

CLAS 205 : Medieval Society

Winter 2017

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Lecture 1

What sources do we have for learning about medieval society?

We have manuscripts, buildings, statues/art/mosaics, surviving institutions, folklore and archaeological sites.

What is codicology

The study of manuscript books on parchment as physical objects.

What is paleography?

The study of ancient writing systems and decoding ancient manuscripts.

Why are sculptures, paintings and mosaics studied?

Their quality and quantity describes the wellness of the period. Also, their content displays the culture of the time.

What is dendochronology?

The study of dating tree rings.

What is numismatics?

The study of coins and currency.

What is paleobotany?

The study of ancient plants.

What is an aerial survey?

A survey of a specific site done by air. Used by archaeological digs.

What is the nursery rhyme, 'Ring Around the Rosie' actually about?

The Black Death in the Middle Ages.

What is the nursery rhyme London Bridge about?

TODO

Name 5 medieval institutions that survive to this day

When was Rome at its greatest peak?

Under Emperor Trajan between 98-117CE.

Under what Emperor was Rome at its greatest peak?

Emperor Trajan.

What was the population of Rome at its peak?
Between 45-60 million people.

Name 6 things a complex society built in imperialism can have access to?
Literacy, coinage, specialization of labour, redistribution of wealth, high quality goods AND economic mobility (moving between economic classes).

Name 6 internal and external threats the Roman Empire faced?
Plague, incompetent rulers, usurpers, barbarian invasions, financial collapse and loss of civic pride.

What century marked the decline of Rome?
The third century CE.
What characterized the Barracks Emperors?
They were short lived, died violently and had seized power via their army.

How many claimants to the throne were there during the 3rd Century CE?
There were 67.

Where did invasions come from during the 3rd Century CE?
The North in Germani and from the East in Syria.

What is the word for migrations of German tribes?
Völkerwanderung.

How does Rome solve manpower needs for the army?
Germanic tribes brought into the empire are used more heavily.

What percentage of the population owned $\geq 90\%$ of the wealth?
1500 families did.

What emperor created the Tetrarchy?
Diocletian in 293 CE. This divided the Roman Empire into 2 parts.

What were the name of the 4 rulers of the tetrarchy?
There were **2 Augusti** and **2 Caesars**.

How did the number of provinces changed during the tetrarchy?
They went from 50 to 100+. Each province was divided into 12 dioceses, each controlled by a Vicar.

What were the two types of armed forces during Diocletian's military reforms?

The Comitatuses and Limitanei. The Comitatuses are mobile, well trained where the Limitanei was infantry and not as well equipped.

What did Diocletian institute in 301CE?

The "Wage and Price Controls" that dictated certain occupations as hereditary in order to control labour shortage problems.

What percentage of the Roman population were farmers at Diocletian's reign?

About 85-90%.

What was the name of the city members who had to pay taxes up front, and collect them from city members?

Curiales.

When did Diocletian abdicate?

305CE

When did Diocletian die?

312CE

What happened after Diocletian died?

The tetrarchy collapsed and there was civil war. Constantine I was victorious.

What was the name and date of the battle where Constantine used the symbols χ, ρ ?

The battle of Milvian Ridge in 312 CE.

What does In Hoc Signo Vincas mean?

In this sign, you will conquer

What did Constantine I enact in 313 CE to legalize Christianity?

The Edict of Milan.

What did Constantine do in 321 CE regarding religious holidays?

He made Sunday a public holiday.

What two heretical Christian groups existed at the time?

Arianism and Donatism.

What city did Constantine I rename Constantinople in 324CE?

Byzantium.

What council did Constantine I create to form religious Christian standards? The Council of Nicaea.

Was Constantine I baptized?
Yes, on his deathbed in 327 CE.

Who was the last emperor to rule a united empire?
Theodosius I, the Great.

How did Theodosius handle paganism?
He outlawed it.

What barbarian group revolted in the Eastern Empire in 378-379 CE?
The Goths, who killed the Eastern Emperor Valens at Adrianople.

What group from the East pushed all other barbarian groups Westward?
The Huns.

What was an effect of the decline of the Empire?
De-urbanization, loss of grain and agriculture.

