

Western University, Department of History, 2016-17
HIS2401E: Medieval Europe

Instructor: Professor Eona Karakacili
Office Hours: LH 2264, M 11:30-12:30 or by
appointment
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Teaching Assistants: TBA

Lectures: M 9:30 - 11:30
Class Location: TBA
Tutorial Times & Locations: online

Course Description

Welcome to the middle ages! This course examines western European societies from their emergence in the late third century Roman Empire up to the eve of Columbus' journey to the New World in 1492. At the beginning of the first half of the millennium, western Europe was in a state of chaotic disarray and poverty. Even five hundred years later, this area is often characterized by historians as an economic and cultural backwater in comparison to its contemporaries: Byzantium, China, and the Islamic middle east. But by 1492 and perhaps even before 1300, western Europe was arguably the wealthiest and most technologically advanced region in the world. The global supremacy that western Europeans were to achieve over the course of the middle ages continues into the present, and its nations and some of its later colonies still dominate the ranks of the wealthiest in the world. How and why did western Europe experience this radical transformation over these 1000 years?

This course traces the path of this distinctive transformation over the centuries in western Europe's medieval economies, political structures, social institutions, and cultures. A special focus is the degree to which ordinary people shaped their societies and directed the course of historical change.

A goal of this course is to promote the development of your historian's "critical faculty," which will allow you to reach your own conclusions regarding the causes of historical changes. You will develop these critical research skills in doing your weekly tutorial readings of medieval documents as well as in your written assignments where you will learn how to analyze and exploit medieval primary sources—the basis of historians' work and ideas concerning the past.

Learning Objectives

- a basic overview of western European development from the beginning to the end of the middle ages, and an understanding of some of its implications for development in later centuries
- an introduction to the analysis of historical documents (primary sources), which historians use to reconstruct the past
- improved essay writing skills, obtained by following the assignment handouts' suggestions on the contents and organization of your written papers

Course Work and Grading

Due Date	Course Work	% of Final Grade
Monday, October 17, due at the lecture & Turnitin.com	Book Analysis (4 to 6 pages)	15 %
Monday, January 9, due at the lecture & Turnitin.com	Document Study (6 to 8 pages)	20 %
Monday, March 27, due at the lecture & Turnitin.com	Document Study (6 to 8 pages)	25 %
	Mandatory Tutorial Participation (5% each term)	10 %
T.B.A.	Final Exam	30 %

Description of Graded Course Work

1. In the Book Analysis assignment, you will closely analyze and critique a historian's hypothesis. Your focus will be on the historical documents (primary sources) used by the researcher to support her or his arguments. You are welcome to select any book on a medieval topic in which you are interested. Be sure to choose one that will allow you to fulfill the assignment's requirements easily (see the handout). You should look for a book with a clear hypothesis and not one providing a general overview of a subject or question (for example, *The History of the Vikings* would supply a general overview). Don't panic! A detailed handout will be given to you (online on our OWL class site) that clearly outlines the assignment's requirements and explains how to write it in an essay format. You will also review this handout in your tutorial.

2. In each Document Study paper, you will construct your own hypothesis regarding some aspect of medieval society by using a primary source from this period. A list of sources for each assignment is provided on our OWL website. You may employ an alternative medieval historical document some aspect of medieval society that interests you with the approval of your teaching assistant or myself. And once again, you will receive a detailed handout that outlines the assignment's requirements and helps you to succeed (online on our OWL class site). You will also review this handout in your tutorial, and use parts of it to help you to analyze your weekly primary source readings.

All three of these assignments are due in paper copy in class. You must also submit an identical electronic copy of each assignment before or on the due date to <http://turnitin.com>, where you will register with your own password to ensure that your work is secure. The local website, <http://turnitin.uwo.ca> will supply you with registration information. I will announce the course password and identification number in class before the due date of the first assignment. Papers not submitted to Turnitin will receive a grade of zero.

In regards to the employment of Turnitin, the policy at Western University is that “All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).”

Late Policy: Extensions to an assignment’s due date are usually available only on medical or compassionate grounds (see the information at the end of the syllabus on the procedure to obtain academic accommodation). Otherwise, marks will be deducted for handing in an assignment after a due date. The late penalty is five percentage points from the final grade of the assignment for each day, including weekends, that the paper is late. Please note that these late marks will also apply to an assignment submitted on-time in paper but late to Turnitin.com.

