

Faith, Reason, and Medieval Society

History 393
Spring 2010
Comenius 305
Friday, 10:20 am – 12:55 pm

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Office Hours: Monday, 10:15 am – 11:15 am; Tuesday, 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm; Wednesday, 10:15 am – 11:15 am; Thursday, 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm (and by appointment)

The Middle Ages are too often dismissed as being a dark period that produced little of enduring intellectual weight. A closer look reveals a fervent tradition of scholarship and debate that still evokes interest and admiration among modern historians. This research seminar introduces students to the greatest thinkers of the Middle Ages, and challenges participants to read, discuss, and write a research paper about some of their most remarkable works. We will examine some of the greatest intellectual problems these authors encountered and how they attempted to solve them. Many of the writers we read will be from the Christian tradition, but students will also read some of the luminaries of the Muslim and Jewish traditions.

The foremost theme of our inquiry will be the relationship between faith and reason. Could a belief in God be reconciled with truths derived from everyday experience? How was the interrelationship between faith and reason fertile for producing intellectual debate? How did the intellectuals engage with one another's writings? Did the underlying assumptions and methods differ among the different thinkers, or among the divergent religious traditions? How did these academic debates reflect the broader culture that produced them?

The goal of this course is to expose students to the intellectual history of the Middle Ages, but also to examine the methods of intellectual discourse in the period and how the ideas we examine provide us with new information about this period.

Students are not expected to have any previous knowledge of the Middle Ages.

Goals of the Course

- To gain a greater understanding of the intellectual history of Western medieval Europe from ca. 500 to ca. 1500.
- To discover the most significant thinkers in medieval intellectual history, the historians doing work on these thinkers, and the debates about medieval intellectual culture.
- To learn the special characteristics of medieval primary sources, and to practice analyzing these sources.
- To learn the basic tools of researching, writing, and revising a paper based upon primary sources and informed by secondary sources.
- To improve the ability to read, discuss, write, and present about the past.

Required Books - Available for Purchase in the Bookstore

- Marcia L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997). ISBN-13: 978-0300078527.
- Peter Abelard. *Ethics and Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian*, trans. Paul Vincent Spade (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1995). ISBN-13: 978-0872203228.
- Augustine, *On Christine Teaching*, trans. R. P. H. Green (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). ISBN-13: 978-0192839282.
- Anselm of Canterbury, *The Major Works*, ed. Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). ISBN-13: 978-0199540082.
- Thomas Aquinas, *Selected Writings*, trans. Ralph McInerny (New York: Penguin Classics, 1999). ISBN-13: 978-0140436327.
- Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. Victor Watts (New York: Penguin Classics, 2000). ISBN-13: 978-0140447804.
- Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, trans. Chaim Rabin (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1995). ISBN-13: 978-0872203242.
- *Selections from the 'Carmina Burana': A Verse Translation*, trans. David Parlett (New York: Penguin Classics, 1986). ISBN-13: 978-0140444407.

Please note:

- Some of the books listed above have also been placed on reserve at Reeves Library. (Search the reserve list on the Reeves website.)
- While you are free to purchase the books on the Internet, please find the same editions listed here.
- Be sure to bring assigned readings to class for discussion.
- *Medieval Foundations* is intended to provide you with background on authors we study, to help you choose your topic, and to provide you with bibliography.

Additional Books on Reserve/Online

- Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
This book is recommended to help you with the composition of research papers.
- *Classical Arabic Philosophy: An Anthology of Sources*, trans. Jon McGinnis and David C. Reisman (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2007).
- Catherine of Siena, *Dialogue*: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/catherine/dialog.html>
This book can be read online or downloaded as a PDF.
- Also see the bibliography of secondary works at the end of this syllabus. Please note that we will not read all of the books listed on it as a class. Many of them are intended to help you with the composition of your research paper, and have been placed on reserve so that they would be accessible to everyone.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class and be punctual. It is the students' obligation to take their own notes. Much of the information and methods covered in class, which will form part of the material you will be expected to have mastered for

papers, cannot be found in the reading. In addition, students will not be able to gain any credit for participation if they do not attend class sessions.

