

University of Wisconsin-Madison

**History 500/Religious Studies 400
RELIGION AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT**

Spring 2013

Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., 110 Social Work Building

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Office hours: Tues 1:00-2:00, Wed 9:00-10:00, and by appointment

While the Enlightenment of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is often associated with secularization and an assault on Europe's religious traditions, the reality was both more complex and more interesting. This course introduces some of the ways in which people in the period as well as modern scholars have treated the relationship between religion, the Enlightenment, and the birth of modernity. We will begin by reading some classic twentieth-century accounts and then move on to consider how recent scholarship is challenging common assumptions, opening up new perspectives, and telling new stories about the fortunes of religion in the "age of reason." Among other topics, our survey will include work on demonology and exorcism, miracles, biblical scholarship, and how Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish figures drew on the new thinking of the age to update and renew their respective religious traditions.

In introducing this vital and fascinating area of research, the course aims to hone your skills as a historical thinker and interpreter of texts from and about the past. We will see how the questions historians ask and the perspectives they bring—reflecting different social locations and philosophical and political commitments—change over time, leading them to tell new stories about the past, and you will begin to ask new historical questions of your own. Through a series of short responses and a longer research paper, you will also gain practice expressing your insights and analyses in writing.

Course Requirements

1. Attend and participate fully in every class meeting. Since this is a discussion-based seminar, your learning experience and the success of the course depend on your coming to every session prepared to engage the week's assignment. This means reading each text closely and thoughtfully and being ready to discuss your insights and questions with your classmates. You are expected to attend all class sessions; absences will be excused only in cases of documented illness or emergency. Any unexcused absence will reduce your final course grade. Class participation counts for 25% of your final grade.

2. Write eight two-page (550-650 words) papers responding to assigned readings. The first two-thirds of the course are reading-intensive. We will be reading and discussing about 200-250 pages (sometimes a bit less) of scholarly writing and/or primary sources each week through April 2. To

help you begin to synthesize your thoughts and prepare for class, you will write brief responses to the assigned texts each week (except for one week of your choice). Your papers can take various forms, and sometimes I will suggest a few questions on which to focus. Each response paper, though, must include three parts: (1) a summary of the thesis or central argument of each text; (2) an evaluative section, where you may offer insights or criticisms about the text and its significance, draw connections between readings, and/or relate an issue in the text to broader course themes; and (3) three questions raised by the readings suitable for class discussion; these questions should avoid straightforward matters of fact and instead raise larger substantive and interpretive issues about the texts and their significance. Your response papers are due in the dropbox on Learn@UW by 9:00 p.m. on Mondays prior to class meetings. Together, they will be worth 25% of your final grade.

3. Write an analytical paper of 4500-4800 words (about 15 pages) on a topic of special interest to you, chosen in consultation with me, arising out of the common readings and/or course themes. Your paper can take one of a variety of approaches. It may be a piece of original research with a focus on primary sources, or it may be historiographical or theoretical, focusing on how scholars have treated a particular question or problem. Your paper will be composed in several stages. A statement of your topic and your bibliography will be due in class on April 2. I will meet briefly with you later that week to discuss these. A first draft of your paper will be due on Friday, April 26; I will return it to you with comments by Tuesday, April 30. The final draft of the paper will be due in class on May 7, when you will also make a ten-minute presentation of your topic and answer questions from the rest of the class. The paper counts for 50% of your final grade, broken down as follows: topic and bibliography, 5%, first draft, 10%; oral presentation, 5%; final draft, 30%.

Communication

I enjoy teaching and I enjoy talking with students. If you have questions relating to any aspect of the course or if you just want to explore an idea, please don't hesitate to speak with me after class or come to office hours. I have set aside time for drop-in appointments on Tuesdays, 1:00-2:00 p.m. and Wednesdays, 9:00-10:00 a.m. but am in my office at other times and am happy to arrange a different meeting time if you can't make it to the regular office hours. Generally the best way to reach me is via email (ewcarlss@wisc.edu). I check email regularly and will try to respond within 24 hours. Often I can reply sooner than that, but on weekends response time may be up to 48 hours.

Academic Honesty

You are expected to do your own work in this course and to cite sources as necessary. Not doing so is academic dishonesty. Penalties for scholastic misconduct, including plagiarism, range from failing a course to being expelled from the university. For university policies concerning academic misconduct, see <http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html>. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, please speak with me or consult http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html.

Required Texts

The books listed below are available for purchase at the University Bookstore as well as at other local and online stores. Copies of each text have also been placed on reserve at College Library.

Carl L. Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers*, 2d ed. (Yale UP, 2003 [orig. 1932])

David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton UP, 2008)

Jane Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England* (Yale UP, 2006)

Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton UP, 2005)

H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Exorcism and Enlightenment: Johann Joseph Gassner and the Demons of Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Yale UP, 2005)

Moses Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem, or On Religious Power and Judaism*, trans. Allan Arkush (UP of New England/Brandeis UP, 1983)

Other readings will also be posted on Learn@UW. See the schedule below for details.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Readings marked with an asterisk (*) are posted on our Learn@UW course page.

- Jan 22 Course Introduction
Immanuel Kant, “An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?” (1784)
- Jan 29 Classic Twentieth-Century Studies I
Carl L. Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers* (1932) (entire)
*Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (orig. 1932), 134-60
- Feb 5 Classic Twentieth-Century Studies II
*Paul Hazard, *The European Mind: The Critical Years, 1680-1715* (orig. 1935), vii-xx, 80-98, 119-54, 180-97, 252-65
*Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, vol. 1., *The Rise of Modern Paganism* (1966), 3-27, 207-12, 256-7, 322-57, 401-19
*Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, “The Religious Origins of the Enlightenment” (1967)
- Feb 12 Radical Enlightenment
*Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity* (2001), chs. 1, 8, 12, 21, 24, 37, 38
*Samuel Moyn, “Mind the Enlightenment” (2010)
- Feb 19 Protestant Enlightenment: The Case of England
David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, 1-65
*B. W. Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth Century England* (1998)
*John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1690) (excerpts)
*William Warburton, *The Divine Legation of Moses* (1737-41) (excerpts)

- *Joseph Butler, *The Analogy of Religion* (1736) (excerpts)
- Feb 26 Miracles
Jane Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England* (entire)
- Mar 5 Biblical Scholarship
Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible* (entire)
- Mar 12 The Catholic Enlightenment
*Ulrich L. Lehner, "The Many Faces of the Catholic Enlightenment" (2011)
David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, 215-309
- Mar 19 Demons and Exorcisms
H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Exorcism and Enlightenment* (entire)
- Mar 26 SPRING BREAK
- Apr 2 The Jewish Enlightenment
Paper topic and bibliography due in class
David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, 165-213
Alexander Altmann, Introduction to Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem*, 3-28
Moses Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem* (entire)
- Individual meetings this week to discuss your paper topic and sources
- Apr 9-30 No regular class meetings: work on your research papers. I will be in my office during class hours for individual conferences.
- The first draft of your paper is due in my mailbox (5024 Humanities) by 5:00 p.m., Friday, April 26.
- On Tuesday, April 30, stop by my office during regular class hours to pick up my comments on your first draft.
- May 7 Oral presentation of paper topics
Final version of your paper due in class