Try to get those assignments in on time. I know that the amount of work that you have to do for all your courses can be overwhelming at times but the further behind you fall in your course work, the harder it will be to catch up.

3. Tutorial attendance is critical for your training in historical research and therefore is mandatory. Please note that more than two absences from tutorials in each term will result in a failing final grade for the course, unless you have obtained academic accommodation.

The weekly tutorial readings are your only required readings for the course (see below for more information on these readings). These generally consist of medieval primary sources. Reading and analyzing these are the exercises through which you will acquire the skills of a historical researcher. Doing these readings will also help you to succeed in your assignments. The historian’s critical faculty is further cultivated by talking, debating, and interacting with your fellow students in your tutorial. It’s been said that, to a certain extent, each historian creates her or his history. As unique individuals, each one of you has different insights that you can share with one another in the tutorials. Your teaching assistant will indicate the marking rubric for the tutorial participation grade.

4. The final exam will cover all the material in the lectures. Not to worry: it is thematic in nature (no need to remember anything but the most important details), and the lectures will underscore these themes and their relationship to each weekly topic (or topics). Please note that electronic devices are not permitted at the final exam.

Succeeding in the Course: Lectures

Attendance at lectures is critical. There is no textbook available that covers all the material presented in this course. One is suggested below for those who would like more background information for some lectures, but you will not be tested on any of its material. This textbook serves only as a supplement to some of the lectures, and does not summarize them.

The lectures will also help you to develop your historical “critical faculty” by the occasional discussion of how our ideas about the past emerged or changed as the result of researchers’ employment of particular sources and methodologies. In addition, they will supply the historical context for your tutorial readings of primary sources.

I know that some of you might be worried that you cannot write quickly enough during the lectures and might miss jotting down some material. Stay calm! For each lecture, my Powerpoint presentations will be placed on our Owl class site before each lecture and you are able to download them. These slides can serve as a guide for your note taking and study aid for the final exam.

Succeeding in the Course: Weekly Required Readings For Tutorials

You will receive a selection of medieval historical documents to read almost every week. A variety of source types have been selected to give you a broad range of experience with different historical documents and their methods. The readings are usually up to thirty pages, and may be read online or downloaded from our OWL class site. These primary source readings will usually be on a topic examined one week prior in the lecture to allow you to study the primary sources within the context of information given in class.

This medieval material can be difficult to work with, especially when you are new to historical research, and so you should be sure to give yourself at least several hours or more to engage in its analysis. Read this weekly material at least twice, the first time quickly for an overall understanding of its contents, and then more slowly again with a greater attention to its details.

Be patient with yourself. At first, you may find reading these historical documents difficult but as time goes on, it will become easier. Students often tell me that the assigned readings in the second term are less complicated than those in the first, but in reality the level of difficulty is the same, and it is just that students have become much better in interpreting historical documents.

When examining any historical document, you need to take into consideration who wrote it, when, where, what kind of document this may be (e.g. law code), and why it was produced. These elements will help shape the type and quality of information that it supplies to you. Influences that you need to think about include the potential influence of genre and authorship (e.g. her or his status/sex/religion/political affiliation), as well as the purpose of the author in producing this work (e.g. intended audience, historical circumstances under which the document was produced). You should also be aware of any problems that might undermine the text's legitimacy as a source (e.g. fragmentation, authenticity, tampering). Finally, it can be useful to think about what is left "unsaid" in the document and the significance of any silence on this point. These considerations will also help you to gauge its representativeness. The Document Study Handout has more detailed suggestions intended to help guide you through the analysis of historical documents.

Historians will generally read primary sources with the goal of answering a particular question in mind. Most sources, though, can be employed to address a multitude of issues. For instance, researchers have used political treatises to provide insights on contemporary views of women, and saints' lives for their information on medieval daily life. So read with an "open" mind and enjoy your excursions into medieval societies!

No Required Textbook

For those who would like a reference tool for some dates and events, Warren Hollister and Judith Bennett's *A Short History of Medieval Europe* is suggested. It is on reserve at Weldon Library. Used copies are also on sale on the internet, usually for a relatively low price.

