

## **Medieval Cluny, Christendom & Islam — Syllabus**

Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar 01:090:279:02 Index #10530 — Spring 2018

Thursdays 11:30 am - 2:30 pm

Honors College Room #128 — College Avenue Campus

Professor Stephen Reinert, History Department

### **Professor's Contact Details**

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> *Phone:* Please use email for communication outside of class.

> *Office:* Van Dyck Hall, Room 218.

> *Office Hours:* Thursdays, 10:00-11:00 am, and by arrangement.

> *Learning Management Platform:* Sakai (i.e., <http://sakai.rutgers.edu>, and then navigate to our course).

**Course Counts for?** WILL count towards the SAS History Major and Minor.

### **Overview of Course Content & Aims**

Why spend a semester exploring the rise and fall, religious and social achievements, artistic and architectural legacies, and contemporary mystique of the Monastery of Cluny, located in Burgundy, in the heart of France? For those impressed by massive buildings, Cluny is fascinating first and foremost for its magnificent abbey church, which in its time was the largest Romanesque church in all of Christendom, and was decorated in magnificent style. But beyond this, there are five other credible reasons for embarking on this adventure. First, Cluny was not simply the custodian of a huge and beautiful church, but the headquarters of what became, at its height in the twelfth century, a monastic empire, with some 1400 dependencies scattered throughout Europe. How it evolved from rather humble beginnings to an incredibly successful “religious business enterprise” is a fascinating puzzle worth exploring. Second, as Cluny steadily achieved this organizational success it evolved as a “church within the church,” with its own distinctive life style and view of the world, the key features of which are quite surprising and often deeply foreign to the modern mind. Thus, for those interested in exploring medieval “mentalité and spirituality,” Cluny is a very special gold mine, a particularly crucial theme of which is its encounter with Islam. It was at Cluny, in the times of its eighth abbot Peter the Venerable, that the first Latin translation of the Qur'an was achieved. Why, you may ask, and whatever for? We'll explore this in depth! Third, as intimated above, the architecture and art associated with the Cluniac order, particularly at its center, was among the best and most influential of the medieval period, surviving reflections of which are of stunning beauty. Fourth, since so much of Cluny was destroyed in the decade after 1789, recovering a secure knowledge and understanding of its “headquarters site” is a remarkable chapter of modern archaeology, a project in which Americans played a key role from 1928 through the 1950s. Finally, students will have the opportunity to follow up their semester's classroom study with a twelve day field trip to France (May 15-26), encountering the ruins and remains first hand in Burgundy, and topping it all off with a few days in Paris contemplating the reflections of Cluny which still are to be found in “the city of light.”

## **Course Format & Requirements**

As is typical of seminars, much of our spring classroom experience will consist of focused discussion on carefully selected primary and secondary readings. Regular attendance is mandatory. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their contributions (at least two reports) and participation throughout (60%). In addition, all students will be required to work up a site report for a particular monument or cultural artifact connected with Cluny (40%). Discussions of key themes will continue in France during our field trip, with an overall objective of understanding how Cluny, in twenty-first century Europe, constitutes a particularly treasured monument of cultural heritage, and cultural heritage preservation.

## **Assigned Reading & Visual Study Material**

All reading and visual study material necessary for navigating the course will be conveyed via the course Sakai site.

## **Themes for Discussion in Weekly Meetings (Specific readings are on the Sakai Site, Available to Registered Students).**

- > Meeting 1: Orientation & tour of course materials.
- > Meeting 2: Exploring modern Cluny — Virtual tour of key monuments.
- > Meeting 3: Benedictine foundations — From St. Benedict's *Rule*, through Benedict of Aniane's reforms and regulations.
- > Meeting 4: The Congregation of Cluny — Genesis (910 CE), expansion, twelfth century apogee.
- > Meeting 5: Lives of the monks.
- > Meeting 6: Architecture — The Maior Ecclesia ("The Great Church").
- > Meeting 7: Art — The choir capitals of the Maior Ecclesia, & the mural paintings of the chapel at Berzé-la-Ville.
- > Meeting 8: Learning & Music — The monastery library, scriptorium & manuscripts, & plainchant at Cluny.
- > Meeting 9: Cluny's encounter with Islam I: The abduction of abbot Maiolus (972 CE) & monastic visions of Islam in the tenth/eleventh centuries.
- > Meeting 10: Cluny's encounter with Islam II: Abbot Peter the Venerable's projects to understand & critique Islam.
- > Meeting 11: Synthesizing the Cluniac "world vision" — Dominique Iogna-Prat's *Order & Exclusion: Cluny & Christendom Face Heresy, Judaism, and Islam (1000-1150)*.
- > Meeting 12: Cluny from apogee to eighteenth-century destruction.
- > Meeting 13: Discussion of site reports, & planning for the field trip to France (May 15-26).