What was the last piece of antique Latin writing?
Boethius's **Consolation of Philosophy**.

What was the name given to the ideal Roman Empire?
Rome Aeterna.

Lecture 2

Reading 1 : The Grandeur of Rome

Overview

Notes

Question

Reading 7 : The Raids of the Northmen

Overview

- In the 9th, 10th centuries, Arabs from the South, Northmen from Scandinavia and Magyars from the Eastern Steppe plagued the towns of Europe (England, France, Low Countries)

Notes

The Early Raids of the Northmen, 834 -859

- Northmen pillaged Nantes in 834, killing the bishop and clergy
- Northmen pillaged along the Garonne until Toulouse
- With 100 ships, the Northmen assailed Paris after being unopposed. Charles the Bald gave them 7000lbs of (coin, resources) for them to leave. They did, but pillaged all the way to the coast
- Danish pirates pillaged Nantes in 853-854 pillaged the city of Nantes, chateau of Blois before being routed at Orleans. Routed by the bishop of Orleans and Chartres
- Tried to pillage Poitiers in 855 but were defeated by Aquitanians
- Pillaged Orleans in 856
- Pillaged along the Rhone in 859, settling on the island of Camargue. Ravaged up until Valence. Travelled to Italy afterward

The Siege of Paris, 885

- Sigfred, leader of the Danes, assailed Paris with 700 ships in 885
- Count Odo led the defence of Paris
- After the first day of fighting, the town's tower was damaged and repaired

- There was a plague inside the city. Count Odo went to seek Charles, the Frankish Emperor for help
- Count Odo came back with Emperor Charles the Fat. Charles allowed the Northmen to have Sens and gave them 700lbs of silver.

Question

Did the cities meet the Viking raids with any type of resistance? Who led the resistance in Paris? What role did ordinary townspeople play in the defense of Paris? How did Emperor Charles the Fat choose to deal with the attackers?

- Certain cities did, but the reading seems to suggest they pillaged most towns unopposed.
- Count Odo was the leader of the Parisian resistance during the Seige
- Ordinary townspeople helped repair the tower that was consistently damaged by the Northmen
- Emperor Charles fought them, but also used bargaining, giving them coinage and land.

Reading 8 : The Magyar Raids

Overview

- The attacks of the Magyars/Hungarians were the last barbarian raids on Europe
- Passage written by Flodoard, a canon of Reims, France

Notes

- King Berengar led the Magyars to pillage the Italian city of Pavia in 924
- Only 200 souls remained. 44 churches and 2 bishops were killed
- The invaders were paid off with 8 measures of silver
- The Magyars then crossed the Alps, were routed by Rudolf II so they entered Gothia. A plague in Gothia killed many
- In 933, the Magyars divided into three with one attacking Italy and another attacking Henry's Germany. With help of Bavaria, Saxony, Henry cut almost 36000 down
- In 955, King Otto went to fight the Magyars and won. Via alliances with the Sarmatians, Bohemians, Lotharingians, they were almost annihilated.

Question

How far-ranging were the Hungarian incursions and what impact did they have on towns? Why did towns act as magnets for the invaders? Did towns or townspeople have anything to do with their defeat?

- The incursions reached into France, Germany and Italy.
- Towns act as magnets because they were not as well defended as cities while also containing vast resources to support the local population.
- TODO

Reading 11 : The Origins of the Saxon Towns

Overview

- Henry 1 was the first German King of the Saxon family/house
- After defeating the Magyars, Henry focused on taking territory from the Slavs to the East and fortifying new towns.

Notes

- After King Henry defeated the Magyars, he focused on defending his existing kingdom
- One out of 9 peasants moved into and helped build fortifications.
- One third of all produce was brought to these fortifications
- While these new fortified towns were being constructed, Henry attacked the Slavs in Havel (Heveldi)
- He then took Dalmatia, Jahna and took Prague from the Bohemians

Question

Which places did King Henry choose to make into cities and what steps did he take to accomplish this end? How do the origins of these Saxon towns compare to the town origins related in docs 9, 10?

