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Fall 2011 Office Hours:
TTh 1:00-3:00; MWF 10:00-11:00

**BIRGITTA, HILDEGARD AND MARGERY
FALL 2011**

SCA 373.8	38350
E 322	35210
EUS 347	36300
GRC 327E	38210
RS 357	43630
WGS 340	46945

MWF 2:00-3:00
GEA 114

May be counted toward the writing flag requirement.
May be counted toward the global cultures flag requirement.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

The life and writings of Saint Birgitta of Sweden, fourteenth-century visionary, religious reformer and pilgrim, will be examined and compared with her predecessor Hildegard of Bingen (Germany) and her successor Margery Kempe (England). Social and historical contexts for all three visionary women will be explored in depth, particularly the factors behind Birgitta's emerging as such an authoritative voice, both political and religious, within the milieu of fourteenth-century Europe. Other related figures, predominantly Julian of Norwich, but also Christina of Markyate, Christina Mirabilis, Angela de Foligno, Jeanne d'Arc and Catherine of Siena may be visited. We will also explore varieties of spirituality and spiritual thinking including: anchorism and asceticism; Marian piety and Goddess-imagery; virginity and female creativity; and bridal imagery. Any theoretical framework – religious; scientific; theological; medical; archetypal; or any other – will be allowed. No single orthodoxy or heterodoxy should become primary in our investigations: all may have a voice (and it need not be a consistent one). We will try to allow the past to speak for itself, always realizing that we, the readers/listeners/watchers, will necessarily apply some kind of “spin” based on our own backgrounds.

Two things to remember when you investigate the lives and thought of people of the past:
1. They were vastly different from us; and 2) They were uncannily like us. Both 1) and 2) are entirely true.

BOOKS and PACKET:

Birgitta of Sweden: Life and Selected Revelations, ed. Marguerite Tjader Harris. Paulist Press, 1990.

ISBN 0809131390

(called **Harris** in syllabus)

The Book of Margery Kempe, ed. & tr. B. A. Windeatt. Penguin, 1994.

ISBN 01404 32515

(called **Kempe** in syllabus)

Hildegard von Bingen's Mystical Visions: Translated from Scivias [Paperback], ed. & tr. Bruce Hozeski. Bear & Company, 1985.

ISBN 9781879181298

(called **Hozeski** in syllabus)

Sister of Wisdom: St. Hildegard's Theology of the Feminine, by Barbara Newman. University of California Press, 1987.

ISBN 05202 11626

(called **Newman** in syllabus)

Revelations of Divine Love, by Julian of Norwich, ed. & tr. by Elizabeth Spearing and A. C. Spearing. Penguin, 1998.

ISBN 01404 46737

(called **Julian** in syllabus)

COURSE PACKET from IT Copy on MLK Blvd.

COURSE PACKET

(called **Packet** in syllabus)

PACKET from IT Copy on MLK Blvd. (Just west of Guadalupe, north side. Across from Jack Brown Cleaners, near the fast food cluster.) If you phone them before you go (476-6662) and put in your request, chances are higher that they will have one ready when you get there. (They don't want to print a full class load ahead of time, in case a course has low enrollment and they have printed packets that won't get used.)

Some biographical data for the curious, before we start:

HILDEGARD VON BINGEN (1098-1179):

Tenth child of Rhenish nobles; Benedictine nun and abbess

The first woman to receive permission from the Pope to write on theological subjects

The first scientific writer to discuss sexuality from a woman's viewpoint

The most prolific female author (of all time) in Latin (poetry and prose)

Composer, poet, visionary, and probable migraine sufferer!

BIRGITTA BIRGERSDOTTER (St. Birgitta / St. Bridget / St. Bride of Sweden: 1303-1373):

Noble child-bride, mother of eight; king's cousin, lady-in-waiting; widow and nun

Prophetess and reformer (chastised a series of Popes. . .)

Founder of a new religious order; traveled the known world
Sainted and then almost un-sainted, a generation later. . .
The only Swede mentioned in Hartmann Schedel's world history,
Chronicorum liber (Nürnberg, 1493) (aka the Nuremberg Chronicle)
The co-patron saint of the European Union (the other is Catherine of
Siena)

MARGERY KEMPE of LYNN (1373-?), a.k.a. "The Madwoman of God":
Dictated the first known autobiography in the English language
Proto-bourgeois wife and mother. . .and then not!
Copied Birgitta's pilgrimages; deliberately shadowed her life
Serious Drama Queen

CLASS POLICY NOTE:

All three of our authors would have considered themselves pious Christians. (Today we would call them "Catholics," but as there were no Protestants yet, the only Christians in western Europe *were* Catholics back then [Catholic simply means "universal"].) Religion played a hugely significant role in their lives that it may or may not often play in the lives of North Americans today.

