



# MHIS207

## From Charlemagne to Game of Thrones: The Middle Ages Then and Now

S1 Day 2016

*Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations*

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#### **Disclaimer**

Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

## General Information

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Credit points  
3

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

The 'medieval' is everywhere in our 'modern' age, both in culture and in our institutions. The University and the Parliament are medieval institutional inventions, for example. Our popular culture is imbued with myths bequeathed by the Middle Ages, from Robin Hood to Jedi Knights. And yet, the term 'medieval' is hurled as an insult to anyone thought to be backwards or ignorant. Following Tarantino, brutal punishment can be defined as getting medieval. This course will look at both the real Middle Ages, as a historical period, as well as its representations in our own culture. In particular, we will look at the political history of Latin Christendom, in order to understand the rise of kingdoms and the papacy during the Middle Ages. At the same time, students will encounter medievalism in our own time. We will match our discussion of the 'real' Middle Ages with awareness of the 'fantasy' Middle Ages in which our imaginations so often reside.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

MHIS207 serves as an introduction to 2 distinct, but overlapping, areas of content. We look at the Middle Ages in Europe (roughly 500-1500), as well as medievalism in contemporary popular culture (roughly 1900-present). By the end of the unit students will

be expected to - Define the roles played by knights, the 'Lady', monarchs, and the clergy within the Middle Ages, and to identify how these roles developed over the course of the medieval period. - Identify the archetypal function played by each of the above in contemporary popular culture. - Explain the chronological arc of medieval history. They will be expected to define key characteristics of the early medieval world, particularly the rise of feudalism and monasticism. They will need also to be able to chart the developments into the more urbanised and governmentalised society that emerges after circa. 1000, explaining the rise of administrations, chivalry, and the university. - Critically consider the cultural work performed by the medieval in popular culture, identifying the ideological usage of both the term 'medieval' and medieval tropes in discourse. - Relate medievalist work and cultural product to larger historical moments.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>In-Class Tests</u>	30%	Class Time
<u>Bio Presentation</u>	30%	Week 11 and 12
<u>Final Test</u>	40%	Week 13

### In-Class Tests

Due: **Class Time**

Weighting: **30%**

Each week, at the end of class, I will introduce the reading for the following week, usually consisting of a journal article or a chapter in a book. In addition, there may also be a cultural text such as a film, novel or poetry. Students will be asked to read these texts closely, in preparation for an in-class test.

For example, at the end of Week 1, I will talk about the themes and reading for the following week. Students will then go away and study those texts. At the beginning of class in Week 2, I will hold a paper-based multiple-choice test on the readings. These questions will not be designed to test your interpretation or critical understanding of those texts. Rather, I will be testing for basic comprehension and evidence that the reading has been done.

The final mark for these tests will be averaged over the semester. I understand that due to illness, students may need to miss class on occasions. With that in mind, I will exclude the two tests from the final average that receive the lowest marks. This means that should you miss class, and not be able to do the test, the 0% result would not factor in the final calculation. Should students need to miss more than two classes due to ill-health, I would ask that they speak to me about the situation.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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## Bio Presentation

Due: **Week 11 and 12**

Weighting: **30%**

Each student should write a biography of a medieval figure whose fame extends into the Middle Ages. This biography should not just cover their actual life, but their afterlives in culture. Some possible figures might be, Robin Hood, Joan of Arc, Eleanor of Aquitaine, King John, Richard the Lionheart, Saladin, Charlemagne, Abelard, Heloise, Thomas Aquinas, William the Conqueror, William Wallace Hildegard of Bingen, Simon de Montfort, Marco Polo, El Cid, King Arthur, Lancelot, Guinevere, Morgan Le Fay, Merlin, St. Patrick, Francis of Assisi..

In this essay, you are asked to provide both an account of the actual life of your figure (as far as we know). The first part of your task is to explain their life in the context of major historical events at that time, to explain both how they emerged from medieval culture, and contributed to it.

The second part of the essay is to discuss the cultural work performed by that figure within modernity. You might like to pick a particular case study to do this (such as a poem, film or painting). Your job is to describe and interpret the role that your figure plays as myth. For example, you might like to consider the use of Joan of Arc within right-wing French political campaigns, or compare the representations of Robin Hood in the various film renditions of his life.

In contrasting the 'real' biography of your figure with their status as a mythical figure from the past, I want to encourage you to think about the way that images of the Middle Ages are used ideologically to present a particular point of view about the present.

This essay should be footnoted.

In addition, you will be expected to present your findings to the class in Week 11 or 12, in a three-minute thesis format.

