

## SYLLABUS Ger 392 Medieval Travel Course, Summer 2015

Instructor: Prof. Albrecht Classen, Dept. of German Studies, 301 LSB, Univ. of AZ (but we will be on the road, May 21-June 15, 2015)

Textbook: *Medieval Answers to Modern Problems*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (San Diego: Cognella, 2012)

See also the web sites on our course webpage 2015 for medieval art and medieval history

### Time Schedule:

The course consists of four weeks, with no weekends, i.e., we'll have class every day because this is such an intensive summer course. Please read every section in advance as assigned and be ready for the class when the material is listed on the syllabus. We will regularly switch from the early to the late Middle Ages so that you gain a good contrastive perspective throughout the course. That will also reflect the reality on the ground as we will observe on our daily excursions.

### Course Objectives:

Familiarizes you with the history of the Middle Ages in its social, philosophical, religious, and cultural dimensions. Through a close reading of a wide variety of texts we will study the political structure, the history of mentality, gender issues, religious conflicts, the basic belief system, and the ethical and moral value system characteristic of that time in Europe.

### Syllabus:

Day 1 and 2: Introduction: The history, social structure, and political system of the Middle Ages. The literary, religious, and philosophical foundations.

Day 3: The early Middle Ages: Hildebrandslied: Critique of feudalism and vassalage.

Day 4: The end of the Middle Ages: Nicholas of Cusa: Fall of Constantinople, yet Christian outreach to the Turks

Day 5: The Christian Church and its value system: Our Lady's Tumbler: the high Middle Ages

Day 6: Feminism in the Late Middle Ages: Gender politics. Christine de Pizan

Day 7: The role of women in the high Middle Ages: Marie de France

Day 8: Cont. Marie de France

Day 9 and 10: The political and social system of medieval society as reflected in literary terms:  
Dante

Day 11: Economic and political aspects in the early Middle Ages: Charlemagne

Day 12: The schools and universities: Bruno of Cologne

Day 13: Miracles, faith, and religious tales: Caesarius of Heisterbach

Day 14: Rationalism, philosophy, and the university schools: Abelard: Yea and Nay

Day 15: Abelard and Heloise: a political scandal

Day 16: Political criticism of the Church: Walther von der Vogelweide

Day 17: The role of nobility and philosophical and religious quests: Hartmann von Aue

Day 18 and 19: Late-medieval discourse on justice, individual happiness, and self-realization:  
Johannes of Tepl

Day 20 and 21: Peace, justice, and the Individual: Marsiglio of Padua

Day 22-24: Medieval Art, we study objects and paintings in the Bode Museum, Berlin

Grading:

Keep a journal for every day, write on your reading experience, on the discussion in class, and on the excursions. These journal entries must be well designed, critical, and in good English. I will collect the journals for an advance feedback from me after 3 days. Thereafter I'll collect the journals for grading three times. Please consult with me if you face any problems or need further input.

I expect ca. 2-3 pp. per day. You must engage with every text covered in class, and always provide some reflections on what we studied on our excursions. Be creative, include images, entry tickets, photos, and other mementos. You can also conceive of a visual portfolio, as long as it is accompanied by extensive and critical narrative.

Journal

Class participation and excursions

The latter two are an automatic given, considering that this will be a study abroad experience. Class participation and excursions will be reflected in the journal. You can always consult with me.

Grade A: full reflection of the reading material, of the visited sites, and the overall learning experience. Good reporting of local names, of specific objects, etc. Creative approach to the task at hand

Grade B: good reflections of the reading material, but not thorough enough; superficial comments on the sites etc.

Grade C: fragmentary reflections, lack of attention, lack of interaction

Grade D: basically a failure in every respect