However, although these women all professed the same religion, in many respects they were entirely unlike one another. We will let *them* speak for themselves. How do we react to them?? (They *will* embarrass us, I guarantee you – but perhaps not on the issues you think they will. Margery made a career of embarrassing people in her own time, after all.)

How about this: As long as we all maintain respect for *each other* in class discussions, it will be legal (even encouraged) in this class to express *any kind* of reaction to our authors' lives and works, from *any point of view*, whether pious or impious, medieval or postmodern, feminist or patriarchal, Catholic or Protestant, evangelical or mainline, charismatic or rationalistic, Christian or nonchristian, traditionalist or pagan, believer or unbeliever, consistent or inconsistent, medievalist or modernist, manic or depressive, Freudian or Jungian, Sunni or Shia, Democrat or Republican, American or European – or anything else you can think of. . .Let a thousand flowers bloom!

HANDY WEB SITES:

Other Women's Voices: An Internet bibliography with links to excellent sites on a number of pre-1600 women authors, including Birgitta, Hildegard, Julian and Margery.
<http://home.infionline.net/~ddisse/>

Umiltà: Portal to Julia Bolton Holloway's interlinked Websites about Julian of Norwich and her times, including material on Birgitta.

<http://www.umilta.net/>

You will doubtless find many other sites. These women are Very Trendy right now. Before you use any other Websites for your papers, though, let me have a look at them. There is a lot of not-very-informed breathless enthusiasm out there, especially for Hildegard.

GRADING:

In keeping with the Writing Flag attached to this course, most of your grade will come from the evaluation of writing-related activities.

The breakdown is like this:

Quizzes on Reading (on most days when readings are due):	10 %
Two six-page reaction papers or position papers, 15% each	30 %
In-class peer review activities on student papers:	10 %
Reading Journals (turned in approx. every other Wednesday)	15 %
One three- to five-page group project w/Power Point (groups of 3-4):	15 %
One six-page research paper:	20 %

NO FINAL.

All the pagination numbers for the papers are based on normal margins, double space, Times or Times New Roman 12 point. (You may use another font if you'd rather, but stick with the 12 point.)

NOTE: Don't worry about my agreeing with your conclusions, on any type of writing assignment. Simply believe in your argument, and make it as well as you can.

MECHANICS are also significant: proofread/spell-check carefully, and weed out all mistakes of typing or English usage that you can find.

Note: Obvious discrepancies in writing style and/or skill among your papers, or obvious plagiarisms from other authors (which are very easy to check for, using the Web), may activate the issues in the following paragraph. You have been warned.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty: Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Judicial Services web site at http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php .

SEMESTER SCHEDULE:

(Note: Readings indicated on any given day are to be read before you come. Second Note: Anything below purported to be in the Packet that is in fact not in it will be noted by me and given to you in a Handout – in the event that happens.)

1.: August 24 Wednesday: First day of class

Introduction. “The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.” (L. P. Hartley, 1953) Pre-conditioning for time travel. What was medieval Christianity like (in the West)? What were medieval women like? Music: Medieval Baebes; Nick Cave; Bok-Muir-Trickett; Garmarna. Song texts can be found in Packet (#4).

2.: August 26 Friday:

Readings due from Packet: What do/did women want?, Gender Wars & other topics under #5. Also #6 (a medieval alternative to medieval Christian misogyny) and #6a (Jacques de Vitry [12th-13th century] on women). Brainstorming sessions on readings: a) What did women want, back then? (Can we know? [Freud never found out; Chaucer claimed to know, however]) b) Gender Wars: The construction of sex and gender (nowadays) in popular and academic discourse. (How is this pertinent to this semester’s material?)

What do we already know/ think about these issues? Are we possibly willing to change what we know / think?

(Note: Nobody is required to end up thinking the way *I* think, which changes regularly anyway.)

3.: August 29 Monday:

Temporary Transit to Liège, late 12th century.

