

SYLLABUS Ger 390 Medieval Travel Course, Summer 2018

Instructor: Prof. Albrecht Classen, Dept. of German Studies, 301 LSB, Univ. of AZ (but we will be on the road, May 23-June 15, 2017)

Textbook: *Medieval Answers to Modern Problems*, 2nd ed. (San Diego: Cognella, 2017): You need to purchase this book online directly from the publisher. For instructions, see the main webpage for our course (Study Abroad, Summer 2018)

See also the web sites on our course webpage 2018 for information on medieval art and medieval history

Time Schedule:

The course consists of four weeks, with no days off, i.e., we'll have class every day because this is such an intensive summer course, offering you 6 credits. Please read every section in advance as assigned and be ready for the class when the material is listed on the syllabus. We will regularly switch from the early to the late Middle Ages so that you gain a good contrastive perspective throughout the course. That will also reflect the reality on the ground as we will observe on our daily excursions. But do not worry, the class will only last for ca. 1-2 hour a day, and we will have plenty of time to relax and to enjoy the sites, so you will have enough free time afterwards for yourself. However, altogether we'll work together in class and on our excursions for ca. 4-5 hours every day. Then you will have to do your homework, the reading, etc.

Course Objectives:

Familiarizes you with the history of the Middle Ages in its social, philosophical, religious, literary, and cultural dimensions. Through a close reading of a wide variety of texts we will study the political structure, the history of mentality, gender issues, religious conflicts, the basic belief system, and the ethical and moral value system characteristic of that time in Europe.

Class Schedule:

May 23-24: Introduction: The history, social structure, and political system of the Middle Ages. The literary, religious, and philosophical foundations (pp. 1-9)

May 23: pp. 1-3 (data, table)

May 24: narrative by Amt, historical overview, structures: pp. 5-8; early Middle Ages, the medieval Church, Jews, Charlemagne, feudalism, rise of cities, mysticism, cathedral schools, three estates, peasants

May 25: narrative by Classen, late Middle Ages: pp. 10-12; gunpowder, fall of Constantinople, rise of humanism, printing press, Protestant Reformation; discovery of America; expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492

May 25-27: Johannes von Tepl, *The Plowman and Death* (p. 365-82) – ethical, religious, philosophical

May 25: Johannes of Tepl, pp. 365-369

May 26: Johannes of Tepl, 375-377, **journal due for preview**

May 27: Walther von der Vogelweide, pp. 141-142; Christine de Pizan, 321-23: Love, Marriage, Death, Grief; gender relationships

May 28-29: The Christian Church and its value system: *Our Lady's Tumbler* (pp. 101-106): the high Middle Ages: Religious Devotion; individual pursuit of one's life's goals

May 30: Feminism in the Late Middle Ages: Gender politics. Christine de Pizan (pp. 319-320, 324-34); **1st journal** to be graded is due: reflect on what we have studied, comment on the readings, raise questions, and add detailed remarks on our excursions (record the names of the castles, churches, cities, etc.)

May 31: The role of women in the high Middle Ages: Marie de France: "The Lay of Eliduc" (pp. 123-34) and "Bisclavret" (pp. 119-22)

June 1: Cont. Marie de France: "Sir Lanval" (pp. 107-13) and "The Lay of the Two Lovers" (pp. 115-17)

June 2-3: The courtly world and love: Hartmann von Aue, *The Unfortunate Lord Heinrich* (pp. 143-55): Selfhood, Ethics, Death, Medicine, Sacrifice

June 4: Economic and political aspects in the early Middle Ages: Charlemagne (pp. 191-93): rulership, military operations, administration, economics

June 5: Charlemagne 194-98

June 6-7: Boccaccio, *Decameron* (pp. 269-92); human life in the early Renaissance, wit, energy, intelligence, politics

June 6: *Decameron* 269-75

June 7: *Decameron* 275-288

June 8: Religious conflicts; outsiders, persecutions, Cathars, p. 11; Mysticism, p. 13; St. Francis (pp. 217-221); **2nd journal due**

June 9: St. Francis, pp. 221-228; especially 222

June 10: Political criticism of the Church: Walther von der Vogelweide (pp. 135-42)

June 11-12: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (293-318): honor, individuality, sacrifice, magic

June 13: Abelard (247-52): theology, logic, philosophy, critical thinking, **3rd journal due**

June 14: Last day: Dante, *Inferno*: wandering through life, guidance, love, sinfulness, pp. 157-165, 170-172

Grading:

Keep a journal for every day, write on your reading experience, on the discussion in class, and on the excursions. These journal entries must be well designed, critical, and in good English. I will collect the journals for an advance feedback from me after 3 days. Thereafter I'll collect the journals for grading three times. Please consult with me if you face any problems or need further input. I expect ca. 2-3 pp. per day (much depends on the size of your journal, your font size, etc.), so a solid narrative, ca. 400 words per day. You must engage with every text covered in class, and always provide some reflections on what we studied on our excursions. Be creative, include images, entry tickets, photos, and other mementos. Please write as legible as possible, and always use a dark **pen**.

Class participation and excursions will be reflected in the journal. You can always consult with me. You are expected to attend all classes and excursions, but reasonable exceptions are acceptable.

Grade A: full reflection of the reading material, of the visited sites, and the overall learning experience. Good reporting of local names, of specific objects, etc. Creative approach to the task at hand

Grade B: good reflections of the reading material, but not thorough enough; superficial comments on the sites etc.

Grade C: fragmentary reflections, lack of attention, lack of interaction

Grade D: basically, a failure in every respect