HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE AGES
TRH 2002HF

2015 SYLLABUS

INTRODUCTION

The body of the mediaeval church, whose head was Christ, consisted, clergy and laity, of saints, and sinners and folk in between. Many had the sometimes false impression that they were obeying God’s will rather than their own. When the church or a part of it occasionally plumbed the depths, there was a reform which raised it up again. It enunciated unchangeable truths about God and the administration of the church which subsequently changed and changed again. Observation of the church during the middle ages helps one understand its favoured yet fallible nature. The student will be asked to do short essays on three topics using only primary sources. The church was an extraordinarily rich source for literature, art and architecture and this will be shown through audiovisual material. Two videos will be presented showing its life, art and architecture, first in the dark ages and the second in the extraordinarily creative eleventh through thirteenth centuries when, as Kenneth Clark rightly said (both literally and figuratively), the world seemed to warm up. The illuminations in an 11th century manuscript from Monte Cassino will be shown to illustrate the life of Saint Benedict written by Gregory the Great. A CD with pictures and commentary of illuminated and other pages in the Book of Kells give an insight into insular script and art ca. 800. A site plan and pictures of the monastic buildings in the Cistercian Abbey of Mahlbronn show how life was lived in an abbey of the period. A slide show will be used to trace the evolution of church architecture from 6th century Ravenna to 15th century Kutná Hora. Lastly, the iconography in late mediaeval church music books will be admired and its evolution noted.

Course Outcomes

A student successfully completing this course will:

• Be able to analyse primary mediaeval documents and draw valid conclusions about their meaning and significance for the period in which they were written.
• Know the most important events in the history of the mediaeval western church and how they influenced its formation

Instructor

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The instructor, having no office, does not celebrate office hours. However, students with questions or ideas to discuss are invited to send an e-mail or to call any time between 10 am and 10 pm, any day of the week. He particularly encourages consultation by students when they are preparing their papers. Please do not hesitate.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

1. Short paper based on original reflection on primary material due October 8 20%
2. Short paper based on original reflection on primary material due November 5 20%
3. Short paper based on original reflection on primary material due December 3 20%
4. Short quiz at the beginning of each class based on the prescribed reading 10%
5. Final written exam at 11:00 am on December 17 30%

Assignments, to receive credit, must have been handed in at the class meeting on the day they are due and must have been completed independently by each student.

FORMAT OF COURSE MEETINGS

Except at the first meeting, the first hour of each meeting will be started by one or two students and followed by a discussion of the assigned reading for the week from F. Donald Logan, A History of the Church in the Middle Ages, 2nd edition. The starter should summarize the text briefly and deal in greater detail on a few points which the student deems most significant. On those weeks when one chapter is assigned, the starter should take no longer than fifteen minutes; when two chapters are assigned, ten minutes. Discussion will follow. This format, to be effective, presupposes that everyone has carefully read and thought about the assigned reading before the meeting. The quiz at the beginning of each meeting is intended to encourage you to take the reading seriously. You should have acquired a copy of Logan (US$44.95 in May 2015) for the first course meeting. (http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415669948/) You should also seriously consider purchasing (amazon.ca) a copy of vol. 1 of the Penguin Atlas of World History, vol. 1 ($11.55), or a copy of the New Penguin Atlas of Medieval History ($12.27).

The second hour of each meeting will deal in a lecture format with subjects covered skimpily by Logan or not at all or, alternatively, with audio-visual material intended to give a more vivid picture of topics than can be conveyed in a printed text.

COURSE DESIGN AND EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

“Doing” history involves two parts: assembly and assimilation of historical facts, and exercising judgement to assess their significance.

Weekly Quizzes and Final Examination
The first part can be had from original documents, contemporary art, architecture and the like. It includes memorizing things like names, dates and places. Places are only meaningful if you know where they appear on a map. While this may seem a bore, dates and places are an essential part of relating what is happening at one time and place to what is happening at another. To get a firm grip of the facts, you must read Logan once or twice carefully before the meeting at which the material is discussed, once after the meeting and again before the examination. Your mastery of the material in Logan will be tested in a quiz at the beginning of each class and in an examination at the end of term. The quizzes and the examination will contain no essay questions, but will ask for facts which can be provided by a word or two, a number or possibly by a sentence. The quiz for a day will have two questions, each of which will have a credit of 0.5 % toward your final mark.
Your ten best quizzes only will be counted for a maximum of ten percent. On the final examination, you will be asked questions which will require you to provide 75 facts. You will be given credit of 0.5% for each correctly answered point, so if you get 60 right, you will receive full marks of 30% for the exam. While the answers to most of the examination questions will be found in Logan, some will relate to material presented in class. A list of sample questions will be distributed at the first meeting. If you have prepared adequately, the examination should take you less than an hour.

**Short Term Papers**

You will have an opportunity to develop your historical judgement by reading part or all of an English translation of a primary document and selecting from it one or more subjects that you find interesting. Each paper should be 5-6 pages double spaced. Do not just give a précis of the subjects, but identify their importance in the author’s eyes or from an historical point of view. Your judgements should be about the contemporary significance or the author’s evaluation of the themes, not about how they relate to the church in the twenty-first century. You can assess contemporary significance and the author’s evaluation in several ways.

