

**History 233-01**  
**Medieval Europe, 500-1350**  
MWF 1:15-2:05pm  
Science 1612

Professor John Wei  
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x9268

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Course Webpage: <https://pioneerweb.grinnell.edu>

### **Course Description**

This course will provide an introduction to Europe during the period 500-1350. Through lectures, discussion, audio-visual material, and the reading of diverse primary sources, students will develop a rich understanding of the people and places, culture and ideas that shaped Europe during the Middle Ages. Although the main focus will be on Western Europe, we will nevertheless also discuss developments in the Byzantine and Islamic worlds and how these affected medieval European culture and society.

### **Course Goals**

1. To develop a general understanding of what happened during the Middle Ages.
2. To gain an appreciation for the ways in which modern biases shape our view of the past.
3. To learn how to analyze diverse genres of primary sources: edicts, hagiography, chronicles, literary texts, etc.
4. To improve reading skills and writing skills, particularly through the critical examination of important secondary articles.

### **Assignments and Grading**

Students' grades will be based on the following criteria:

1. Class participation (10%)
2. Five ½ to 1-page responses to a secondary article (20% total, 4% each)
3. One 3-page document analysis paper (15%)
4. 10-minute presentation (10%)
5. One 5-page book review (20%)
6. Take-Home Final Exam (25%)

### **Class Participation**

Students are expected to come to class on time having already read the assigned reading. Since you cannot participate if you are not present, more than two unexcused absences will have a detrimental effect on your grade.

### **Take-Home Final Exam**

The Final Exam will consist of two prompts, which you will have four days to answer. The questions will be related to material covered in the course. To answer them well, you will need to

review relevant primary and/or secondary readings discussed in class. The final must be submitted electronically using Pioneerweb.

### **Response Papers**

The response papers are meant to improve your critical reading and writing skills. For five out of the seven secondary readings marked with an asterisk (\*) in the syllabus, you will need to write a ½ to 1-page response. In your response, you need to explain:

1. what question the author is trying to answer;
2. what the author's thesis is; and
3. how the author tries to prove his or her thesis, noting in particular the sources/types of evidence which the author makes use of.

Furthermore, you should state whether you find the author's thesis convincing and why you feel the way you do. You may choose to do more than five reading responses; I will only count the top five grades. **Everyone must do the first reading response.** The responses are due in class on the day assigned.

### **Papers**

The two papers are designed to exercise different skills. In the document analysis paper, you will be asked to analyze one or more primary sources and to discuss your interpretation of them in light of contemporary events and ideas. The book review will be based on your in-class presentation. In the paper, you will critique a book by a modern scholar. You will need to demonstrate an understanding of the scholar's argument, methodology, and process of argumentation. And you will be asked to evaluate your book in light of class readings and the books assigned to other members of your panel.

### **Presentation**

In the 10-minute presentation, you will be asked to explain the argument and methodology of your book. About two days before the presentation, you and the other members of your panel will be required to meet with me to go over the details of the presentation and to discuss the relationship between your respective books. You should prepare for this meeting by discussing with the other panel members what the larger issues and questions of your topic are.

### **Late Policy**

All the due dates are marked clearly on the syllabus. It is your job to take notice of them and to hand in the assignments on time. The late penalty is one letter grade per day. After four days the assignment will receive an automatic F. Failure to hand in any of the major assignments will result in an F in the class.

### **Accommodations**

If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Dean for Student Academic Support and Advising, Joyce Stern, who is located on the third floor of the JRC (x3702).

### **Required Texts**

Judith M. Bennett and C. Warren Hollister. *Medieval Europe: A Short History*. 10<sup>th</sup> edition.

Barbara H. Rosenwein, ed., *Reading the Middle Ages: Sources from Europe, Byzantium, and the Islamic World*, 2006.

