Module title: **Witches, Heretics and Social Outcasts: Europe and its Outsiders c.1250-1550**

Module code: **HS3T39**  
Providing Department: **History**  
Level **H**  
Number of credits: **20**

Terms in which taught: **Autumn or Spring**  
Module convenor: **Dr Helen Parish**

Pre-requisites: **None**  
Co-requisites: **None**

Modules excluded: **None**  
Current from: **2005-06**

**Aims:**  
Topics involve the study of specific periods, subjects or types of history. This topic aims to provide students with an understanding of the rise and spread of ‘deviance’ in western Europe during the late medieval period.

**Assessable outcomes:**  
By the end of the module it is expected that the student will be able to:
- identify and explain the main issues and events studied
- acquire a detailed knowledge of the events through extensive reading in specialised literature
- locate and assemble information on the subject by independent research
- appraise critically the primary sources and historical interpretations of the subject
- organise material and articulate arguments effectively in writing, both under timed conditions and in assessed essays.

**Additional outcomes:**  
The module also aims to encourage the development of oral communication skills and the student’s effectiveness in group situations. Students will also develop their IT skills by use of relevant web resources.

**Outline content:**

Late medieval Europe has been described as ‘a persecuting society’ in which the enforcement of orthodox belief and behaviour resulted in the exclusion and persecution of individuals and groups as diverse as Christian heretics, Jews, women, mystics, and witches. This Topic will examine the rise and spread of ‘deviance’ in western Europe, and the strong reactions aroused by crimes as diverse as blasphemy, witchcraft, and infanticide. It will consider the factors that underpinned the determination of the authorities to define and enforce orthodoxies, and the methods employed to bring about conversion and integration, from preaching missions to segregation to persecution. Seminars will explore the treatment of various groups at the hands of church and state, including witches, heretics (Cathars, Hussites and Anabaptists), lepers, and Jews. Consideration will be given to the efforts made to stamp out doctrinal error, superstition and magic, but also the degree to which toleration was advocated and practiced. Specific case studies will be set within a more general historiographical and theoretical context. Students will also be introduced to a broad range of primary source materials, and encouraged to reflect upon the difficulties posed by the use of such records.
**Brief description of teaching and learning methods:**
Seminars for which students must carry out full preparatory reading and research. Seminars rely on structured group discussion and may also include: seminar papers by students; discussion of evidence; team-based exercises and debates; study visit to a relevant location. Students are expected to carry out self-directed revision in the Summer term. Staff will be available for consultation as necessary.

**Contact hours:**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Autumn or Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutorials/seminars</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practicals</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other contact (eg Study visits)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total hours</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of essays or assignments</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (eg major Seminar paper)</td>
<td>see above</td>
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**Assessment:**

**Coursework**
Students will write two essays of not more than 2,500 words, one to be submitted on the Monday of week six of the term and the second on the Monday of week ten of the term.

**Relative percentage of coursework**  50%

**Electronic submission**
The Department reserves the right to ask (via e-mail) for an electronic copy of any essay (in addition to the hard copy). This allows for the calculation of an accurate word count. In the unlikely event of any coursework showing signs of poor academic practice, electronic submission allows work to be read by plagiarism-detecting software. The electronic copy should be supplied within 48 hours of a first request being made. In the event of any failure to supply an electronic copy within seven days of the request, the department may impose standard penalties for late submission.

**Penalties for late submission**
Penalties for late submission of coursework will be in accordance with University policy.

**Examinations**
One two-hour paper requiring two answers to be taken at the time of the Part 3 examinations.

**Requirements for a pass**
A mark of 40% overall.

**Reassessment arrangements**
Re-examination in September. Coursework will be carried forward if it bears a confirmed mark of 40% or more. Otherwise it must be resubmitted by 1 September.
Witches, Heretics, and Social Outcasts in Europe

Course Outline

Week One
a. Medieval Heresy: Introduction
b. What is a heretic?
c. INTRODUCTION: Waldensianism

Week Two
a. SOURCES AND DEBATES: Waldensianism
b. INTRODUCTION: Pre-Reformation heresy

Week Three
a. SOURCES AND DEBATES : pre-Reformation Heresy
b. Seminar Presentation planning meetings

Week Four
a. PRESENTATION: lepers and leprosy
b. PRESENTATION: Jews in medieval and early modern Europe

Week Five
a. PRESENTATION: Women, religion, mysticism, prophecy
b. PRESENTATION: Women and witchcraft