Reading Due: Christina Mirabilis material (in Packet, #10 and #11).

Purgatory: A New Idea (first appearing, 11th century). (Roots of the idea: I Corinthians 3: 11-15 and I Peter 3:18-19, in the Bible [New Testament].)

4.: August 31 Wednesday:

Temporary Transit: Norway, Sometime in the Middle Ages (pre-Reformation, in any case). Reading due: Draumkvedet material (in Packet, #12). Note the role of Purgatory in Sir Olaf’s vision. Music: Agnes Buen’s or Sondre Bratland's recording of “Draumkvedet.” Discussion.

Reading Journals Due.

5.: September 2 Friday:

Readings due from Packet: Bridal Imagery (#7). (Read/look at material from the Wise Virgins to St. Teresa in Ecstasy. Pay special attention to the material by Hildegard Elisabeth Keller, who puts it all together.) Look at #8 and #9 as well, just for basic cultural data.

Film Clips (note: fiction!): Arn Magnusson learns about divine & human love.

September 5 Monday: Labor Day holiday.

6.: September 7 Wednesday:

Transit to 12th-century Rhineland. Reading due from Packet (#13): Newman selection, “Life and Times of Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179).” **IDEAS** for your

- first paper may be checked with me today.
 Film: Canadian educational video on Hildegard.
- 7.: September 9 Friday:
 Extra Credit Research, for Volunteers: Lives of St. Rupert, St. Disibod, St. Ursula.
 Reading due from Packet (#17 and # 18): Selected poems (translated by Barbara Newman) from the *Symphonia* of Hildegard von Bingen. Discussion. CD Concert: Hildegard as a Trendy Modern Composer. (Note variations in styles of recordings!)
- 8.: September 12 Monday:
 Reading due: Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, to p. 41.
 Reading in Class: Barbara Newman, selections from *God and the Goddesses*.
 Discussion: Natura, Caritas/Amor, Sapientia, Paupertas, the Virgin Mary, &c.
- 9.: September 14 Wednesday:
 Reading Journals Due.
 Reading due: Newman, to p. 120; Four Humors and Trotula (in Packet, #14); also *Causae et curae* (in Packet, #15).
- 10.: September 16 Friday:
 Reading due: Newman, to p. 195. **FIRST REACTION/POSITION PAPER DUE.**
11. : September 19 Monday: Reading due: Newman, to end of book; Hozeski, ix-xviii; 1-7; 12-13; 26-7; 38-41; 58-9; 66-7; 76-7; 86-7; 96-7; 100-103; 126-7; 160-161; 168-9; 176-7; 188-9; 202-3; 206-7; 216; 224-5; 240-1; 262-3; 276-7; 304-5; 320-1; 344-5; 364-5; . Art show: *Scivias* (Packet, #16 lists the names of the slides). Bring Hozeski to class for a discussion on interpreting Hildegard's imagery.
- 12.: September 21 Wednesday:
 Readings Due: Packet, #17-20. Hozeski, 375-395. Film Clip: Performance of *Ordo virtutum* from the film *Vision* (von Trotta, 2009). Handout: Lingua ignota glossary. Discussion: Lingua ignota & secret alphabet.
- 13.: September 23 Friday:
 Reading due: "Töris av Wänge" (Swedish ballad), St. Winifred (Wales), & "I Himmelen" in Packet (# 21). Transit: Sweden, 1300s. Film: Ingmar Bergman's *Jungfrukällan* (1960).
- 14.: September 26 Monday:
Jungfrukällan, continued. Discussion.
- 15.: September 28 Wednesday
 Reading Journals Due.
 Readings due: Lives of St. Birgitta (1303-1373): 1. by the two Peters, in Harris, p. 69; 2. by Birger Gregersen & Thomas Gascoigne, in Packet (# 24, Vita Birgittae); Birgitta's relics (in Packet, #23); Birgittine monastery schedule (in Packet, #29).
 Film: Canadian educational video on Birgitta & Catherina of Siena.
- 16.: September 30 Friday:
 Reading due: Fifth Book of Birgitta's Revelations, Harris, p. 99; Seventh Book of Birgitta's Revelations, Harris, p. 157.

