religion—monks, nuns or saints? Kingship and government? Warfare? Medieval trade and city life? Aristocratic courtly life? Gothic cathedrals? Troubadour love poetry?) but more importantly, select a primary source text (or two or three for comparative purposes) with which to work. The choice of topic area can be governed by interest in a particular source text, or vice versa: if anything in Geary has got you interested in looking further, consult me about related texts.

Accompanying this is a list of important medieval primary texts available in English translations. The most important first step is to pick one (or more) up and read! If you are interested in any specific one or ones, and can't get them, let me know and I'll lend you a copy or help you locate it. If you are at a loss, contact me **soon**, and we'll brainstorm about texts you may be interested in.

If the first step is to identify a likely source text (or two); the second step is to read enough into it/them to formulate a thesis question and begin to outline an essay you can write based on textual analysis. To help the process along, observe the **preliminary deadline**:

By **Friday, March 30**, I would like to see a one-page proposal consisting of two paragraphs: the first paragraph should state the text(s) on which you are working and the problem or thesis you would like to address. The second paragraph will illustrate the project by analyzing a single passage from the text relating to your question. The proposal should include a careful footnote citing the primary text(s) you are using. I will return an evaluation by e-mail within three days.

As an intermediate phase, I am willing to analyze drafts or outlines that build on the initial proposal, though I cannot promise to read any draft submitted later than one week before the paper's due date.

The essay must be eight pages, typed, double-spaced; it is **due in final form on Friday, April 20**, at the beginning of lecture (2:00). Late essays will be penalized one full letter grade (or ten points) for each day late.

History 271: the Later Middle Ages
Primary sources in English translation; related paper ideas
(in no particular order)

- Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (various translations, but that by Dorothy Whitelock is best). This represents the native (Anglo-Saxon) view of English History. How does it view the Norman Conquest? William the Conqueror?
- The Battle of Hastings*. The book of this name by Stephen Morrillo presents translations of all the surviving original accounts of the battle. Use this collection to write about a medieval battle, problems and issues arising from divergent sources.
- Arthurian Romances*: read & comment on any of the several romances by Chrétien de Troyes as reflecting the culture of the twelfth-century knights and their ladies. Read also the article by Georges Duby, "Youth in Aristocratic Society: Northwestern France in the Twelfth Century," in *The Chivalrous Society*, trans. Cynthia Postan (Berkeley, 1977), pp. 112-122.
- Troubadour poetry: select some from an anthology, such as *Lyrics of the Troubadours and Trouvères*, ed. Frederick Goldin. How does this literature reflect 12th-century life & ideas?
- Galbert of Bruges, *Murder of Charles the Good*. Tr. James Bruce Ross (Columbia, 196x). This gives the full version of the account you saw already: social unrest, civil war, politics, mob scenes, executions. Choose a particular issue in the extended text and write on it.
- Guibert of Nogent, *Self & Society in Medieval France: the Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent* (ca. 1115-1120), ed. John F. Benton (Toronto, 1984—there's also a newer translation of his memoir with a different title). Here's a 12th-century abbot and autobiographer. How does he talk about himself? How does he describe social unrest in his local city of Laon (spectacular mob scene and murder of the bishop in 1115).
- English Historical Documents*. Volume II of this big blue series has many translations of legal and constitutional documents from English history, 1066 onward. Examine King Henry II's legislation, or some of the governmental struggles of the thirteenth century.
- Letters of Abelard and Heloise* (trans. Betty Radice, Penguin). Compare one or more of the letters to Abelard's autobiography (also in Radice).
- Hugh of Poitiers, *The Vézelay Chronicle*, ed. Scott & Ward (New York, 1992). How is life in a southern French city in the twelfth century reflected in this chronicle?
- Jean Froissart, *Chronicles* (Penguin, 1968—various other translations & abridgements available). A massive chronicle of the later middle ages (14th-15th centuries), with many themes of war, politics, and public life.
- Jocelin of Brakelond, *Chronicle of the Abbey of Bury Saint Edmunds* (ca. 1205), ed. and trans. Diana Greenway and Jane Sayers (Oxford, 1989). A monk from about the time of King John describes the politics and reforms of his monastery.
- The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela*, trans. William Melczer. Classic 12th-century travel guide. What was religious travel like for a medieval person?

Travels of Sir John Mandeville, tr. C. W. R. D. Mosely (Penguin, 1983). A 14th-century view of the world outside Western Europe, peopled with fantastic countries and monsters. Could contrast it with the text above.

Jacobus de Voragine. *The Golden Legend*. 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993). The standard medieval encyclopedia of saints' stories (written in the 13th century). Pick a couple and contrast them.

Hildegard of Bingen (ed. Kent Kraft), Mechtild of Magdeburg (ed. John Howard), and Julian of Norwich (ed. Catherine Jones), or others: selected writings in *Medieval Women Writers*, ed. Katherina M. Wilson (Athens, Georgia, 1984). Compare any two of the later-medieval writers with selections in this volume.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain* trans. Lewis Thorpe (Penguin, 1966). A fantastical account of early British history, with the original King Arthur legend.

Dante Alighieri, *Vita Nuova*, tr. Mark Musa. An autobiographical essay with poetry, from the first dawn of the Italian Renaissance.

Merchant culture in fourteenth-century Venice: the Zibaldone da Canal, trans. John E. Dotson (Binghamton, 1994). A narrative of fourteenth-century urban merchant culture in the Republic of Venice.

The Peasants' Revolt of 1381, ed. R. B. Dobson. A collection of chronicles and other primary sources describing the event. Contrast different sources on a theme you choose.

Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis. *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis and its art treasures*, ed. Erwin Panofsky (Princeton, 1968). A vivid account of patronizing and coordinating the construction and decoration of a Gothic church.

Abbot Suger. *Deeds of Louis the Fat*. Suger's biography of French King Louis VI, his close associate.

Orderic Vitalis. *The Ecclesiastical History*. Trans. Marjorie Chibnall, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1968-1980). Actually a history of all things—local and national politics in Normandy and England seen by this 12th-century monk. The later volumes are the most interesting chronicle of England and France in their time.

Boccaccio, *Decameron*, trans. G. H. McWilliam (Penguin, 1972). A collection of ribald stories depicting an earthy and irreligious view of the world, set in the time of the great Plague of 1348-51.

Chronicle of San Juan de la Peña, trans. Lynn Nelson (Pennsylvania, 1991). An official narrative history of the kingdom of Aragon from the 14th century, showing the origin and growth one of the great Spanish kingdoms.

Additional possibilities: art-related topics can use visual sources as 'primary' sources. Specific cathedrals or castles can be described and related to the historical context of their creation and use. Consult me if interested.

This is far from being an exhaustive list. It should give you an idea of the range of possibilities. Please contact me as early as possible for help locating choosing a topic or locating sources. I am best reached by e-mail and will be available throughout Spring Break week as well. See the separate 'Crusades' handout for a bibliography of crusade narratives.