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WITCHCRAFT AND MAGIC IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE
HISTORY 343, SUMMER 2003

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday and Thursday, 2pm - 3 pm, Monday and Wednesday 5pm-6pm, OR BY APPOINTMENT. PLEASE LET ME KNOW IN ADVANCE IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO COME BY ON MONDAY OR WEDNESDAY 5-6PM, AS I WILL LEAVE @ 5PM IF NO-ONE IS HERE TO SEE ME. If you cannot come during my regular office hours, I am happy to arrange a time to meet that is convenient to you. PLEASE NOTE THAT I SOMETIMES KEEP MY DOOR CLOSED DURING OFFICE HOURS. PLEASE KNOCK!! **MY OFFICE IS RATHER HIDDEN -- PLEASE SEE MAP ON LAST PAGE OF SYLLABUS**

ATTENDANCE IN CLASS is required. **This class will go by very quickly. Much of the material on the class examinations comes from my lectures, and it will be very difficult to do well if you do not attend regularly and do the readings as they are assigned.** You are responsible for finding out from other students about the contents of lectures you miss, as well as about announcements in class concerning examinations, changes in deadlines, etc. You are allowed 2 absences (equivalent to missing three weeks or six normal classes). After that your overall average will be reduced by 5 points (on a scale of 100) for *each additional unexcused absence*. I reserve the right to decide what constitutes a legitimate excuse. Examples of legitimate excuses include: brain surgery on yourself, a major organ transplant, other illnesses. Unacceptable excuses include: oversleeping, car failing to start, vacation trips while classes are meeting, serious illness suffered by your boy/girl-friend's brother's sister-in-law's dog.

Makeup exams will only be given because of a medically excused absence or other well-documented reason for absence at the regularly scheduled exam time. **Quizzes will not be made up for any reason, as I drop the lowest quiz grade.**

REQUIRED READINGS (Available in Student Bookstores):

Brian Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, **SECOND EDITION**, Longman, 1995 provides a good discussion and overview of the subject. **DO NOT PURCHASE THE FIRST EDITION.**

Alan C. Kors and Edward Peters, *Witchcraft in Europe, 400-1700: A Documentary History*, **SECOND EDITION**, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001, provides many fascinating examples of writings from medieval and early modern Europe in which individuals who lived then describe their ideas and report on the practices they believe to be happening around them, and on the trials and executions of witches. **DO NOT PURCHASE THE FIRST EDITION.**

Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, Johns Hopkins, describes a people in Italy who, the author believes, practiced a form of witchcraft.

THEMES OF THE COURSE:

How and why did some people -- predominantly women -- come to be tried as witches? How could such seemingly bizarre accusations appear perfectly rational to people living in earlier centuries? This course is divided into three overlapping sections. In the first, we will attempt to reconstruct the assumptions about how the world worked that made it possible for educated and uneducated people to believe in witchcraft and magic. In the second we will study the recurrent witch-hunting campaigns that plagued early modern Europe in the light of these beliefs. In the third, concluding section we will study the decline of witch-hunting and belief in the reality of witchcraft.

This course assumes a familiarity with the basic course of European history, especially the period from 300 to 1750; I strongly suggest that you take this course only if you have completed Western Civilization I and II; if you did not cover this period I strongly suggest you keep handy a recent Western Civilization textbook and frequently refer to it when you are not sure of a time period, event or person referred to in your readings. Please see me for suggestions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

In-Class Quizzes, 15% of grade

Midterm, Tuesday, June 17, one hour, 25% of grade, class will continue after midterm

Paper, due, Tuesday, June 24 20% of grade. It will be a five-six page careful analysis of two documents in Peters, in which you will explain what they say, discuss the assumptions of their authors about the supernatural, and discuss the significance of the documents for understanding beliefs about witchcraft and witch-hunting.

Final Exam, Thursday, June 26th, two hours, 40% of grade.

You are responsible for finding out from other students about the contents of lectures and discussions you miss, as well as about announcements in class concerning quizzes, changes in deadlines, etc.