- Subjects with which an author deals more than once and in different contexts can often signal topics he feels are important. Looking at several of his references can give a broader idea about what his position is. For example, the subject of miracles fascinates Bede, and he has a number of explanations for why they occur and why the virtuous sometimes suffer.
- New Testament scholars can identify the particular concerns of Matthew and Luke because they both had a copy of Mark before them and they edited Mark’s text differently. The same situation prevails in some of the primary sources listed in the bibliography. The author of the 1223 Franciscan Rule had in front of him the 1221 Rule. A comparison of the two can point to changes in the Franciscan order over two important years. Similarly, Benedict as he wrote his rule had in front of him a copy of the older Regula Magistri. The points he changed give an insight into the saint’s personal priorities.
- Canon law collections (except Gratian) were assembled by a canonist for use in a local area which may have been a diocese. The laws included reflected only those that the canonist (or the bishop he was working for) deemed important for the region in which the collection was to be used. So the choice of the laws included ones which related to general matters or to matters which were a current local problem. Having made this point, some canon law collections proved popular (i.e., relevant) outside the geographic area for which they were assembled and additional copies were made. As a counter example, why do you suppose the ordination of women was never an issue in canon law?
- Conciliar material is often important since the canons passed point to problems in a geographic region or in the church as a whole. You may find Lateran IV, Constance and Basel of particular interest in this respect. For example, Lateran IV has a canon which insists on annual communion. What had produced the situation which motivated this enactment? Why was the prescribed remedy so minimalist?
- It’s often interesting to trace how church thinking on a particular topic developed over time. Think of clerical marriage as an example and trace the position starting with the Bible, Isidore’s *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, John Gilchrist’s *Canon Law Collection in 74 Titles* (late 11th century), and continue on through the four Lateran Councils (1123 - 1215). There is a pronounced change which occurs. The amount of reading involved is very small and you can uncover a fascinating evolution. In all canon law sources, you should remember that subjects are only dealt with when the subject of the legislation is actually happening. You’d not find clerical concubinage condemned unless clergy at the time had concubines.
A few more words about the difference between primary and secondary sources are in order. “Primary” and “old” are not synonymous. “Primary” denotes the original documentation of an event, liturgy, canon law or whatever. A thing is primary if it is not derived from something else. “Secondary” is something that has been composed by a later author about an earlier event or source. For example, a surviving unaltered church building is a primary witness of architectural style at the time it was built. The original canons of a synod or church council are primary. However, many canons have been preserved in canon law collections compiled by later authors and these collections are secondary. Canons in collections often identify the original source however and in any event, the selection of canons is primary evidence of the concerns of the canonist. Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* is the most important extant source for English history between 600 and 731. However, Bede’s work as English history is secondary, relying as it does on other sources. It is however primary as a source of Bede’s thought, values, etc. So how Bede treats various subjects would be a valid topic for one of your papers.

In your essays, you should identify in brackets (rather than by footnote) the page in the translated text of passages you comment on. In a text like Bede or the *Rule of St. Benedict*, of which there are many editions, cite the book and chapter or whatever other internal identification is used.

Please use secondary sources either not at all or else only to check conclusions about which you are uncertain. The bibliography has a number of suggestions about primary sources you might use. It makes a certain amount of sense to do your first paper about something before 1000 CE, your last one about something after 1000, and the second paper about something in between. If you want to write about a topic not on the list, I’ll try to suggest a source to you. Evaluation will be based on the interest of the points you identify and on the understanding and judgement shown in your comments and conclusions about them.

Before each paper you should tell me in three or four sentences either by phone or email what source and subject you intend to use, what idea(s) you want to develop and how you will do it. Since I may not be at home if you phone or may not respond to an email for a few hours, you should not delay starting your paper until the day before it is due.

In grading your paper, I will refer to the page references you give from your primary source. If there is no copy of the book available in one of the U of T libraries, I will have to delay grading until there is. Generally, I will return your work at the class following the one at which you handed it in.

**SUBJECTS AND READINGS FROM LOGAN FOR EACH CLASS**

**September 17**
Reading (R): Ch. 1 to be done after the class.
Second hour (SH): The Skin of Our Teeth, a video narrated by Kenneth Clark.

**September 24**
R: Chs. 2 & 3, 2 starters
October 1
R: Ch. 4, 1 starter.
SH: Insular art and palaeography in the Book of Kells

October 8
First term paper due
R: Ch. 5, 1 starter
SH: The Eucharist and baptism in the eighth century

October 15
R: Chs. 6 & 7, 2 starters
SH: Canon law; forgeries, penitentials.

October 22
R: Chs. 8 & 9, 2 starters
SH: The Great Thaw, a video narrated by Kenneth Clark

November 5
Second term paper due
R: Ch. 10, 1 starter
SH: Monasteries: prayer life and architectural design; PowerPoint survey of Mahlbronn Abbey

November 12
R: Ch. 11, 1 starter
SH: Francis, his admirable lifestyle and the problems it caused his successors

November 19
R: Ch. 12, 1 starter
SH: Mediaeval Churches; a PowerPoint survey from 490 to 1500

November 26
R: Ch 13, 1 starter
SH: Guest lecturer. The development of theology in the middle ages

December 3
Third term paper due
R: Chs. 14 & 15, 2 starters
SH: Iconography in the high and late middle ages found in liturgical books. A PowerPoint survey
of miniatures in late mediaeval Bohemian and Moravian graduals

December 10
R: Chs. 16 & 17, 2 starters
SH: The Bohemian reformation and revolution

December 17
Final examination

4 May 2015