

History 594: Methods and Theory in the Historical Study of Religion (Women, War, and Religion in Early Medieval Europe)

Dr. Katherine E. Milco

SPRING 2021

ONLINE COURSE on Canvas

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Office hours: By appointment over Microsoft Teams.

Course Description:

This course focuses on the topics of women, war, and religion in late antiquity and early medieval Europe. This will include a lot of ancient material, since the line between antiquity and the early medieval period is largely undefined. The emphasis is placed on the critical analysis of primary texts, which is the hallmark of historical methodology that professional historians use today. Specifically, the course emphasizes **the critical analysis of primary texts in connection with the historical study of religion**. The secondary emphasis is **the examination and evaluation of different contemporary methodologies** – postmodernism, Marxism, feminism, psychohistory, postcolonialism – that some professional historians also use in the study of the history of religion.

Course Objectives:

1. To learn how to use and analyze primary sources in the historical study of religion.
2. To learn the role of secondary sources in historical research: positive and negative.
3. To understand and utilize contemporary methodologies utilized in the discipline of history.

Required Textbook:

There is **no required textbook** for you to purchase. All readings will be provided to you free of charge via Canvas.

Grading Scale:

95-100	A	80-82	B-	67-69	D+
90-94	A-	77-79	C+	63-66	D
87-89	B+	73-76	C	60-62	D-
83-86	B	70-72	C-	Lower than 60	F

Evaluation:

Reading Responses	80%
Final Paper	20%

Course Components:

1. Reading Responses: There are a total of **18 reading responses** assigned over the course of the semester. These are responses that you give to questions that I pose about the text. For the first 7 weeks of the course, all the reading responses will answer questions that I pose about ancient source material. From week 8 onward, they will answer questions that I pose about contemporary methodologies and secondary sources. I will drop **your two lowest reading responses**. **Late reading responses are not accepted**. For each reading (ancient or modern), I often – but not always - create a **short video** to orient you to the text.

2. Final Paper: The final paper will be assigned on Friday, November 27 at 8 am and will be due on Friday, December 11 at 12 pm (Noon). It should be **7-8 pages double-spaced**. This is not a research paper. **Late papers are not accepted.**

Guidelines for writing:

- a. Do not include an introduction or conclusion. Get to the point.
- b. **Do not** express your perspective or opinion. **Do not** use personal pronouns (such as “I” or “me”).
- c. Your response should be typed, 12-point font.
- d. Do not refer to any other reading than the one assigned.
- e. Cite your sources in parenthesis: page number or paragraph number.
- f. Provide all the evidence.
- g. No direct quotations.
- h. Write in grammatical English. Be precise. Do not use jargon or pretentious language. Never use an English word when you are not certain of its meaning.
- i. Spelling and punctuation are not optional!

Policy on late assignments: No late assignments are accepted. (See above.) If you test positive for Covid-19, I may grant you an extension if you provide documentation.

All material for the course can be found under the “assignments” tab on Canvas with the exception of the syllabus (which is under the “syllabus” tab).

There are no extra credit opportunities offered in this course. Do not ask.

Academic Honesty:

All work must meet the criteria for academic honesty as established by the University.

Please see:

<https://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/>

No material (including from the web) that has not been assigned by the instructor may be used for any of the papers.

Work Per Week:

The amount of time that you should expect to spend on homework per week will vary according to student. Nevertheless, the ballpark figure of 7-9 hours is what I suggest.

If you require special accommodations due to a documented disability, please contact me.

CALENDAR 2021

All days/times are Central Standard Time.

It is your responsibility to submit assignments on time. I am not obliged to remind you. I recommend either printing this calendar or copying the dates into your planner.

