



Spring 2019 – Magic, Religion, and the Inquisition

MEDI-UA9995001 RELST-UA9671001

Tuesday 3:00pm-17:45

Classroom Montughi, Villa Sassetti

Class Description:

In the last three decades, the history of magic, of witchcraft, and of their repression has been analyzed from a variety of viewpoints. Historians now consider the “occult sciences” and their reception – and rejection - to be a highly multifaceted topic, which cannot be fully understood unless it is studied from multiple angles. Correspondingly, we will look at this elusive topic from various, different perspectives, trying to capture as much as possible of its multifaceted essence.

This course is made up of four sections. The first opens with an analysis of the intellectual foundations of the witch-hunt from the later Middle Ages to the early Renaissance. It traces the development of the elite's opinions with respect to popular superstition, magic and heresy, and their evolution into the belief in the witches' plot to destroy Christendom.

The second section will concentrate on the most famous handbook for witch-hunters, *Malleus Maleficarum* (“The Hammer of the Witches”) and on the roots of medieval misogyny, also studying how visual representations of female sexuality served as a means to articulate and reinforce male expectations and control over women.

In the third section we will look at the mass witch-hunts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries on the backdrop of the break between Protestant and Catholic Europe, and examine the connections linking witch-hunting to the momentous social, political and religious changes of the times.

In the fourth part, the course will shift focus to the grassroots level, with a twofold aim. On the one hand, thanks to the contribution of anthropology and sociology, we will shed light on the economic and social mechanisms which lead a community to “make a witch”, singling out one of its members and accusing him (but more often her) of anti-social, and indeed anti-human deeds. On the other hand, the tools of gender history will enable us to understand why witches were often accused by other women, and to read the witches' confessions with psychoanalytical tools.

Instructor Details:

Matteo Duni, PhD

NYUGlobal Home Email Address: md90@nyu.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Villa Ulivi Office Location: Office 6

Villa Ulivi Phone Number: +39 055 5007 300

Desired Outcomes:

On completion of this course, students should:

- be able to contextualize the discourse on magic and witchcraft in the wider framework of early modern culture, from natural philosophy to politics, from language to gender;
- be able to distinguish and comprehend the various historiographical approaches which enable our present understanding of the subject;
- have a clear sense of the different factors that, through their complex interplay, lead to the age of the witch-hunts
- have improved their understanding of the methodologies of research on the course's topics

Assessment Components

- **Attendance and Participation: 12,5%**
- **Written Assignments (two 5-page reaction papers): 25%**
- **Midterm Exam: 20%**
- **Oral Presentation: 12,5%**
- **Final Exam: 30%**

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

Class presentations: Students will present to the class on a theme chosen among the weekly topics listed on the syllabus. They are first to show clearly the main points discussed by the author(s), expressing their personal point of view, comparing the readings examined to other texts read in class, and explaining whether they are convinced of the authors' opinion and why. Presentations must be an exercise in critical thinking, not a mere repetition of the readings' contents; they will have to be concise (max. 30 minutes), lively and to the point. After their presentation, students will chair the class discussion, that is, questions and comments from their peers. PowerPoint, handouts, and other creative methods of interaction/presentation are encouraged, but must be discussed with the professor. Students may have to read additional bibliography to prepare for presentation, and in any case must meet with professor beforehand. Presentations have to be done normally in pairs, on the first class of the week chosen. The first week available for presentations is that of **Feb. 26**, the last one that of **May 7**. No presentations will be scheduled in the week of Apr. 2. Professor will circulate a sign-up calendar of presentations in the week of **Feb. 19**. All students **MUST** sign up for a presentation by that week. No rescheduling of presentations will be allowed.

In-class Examinations: The midterm exam will consist of two parts. The first part will be a list of names, dates and events which students will have to identify with short definitions - 2-3 complete sentences each. The second part will be composed of four essay questions. Students will choose two, and answer them fully, that is, with essays approx. two pages long each. The final exam will consist of a list of two short and four long essay questions: students will do both short essays (ca. 150 words, or one page, each), and will choose two out of the four long questions (approx. two pages long each). Professor will hand out study sheets before exams.