- 17.: October 3 Monday:
Peer review activities.
- 18.: October 5 Wednesday:
Reading due: Four Prayers, in Harris, p. 219; Lars Bergquist on Birgitta, in Packet (# 22).
CD Concert of Birgitta's music.
IDEAS for your second paper can be checked with me today.
- 19.: October 7 Friday:
Reading due: Birgitta chapter (intro. & sample texts) from *Women Writing Latin*, in Packet (#26). Also Pilgrim Songs, in Packet (#25).
- 20.: October 10 Monday:
Reading due: Bridget Morris on Birgitta's canonization, in Packet (#27).
Background Handouts: Council of Constance, Jean Gerson.
- 21.: October 12 Wednesday:
Reading Journals Due.
Reading due: Straubhaar on Birgitta's authority, in Packet (#28). **SECOND REACTION / POSITION PAPER DUE.**
Discussion: How to do Group Projects (due at the end of this month).
- 22.: October 14 Friday:
Reading due: *Ancrene Wisse* & Modern Hermits material, in Packet (#30).
- 23.: October 17 Monday:
Reading due: Dame Julian ("Jelyan" as Margery Kempe calls her) of Norwich (1342?-ca. 1420?), Introduction (pp. vii-xxxix); Short Text (pp. 3-38).
- 24.: October 19 Wednesday:
Reading due: Packet (#31-32): Julian background, including T.S. Eliot; Original orthography for "The Hazelnut" (ch. 4).
- 25.: October 21 Friday:
Reading due: Julian, Long Text, chs. 1-43 (pp. 41-105). In Packet: Original orthography for "All is Well" (ch. 32; in Packet, #32).
- 26.: October 24 Monday:
Reading due: Julian, Long Text, chs. 44-86 (pp. 105-180). In Packet: Original orthography for "Christ as Mother" (ch. 58-60; in Packet, #32).
Also look at material on Julian and her cat (?!), and on "Pangur Bán" (to show you how far back this cats-and-hermits thing goes) -- Packet #33. Film Clip: *The Secret of Kells* (2009).
- 27.: October 26 Wednesday:
Reading Journals Due. Reviews and background for Chris Newby's film, *The anchoress* (1993), in Packet (#34).
- 28.: October 28 Friday:
Film Clips: Enclosure Scenes from *Anchoress*, part I. Discussion.
- 29.: October 31 Monday:
GROUP PROJECTS DUE: PRESENTATIONS, DAY 1.
- 30.: November 2 Wednesday:
GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATIONS, DAY 2.
- 31.: November 4 Friday:
Reading Due: Birgitta & Margery Supplemental Timeline, in Packet (#35).

- Transition to Margery Kempe: Birgitta and Julian's (potential) influences on Margery. Discussion: Margery's social position vis-à-vis the call to a religious life.
- 32.: November 7 Monday:
Reading due: Kempe (1373-1440?), First Book, chs. 1-30 (to page 114). Also look at original text of ch. 3, in Packet (#36; "it is full merry in heaven").
- 33.: November 9 Wednesday:
Reading Journals Due.
Reading due: Kempe: First Book, chs. 31-60 (to page 187).
- 34.: November 11 Friday:
Reading due: Kempe, First Book, chs. 61-89 (to page 261).
- 35.: November 14 Monday:
Peer review activities.
- 36.: November 16 Wednesday:
Reading due: Kempe, Second Book, chs. 1-5 (to page 279).
- 37.: November 18 Friday:
Fashion Show: Secular clothing of Margery's time. ("Gold pipes on her head"??? "Slashing" (daggy)s?? What??) Look at material in Packet (#37).
- 38.: November 21 Monday:
Reading Journals due today (instead of Wednesday).
Discussion: What are we to make of Margery?
How is she different from Hildegard, or Birgitta, or Julian, or Christina Mirabilis? How is she like them? Was she sane? (If you roomed with her, would you stay sane?) **IDEAS** for your final paper may be checked with me today.
- 39.: November 23 Wednesday:
Reading due: Staley, in Packet, first section of #38.
- Fri. Nov. 25: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**
- 40.: November 28 Monday:
Reading due: Staley, in Packet, second section of #38; also Richard Einhorn, Libretto for *Voices of Light* (1988), in Packet (#39). Film: *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, Carl Theodor Dreyer (1928). (Jeanne d'Arc: 1412-1431.)
- 41.: November 30 Wednesday:
Continuation of Film.
- 42.: December 2 Friday: Last class day.
Discussion: What do we make of all this? (What *did* these women want, or can we presume to speak for them?) **RESEARCH PAPER DUE.**