- Allocating human resources in the form of $\frac{1}{9}$ peasants helped him fortify the new towns
- The allocation of one third of all crops to go to these towns made people flock to them
- TODO

Reading 13 - Granted of Privileges to the Castellians, Mozarabs and Franks of Toledo

Overview

- Charter made in 1118 after King Alfonso II seized Toledo from the Moslems
- Describe 5 different groups residing in Toledo at the time : Castellians, Mozarabs, Franks, Galicians and Jews.

Notes

- Wants to re-establish a pact with the Franks, Mozarabs and Castellians still residing in the city
- All knights are exempted from tolls at the gates on horses, mules
- Clergy, Christian keep hereditary goods which are exempt from tithes
- Any gifts given from the King should be divided evenly among the Knights of Toledo, Castellians, Galicians and Mozarabs
- If a Moor or Jew has a legal case against a Christian, they use a Christian judge

Question

Who were the "knights" of Toledo and what privileges did they receive? What were they expected to do in exchange for these privileges? Did the different religious and ethnic groups in Toledo enjoy the same privileges and responsibilities? To what extent does this charter illustrate harmony or tension between the different ethnic and religious groups of Toledo?

- Knights were expected to go on Abnudba (guarding of animal herds on the frontier) or Fossatum (military conquest into muslim territory) in exchange for the benefits they received
- Not everyone had the same privileges or responsibilities. For example, the Franks and Jews were excluded from receiving benefits from the King while the other citizen groups did

Reading 15 - Archaeological Excavations in Tenth-Century York

Overview

- York was initially a Roman Town but was captured by Vikings in 866.

- Viking maintained it until 954
- Archaeological finds at Coppergate in York shed light on York when the Northmen resided there

Notes

- One find was buildings with Wattle walls, a central hearth and benches
- Wattle paths
- Woodrunner/carpenter workshop
- Silver brooches. Also copper or lead alloys. Most were lead
- Amber/Jet beads
- Forgery of Islamic coins

Question

None

Reading 16 : The People of Cologne Rebel against their Archbishop

Overview

Notes

Question

Reading 17 : The Formation of a Commune at Laon, 1116

Overview

- Describes the formation of a commune by townspeople fed up with their local ruler, the Bishop
- The first commune that was formed by clergy, nobles and townspeople was disbanded after 3 years
- The second commune that arose of mainly townspeople, grew tired of constant taxes/fees by the Bishop and revolted

Notes

Question

How does Guibert of Nogent define a "commune"? Did the interest groups involved in the formation of the commune fit with Guibert's definition? What role did oaths play in the formation of the commune and the revolt against Laon's lord, the bishop? What tactics did townspeople employ to secure their commune after the bishop revokes it? What did the bishop fear about the formation of the commune? How does this revolt compare with that in Cologne in terms of motivation, leadership, aims?

- A **commune** is a community where members only pay the annual customary head tax to their ruler, fees for breaking the law with no other financial burdens imposed.
- Essentially. It was the regular townspeople forming the commune, for the purpose of foregoing other financial fees throughout the year. The sum paid to form the commune went to the ruling/upper class of nobles and clergy.
- Establishing the commune involved the nobles to profess oaths, stating they would maintain their end of the agreement. The beginning of the revolt stems from the Bishop forcing the King and all parties involved in the creation of the commune, to break their oaths.
- After the bishop revoked the commune, the townspeople left their jobs and positions. They did not expect to have much wealth left after the ruling class was to tax them.
- TODO
- TODO

Reading 96 : Problems among the Clergy at Rouen Cathedral : 1248

Overview

- Bishops regularly visited churches, cathedrals and monasteries to ensure proper religious conduct was followed.
- This reading describes a bishop's visit to a Cathedral in Rouen

Notes

Question

What impression does this inquiry give us of the activities of the cathedral clergy within the town of Rouen?

- The cathedral clergy in Rouen did not practice church conduct with proper rigour
- The clergy also engaged with the local townspeople often, mostly when performing activities forbidden by the church
- Certain cathedral members talked to women during choir, left choir without reason, said Psalms too fast etc.
- Many of the Masters and Sirs were incontinent, thieves, murderers, drunkards, dicing and trading.

What were considered the right relations between the clergy and townspeople?

- It appears that the interactions between the clergy and townspeople should be limited to the basics (food, water etc.) and items related to the church. This can be seen because of the bishop's anger towards clergy trading, engaging with merchants and being drunkards.

