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Hours: MWF 10-11
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Hist 402W: Witches, Saints and Holy Wars: A Cross-Cultural Examination of Religious Practice

This course will examine various religious practices and manifestations of religious belief in order to understand how religion has shaped societies in the past and informed actions, both individually and collectively. Focus will be placed upon practices common to more than one religion, time period, and place, in order to better facilitate comparison. In addition to assessing manifestations of belief which provide unity and uniformity in societies (such as saints and pilgrimages) we will also look at views and attitudes which resulted in polarization and persecution (heresy, inquisition, holy wars). Ultimately, this class will attempt to further an understanding of how religious belief translates into action, and how such action affects society.

This course will be structured thematically to facilitate an examination of belief and practice across time and geographical space. We will examine practices which span a chronological period from the emergence of Christianity in the 1st century A.D. to the witchcraze which indelibly marked the Early Modern Period. Our geographical focus will range from Asia to the Middle East to Western Europe to New England. Such a broad examination will not only facilitate the identification of similarities which transcend cultures and chronological periods, but will also allow for comparison which ultimately broadens our understanding of difference.

This course is intended for senior history majors who have already acquired a basic knowledge of history up to the Modern period. Students will examine how history is made, and compare and contrast the various historical methodologies that scholars have employed when examining the various religious practices and manifestations of belief addressed in this course. Students will produce weekly written assignments that respond directly to readings and incorporate analysis and encourage critical thinking. They will be expected to enter into discussions that engage the material at a level appropriate for advanced history students. The course will culminate in the completion and presentation of a detailed research paper that incorporates both primary and secondary source materials.

Performance and Evaluation:

Attendance and completion of all assignments is mandatory. Each student will be expected to present the results of a book they have chosen to review to the class during the semester. These books will be chosen from the list at the end of the syllabus. Your book review should not exceed 1000 words (single spaced) and should cover a series of questions that we will discuss in class. Your presentation should not exceed 10 minutes. This assignment will combine both summary and analysis of the text. You should not consult any sources other than the monograph you are reviewing for this assignment.

Students will also complete a 15-18 page research paper which they will present to the class towards the end of the semester. This is intended to be an argumentative, rather than a descriptive, paper, and should focus on close investigation of primary sources. In addition to their completed paper, students will be expected to submit a research proposal and annotated bibliography earlier in the semester. Individual meetings will be arranged with me to discuss the proposed research and strategies to employ in identifying additional sources and developing an argument. Internet sources will not be deemed suitable material for any assignments in this course without my express consent and permission in advance. 24 hours before you present the results of your research to the class, you will submit an outline of your paper/presentation to me via email. I will distribute this outline to all members of the class.

These assignments will be weighed according to the following scale:

Discussion	25%
Book Review/Presentation	15% (10%/5%)
Research Paper	30%
Reading Questions (5 of 7)	25%

In addition to being evaluated on written work and oral presentations, students will also be expected to participate regularly in class discussion, which will occur on a weekly basis. Since this course is designed as a seminar and the number of students enrolled is low, everyone will be expected to prepare the readings in advance of each meeting and share their views with the class. In addition, everyone must prepare reading questions for 5 of the 7 major discussion days. These questions should be designed to promote discussion of the texts, directed towards issues of sources, methodology, or arguments. Reading questions must be submitted to me via email at least 24 hours in advance of the day on which they are due.

Regular attendance is expected in this class. After one absence (excused or unexcused), I will deduct one percentage from your final semester grade. Late work will not be accepted unless there is a family or medical emergency. It is your responsibility to plan ahead to make certain that assignments are ready to be submitted at the beginning of the class period. If an emergency does arise, you need to contact me in advance of class to make the necessary arrangements, not after the fact.

Plagiarism: It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the definition of plagiarism as it is presented in the ODU student handbook and with the procedures and punishments that will result if you are suspected of plagiarizing. Although I will make determinations on a case to case basis, you should be aware that the penalties for engaging in this activity, willfully or unwittingly, are extremely harsh. Cheating will be dealt with in a similar manner. Be warned that it is against ODU student conduct policies to submit a paper to more than one class without the express prior consent of each instructor.