Lewis Thorpe, ed. and trans., *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, 1969. (Penguin Classics)

### Abbreviations

(E) = E-Reserve

(I) = Internet

(J) = J-Stor

(P) = Pioneerweb

### Schedule

Friday Introduction

Aug. 28 Pre-test

### Week 1: The End of the Roman World

Monday The Roman World

Aug. 31 Bennett 8-14

Wednesday Christianity and the Roman Empire

Sept. 2 Bennett 14-29

Rosenwein 1-10, 19-20

Friday Barbarian Invasions

Sept. 4 Bennett 30-56

Rosenwein 58-59, 65-70

(J) \*[Goffart, "Rome, Constantinople, and the Barbarians"](#)

### Weeks 2-3: The Emergence of Three Civilizations: Latin Christendom, Byzantium, Islam

Monday The Roman Legacy in the East: Byzantium

Sept. 7 Bennett 68-81

Wednesday Western Monasticism

Sept. 9 Bennett 56-67

Rosenwein 28-47 (Sts. Benedict, Anthony, and Martin)

Friday Catholicizing the West

Sept. 11 Rosenwein 97-124

(J) [Markus, "Gregory the Great's Europe"](#)

Monday The Rise of Islam

Sept. 14 Bennett 81-95

Rosenwein 86-96

Wednesday  
Sept. 16            Al-Andalus  
                            Rosenwein 167-71

Friday  
Sept. 18            Christians in Al-Andalus – PRESENTATIONS  
                            (J) \*[Safran, “Identity and Differentiation in Ninth-Century Al-Andalus”](#)

### **Weeks 4-5: The Carolingian World**

Monday  
Sept. 21            The Early Carolingians  
                            Bennett 97-104  
                            (J) \*[McKitterick, “The Illusion of Royal Power in the Carolingian Annals”](#)

Wednesday  
Sept. 23            Charlemagne  
                            Bennett 104-18  
                            Einhard’s *Life of Charlemagne*  
**Document Analysis Assignment handed out**

Friday  
Sept. 25            The Carolingian Renaissance  
                            Notker 94-102  
                            (J) [Trompf, “The Concept of the Carolingian Renaissance”](#)

Monday  
Sept. 28            Carolingian Society – PRESENTATIONS

Wednesday  
Sept. 30            Decline of the Carolingians and the Vikings  
                            Bennett 119-28  
                            (I) [Agobard, \*On the Division of the Empire\*](#)  
                            (I) [Annals of Xanten](#)  
                            Rosenwein 258-62

Friday  
Oct. 2              The Holy Roman Empire  
                            Bennett 139-44  
**Document Analysis Assignment Due**

### **Week 6: Post-Carolingian Chaos?**

Monday  
Oct. 5              Castles and Castellans  
                            Rosenwein 213-19, 221-22  
                            (J) [Bisson, “Feudal Revolution”](#)

Wednesday  
Oct. 7              Peace of God and Truce of God  
                            Rosenwein 219-21

Friday  
Oct. 9              Public Order and Dispute Resolution – PRESENTATIONS

## **Towards a New European Order**

### **Week 7: The Growth of Papal Monarchy**

Monday            Reforming the Church  
Oct. 12            Bennett 201-207, 240-46  
                      Rosenwein 281-85

Wednesday        Law and the Growth of Bureaucracy  
Oct. 14            Bennett 246-49  
                      Rosenwein 366-70  
                      (E) Excerpts from Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Consideration*

Friday             The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy  
Oct. 16            Bennett 250-60  
                      Rosenwein 374-378

-----Oct. 16-25: Fall Break-----

### **Week 8: Monetizing Society**

Monday            The Agricultural and Commercial Revolutions  
Oct. 26            Bennett 156-74  
                      Rosenwein 277-79

Wednesday        Poverty and Heresy  
Oct. 28            Bennett 186-201, 207-13  
                      Rosenwein 395-409

Friday             Life in Medieval Towns and Villages – PRESENTATIONS  
Oct. 30            (I) [William Fitz Stephen's Description of London](#)

### **Week 9: Europe's External and Internal Frontiers**

Monday            Medieval Iberia  
Nov. 2             (J) \*[Lourie, "A Society Organized for War: Medieval Spain"](#)  
                      (J) [Fletcher, "Reconquest and Crusade in Spain c.1050-1150"](#)

Wednesday        Islam, Byzantium, and the Crusades  
Nov. 4            Bennett 225-28  
                      Rosenwein 286-303  
                      (J) \*[Riley-Smith, "The Motives of the Earliest Crusaders and the Settlement of Palestine, 1095-1100"](#)

Friday             Pluralistic Societies – PRESENTATIONS  
Nov. 6            (E) Bartlett, "Race Relations on the Frontiers of Latin Europe"

### **Week 10: New Learning**

Monday  
Nov. 9 Cathedral Schools and Universities  
Bennett 307-19

Wednesday  
Nov. 11 Scholasticism  
Rosenwein 313-20  
(I) [Gratian, \*Causa 29\*](#) (Noonan's Translation)