Week Six
a. INTRODUCTION: Reformation
b. Martin Luther

Week Seven
a. SOURCES AND DEBATES: Reformation
b. INTRODUCTION: Religious radicalism

Week Eight
a. SOURCES AND DEBATES: Religious radicalism
b. INTRODUCTION: Understanding early modern witchcraft

Week Nine
a. SOURCES AND DEBATES: Witchcraft
b. GROUP DISCUSSION: interpreting witchcraft: case studies and context

Week Ten
a. Conclusions
b. Revision tutorials
Additional Information

1. Seminars

Attendance at all seminars is compulsory, and students are expected to prepare for each class by reading items from the appropriate section of the course bibliography below.

Certain seminars (identified as ‘presentation’ in the course summary above) involve student-led presentations, in small groups. All students are asked to choose a topic for a group presentation from the list that will be circulated at the start of term.

Some seminars will be structured around ‘sources and debates’, and will involve either an informal discussion of selected primary source materials (see bibliography below), or a more formal presentation of the sources.

2. Essays

All students are required to write two essays. A full list of essay questions may be found below.

The first essay must be submitted on Monday of week 6. The second essay must be submitted on Monday of week 10. Both essays must be accompanied by a completed coversheet. Remember that there are penalties imposed upon over-length work, and essays that are submitted after the deadline.

The first essay will be returned to students by Tuesday of week 7. Individual tutorials are offered to students who wish to discuss their work. Marks and feedback for the second essay will be available at the end of term. Both essays will be retained by the department for review by internal and external examiners.

3. Electronic Resources

There is a course web page for this module, accessible via my personal pages at www.rdg.ac.uk/~lhs99hlp. The website reproduces much of the information contained in this handbook, and will be updated with additional materials if necessary. If you find any useful online source materials yourself that you think might be useful to the class, I will be pleased to add these to the online module information.

4. Contact

My office is HUMSS 138, and I am available to see students without an appointment during my regular ‘office hours’. I can be reached by telephone (x8145), or email h.l.parish@rdg.ac.uk
Essay Questions

‘The historian faces acute problems of evidence when studying the behaviour, motives and beliefs of the heretic’ (Malcolm Lambert). Discuss.

Compare and contrast the studies by Moore and Nirenberg of the position of medieval minorities.

‘The problem of medieval heresy was creation of a developing, empire-building Church.’ Discuss.

Why did the Catholic church persecute Waldensianism so vigorously?

To what extent was the suppression of the heresy of the Free Spirit the result of non-doctrinal concerns?

How influential was the thought of John Wycliffe in fifteenth century Lollardy?

Why were lepers excluded from medieval society?

To what extent can the popularity of Hussitism be explained by political factors?

How far were sixteenth century European attitudes towards Jews shaped by medieval precedents?

Why were Anabaptists so feared by Catholic and Protestant churches?

How successful was the medieval church in its attempts to separate magic and religion?

How important was the *Malleus Maleficarum* in shaping early modern attitudes to witchcraft?
**Text Books and Introductory Works**


D. Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1996) [also an e-book]

J. Richards, *Sex, Dissidence and Damnation: Minority Groups in the Middle Ages* (London, 1991)

R. N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c.1215-c.1515* (Cambridge, 1995), chap. 8 ‘Inclusion and Exclusion’


**Primary Source Collections:**


R. Mellinkoff, *Outcasts: signs of otherness in Northern European art of the later Middle Ages*, 2 vols., (Los Angeles, 1993) [on visual representations]


W. L. Wakefield and A. P. Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia U.P., 1991) (covers the early part of the course)
**Online Source Materials**
The *Internet medieval sourcebook* at
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1s.html#Medieval%20Heresy

The *online reference book for medieval studies* at: http://www.the-orb.net/ which also includes some good introductory essays

A student project at Kenyon on marginality and community:
http://www2.kenyon.edu/Projects/Margin/margin.htm

Details of printed primary sources used in seminars can be found under each subject heading.