Reaction papers: These are reviews of readings, each ca. 5 pages, typewritten, double-spaced. The paper must include a summary of the main points of the reading, and a critical comment by the student

explaining why text is relevant to the course, best if linked to other readings and/or lectures (in case with bibliographical references). Each paper must refer to a single text, either an article/essay, or a chapter from a book. The students have to write two papers during the semester: one must refer to a reading from the first half of the course (deadline for submission: **Mar. 12**); the other to a reading from the second half (deadline: **Apr. 23**). Papers have to be written in clear, correct English, and to be typed with care. Grammatical and spelling mistakes and sloppy writing will result in the lowering of the grade. You cannot choose readings from either the course textbook, *The Witch-hunt in Early Modern Europe* by B. P. Levack, or *Under the Devil's Spell* by M. Duni, for a review paper.

Assessment Expectations

- **Grade A:** The student's work demonstrates an understanding of the subject that goes beyond assigned course readings. The student writes essays/exam questions that are an original synthesis of source materials, demonstrating the ability to evaluate source material critically. Written arguments are clear, well-organized and well-presented; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student has distinguished himself/herself throughout the course of the semester for his/her contributions to class discussion.
- **Grade B:** The student's work shows a clear understanding of assigned readings and materials covered in class. The student writes clear, well-organized and well-presented essays/exam questions; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student is prepared in class and asks relevant questions.
- **Grade C:** The student's work shows a basic understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. However, written and/or oral work is deficient in one or more of the following areas: clarity, organization or content. The student's work is generally in need of improvement.
- **Grade D:** The student's work shows occasional understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work is deficient in one or more of the following areas: clarity, organization or content. The student does not participate in class discussion and has not frequented the instructor's office hours.
- **Grade F:** The student's work does not demonstrate understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work are either insufficient or are not submitted. The student appears unprepared in class and has not frequented the instructor's office hours.

Grading Guidelines

A=94-100

A-=90-93

B+=87-89

B=84-86

B-=80-83

C+=77-79

C=74-76

C-=70-73

D+=67-69

D=65-66

F=below 65

Grading Policy

Please refer to Assessment Expectations and the policy on late submission of work

Academic Accommodations

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see the [Moses Center](#) for further information.

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see [Study Away and Disability](#).

Attendance Policy

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade.** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

For courses that meet once a week, one unexcused absence will be penalized by a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade. For courses that meet two or more times a week, the same penalty will apply to the number of class times over a single week

Excused Absences:

In case of absence, regardless of the reason, the student is responsible for completing missed assignments, getting notes and making up missed work in a timely manner based upon a schedule that is mutually agreed upon between the faculty member and the student. **The only excused absences are those approved by the Office of Academic Support; they are as follows:**

Absence Due to Illness

- If you are sick, please see a doctor. Contact the Office of Student Life for assistance.
- For absences that last for **two or more consecutive days**, a **doctor's certificate, "certificato medico" is required**. The doctor will indicate in writing the number of days of bed rest required. Please note **these certificates can only be obtained on the day you see the doctor** and cannot be written for you afterwards.
- Absences can **ONLY** be excused if they are reported **WITHIN 48 HRS** of your return to class via the online NYU Florence Absence Form [insert new hyperlink]
- OAS will not accept a student email or telephone call regarding an absence due to illness
- OAS will only notify faculty of absences **REPORTED** on the **ABSENCE FORM**
- The Office of Student Life, when assisting you in cases of severe or extended illness, will coordinate with the Office of Academic Support to properly record your absences

Due to Religious Observance

- Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday
- Information regarding absences due to religious observance must be provided at least SEVEN DAYS PRIOR to the date(s) in question using the online NYU Florence Absence Form [insert new hyperlink]
- Please note that no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retroactively.

Due to a class conflict with a program sponsored lecture, event, or activity

- All students are entitled to miss one class period without any penalty to their grade in order to attend a lecture, event or activity that is sponsored by La Pietra Dialogues, Acton Miscellany or the Graduate Lecture series.
- Information regarding absences due to a class conflict must be provided at least SEVEN DAYS PRIOR to the date(s) in question using the online NYU Florence Absence Form [insert new hyperlink]
- Please note that no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retroactively.

