

History 600-014, Advanced Seminar:

Lordship, Monarchy, and Rebellion in Medieval Europe, 900-1350

Syllabus

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Thursday, 5257 Mosse Humanities

Instructor: Richard Keyser, rkeyser@wisc.edu , Tel. 608-263-1862

Office Hours: Tues., 4:00-6:00 p.m., 5220 Mosse Humanities (and by appointment)

Description: The exercise of power in medieval Europe was more uncertain and contested than the stereotype of kings ruling in an ‘Age of Faith’ might lead one to believe. This class focuses on various types of social and political authority and the ways they were challenged in Western Europe in the High Middle Ages (ca. 1000-1350). Whereas monarchs gained increasing control over many of the classic functions of government (e.g. defense and taxation), recent scholarship has shown that the shift from personal lordship towards bureaucratic administration was gradual and remained incomplete throughout this period.

When centralizing institutions and the rule of law were only beginning to become hegemonic, how did local and central authorities assert their power? Why did others accept their authority? What criteria defined local communities? How did local people resolve their conflicts? When and why did they rebel? To what extent was the exercise of force limited or shaped by the recognition of customary norms, the need for compromise, or prejudice against excluded groups? To explore these questions, we will study interminable local warfare between lords and their own vassals, bitter urban revolts against overlords, epic battles between church and state (such as the investiture conflict), attacks on Jews and heretics, and uprisings of millenarian revolutionaries and peasants.

Requirements: As a seminar class, your attendance and participation are vital. You will be responsible for weekly written responses on the assigned readings and occasional oral reports on both assigned readings and your own research. An eight-page paper based on the assigned primary sources will be due at midterm. Your most important goal in this seminar will be to carry out an independent research project, on which you must begin working early in the semester, and which will culminate in a twenty-page paper based on your original analysis of a selection of translated documentary and narrative sources.

Grades: 20% for attendance and participation; 20% for the midterm paper; and 60% for the final paper.

Attendance: You are allowed ONE ‘free’ absence, which will not impact your grade. Given that this class meets only once a week, you should not miss any more than this. You do not earn points just for attending class, as this is expected, but after the one allowed absence, each additional absence will reduce your grade by 5%, up to a maximum of three additional absences, or 15% of your grade. With a total of five absences (four in addition to the allowed one), you will lose the entire 20% of the grade that reflects attendance and participation. More importantly, you will have missed five weeks and will receive a

failing grade for the course. Except in the case of very well-documented major illnesses that impact two or more consecutive classes, NO EXCUSES will be considered for missing a class.

Participation: While your active participation in class discussions is vital, I will not grade your participation in each class period. Instead, I will assess your participation throughout the class at the end of the semester. Everyone should speak in every class at least once, and preferably two or three times. I will try to call on students who do not seize the opportunity to speak up frequently. But quality of contribution counts more than quantity. Quality contributions are, ideally, clear and precise, while showing that you have understood the readings and that you are asking good critical questions about them (for this kind of question, see the writing guide by Patrick Rael linked from the History Department's "Writing History" page, available at: <http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/>, sections 3c and 3d). Good seminar participation also means that you listen to others and try to engage seriously but respectfully in the lively conversation that we hope to generate.

Reading Responses and Discussion Leading: You should read each weekly assignment carefully, take notes, and prepare a short summary of, response to, and critical questions provoked by the readings as a basis for class discussion (1-2 pages, handwritten or typed). I will not collect your responses most weeks, but I reserve the right to do so at any time; if you are having difficulties, looking at your response may help to find ways to improve. I will also collect your responses on the weeks when you help to lead the class discussion, which you should expect to do at least twice during the semester. For these presentations, it may be helpful to do a little extra research on that week's topic.

Research Tasks and Presentations: To help structure your project, for some weeks I will assign such targeted research tasks as describing your topic or arguing a thesis based on a sample of primary sources. You should write up the results of your work and be prepared to discuss them with the class. I will collect at least two of these mini-assignments, which, like those you present orally, will count towards your participation grade. You should also expect to give regular, brief updates on your research, and in the last third or so of the semester you will make a fuller (20-30 minute) presentation on your project.

Midterm Paper (due Oct. 20): An 8-page analytical essay based on the assigned readings on a topic to be announced later in the semester.

Final Paper (due Dec. 15): A 20-page research paper based on both primary and secondary sources, on a topic of your choice. Guidelines and preliminary assignments relating to your research project will be given over the course of the semester.

Citation of Sources: Please follow standard practice in the field of history by using the *Chicago Manual of Style* format for citing sources, using footnotes, and making bibliographical entries, as summarized in Mary Lynn Rampolla's *Pocket Guide* (see under textbooks). For further information and other writing and research guides, please see: http://history.wisc.edu/undergraduate/researchinhistory_writing.htm.

Academic Honesty: Your written work must reflect your own ideas, and where you draw on others' words or ideas you need to indicate this clearly with proper quotations and citations. As the UW website explains, "plagiarism means presenting the words or ideas of others without giving credit. You should know the principles of plagiarism and the correct rules for citing sources...." For this quotation and more information, see: <http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html#overview>. As this website notes,

“if you are unsure about the proper ways to give credit to sources, ask your instructor or consult the Writing Center at 6171 Helen C. White Hall (phone: 608/263-1992, e-mail: writing@wisc.edu) for a copy of their handout ‘Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources,’ which you can download” (from a link provided in the above website).