**Identification and Repression: What is a heretic?**


**Set text**

Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou* (1978 and other editions) ch. 18, 19 and 21
Waldensians


**Waldensians: Primary Sources**


The *Conversion of Peter Waldo*: [http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/waldo1.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/waldo1.html) (Medieval Source Book)

Waldes, in Wakefield and Evans, *Heresies*, no. 30 and no. 33; and in Moore, *Birth of Popular Heresy*, no. 34.
Pre-Reformation Heresy: Wycliffe and Hus

Wycliffe and Lollardy

Margaret Aston, Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion (London, 1984)
Margaret Aston and Colin Richmond, eds, Lollardy and the Gentry in the Later Middle Ages (Stroud, 1997), BX4901.2.L6.
Margaret Deanesly, The Lollard Bible and other Medieval Biblical Versions (Cambridge, 1920)
Anne Hudson, Lollards and their Books (London, 1985)
Anne Hudson and Michael Wilks eds., From Ockham to Wyclif: Studies in Church History Subsidia, 5 (1987)
Anthony Kenny, Wyclif (Oxford, 1985)
Kenneth B. McFarlane, John Wycliffe and the beginnings of English Non-conformity (Harmondsworth, 1952)
Richard Rex, The Lollards (Basingstoke and New York, 2002), BX4901.2.R3

Jan Hus

Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium, ch. 11.
F. G. Heymann, John Zizka and the Hussite Revolution (Princeton, 1955)
http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/History/?type=article&byte=1090043&isize=M
F. Smahel, ‘John Hus, Heretic or Patriot?’ History Today, 40 April (1990), 27-33

Pre-Reformation Heresy: Primary Sources

Lollardy
J.Todd ed., An Apology for Lollard Doctrines attributed to Wicliffe, Camden Society 1st series no. 20 (1842)

Jan Hus
Leprosy

P. Richards *The Medieval Leper and his Northern Heirs* (1977)

S. Brody *The Disease of the Soul: Leprosy in Medieval Literature* (1974)


C. Ginzburg *Ecstacies: Deciphering the Witch’s Sabbath* (1993), ch.1


M. Dols ‘The leper in medieval Islamic society’, *Speculum*, 58 (1983)


Online sources:
http://www2.kenyon.edu/Projects/Margin/lepers.htm

ORB article on medieval medicine:
http://www.theorb.net/non_spec/missteps/ch4.html

Leprosy: Primary Sources

*The Bible*: http://www2.kenyon.edu/Projects/Margin/biblep.htm


*Extracts from the Poem of the Cid*:
http://historymedren.about.com/gl/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/p/pd%2Dmodeng/pd%2Dmodeng%2Didx%3Ftype=header%26id=SoutRChron

*Excerpts from the life of Alice the Leper*, a nun who became a leprous martyr:
http://www2.kenyon.edu/Projects/Margin/alice.htm

**Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Europe**


M. Bodian, "Men of the Nation": The Shaping of Converso Identity in Early Modern Europe’, *Past & Present* 143 (1994)


A. Funkenstein, ‘Basic types of Christian anti-Jewish polemics in the late Middle Ages, *Viator* 2 (1971) 373–382


H. C. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition in Spain* available online at [http://libro.uca.edu/lea1/1lea.htm](http://libro.uca.edu/lea1/1lea.htm)


R. Mellinkoff, *Outcasts: signs of otherness in Northern European art of the later Middle Ages*, 2 vols., (Los Angeles, 1993)


S. Rowan, ‘Luther, Bucer and Eck on the Jews’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 16 (1985)

D. Wood (ed.), *Christianity and Judaism*, Studies in Church History 29 (1992)

J. Edwards, *The Jews in Western Europe* (online resource): [http://www.medievalsources.co.uk/jewsinwest.htm](http://www.medievalsources.co.uk/jewsinwest.htm)
Anti-semitism: Primary Sources

J.Edwards, *The Jews in Western Europe* (online resource):
http://www.medievalsources.co.uk/jewsinwest.htm

An account of the York Massacre (late 12th century):
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/ephr-bonn1.html

Innocent III: *Constitution* (1199)
The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/lat4-c68.html

Martin Luther, *Of the Jews and their Lies* http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/1543-Luther-JewsandLies-full.html
**Heresy of the Free Spirit and Dangerous Women**

M. Bailey, *Battling Demons. Witchcraft, Heresy and Reform in the Late Middle Ages* (2003) chapter 3  
H. Grundmann, *Religious movements in the Middle Ages: the historical links between heresy, the Mendicant Orders, and the women's religious movement in the twelfth and thirteenth century, with the historical foundations of German mysticism* (Univ Notre Dame, 1995)  
Carol Neel, "The Origins of the Beguines" in Judith M. Bennett, et. al., ed. *Sisters and Workers in the Middle Ages* (Chicago, 1989)  