Week 1: January

M: 25 8 am: material for w. 1-2 available	T: 26	W: 27	Th: 28	F: 29 10 pm: R.R. 1 (Handout)	Sa: 30	S: 31
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Week 2: February

M: 1	T: 2 10 pm: R.R. 2 (Tacitus)	W: 3	Th: 4 10 pm: R.R. 3 (Tacitus)	F: 5 8 am: Material for w. 3-4 is posted	Sa: 6	S: 7
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Week 3: February

M: 8	T: 9 10 pm: R.R. 4 (Plutarch)	W: 10	Th: 11 10 pm: R.R. 5 (Plutarch)	F: 12	Sa: 13	S: 14
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Week 4: February

M: 15	T: 16 10 pm: R.R. 6 (Perpetua & Felicity)	W: 17	Th: 18 10 pm: R.R. 7 (Symmachus)	F: 19 8 am: Material for w. 5-7 is posted	Sa: 20	S: 21
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Week 5: February

M: 22	T: 23 10 pm: R.R. 8 (Marcellinus 1)	W: 24	Th: 25 10 pm: R.R. 9 (Marcellinus 2)	F: 26	Sa: 27	S: 28
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Week 6: March

M: 1	T: 2 10 pm: R.R. 10 (Gregory of Tours 1)	W: 3	Th: 4 10 pm: R.R. 11 (Gregory of Tours 2)	F: 5	Sa: 6	S: 7
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Week 7: March

M: 8	T: 9 10 pm: R.R. 12 (Gregory the Great)	W: 10	Th: 11 10 pm: R.R. 13 (Gregory the Great)	F: 12 8 am: Material for w. 8 is posted	Sa: 13	S: 14
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Week 8: March

M: 15	T: 16	W: 17	Th: 18 10 pm: R.R. 14 (Post-modernism)	F: 19 8 am: Material for w. 9 is posted	Sa: 20	S: 21
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Week 15: March (Spring Break)

M: 22	T: 23	W: 24	Th: 25	F: 26	Sa: 27	S: 28
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Week 9: March-April

M: 29	T: 30	W: 31	Th: 1 10 pm: R.R. 15 (Marxism)	F: 2 8 am: Material for w. 10 is posted	Sa: 3	S: 4
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Week 10: April

M: 5	T: 6	W: 7	Th: 8 10 pm: R.R. 16 (Psychohistory)	F: 9 8 am: Material for w. 11 is posted	Sa: 10	S: 11
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Week 11: April

M: 12	T: 13	W: 14	Th: 15 10 pm: R.R. 17 (Feminism)	F: 16 8 am: Material for w. 12 is posted	Sa: 17	S: 18
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Week 12: April

M: 19	T: 20	W: 21	Th: 22 10 pm: R.R. 18 (Post- colonialism)	F: 23	Sa: 24	S: 25
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Week 13: April

M: 26	T: 27	W: 28	Th: 29	F: 30 8 am: Final exam is posted	Sa: 1	S: 2
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Week 14: May

M: 3	T: 4	W: 5	Th: 6	F: 7	Sa: 8	S: 9
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Week 15: May

M: 10	T: 11	W: 12	Th: 13	F: 14 12pm (Noon): Final Exam	Sa: 15	S: 16
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List of Readings

Week 1: Handout

Week 2: Excerpts from Tacitus' *Germania* and *Agricola*

Week 3: Plutarch's *On Superstition* and excerpts from Plutarch's *On the Bravery of Women*

Week 4: *The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity* and the *Memorial of Symmachus*

Week 5: Excerpts of Ammianus Marcellinus' *Res Gestae*

Week 6: Excerpts from Gregory of Tours' *History of the Franks*

Week 7: *Pope Gregory the Great's Letter to Augustine of Canterbury*

Week 8: Postmodernism handout and Hayden White's "Postmodernism and Historiography"

Week 9: Marxism handout and Robert J. Myles' "Fishing for Entrepreneurs in the Sea of Galilee? Unmasking Neoliberal Ideology in Biblical Interpretation"

Week 10: Psychohistory handout and Llyod DeMause's "Infanticide, Child Rape and War in Early States"

Week 11: Feminism handout and Mary R. Lefkowitz' "The Motivations for St. Perpetua's Martyrdom"

Week 12: Postcolonialism handout and S. Rutledge's "Tacitus in Tartan: Textual Colonization and Expansionist Discourse in the *Agricola*"