Textbooks (5). You need to purchase these five books (in the exact editions listed), which are available through the UW Bookstore (<http://text.uwbookstore.com/home.aspx>): Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900-1300*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Maureen Miller, ed., *Power and the Holy in the Age of the Investiture Conflict: A Brief History with Documents* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2005); Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Geoffrey Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, transl. Lewis Thorpe (New York: Penguin, 1966); and Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 6th ed. (New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2010).

Learning about Research in History: We will be discussing how to find and use both primary and secondary sources all semester, but you also need to begin—right away—learning about this yourself. Good places to start, in addition to class handouts and the assigned textbooks and their bibliographies (especially those in Reynolds), include the Memorial Library reference librarians and the library’s guide to research in European history, at: <http://www.library.wisc.edu/guides/europeanhistory/> (though in August this page was still under construction). Also, please register for one of the four sessions of the library’s “Historical Research Workshops,” which will be held September 20, 22, 26, and 28, at Memorial Library from 6-7:30PM. You must register online, at: http://www.ohrd.wisc.edu/reg/catalog_course.aspx?groupcoursekey=31638

Medieval Studies Websites: Some standard websites for medieval studies include: Fordham University’s Internet Medieval History Sourcebook, at: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.asp>, where you can browse primary sources in translation (though often from outdated or unidentified publications); and several general medieval reference sites or meta-sites, of which the easiest to use is Catholic University’s *Netserf*, at: <http://www.netserf.org/>. See also: CUNY-Staten Island’s *Orb*, at: <http://www.the-orb.net/index.html>, Georgetown University’s *Labyrinth*, at: <http://www8.georgetown.edu/departments/medieval/labyrinth/>, and Cambridge University’s *Marginalia*, at: <http://www.marginalia.co.uk/resources.php#general>.

SCHEDULE

I. Sept. 8. Introduction: The Problem of Authority in the Middle Ages

- Discuss class requirements, research topics, and research methods.
- Begin reading “Hugh’s Agreement,” (*Conventum Hugonis*), available online at learn@uw; from: Jane Martindale, *Status, Authority, and Regional Power: Aquitaine and France, Ninth to Twelfth Centuries* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1997).

II. Sept. 15. Lordship and Feudalism: A Revolution around 1000 AD?

- Discuss “Hugh’s Agreement” (*Conventum Hugonis*).
- Read the Feudal Revolution Debate, available through the library databases (JSTOR). An essay by Thomas Bisson, “The Feudal Revolution,” *Past and Present* 142 (1994): 6-42, elicited four critical “comments,” to which Bisson made a final reply, all in this journal with the title, “Debate: The Feudal Revolution,” by: Dominique Barthélemy, 152 (1996): 196-205; Stephen D. White, 152 (1996): 205-23; Timothy Reuter, 155 (1997): 177-95; Chris Wickham, 155 (1997): 196-208; and Bisson, 155 (1997): 208-25.
- Research Task: Reference Works.

III. Sept. 22. Rulers, Communities, and Rebellion: A Case Study in Flanders

- Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*, ch. 1-3, pp. 1-78.
- Galbert of Bruges, *The Murder of Charles the Good*, ch. 1-16, available online at learn@uw; from James B. Ross, ed. (Columbia UP, 1959, repr. Medieval Academy, 1982), pp. 79-124.
- Sample Reference Works; begin book review survey.

IV. Sept. 29. Sacral Kingship and the Papal Reform: The Investiture Conflict

- Miller, *Power and the Holy*, introduction, pp. 1-27; and documents in Part 1, “Reform,” and Part 2, “Investiture Conflict,” i.e. through document no. 30, p. 121. In Part 1, we can focus our discussion especially on documents nos. 1-4, 7, and 12.
- Survey of Book Reviews.

V. Oct. 6. Popular Preachers, Holy War, and Apocalypse

- Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium*, introduction, pp. ix-xi, and ch. 1-4, pp. 1-82.
- Miller, *Power and the Holy*, Part 3, “Consequences,” documents nos. 31-35, 39, and 42-46.
- ***Research Topic Abstract and Short Bibliography Due.**

VI. Oct. 13. Local Communities: Villages and Towns

- Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*, ch. 5, conclusion only (pp. 152-4); ch. 6, all.
- Selected village and town charters.
- Begin Geoffrey Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, transl. Lewis Thorpe (Penguin, 1966), introduction and parts 1-2, to p. 106.

VII. Oct. 20. Regnal Communities: Provinces and Kingdoms

- Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*, ch. 7 and 8, to p. 261.
- Selected coronation oaths.
- Monmouth, parts 3-6, pp. 107-211.
- ***Midterm Paper due.**

VIII. Oct. 27. Assemblies and Representation.

- Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*, ch. 8, pp. 262-331.
- Magna Carta and selected documents.
- Finish Monmouth, parts 7-8, pp. 212-84.

IX. Nov. 3. The Rise of Bureaucratic Government and Formal Law: What Changed?

- Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*, ch. 9.
- Owen, D. D. R., ed. *The Romance of Reynard the Fox*. Oxford UP, 1994. Branch I, "The Trial of Reynard," pp. 5-28; and Va, "The Lawsuits of Isengrin and Bruin the Bear," pp. 92-106.
- ***Research Thesis Statement, Bibliography, and Brief Outline Due.**

Remaining class meetings will be devoted to presentations of student research: Nov. 10 and 17; and Dec. 1 and 8. ***Final papers are due on Dec. 15.**