Lecture Topics & Readings

September 12: Introduction to the Course & The Late Roman Empire: the Foundation for Medieval Europe

Tutorials Begin: Introductions. Read and discuss the Book Analysis Handout for the first assignment (online).

September 19: Early Christianity & Empire

Tutorial: As an introduction to working with secondary and primary sources, and as preparation for the first written assignment, read the book selections taken from the historian Rudolph Bell's *Holy Anorexia* (online on our OWL class site). Analyze and discuss this material according to the requirements found in the Book Analysis Handout (this will help you to prepare for the first assignment, as well as the document study papers).

September 26: Popular Christianity & Orthodoxy

Tutorial: Continue your discussion of Bell's book in reference to the Book Analysis Handout. Receive your tutorial assistant's approval on your selection of a book to analyze for the first assignment.

October 3: Rise of the Barbarian Kingdoms in the West; Early Church and State Relations

Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 1 (online) This week's primary source is a portion of Catherine of Siena's biography, which is one of the historical documents used by the historian, Rudolph Bell, to support his hypothesis in *Holy Anorexia*. As an introduction to working with historical documents, and as preparation for the second written assignment, read the Document Study Assignment Handout (online on our OWL class site) and use it to help guide your analysis of this source (you should also use this handout to help with all your tutorial primary source readings throughout the year). Discuss Catherine's biography and the degree to which reading it critically may or may not change your mind about the validity of Bell's hypothesis (this will also help you to prepare for the document study papers).

October 10: No Lecture or Tutorials this week (Thanksgiving Day Monday)

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October 17: Monasticism and Society

Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 2 (online)

Book Analysis assignment is due this Monday at the lecture and on Turnitin.com

October 24: A New Western Empire: the Carolingians to the Ninth Century

Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 3 (online)

October 31: Changes and Continuities in the Ninth & Tenth Centuries (includes serfdom and knights)

Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 4 (online)

November 7: The Economic Take-off in Western Europe & Artisan Guilds

Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 5 (online)

November 14: Merchant Guilds & The Instruments of Growth: the Evolution of Financial Instruments

Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 6 (online)

November 21: Everyday Life in the Medieval Countryside
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 7 (online)

November 28: The Creation of the University; Magic and Science
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 8 (online)

December 5: Centralization of Governments & the Influence of Ordinary People, 11th to 13th Centuries
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 9. Discuss progress on Document Study paper and receive feedback from your t.a.

WINTER HOLIDAYS & GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR EXAMS!

January 9: Emergence of the Secular State?: Conflict Between Church & State, 11th to early 14th Centuries
Tutorial: No tutorials or readings! First Document Study assignment is due at Monday's lecture and on Turnitin.com.

January 16: Heresy, Orthodoxy & Society
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 10 (online)

January 23: The First and Later Crusades
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 11 (online)

January 30: The Military Monastic Orders
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 12 (online).

February 6: Medieval Medicine
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 13 (online)

February 13: Technological Advances to the 15th Century; Technology in Action: From Ale to Beer
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 14 (online)

NO CLASSES FROM FEBRUARY 20 TO 24 (READING WEEK)

February 27: Crime, Punishment and the Medieval State; Medieval Witchcraft Trials
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 16 (online)

March 6: The Black Death & Its Aftermath
Tutorial: Sources, Week 17 (online)

March 13: The Aftermath of the Black Death in the Later 14th Century, Con'd
Tutorial: Sources, Week 18 (online)

March 20: Hundred Year's War
Tutorial: Primary Sources, Week 19 (online)

March 27: Late 14th & 15th Centuries Crisis in the Church; Late Medieval Culture

Tutorial: No tutorials or readings! Second Document Study is due at Monday's lecture and on Turnitin.com.

April 3: On the Eve of Columbus: Travel and Conquest in the Late Middle Ages; Course Summary and Exam Preparation

Tutorial: Final exam preparation. No tutorial readings!

GOOD LUCK ON THE FINAL EXAM!

I look forward to getting to know each one of you throughout the year. Please feel free to drop by during my office hours for help with readings, assignments or just to chat.

Professor Karakacili aka Professor "K"