In the cases of *documented* illness or family emergency that will make it impossible for students to attend class or complete assignments, students are urged to get in touch with the instructor.

Academic Honesty Policy

Students are expected to adhere to Moravian College's Academic Honesty Policy for all assignments in this course. It is imperative that you familiarize yourself with the definition of plagiarism, which (even when done inadvertently) is considered a serious offense. I expect that all exams and papers are *your own work*. Any time that you use someone else's ideas in a paper, you must give credit to the person. For further information, see the appropriate pages in the Student Handbook or come speak with me.

Schedule of Classes and Readings

During our sessions I will devote time to introducing our authors and the historical background of when they wrote. In addition, there will be three formal lectures that are intended to give the main outlines of medieval intellectual history for your understanding of their works and to assist you in composing your research paper.

Friday, 1/22/10: Introduction to the Course

Review of the syllabus and course expectations, especially the research paper.
First lecture on approaches to faith and reason, and classical/early-medieval intellectual traditions.

Friday, 1/29/10: Augustine

Reading: Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, pp. 3-100.
M. L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. x-xii, 25-37.

Friday, 2/5/10: Boethius

Reading: Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, pp. 3-137.
M. L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. 42-51.

Friday, 2/12/10: Anselm of Canterbury

Reading: Anselm, *The Major Works*, pp. 5-104.
M. L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. 160-72.
Second lecture on intellectual flowering in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Friday, 2/19/10

No formal class meeting; Dr. Romano to be in Dublin, Ireland to present a paper.
Assignment: Paper proposal due via e-mail by 5 pm. Students will set up individual meetings with Dr. Romano to discuss the results of this proposal.

Friday, 2/26/10: Peter Abelard

Reading: Peter Abelard, *Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew and a Christian*, pp. 63-148. M. L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. 274-88.

Friday, 3/5/10: Moses Maimonides

Reading: Moses Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed*, pp. 41-87 and 149-202.

M. L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. 148-59.

Third lecture on the late-medieval intellectual tradition.

Friday, 3/19/10: Thomas Aquinas

Reading: Thomas Aquinas, *Selected Writings*, nos. 6 (pp. 109-41), 11 (pp. 243-56), 22 (pp. 551-64) and 27 (pp. 710-17).

M. L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. 295-301.

Assignment: First chunk of writing due

Friday, 3/26/10: Catherine of Siena

Reading: Catherine of Siena, *Dialogue*, pp. 13-34, 101-42.

M. L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. 234-44.

Friday, 4/9/10: Muslim Thinkers

Reading:

From *Classical Arabic Philosophy*:

- Ar-Razi, *The Philosopher's Way of Life*, pp. 36-44.
- Abu Sulayman as-Sijistani, *Selection from On the Proper Perfection of the Human Species*, pp. 139-45.
- Avicenna, *On Governance*, pp. 224-37.
- Al-Ghazali, *Incoherence of the Philosophers*, pp. 241-54.
- Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, pp. 309-30.

M. L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. 129-48.

Friday, 4/16/10: Carmina Burana

Reading: *Selections from the 'Carmina Burana,'* pp. 53-71, 75-78, 81-83, 94-96, 121-24, 129-35, 151-78. M. L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. 200-12.

