

SOCIETY AND THE SUPERNATURAL IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Fall 2022

History 560 / Religious Studies 691

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Office Hours by appointment

Course Description:

Conceptions of the supernatural changed drastically in the sixteenth century. This course will analyze the nature and scope of this change, with a focus on two interrelated subjects:

1. How conceptions of the supernatural relate to cultural, social, and political structures;
2. How historians approach past manifestations of the supernatural.

Key: 1 or 2 without asterisk = required reading

* = recommended reading

** = suggested reading

SYLLABUS

week 1 Aug 31: Introductory meeting

1. Robert Bartlett, *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middle Ages*

week 2 Sep 7

1. *The Book of Margery Kempe* (Yale e-book)
2. "The Unbelieved and Historians, Part I: A Challenge," *History Compass*, Dec. 2016
- *3. Carolyn Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe*
- *4. William Christian, Jr., *Apparitions in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain*.
- *5. C.S. Watkins, *History and the Supernatural in Medieval England*.
- *6. Derek Wilson, *A Magical World*
- *7. André Vauchez, *Saints, prophètes et visionnaires: le pouvoir surnaturel au Moyen Age*

week 3 Sep 14

1. Erasmus of Rotterdam, "The Shipwreck"; "A Pilgrimage for the Sake of Religion"; "An Exorcism, or Apparition"
2. Andrew Karlstadt, "On the Removal of Images," John Eck, "On Not Removing Images of Christ and the Saints"
3. "The Unbelieved and Historians, Part II: Proposals and Solutions," *History Compass*, Jan. 2017
- *3. Craig Harline, *Miracles at the Jesus Oak*
- *4. Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, chapters 1-5
- *5. Susan Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual*
- **6. Carlos Eire, *War Against the Idols*, chapters 1-4.

week 4 Sep 21

1. Transcript of the Marburg Colloquy
2. John Calvin, *Institutes*, I.1-14, IV.17-19

3. "The Unbelieved and Historians, Part III: Responses and Elaborations," *History Compass*, Dec. 2017

*3. Christopher Elwood, *The Body broken: the Calvinist doctrine of the Eucharist and the symbolization of power in sixteenth-century France*.

*4. Philip Soergel, *Miracles and the Protestant Imagination*

*5. Robert Scribner, "Incombustible Luther," *Past and Present* 110: 38-68 (1986) and Lyndal Roper, "Luther Relics" in *Religion, the Supernatural, and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe*, pp.330-353.

**6. Carlos Eire, *War Against the Idols*, chapters 4-8.

week 5 Sep 28

1. Teresa of Avila, *Life of Teresa of Jesus*, chapters 1-2, 7-14, 20-22, 28-40.

2. Carlos Eire, *The Life of Saint Teresa of Avila: A Biography*, preface & chapters 1-3

*3. Andrew Keitt, *Inventing the Sacred*

*4. Alison Weber, *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity*

*5. Marilyn Fedewa, *Maria of Agreda, Mystical Lady in Blue*

*6. Richard Kagan, *Lucrecia's Dreams*

week 6 Oct 5

1. Pedro Ciruelo, *A Treatise Reproving All Superstitions*

*2. Stuart Clarke, *Thinking With Demons*, chapters 1-22.

*3. Kathryn Edwards (ed.), *Werewolves, Witches, and Wandering Spirits: Traditional Belief & Folklore in Early Modern Europe* (10 essays)

*4. Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours*

*5. Verena Thiele and Andrew McCarthy, eds., *Staging the Superstitions of Early Modern Europe* (10 essays)

*6 Fernando Cervantes & Andrew Redden, eds., *Angels, Demons and the New World* (9 essays)

week 7 Oct 12:

1. Urbain Grandier, *History of the Devils of Loudun*

*2. Robert Rapley, *A Case of Witchcraft: The Trial of Urbain Grandier*

*3. Aldous Huxley, *The Devils of Loudun*

*4, Moshe Sluhovskyy, *Believe Not Every Spirit: Possession, Mysticism and Discernment in Early Modern Catholicism*

*5. Kathryn Edwards (ed. & trans.), "Leonarde's Ghost"

**6. Michel de Certeau, *The Possession at Loudun*

week 8 Oct 19

NO CLASS: Feast of St. Paul of the Cross (1694-1775), preacher to peasants and the poor, founder of the Passionist order, promoter of devotion to the passion of Christ.

week 9 Oct 26

1. Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*

2. King James I, *Demonology*

*3 Stuart Clarke, *Thinking With Demons*, chapters 22-44.

- *4. Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze*
- *5. Orna Alyagon Darr, *Marks of an Absolute Witch: Evidentiary Dilemmas in Early Modern England*
- *6. Francis Young, *English Catholics and the Supernatural*

week 10 Nov 2:

- 1. Angelo Pastrovicchi, *Life of Saint Joseph of Copertino*;
- *2. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, chapters 1-12.
- *3. L. Daston & K. Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, chapters 1-4.
- *4. Paolo Parigi, *The Rationalization of Miracles*
- *5. Bradford Bouley, *Pious Postmortems: Anatomy, Sanctity, and the Catholic Church in Early Modern Europe*
- **6. Carlos Eire, "The Good, the Bad, and the Airborne," in: *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany*, pp. 301-324.

— **DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING A PAPER TOPIC**

Week 11 Nov 9

- 1. Jane Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England*
- 2. Alexandra Walsham, "The Pope's Relics and the Jesuits' Trumpery" in *Religion, the Supernatural, and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe*, pp.379-410..
- *3 David Hume, *Of Miracles*
- *4. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, chapters 13-22.
- *5. L. Daston & K. Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, chapters. 5-9.
- *6. Julie Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism: Monstrous Births in Post- Reformation England*
- *7. Robert Burns, *The Great Debate on Miracles, from Joseph Glanvill to David Hume*

week 12 Nov 16

- 1. H.C. Erik Midelfort, *Exorcism and Enlightenment*
- *2. The science of rational devotion From the writings of the learned and Celebrated Lodovico Muratori
- *3. Raymond Jonas, *France and the Cult of the Sacred Heart*
- *4. Francis Young, *English Catholics and the Supernatural, 1553-1829*
- *5. Michael Printy, *The Enlightenment and the Creation of German Catholicism*

Week 13 Nov 23:

NO CLASS: Feast of St. Columbanus (543-615), Irish missionary to the Frankish and Lombard kingdoms, promoter of private confession to priests.

week 14 Nov 30

- 1. Euan Cameron, *Enchanted Europe*
- **2. Carlos Eire, "Incombustible Weber: How the Protestant Reformation Really Disenchanted the World."

week 15 Dec 7, Paper summaries

PAPERS DUE

Course Requirements

1. Weekly: reading and discussion of assigned texts. Texts available online, at Yale Bookstore, or Tyco
2. Drawing up discussion questions for one week, and presenting one recommended reading to the seminar. Details provided during first meeting, August 31.
3. Paper: 20-25 pages, Due December 7. Details provided in early October, and as the semester progresses.