Students with questions or needing clarification about this policy are instructed to contact a member of the Office of Academic Support located in Villa Ulivi or to email florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu

Late Submission of Work

- All course work must be submitted on time, in class on the date specified on the syllabus.
- To request an extension on a deadline for an assignment, students must speak to the professor one week prior to the due date
- To receive an incomplete for a course at the end of the semester, two weeks before final exams, both the student and the faculty member must meet with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs to review the request and if granted, they must both sign an Incomplete Contract detailing the terms for completing missing coursework.

Plagiarism Policy

PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN ANY FORM:

The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

In the event of suspected or confirmed cases of plagiarism, The faculty member will consult first with the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs as definitions and procedures vary from school to school. Please consult the "Academic Guidelines for Success" distributed on your USB key at Check-in and on the NYU Florence Global Wiki.

For a detailed description of some possible forms of plagiarism and cheating please consult the Community Compact that you signed at Orientation, a copy of which is on the above mentioned Wiki and USB key.

Writing Center:

The Writing Center, located in Aula Belvedere in Villa Ulivi, offers you feedback on any type of writing, at any stage in planning or drafting. Sign up for a consultation at the [Writing Center's website](#) and submit your working draft or ideas a day in advance to [NYU Florence Writing Center](#). Drop in for a consultation M-Th, but remember that appointments are given priority. Be assured that very rough drafts are welcome. Please note that we do not correct or "fix" your writing; instead we prompt you to think and work. Our aim is to create stronger writers in the long term, not necessarily perfect papers in the short term

Required Text(s):

It is recommended that students purchase the books marked with *: they are available at the Paperback Exchange bookstore, via delle Oche 4/r. Copies of each textbook are available for consultation and short term loans in the [Villa Ulivi Library](#). Extra copies of some textbooks are also available for semester long loans. The library of Villa Ulivi holds both the originals and the master copies of all the other readings. For more information on Books and Course Materials go [here](#).

Behringer, Wolfgang, "Weather, Hunger and Fear" in *The Witchcraft Reader*, ed. Darren Oldridge, London-New York, Routledge, 2002, 67-86.

Broedel, Hans Peter, "Witchcraft as an Expression of Female Sexuality" in Id., *The Malleus Maleficarum and the Construction of Witchcraft: Theology and Popular Belief*, Manchester (UK), Manchester University Press, 2003, 167-88.

Gene Brucker, ed., *The Society of Renaissance Florence: A Documentary Study*, New York-London, Harper and Row, 1971, 260-73

Burke, Peter "Witchcraft and Magic in Renaissance Italy: Gianfrancesco Pico and his Strix" in *The Renaissance in Europe: A Reader*, ed. Keith Whitlock, New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 2000, 327-41.

Clark, Stuart, "Natural Magic", "Demonic Magic" in Id., *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, 214-50

--- "Protestant Witchcraft, Catholic Witchcraft" in Id. *Thinking with Demons*, 526-45.

*Duni, Matteo, *Under the Devil's Spell: Witches, Sorcerers, and the Inquisition in Renaissance Italy*, Florence, Syracuse University in Florence Press, 2007.

*Ginzburg, Carlo, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Baltimore-London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983.

Gurevich, Aron Ja., "Popular Culture in the Mirror of Penitentials", in Id., *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception*, London-New York, Cambridge University Press, 1988, 78-103

Kors, Alan C., and Edward Peters, eds., *Witchcraft in Europe 1100-1700: A Documentary History*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001 (2nd edition).

Hester, Marianne, "Patriarchal Reconstruction and Witch-hunting" in *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief*, eds. Jonathan Barry et al., London-New York, Cambridge University Press, 1996, 288-308.

Larner, Christina, "Was Witch-hunting Woman-hunting?" in *The Witchcraft Reader*, ed. Darren Oldridge, London-New York, Routledge, 2002, 273-5.

*Levack, Brian, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, Abingdon (UK), Routledge, 2016 (4th edition).

Roper, Lyndal, "Fertility" in Ead., *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany*, New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 2004, 128-159.

Ruggiero, Guido, *Binding Passions: Tales of Marriage, Magic, and Power in the Renaissance*, London-New York, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 130-74.

Thomas, Keith, "Witchcraft and its Social Environment" in Id., *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, London, Penguin, 1971, 638-80.

Waite, Gary K., "Between the Devil and the Inquisitor", in *The Witchcraft Reader*, 189-199.