### **Prospectus for May 15-26 Field Trip to France (1 credit)**

Assuming that some students may wish to participate in University Commencement ceremonies on May 13 (Sunday), we will set the “arrival date” as May 15 (Tuesday). Thus, students staying in N.J. for May 13 commencement should plan on flying to Paris on May 14, for a morning arrival of May 15 and then TGV train to Mâcon-Loché.

#### **Day 1 (May 15, Tuesday): Arrival**

Students will be picked up by bus at the Mâcon-Loché train station and taken to their lodgings at Cluny-Séjour.

#### **Day 2 (May 16, Wednesday): Cluny — Envisioning the Abbey Before Destruction**

A.M. Theme: Inside the Abbey Walls.

Orientation to topography from the model in side the Musée Ochier. Tour of surviving monuments, focusing on architecture and spatial organization from Abbots’ Palaces, through Farinier Building, through Malgouverne and Cellier de l’Abbaye.

P.M. Theme: The Abbey Walls, Gates & Towers. Boundary of Sacred Space. Cheese tower climb for panoramic orientation. Perimeter walk along outside of walls, hopefully with visits to other key towers.

#### **Day 3 (May 17, Thursday): Cluny — The Secular City**

A.M. Theme: Exploring the Medieval Streets & Houses from the outside. Selected sectors of the inner city where key Romanesque & Gothic houses survive, exploring overall development from 12th C - today and relationship with the abbey.

P.M. Theme: Exploring Interiors — Medieval Houses and Churches

The Dragon’s House  
M. Maréchal House & Medieval Garden  
Jean-Denis Salvègue House  
Constable-Woolf House

Church of Notre-Dame  
Church of St. Marcel

#### **Day 4 (May 18, Friday) — Cluny Beyond Cluny: In the Clunisois & Maconnais**

AM Theme: Cluny’s Outposts in Mazille and Berzé

Mazille Deanery  
Berzé-la-Ville Deanery and Chapel

PM Theme: Cluny & Secular Society — The Lords of Berzé  
Berzé-le-Chatel — Tour and Wine-tasting

**Day 5 (May 19, Saturday) — Cluny Beyond Cluny: In the Brionnais**

AM Theme: The Architecture of Cluny II & III, Studying Paray-le-Monial

The Basilica of Paray-le-Monial

PM Theme: Cluniac & Non-Cluniac Treasures in the Brionnais

Anzy-le-Duc — non Cluniac but a prosperous gem

Marcigny — first Cluniac nunnery

Semur-en-Brionnais — Hugh's birthplace, ancient chateau, splendid church

**Day 6 (May 20, Sunday) — Cluny Beyond Cluny: In the Chalonnais & Tournais**

AM Theme: Cluny's Influence en route to Tournus

The Blanot Priory & Its Preservation

Chapaize ... Resisting Cluny?

Lancharre ... A Women's Sanctuary Blessed by Cluny

PM Theme: Cluny's Ties with Feudal & Secular Ecclesiastical Powers

Brancion Castle

The Abbey of St. Philibert in Tournus

**Day 7 (May 21, Monday): Destruction, Reconstruction & Preservation of Legacy**

Archaeology — Museum Finds, from Conant through recent

French projects, and their preservation

Digitization Project - Demonstration at ENSAM

The Giles Constable Library

Local History Societies

**Day 8 (May 22, Tuesday): Cluny & Islam, Free Afternoon**

AM Review of Cluny's encounter with Islam: 10thC through Peter Venerable in the Constable Library.

PM Free afternoon, for packing and saying "goodbye" to Cluny.

**Day 9 (May 23, Wednesday): Travel day to Paris**

**Day 10 (May 24, Thursday): Paris — Cluny's Properties & Current Use**

AM St. Martin-des-Champs Priory (Musée des Arts et Métiers)

PM Musée de Cluny

**Day 11 (May 25, Friday): Paris — Peter the Venerable's Latin Qur'an & Attempt to Understand Islam.**

AM     Bibliothèque National, the Arsenal Museum — MS 1162 (The Latin Translation of the Qur'an)

PM     Afternoon Free.

**Day 12 (May 26, Saturday): Students depart the course.**