**Online essays and articles:**

[http://www.users.csbsju.edu/~eknuth/xpdx/beguines.html](http://www.users.csbsju.edu/~eknuth/xpdx/beguines.html)
Primary Sources: Beguines

F.Tobin (Mechthild of Magdeburg) *Flowing Light of the Godhead*, (Paulist Press, 1998)

Online Sources:

Marguerite Porete: The Mirror of Simple Souls By Bonnie Duncan of the English Department at Millersville University. Marguerie Porete was a Beguine condemned and executed for heresy in 1310.
http://www2.kenyon.edu/Projects/Margin/porete8.htm
Na Prous Bonnet (Boneta) was condemned as a Beguine in 1325.
http://www2.kenyon.edu/Projects/Margin/naprous.htm.
The Condemnation of the Beguines at the Council of Vienne, 1311-12
http://www.dailycatholic.org/history/15ecume5.htm

Prophecy and Prophets

K.Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain 1530-1645* (1979)
S.Clark, *Thinking with Demons* (1997), part III, esp. chs 20, 22, 23, 24
A. Williams (ed.), *Prophecy and Millenarianism: Essays in Honour of Marjorie Reeves* (1980)
The Reformation

Overview

Cooper, T., ‘Reassessing the Radicals', *Historical Journal*, 50 (2007), 241-52
Eltis, D.A., 'Tensions between clergy and laity in some western German cities in the later Middle Ages.' *JEH* 43 (1992).
*The European Reformations Sourcebook* (Oxford, 2000), Documents
*The Age of Reform 1250-1550* (New Haven, 1980).
Scribner, R.W 'Elements of popular belief,' in *Handbook of European history, 1400-1600 : late Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation* ed.T.A. Brady, Jr., H.A. Oberman, J.D. Tracy (Leiden / New York, 1994).

Online sources:
TLTP tutorial "The Protestant Reformation", accessible via History Department web site
Primary Sources: The Radical Reformation

Klaassen, W., 'The Anabaptist understanding of the separation of the church,' Church History, 46 (1977).
Po-Chia Hsia, R., 'Münster and the Anabaptists,' in his German People and the Reformation (Ithaca, 1988).
Scott, T., Thomas Muntzer. Theology and Revolution in the German Reformation (Basingstoke, 1989).

Primary Sources

The Schleitheim Confession 1527: http://www.anabaptists.org/history/schleith.html
**WITCHCRAFT**

**Medieval Magic and Witchcraft**

Norman Cohn, *Europe’s Inner Demons* (London 1975)
David Rollo, *Glamorous Sorcery: Magic and Literacy in the High Middle Ages* (Minneapolis, 2000)

**Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe**

S.Clark, *Languages of witchcraft : narrative, ideology, and meaning in early modern culture* (2001)
G. Scarre, *Witchcraft and Magic in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Europe*
J.A. Sharpe, ‘Witches and Persecuting Societies’, *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 3 (1990), 75-86

**The Malleus Maleficarum, Witchcraft and Women**
R. Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours*, chapter 7 (the gendering of witchcraft)
R.A. Horsley ‘Who were the witches?’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 9 (1979)
Online Articles


Primary Sources:


Primary Sources


OR in *Proceedings against Dame Alice Kyteler*, ed. T. Wright, Camden Society 1st series, no. 24 (1843).

*The Malleus maleficarum of Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger*, trans. Montague Summers (1971) or online at [www.malleusmaleficarum.org](http://www.malleusmaleficarum.org)

Primary sources online at ORB: [http://www.the-orb.net/encycl/culture/magwitch/magic.html](http://www.the-orb.net/encycl/culture/magwitch/magic.html)

Put yourself on trial for witchcraft at [http://departments.kings.edu/womens_history/witch/hunt/](http://departments.kings.edu/womens_history/witch/hunt/)

*Links to websites detailing individual witch trials may be found on the course website*
CONCLUSION: Heresy and Exclusion 1250-1550

Survival and Revival

M. Aston, ‘Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Revival?’ , History, 49 (1964), 149-70
N. Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium (London 1970)
M. Lambert, Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation (Blackwells, 2002)
G. Leff, Heresy in the Later Middle Ages: the Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent, c.1250-1400, 2 vols (Manchester 1967)
R. I. Moore, The Origins of European Dissent (Toronto1994)