Reading 97 : The Beguines of Ghent, 1328

Overview

- Beguine is a name for women devoting themselves to God but who were not nuns. Unlike Nuns, they were able to go about normal lives.
- Beguines lived in Beguinages
- This reading is from an inquiry into the Beguinage in Ghent.

Notes

Question

Is there any evidence of why so many urban women were drawn to the Beguine movement?

- There were many women who did not have husbands and could not enter a monastery because of capacity.
- Women were drawn to beguinages because they could remain chaste but have food, shelter and community
- Were there more women at this time because of a war and the men were gone?

To what extent did Beguines participate in town life?

- The principal mistress of the Beguinage ensured beguines did not stay in town for a night without permission and could not leave for an hour.

- They are not intended to meet suspect people when they do go into town
- The passage paints a lack of involvement in town life

Is there any evidence of how the townspeople might have viewed these religious women who lived in the world, rather than a convent?

- TODO

Reading 98 - The Good Canon of Cologne

Overview

- Describes the virtue of a Canon in order to guide and train novices becoming monks

Question

What types of social, religious and charitable interactions did the canon have with the townspeople of Cologne?

- He consistently gave away food, coin and others to the impoverished
- He brought the people to feasts as guests
- TODO

What does the passage tell us about attitudes towards the poor?

- It tells us that most were not really cared for by the Church, making what the Canon did exceptional.
- The meeting with Abbess confirms that certain clergy were opulent and not pious like the canon

Why does the canon criticize the abbess and how does his concern compare to the complaints of the reforming bishop of Rouen in doc. 96?

- He criticizes her because she and her group are dressed nicely whereas he is surrounded by the poor. The money she used on clothing and luxury, could have been given to the poor
- The complaints are similar but also different. The Bishop of Rouen complained about the rigour of church practice and how certain members traded, were incontinent, and drunkards. However, he never commented on their morality, like the Canon does to the Abbess. The canon's complaints are moral complaints and align themselves with the teachings of the Church. The Bishop's complaints were about Church policy and conduct, but not the specific teachings in the Bible.

Reading 99 : A Popular Franciscan Preacher in Paris : 1429

Overview

- Describes the charismatic nature of a Franciscan preacher during the Hundred Years

Notes

Question

What does this passage tell us about sermonizing and its impact in medieval towns?

- It tells us that it was able to have a large impact when the preacher was charismatic and consistently preached. Brother Richard was very frequent with his preaching and as a result, was able to talk to a large audience.

Why were people compelled to attend these long sermons?

- People may have felt compelled to attend because he travelled to Paris specifically for the purpose of preaching. He may have been known and respected as well, making people more inclined to hear him talk.
- As well, the writer wrote this during the tumultuous years of the Hundred Year's War. Perhaps this caused people to want to be more pious in order to end the suffering the conflict caused?

How did those most influenced by the sermons react and why did they take the actions they did?

- People destroyed games deemed covetous like dice, cards, balls and sick that could cause anger or swearing.
- Women removed fine clothing, head-geat, stuffing and other items for pure purpose of vanity. This affected women of all social classes
- People were sad and cried when he announced he had to leave.
- Over 6000 people wished to attend his final sermon, although he did not arrive to give it.

Reading 102 : The Religious Fraternity of St.Katherine at Norwich, 1389

- Religious guilds/groups like that dedicated to St.Katherine in Norwich provided benefits to members
- In exchange for money, candles were provided for prayer and sermons for recently deceased humans were provided

Notes

Question

Why would people join this guild?

- For the services it offers, especially in times of misfortune. This includes the death of a family member, being struck with poverty.

What services or benefits did it have to offer?

- They offered mass for a deceased family member
- They offered to carry the dead, if permitted, to Norwich for a ceremony. If not, they buried the dead in place and still celebrated mass.
- They offered welfare if a family was struck with poverty
- They offered community. Members ate together on their guild day, wore the same clothing and were together often as a result of the above offered services

How did the guild help ensure a sense of solidarity among its members

- Solidarity was created as a result of the common clothing, consistent gatherings and the services provided.
- Being a member of the guild helped out a person in their time of need, giving a sense of community.