GRADING: 90 and above = A
80 to 89 = B
70 to 79 = C
60 to 69 = D
59 and below = F

I welcome students to come by during my office hours to discuss the course material and enjoy talking to you. You need not be having a problem to come by. Of course if at any time you are having difficulties understanding the material, working on your paper, preparing for exams, I want you to come talk to me about the problem. It is quite common even for seniors to run into difficulties in their studies.

If you cannot come during my office hours (listed at beginning of Syllabus), please speak to me after class or leave a message in the History Department with the best times to reach you and I will be happy to arrange an appointment.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with bona fide disabilities will be afforded reasonable accommodation. The Office of Special Student Services will certify a disability and advise faculty members of reasonable accommodations.

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

INTRODUCTION

READING: Levack, pp. 1-4, 21-26

PART I: THE ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL CULTURAL BACKGROUND

I. THE MAGICAL WORLD-VIEW

READING: Levack, pp. 4-11
PETERS, William of Malmesbury, "The Sorceress of Berkeley", 70

II. CHRISTIANITY AND PRE-CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

LEVACK, 27-35
PETERS, Augustine "On Christian Teaching," 43
Caesarius of Arles, "Sermon 54," 47
Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, 50

III. ELITE VIEWS OF WITCHES AND MAGIC I: EARLY VIEWS

- READING: LEVACK pp. 27-35
 PETERS, Regino of Prum: Warning to Bishops, *Canon Episcopi*, 60
 John of Salisbury, *Policratus*, 77
 Ralph of Coggeshall, "The heretics of Rheims," 78

IV. ELITE VIEWS II: HERESY, WITCHCRAFT AND THE PACT WITH THE DEVIL

- READING: LEVACK, pp. 35-8
 PETERS, Nicholas Eymeric, *Directorium inquisitorum*, 120
 Pope Gregory IX, *Vox in Rama*, 114
 OPTIONAL: PETERS, Aquinas, selections, 87-105

V. ELITE VIEWS III: THE WITCH'S SABBATH

- READING: LEVACK, pp. 38-50
 PETERS, Nider, *Formicarius*, 155
 Anonymous, *Errores Gazariorum*, 159
 Claude Tholosan, *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores*, 162
 Nicholas Jacquier, *A Scourge for Heretical Witches*, 169

VI. WAS THERE A THRIVING POPULAR PAGAN CULTURE I? THE BENANDANTI

- READING: LEVACK, pp. 11-20
 Begin GINZBURG, *Night Battles*, Book's forward to p. 39

VII. WAS THERE A THRIVING POPULAR PAGAN CULTURE II?

THE BENANDANTI AND A LARGER FERTILITY CULT

- READING: GINZBURG, pp. 40-68

VIII. WAS THERE A THRIVING POPULAR PAGAN CULTURE III?

THE BENANDANTI AND THE INQUISITORS

- READING: GINZBURG, *Night Battles*, p. 69-171; *Be sure to read documents in Appendix*

PART II: THE WITCH-HUNT

IX. SOCIAL CHANGE

- READING: LEVACK, pp. 125-33; 156-159

X. LATE FIFTEENTH CENTURY CHANGES IN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND PRACTICE

- READING: LEVACK, pp. 50-59
 PETERS, Editor's introduction and Pope Innocent VIII, *Summis desiderantes* (Witch Decree), pp. 176-180
 Kramer and Sprenger, "Malleus Maleficarum," 180-204.
 Gianfresco Pico della Mirandola, *Strix*, pp. 239-245

XI. OUTBREAKS OF WITCH-HUNTING

- READING: LEVACK, pp. 160-184
 PETERS, "The Persecution in Scotland," pp. 318-322
 "The Persecution at Wurzburg," pp. 353-54
 "The Devils of Loudun," pp. 355-359.

XII. DEVELOPMENTS IN LAW: TWO WITCH TRIALS

- READING: LEVACK, pp. 68-99
 PETERS, Kramer and Sprenger, "Malleus Maleficarum," pp. 204-229
 "The Confessions of the Chelmsford Witches, England" 302-308
 "The Trial of Marie Cornu," 345-348