Required Texts [Available at the University Book store or for purchase on-line]:

Charles Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe*. Yale, 2011. ISBN: 0300125712

Adam Jortner, *The Gods of Prophetstown: The Battle of Tippecanoe and the Holy War for the American Frontier*. Oxford, 2011. ISBN: 0199765294

Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits*. Oxford, 2006. ISBN: 0195309340

Michael Wolfe, *One Thousand Roads to Mecca*. Grove Press, 1998. ISBN: 082135954

John Demos, *Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England*. Oxford, 2004. ISBN: 0195174836

Antigone, *Sophocles*. Simon and Brown, 2012. ISBN: 161382243x

Blackboard Readings:

McGiffert review of Demos, *Entertaining Satan*

Nissenbaum review of Demos, *Entertaining Satan*

Gildrie review of Karlson, *Devil in the Shape of a Woman*

Boyer review of Karlson, *Devil in the Shape of a Woman*

Elspeth Whitney, "The Witch She/The Historian He"

Gaskill, "The Devil in the Shape of a Man"

Brian Victoria, "Holy War: Toward a Historic Understanding," *Journal of Religion, Conflict and Peace* 3/2 (2010): 429-45

Jesus Casquete, "Martyr Construction and the Politics of Death in National Socialism." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 10 (2009): 265-83

Erik Bahre, "Witchcraft and the Exchange of Sex, Blood, and Money among Aficans in Cape Town, South Africa"

Susan Dominus, "What Happened to the Girls in Le Roy"

Vita of Christina the Astonishing

Vita of Lutgard of Aywieres

Vita of Margaret of Ypres

Schedule of Topics

Week 1: Introduction to the course

Aug. 27

Review syllabus

Discuss course expectations

Primary vs. Secondary sources

Assignment: Read the 4 book reviews posted on Blackboard (McGiffert and Nissenbaum on Demos, Gildrie and Boyer on Karlson).

Consider the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of a book review?
2. What makes a book review effective?
3. What different kinds of information do these authors provide and what does it accomplish? How do the reviews differ? Why?
4. How are these reviews organized? How else might they be organized?

Aug. 29

History vs. Historiography
Discuss book reviews

Defining witchcraft

- Judeo/Christian vs. Animist cultures
- pre-modern vs. modern
- role of the supernatural

Choose books to review and assign presentation dates

Assignment: Read Whitney, “The Witch She and the Historian He” and Gaskill, “The Devil in the Shape of a Man” and be prepared to submit answers to the following questions (Reading questions #1-mandatory):

1. Identify the central arguments of each text.
2. Describe the evidence they use to support their arguments. In what ways is their evidence similar? In what ways does it differ? Do you consider one more reliable and why?
3. In what ways do the authors agree in their explanation of what causes witchcraft? In what ways do they disagree?
4. Based on your assessment of each argument, which author is more convincing? Be specific in your answer.
5. What does this exchange reveal about the historiography of witchcraft?
6. What does this exchange reveal about the history of witchcraft?

Week 2:

Witchcraft

Sept. 3

Labor Day-No Meeting

Sept. 5

Discuss Whitney and Gaskill articles
Lecture: Witchcraft in Salem

Reading questions #1 due

Assignment: Demos, *Entertaining Satan*

Week 3:

Witchcraft

Sept. 10

Discuss Demos, *Entertaining Satan*

Reading questions #2 due

The process of writing a research paper

Sept. 12

Library Exercise

Assignment: Susan Dominus, "What Happened to the Girls in Le Roy"

Week 4:

Modern Witchcraft

Sept. 17

Discuss Dominus article

Library Assignment due

Witchcraft presentations

Assignment: Erik Bahre, "Witchcraft and the Exchange of Sex, Blood, and Money among Africans in Cape Town, South Africa"

Sept. 19

Discuss Bahre, "Witchcraft and the Exchange of Sex, Blood and Money"

Reading questions #3 due

Witchcraft presentations

Week 5:

Saints and Pilgrimage

Sept. 24

Lecture: Saints, Pilgrimage and Relics in the pre-Modern West

Assignment: Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*

Sept. 26

Discuss Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*

Reading questions #4 due

Assign vitae:

Defining sainthood: Primary source readings

Thomas of Cantimpré: The Collected Saints' Lives: Abbot John of Cantimpré, Christina the Astonishing, Margaret of Ypres, and Lutgard of Aynières. \

Week 6:

Oct. 1

Discuss vitae

Saints presentations

Oct. 3 Research Day

Assignment: Greer, *Mohawk Saint*

Week 7: Saints and Pilgrimage continued

Oct. 8 Fall Break-no meeting

Oct. 10 Discuss Greer, *Mohawk Saint*

Reading questions #5 due

Saints presentations

Research Proposals and Bibliography due

Week 8: Saints and Pilgrimage continued

Oct. 15 Lecture: Islam and Haj
View Video: Inside Mecca

Assign Wolfe selections

Oct. 17 Discussion: Wolfe, *One Thousand Roads to Mecca* (selections)

Schedule research paper meetings

Week 9: Paper proposal meetings

Week 10: Martyrdom

Oct. 29 Defining Martyrdom

Oct. 31 Martyrdom presentations

Assignment: Sophocles, *Antigone*

Week 11: Martyrdom

Nov. 5 Discuss Antigone

Reading questions #6 due

Modern Martyrdom

Assignment: Jesus Casquete, "Martyr Construction and the Politics of Death in National Socialism,"

Nov. 7 Discuss Casquete, "Martyr Construction and the Politics of Death"
Assignment: Victoria, "Holy War: Toward a Historic Understanding"

Week 12 Holy War

Nov. 12 Defining Holy War
First Crusade documents
Discuss Brian Victoria, "Holy War: Toward a Historic Understanding."

Nov. 14 View and discuss video, "John Brown's Holy War"
Assignment: Jortner, *Gods of Prophetstown*

Week 13: Holy War continued

Nov. 19 Discuss Jortner, *Gods of Prophetstown*

Reading questions #7 due

Holy War presentations

Nov. 21 Thanksgiving-no meeting

Week 14:

Nov. 26 Final Presentations

Nov. 28 Final Presentations

Week 15:

Dec. 3 Final Presentations

Dec. 5 Final Presentations

Books for Review:

Witches (9):

Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany*. 2006

Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours: the Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft*. 1996

Elizabeth Reis, *Damned Women: Sinners and Witches in Puritan New England*. 1997

Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*. 1971

Pompa Banerjee, *Burning Women: Widows, Witches, and Early Modern Travelers in India*. 2002

Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*. 2003

Carol Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman*, 1998

Leslie Desmangles, *The Faces of the Gods: Vodou and Roman Catholicism in Haiti*. 1992

Raquel Romberg, *Healing Demons: Divination and Magic in Modern Puerto Rico*. 2010.

Saints and Pilgrimage (7):

Leigh Ann Craig, *Wandering Women and Holy Matrons: Women as Pilgrims in the Later Middle Ages*. 2009

Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*. 1988.

Ronald C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England*. 1995

Brian Douglas Ruppert, *Jewel in the Ashes: Buddha Relics and Power in Early Medieval Japan*, 2001

Saurabh Mishra, *Pilgrimage, Politics and Pestilence. The Hag from the Indian Subcontinent, 1860-1920*.

Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood. Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Germany*. 2007

Richard Wunderli, *Peasant Fires: The Drummer of Niklashausen*. 1992.

Martyrs (5):

Kamran Scot Aghaie, *The Martyrs of Karbala*. 2004

Amir Alexander, *Duel at Dawn: Heroes, Martyrs and the Rise of Modern Mathematics*. 2010

L. Stephanie Cobb, *Dying to be Men: Gender and Language in Early Christian Martyr Texts*. 2008

Detlef Garba, *Between Resistance and Martyrdom: Jehovah's Witnesses in the Third Reich*. 2008

Roxanne Varzi, *Warring Souls. Youth, Media and Martyrdom in Post-Revolution Iran*.

Holy Wars (3):

Reuven Firestone, *Jihad: The Origin of Holy Wars in Islam*. 2002

Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades*. 2009.

Nigel Cliff, *The Last Crusade. The Epic Voyages of Vasco de Gama*. 2012