Assignment: Second chunk of writing due

Friday, 4/23/10: Themes in Medieval Intellectual History

Assignment: Oral presentations

Friday, 4/30/10: Conclusions on Faith, Reason, and Medieval Society

Assignment: Final paper due and discussion

Grading

Class participation	30%
Paper proposal, due on 2/19 via e-mail by 5 pm	10%
First writing chunk (8 pp.), due in class on 3/19	10%
Second writing chunk (15 pp.), due in class on 4/16	10%
Oral presentation, to be given on 4/23	10%
Final paper (20-25 pp.), due in class on 4/30	30%

Requirements

- The paper proposal will give the name of the thinker with whom you will work; the name of the text or texts you will handle; a thesis statement; an opening paragraph to the paper; a preliminary outline; and a bibliography of secondary works. To be submitted via e-mail by 5 pm on 3/19.
- Students will complete two writing “chunks” in the course of the semester, partial drafts intended to allow you to get feedback from me and to revise your work accordingly. The first, 8 pp., is due on 3/19; the second, 15 pp., is due on 4/16.
- The goal of the course is to produce a substantial scholarly paper that presents an original argument. It should engage with medieval primary sources and be informed by relevant secondary literature. The paper will be 20-25 pp. long and is due in class on 4/30. Students will be expected to be able to discuss their work and the methods employed to produce it.
- Because of the difficulty of dealing with medieval sources, the research paper need only draw on one primary source but may combine several. Students will ordinarily read sources in English translation, but different arrangements can be made in consultation with the professor. Students must incorporate a minimum of ten secondary sources.
- Late papers will be penalized one “step” per day late (e.g., an A paper would become an A-; an A- paper would become a B+; and so on).
- Descriptions of the format for papers will be distributed in class and discussed. Papers should employ footnotes for references, and use the Chicago Manual of Style format.
- The paper proposal will be submitted via e-mail. All other papers must be submitted in hard copy.
- Students who would like help with their writing are encouraged to take advantage of the resources of the Writing Center. While the tutors at the Center are unlikely to have any specialized knowledge of your topic, they will aid you in formulating your thoughts and editing your writing.
- Participation grades are assigned based upon your contributions in class discussion. It is imperative that you prepare the readings assigned for each day before class and are ready to talk about them. Simply attending class does not guarantee you a high participation mark. Participants should bear in mind that this is an advanced seminar and some of the assignments will be lengthy.
- Students will deliver oral presentations in class on 4/23 on the topic of their final paper, and we will discuss your results as a class. The format of the oral presentations will be discussed in class.
- Please note that it is within my purview as an instructor to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades. I will do my utmost to be fair and consistent.
- There are no make-up presentations, save for documented emergencies.
- There are no extra-credit assignments in this course.
- Please note that this schedule is subject to change when circumstances make it necessary. Students will be made aware of any modifications as soon as possible.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities who need special facilities or consideration should present the appropriate documentation from Disability Support Services to the instructor.

Research Tips

- The first essential step in choosing a theme for research is deciding which author you will read. Students will normally choose from following list of medieval thinkers: Peter Abelard; Albert the Great; Ambrose; Anselm; Thomas Aquinas; Augustine; Averroës; Avicenna; Boethius; Bonaventure; Cassiodorus; Catherine of Siena; John Scottus Eriugena; Gregory the Great; Hildegard of Bingen; John Hus; Jerome; Julian of Norwich; Meister Eckhart; Peter Lombard; Moses Maimonides; John Wycliffe; and William of Ockham. Students may also choose another thinker, but *only in consultation with the professor*.
- Students may choose to read an author we have examined in our mutual work, but they will be expected to expand their scope beyond what we have done in class – i.e. choosing different texts and analyzing new themes.
- After choosing the author with whom you will work, it will be necessary to decide which work or works you will deal with. I recommend first seeing which works are available in translation and browsing through a few to decide which ones seem most interesting to you. Your final product should not be a mere summary of the primary works but must have an argument on an intellectual theme contained within them.
- Students will also need to compile secondary sources to inform themselves of the scholarship regarding the thinker they have chosen. Students will find it useful to seek out the following places:
 - The bibliography I provide at the end of this syllabus
 - The introductions to translations they use
 - The bibliography at the end of *Medieval Foundations* (pp. 364-69) and bibliographies in other secondary surveys
 - The American Historical Association's Guide to Historical Literature*, ed. Mary Beth Norton and Pamela Gerardi, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), vol. 1, pp. 690-96. In Reeves Reference D20.N67 1995.
 - Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, ed. André Vauchez, 2 vols. (Chicago: Fitzroy Publishers, 2000). In Reeves Reference D114.E53 2000.
 - Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. J. R. Strayer (New York: Scribner, 1982). In Reeves Reference D114.D5 1982.
 - The Catholic Encyclopedia. Available online at newadvent.org. This is a handy reference, and is especially useful for older works.
 - The online databases compiled at: <http://moravian.libguides.com/hist294fa09>
- To compile a strong bibliography, it will often be necessary for students to obtain books through E-Z Borrow and Interlibrary Loan. Students are urged to place requests early to ensure that they have enough time to examine these books.
- Students will be expected to engage actively with the secondary sources they find. Students will determine where their arguments fit with other historians' ideas, and if necessary, challenge older ideas with their own interpretations.
- Students are encouraged at every stage of their research to visit or correspond with the professor to get suggestions or present drafts.