Zika, Charles, "Dürer's Witch", and "She-Man: Visual Representations of Witchcraft and Sexuality" in Id., *Exorcising Our Demons: Magic, Witchcraft and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2003, 305-32, 269-304.

Supplemental Texts(s):

Texts that students are not required to purchase are in NYU-FL Library or available on line.

Internet Research Guidelines:

The careful use of internet resources is encouraged and a list of recommended websites will be given. Failure to cite internet and other non-traditional media sources in your written work constitutes plagiarism.

Class Assignments and Topics:

Session 1 – 5/2

Introduction: themes, focus and format of the course

Session 2 – 12/2

Magic and Witchcraft in the Early Times of Christianity

Levack, *The Witch Hunt*, chap. 1.

Session 3 – 19/2

The Catholic Church and Popular Culture in the late Middle Ages

Levack, *The Witch-Hunt*, chap. 2; Gurevich, "Popular Culture in the Mirror of Penitentials", 78-103; *Canon Episcopi* in Kors & Peters, *Witchcraft in Europe*, 60-63.

Session 4 – 26/2

The Folkloric Roots of Witchcraft

Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, chaps. 1-2

Session 5- 5/3

Jews, Heretics, Witches: the “Diabolical Sect” and the Inquisition

Ginzburg, “Deciphering the Sabbath”, 121-37; Cohn, “The Demonization of Mediaeval Heretics”, 35-78, 242-8; Duni, *Under the Devil’s Spell*, 23-32

Session 6 –12/3

Women and Demons: the *Malleus Maleficarum*

Malleus Maleficarum and other authors in Kors & Peters, *Witchcraft in Europe*, 176-204; Broedel, *The Malleus Maleficarum*, 167-88

FIRST PAPER DUE

Session 7 –19/3

MIDTERM EXAM

SPRING BREAK, MAR. 25 - 31

Session 8 –2/4

Magicians, Philosophers, Inquisitors and Witches in the Renaissance

Clark, “Natural Magic”, “Demonic Magic”, 214-250; Burke, “Witchcraft and Magic in Renaissance Italy: Gianfrancesco Pico and his *Strix*”, 32-52; Duni, *Under the Devil’s Spell*, 20-22, 118-123.

Session 9 – 9/4

The Witch-hunt and the Protestant Reformation

Levack, *The Witch-Hunt*, chap. 4; Martin Luther, John Calvin in Kors & Peters, 261-270; Clark, “Protestant Witchcraft, Catholic Witchcraft”, 526-45; Waite, “Between the Devil and the Inquisitor”, 189-99

Session 10 – 16/4

Images of Witchcraft

Zika, “Dürer’s Witch”, 305-32, and “She-Man: Visual Representations of Witchcraft and Sexuality”, 269-304.

Session 11 – 19/4 (Friday) **SCREENING OF THE MOVIE *THE CRUCIBLE***

Session 12 – 23/4 **Demography, Economy, and Witch-hunting**

Levack, *The Witch-Hunt*, chap. 5; Behringer, “Weather, Hunger and Fear”, 69-86; Roper, “Fertility”, 128-159

SECOND PAPER DUE

Session 13 – 30/4

Who Were the “Witches”? Gender and Society

Thomas, “Witchcraft and its Social Environment”, 638-80; Hester, “Patriarchal Reconstruction and Witch-hunting”, 288-306; Lerner, “Was Witch-hunting Woman-hunting?”, 273-5.

Session 14 – 7/5

What Did the “Witches” Do? Varieties of Magic and the Inquisition’s response

Duni, *Under the Devil’s Spell*, 32-38, 52-71, 85-109; Ruggiero, *Binding Passions*, 130-174

Session 15 – 14/5

FINAL EXAM

Classroom Etiquette

- Eating is not permitted in the classrooms. Bottled water is permitted.
- Cell phones should be turned off during class time.
- The use of personal laptops and other electronic handheld devices are prohibited in the classroom unless otherwise specified by the professor.
- We recycle! So keep it green! Please dispose of trash in the clearly marked recycle bins located throughout the on campus buildings
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Suggested Co-curricular Activities

Suggested optional co-curricular activities will be announced in class and/or via email by the professor throughout the semester.

Your Instructor

Matteo Duni’s (PhD in History and Civilization, European University Institute) research interests focus on the history of religious beliefs and practices in late medieval and early modern Italy and Europe.