Friday  
Nov. 13 New Learning – PRESENTATIONS

### **Week 11: The Emergence of the State**

Monday  
Nov. 16 Nobles and Knights  
Peters 314-20  
Rosenwein 384-94, 473-76  
(J) [Bouchard, "Origins of the French Nobility: A Reassessment"](#)

Wednesday  
Nov. 18 England and France in Comparative Perspective  
Bennett 128-32, 266-83  
Rosenwein 304-308, 350-54, 371-74, 378-83

Friday  
Nov. 20 Aristocratic Society – PRESENTATIONS

### **Weeks 12-13: The Waning of the Middle Ages**

Monday  
Nov. 23 Mongols and the East  
Rosenwein 414-27  
(J) \*[Fletcher, "The Mongols: Ecological and Social Perspectives"](#)

Wednesday  
Nov. 25 **Class Cancelled**

Friday  
Nov. 27 **Thanksgiving Break: No Class**

Monday  
Nov. 30 Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII  
Bennett 262-64, 283-86  
Rosenwein 455-59

Wednesday  
Dec. 2 The End of the Capetians and the beginning of the Hundred Years' War  
Bennett 347-56  
Rosenwein 512-24  
(J) \*[Rogers, "The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years' War"](#)

Friday                    Black Death  
Dec. 4                    Bennett 321-36  
                              Rosenwein 483-91

### **Week 14: Some Modern Perspectives on the Middle Ages**

Monday                  The Christian Middle Ages  
Dec. 7                    (J) [John Van Engen, "The Christian Middle Ages as an Historiographical Problem"](#)

Wednesday            The Birth of Europe  
Dec. 9                    (J) [Richard E. Sullivan, "The Carolingian Age: Reflections on its Place in the History of the Middle Ages"](#)  
                              (J) [Ross Balzaretti, "The Creation of Europe"](#)

Friday                    End of Course Evaluations; Review  
Dec. 11

### **Thursday, Dec. 17: Take-Home Final Exam Due**

#### **Christians in Al-Andalus**

Christys, Ann. *Christians in Al-Andalus, 711-1000*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2002.  
Coope, Jessica. *The Martyrs of Córdoba: Community and Family Conflict in an Age of Mass Conversion*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995.  
Wolf, Kenneth Baxter. *Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

#### **Carolingian Society**

Hodges, Richard. *Towns and Trade in the Age of Charlemagne*. London: Duckworth, 2000.  
McKitterick, Rosamond. *The Carolingians and the Written Word*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.  
Wemple, Suzanne Fonay. *Women in Frankish Society: Marriage and the Cloister, 500-900*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.

#### **Public Order and Dispute Resolution**

Bartlett, Robert. *Trial by Fire and Water: The Medieval Judicial Ordeal*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.  
Davies, Wendy and Paul Fouracre. *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.  
Little, Lester. *Benedictine Maledictions: Liturgical Cursing in Romanesque France*. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1993.  
White, Stephen D. *Feuding and Peace-Making in Eleventh-Century France*. Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2005. Sections I, IV, V, VII, and VIII. (ILL)

### **Pluralistic Societies**

- Cohen, Mark. *Unde Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Moore, R.I. *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007.
- Nirenberg, David. *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Pick, Lucy K. *Conflict and Coexistence: Archbishop Rodrigo and the Muslims and Jews of Medieval Spain*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004.

### **Town and Village Life**

- Hanawalt, Barbara. *The Ties that Bound: Peasant Families in Medieval England*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Genicot, Léopold. *Rural Communities in the Medieval West*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.
- Le Roy Ladurie, Emmanuel. *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village, 1294-1324*. London: Scholar, 1978.
- Little, Lester. *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978.

### **New Learning**

- Haskins, Charles Homer. *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927.
- Radding, Charles and William Clark. *Medieval Architecture, Medieval Learning: Builders and Masters in the Age of Romanesque and Gothic*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Sapir Abulafia, Anna. *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Southern, R.W. *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe*. Vol. 1. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.

### **Aristocratic Society**

- Bouchard, Constance Brittain. *Strong of Body, Brave and Noble: Chivalry and Society in Medieval France*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998.
- Cheyette, Fredric L. *Ermengard of Narbonne and the world of the troubadours*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001.
- Crouch, David. *William Marshal: Court, Career, and Chivalry in the Angevin Empire, 1147-1219*. London: Longman, 1990.
- Keen, Maurice Hugh. *Chivalry*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.