Bibliography of Secondary Sources

All items marked with an asterisk (*) have been placed on reserve at Reeves. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but is intended to give you a guide to some of the basic books of the field to get you started. You will need to explore to find books that suit your specific themes.

**The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Philosophy*. Ed. A. S. McGrade. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Jewish Philosophy. Ed. Daniel H. Frank and Oliver Leaman. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

*Chenu, Marie – Dominique. *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.

Chenu, Marie – Dominique. *Toward Understanding Saint Thomas*. Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1964.

*Copleston, Frederick Charles. *A History of Medieval Philosophy*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1990 [1972].

*Davies, Brian. *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

*Evans, G. R. *Philosophy and Theology in the Middle Ages*. London; New York: Routledge, 1993.

*Gilson, Etienne. *The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine*. London: V. Gollancz, 1961.

*Gilson, Etienne. *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*. New York: Random House, 1955.

Gilson, Etienne. *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*. New York: C. Scribner, 1950.

*Gilson, Etienne. *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*. New York: C. Scribner, 1936.

*Grant, Edward. *God and Reason in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

*Hibbs, Thomas S. *Aquinas, Ethics, and Philosophy of Religion: Metaphysics and Practice*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007.

*Jaeger, C. Stephen. *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950-1200*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994.

- *Knowles, David. *The Evolution of Medieval Thought*. London: Longmans, 1962.
- Luscombe, David. *Medieval Thought*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- *Marenbon, John. *Early Medieval Philosophy (480-1150): An Introduction*. London; Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1983.
- *Marenbon, John. *Later Medieval Philosophy (1150-1350): An Introduction*. London; New York: Routledge & K. Paul, 1987.
- Marenbon, John. *Medieval Philosophy: An Historical and Philosophical Introduction*. London; New York: Routledge, 2007.
- *Murray, Alexander. *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Nichols, Aidan. *Discovering Aquinas: An Introduction to his Life, Work, and Influence*. London: Darton Longman & Todd, 2002.
- *Riché, Pierre. *Education and Culture in the Barbarian West, Sixth through Eighth Centuries*. Trans. John J. Contreni. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1978.
- *Rubenstein, Richard E. *Aristotle's Children: How Christians, Muslims, and Jews Rediscovered Ancient Wisdom and Illuminated the Dark Ages*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2003.
- Schmitt, Jean-Claude. *The Holy Greyhound: Guineford, Healer of Children since the Thirteenth Century*. Trans. Martin Thom. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- *Southern, R. W. *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in the Landscape*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- *Southern, R. W. *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies*. Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1970.
- *Southern, R. W. *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe. Volume I: Foundations*. Oxford; Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995.
- *Swanson, R. N. *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c. 1215-c. 1515*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Wippel, John F. *Mediaeval Reactions to the Encounter between Faith and Reason*. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995.