

**Religious Studies 433**  
**History of Christian Thought, 200-1000**

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**Fall, 2001**  
**Thursday 2-5**  
**Logan Hall 204**

This course introduces students to the major intellectual issues of Christianity from the period of the formulation of orthodox theology (the third to the fifth centuries), through the early medieval era, to the dawn of scholastic theology around the year 1000. Although the emphasis is on the evolution of Christian thought, several aspects of social and political history will also be considered, for example, the growth of ascetic movements and the monastic ideal, relationship between Christianity and the Roman Empire, and the role of women in Christian history. Readings will be largely from primary sources, with several secondary authors (especially Peter Brown) serving as foils to interpretation. Students will be expected to do independent research in the library and on line, beyond the assigned readings of the course.

There will be two papers required of all students. The first (5-7 pp.) is a close examination of a primary text, either one of those read in common, or one chosen with the approval of the instructor. The final paper (10-15 pp.) will be a research paper that must include materials not assigned to the class. Each student should choose a topic for the final paper, in consultation with the instructor, by the end of October.

**Course Outline:**

**September 6** Introduction to the class. Discussion of periodization. Geography quiz! Close reading of texts by Tertullian and Origen of Alexandria (provided)

**September 13** “Late Antiquity” and “Early Christianity” The formation of Christianity from 300-451.

Reading: 1. Brown, Part I, chapters 1-5

**September 20** Creedal Christianity – the proclamations of Nicaea-Ephesus-Chalcedon, “orthodoxy,” “heterodoxy,” “heresy”

Reading: 1. Henry Chadwick, The Early Church chapters 9 & 14 (on reserve at Rosengarten Library, BR165. C48 1968)

2. St. Athanasius, On the Incarnation

**September 27** Ascetic Christianity – the romance of the desert, the desert in the world

- Reading: 1. The Desert Fathers, trans. Helen Waddell  
2. Gregory of Nyssa, The Life of Saint Macrina, trans. Kevin Corrigan  
3. Egeria, Diary of a Pilgrimage selections (provided)

**October 4** Augustine of Hippo, 1: Life and Seeking

Reading: (in Augustine of Hippo, Selected Writings, trans. Mary T. Clark))

1. Confessions Books 7,8,9,10
2. The Happy Life, all.

(Note: Peter Brown's Augustine of Hippo would be a very useful book to read in these weeks. The new edition (2000) is in Rosengarten Library, BR1720.A9 B7 2000, and multiple copies of earlier editions are in the stacks, BR1720.A9 B7)

**October 11 NO CLASS**

**October 18 FIRST PAPER DUE** Augustine 2, Reading and Preaching the Bible

Reading (all found in Augustine of Hippo, Selected Writings)

1. Homilies on the Psalms: Psalm 119, 120, 121, 122
2. Homilies on the Gospel of Saint John: First Homily, Twelfth Homily
3. Homily on the First Epistle of St. John, Treatise 7.

**October 25** Augustine 3, The Doctrinal and Philosophical Legacy

Reading (all found in Augustine of Hippo, Selected Writings)

1. On the Trinity, Books 8, 14.
2. Letter 147 to the Noble Lady, Pauline
3. Letter 187, On the Presence of God
4. The City of God Book 19
4. The Rule of St. Augustine

**November 1** The Growth of the Monastic Ideal and Institutions

Reading: 1. Brown Part II, chapters 6-13

2. The Rule of Saint Benedict, trans. Anthony C. Meisel
3. Gregory the Great, The Life of St. Benedict (provided)
4. The Venerable Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English Church and People  
2. 1 (in Medieval Studies/Religious Studies Seminar, BR746 .B5 1969)
5. Judith Herrin, The Formation of Christendom, chapter 4, "The Achievement of Gregory the Great," in Rosengarten Library, BR232 .H47 1987.

**November 8** Frankish Christianity and the Carolingians

Reading: 1. Brown, Part III, chapters 14-17

2. Haimo and Thietland on 2 Thessalonians, Trans. Hughes and Cartwright
3. "A List of Superstitions and Pagan Practices" (provided)

4. "The Donation of Constantine" (provided)
5. "The Capitulary on the Saxon Territories," (provided)
6. A selection of Carolingian poetry (provided)
7. Judith Herrin, The Formation of Christendom, chapter 10, "The Carolingian Innovation," in Rosengarten Library, BR232 .H47 1987.

**November 15** Anselm I: The Development of Scholastic Theology

- Reading: 1. John Scotus Eriugena, Periphyseon, selections (provided)
2. Anselm, Monologion (all Anselm trans. Davies and Evans)
  4. Anselm, Proslogion
  5. Gaunilo, Pro Insipiente (On Behalf of the Fool)
  6. Anselm, Reply to Gaunilo

**November 22 NO CLASS – Happy Thanksgiving!**

**November 29** Anselm 2: Philosophy/Theology; Doctrine/Preaching

- Reading: 1. Anselm, On the Incarnation of the Word (trans. Davies and Evans)
2. Anselm, Why God Became Man
  3. Anselm, On the Virgin Conception and Original Sin

**December 6** The Liturgy of the Medieval Church

(readings to be determined – will be provided)

**FINAL PAPERS DUE BY NOON ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 17.**

**The following books are available from the Penn Book Center. It is highly recommended that you purchase the Brown volume. The primary sources may be read in other editions (and in a variety of languages) available in Van Pelt Library.**

7. Peter Brown, The Rise of Western Christendom : Triumph and Diversity Ad 200-1000 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).
8. Helen Waddell (Translator), The Desert Fathers : Translations from the Latin (Vintage Spiritual Classics, reprint 1998).
9. Athanasius, On the Incarnation : The Treatise De Incarnatione Verbi Dei (St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1975).
10. Gregory of Nyssa, The Life of Macrina (Translated by Kevin Corrigan) (Peregrina Publishing, 2001.)
11. Augustine of Hippo : Selected Writings (Translated by Mary T. Clark ) (Paulist Press, 1988)
12. The Rule of St. Benedict, Anthony C. Meisel (Translator), M. L. Del Mastro (Translator) (Image Books , 1975) .
13. Second Thessalonians : Two Early Medieval Apocalyptic Commentaries (Haimo of Auxerre and Thietland of Einsiedeln) (Translated by Kevin Hughes and Steven R. Cartwright) TEAMS Commentary Series, Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan U., 2001).
14. Anselm of Canterbury : The Major Works (Oxford World's Classics) (Translators Brian Davies and G. R. Evans) (Oxford Univ Press, 1998).