For information on the 3 minute thesis format, see this [http://students.mq.edu.au/opportunities/3\\_minute\\_thesis/](http://students.mq.edu.au/opportunities/3_minute_thesis/)

On successful completion you will be able to:

- MHIS207 serves as an introduction to 2 distinct, but overlapping, areas of content. We look at the Middle Ages in Europe (roughly 500-1500), as well as medievalism in contemporary popular culture (roughly 1900-present). By the end of the unit students will be expected to - Define the roles played by knights, the 'Lady', monarchs, and the clergy within the Middle Ages, and to identify how these roles developed over the course of the medieval period. - Identify the archetypal function played by each of the above in contemporary popular culture. - Explain the chronological arc of medieval history. They will be expected to define key characteristics of the early medieval world, particularly the rise of feudalism and monasticism. They will need also to be able to chart the developments into the more urbanised and governmentalised society that emerges after circa. 1000, explaining the rise of administrations, chivalry, and the university. - Critically consider the cultural work performed by the medieval in popular culture, identifying the ideological usage of both the term 'medieval' and medieval tropes in discourse. - Relate medievalist work and cultural product to larger historical moments.

## Final Test

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **40%**

At the end of the unit you will be assessed with a test designed to assess your understanding of the unit as a whole. There will be one question, and you will be expected to write approximately 1500 words in response.

You can choose whether you take the test in-class during Week 13. This test will be under exam conditions, closed book, and will take approximately 90 minutes.

Or, you can take the test as a take-home, emailing it to me 24 hours after your class-time in Week 13. You can do the test under open book conditions. The answer should be footnoted.

There will be different assessment rubrics for the in-class and the take-home test, which will be distributed and discussed during the semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- MHIS207 serves as an introduction to 2 distinct, but overlapping, areas of content. We look at the Middle Ages in Europe (roughly 500-1500), as well as medievalism in

contemporary popular culture (roughly 1900-present). By the end of the unit students will be expected to - Define the roles played by knights, the 'Lady', monarchs, and the clergy within the Middle Ages, and to identify how these roles developed over the course of the medieval period. - Identify the archetypal function played by each of the above in contemporary popular culture. - Explain the chronological arc of medieval history. They will be expected to define key characteristics of the early medieval world, particularly the rise of feudalism and monasticism. They will need also to be able to chart the developments into the more urbanised and governmentalised society that emerges after circa. 1000, explaining the rise of administrations, chivalry, and the university. - Critically consider the cultural work performed by the medieval in popular culture, identifying the ideological usage of both the term 'medieval' and medieval tropes in discourse. - Relate medievalist work and cultural product to larger historical moments.

## Delivery and Resources

The classes will be held as 2 hour seminars. Attendance is mandatory.

Resources for pre-reading will be made available through the course reader, and through the Moodle site on ilearn.

Laptops and electronic devices will not be permitted in the seminars. Students who need to use laptops as a result of a disability should contact me prior to classes beginning.

The classroom experience will be interactive and engaging, with a variety of activities planned. The object will be to engage in shared active learning as a community. We are avoiding tech in these classes in order to focus properly on the content, as well as to get to know each other as colleagues.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

**New Assessment Policy in effect from Session 2 2016** [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy\\_2016.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html). For more information visit [http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/19/new\\_assessment\\_policy\\_in\\_place\\_from\\_session\\_2/](http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/19/new_assessment_policy_in_place_from_session_2/)

Assessment Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public <http://www.mq.edu.a>

[u/policy/docs/complaint\\_management/procedure.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit [http://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/offices\\_and\\_units/information\\_technology/help/](http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/).

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcome

- MHIS207 serves as an introduction to 2 distinct, but overlapping, areas of content. We look at the Middle Ages in Europe (roughly 500-1500), as well as medievalism in contemporary popular culture (roughly 1900-present). By the end of the unit students will be expected to - Define the roles played by knights, the 'Lady', monarchs, and the clergy within the Middle Ages, and to identify how these roles developed over the course of the medieval period. - Identify the archetypal function played by each of the above in contemporary popular culture. - Explain the chronological arc of medieval history. They will be expected to define key characteristics of the early medieval world, particularly the rise of feudalism and monasticism. They will need also to be able to chart the developments into the more urbanised and governmentalised society that emerges after circa. 1000, explaining the rise of administrations, chivalry, and the university. - Critically consider the cultural work performed by the medieval in popular culture, identifying the ideological usage of both the term 'medieval' and medieval tropes in discourse. - Relate medievalist work and cultural product to larger historical moments.

### Assessment tasks

- Bio Presentation
- Final Test

### Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:



## Learning outcome

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## Assessment tasks

- In-Class Tests
- Bio Presentation
- Final Test

## Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcome

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## **Assessment tasks**

- Bio Presentation
- Final Test

## **Problem Solving and Research Capability**

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcome**

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## **Assessment tasks**

- Bio Presentation

- Final Test

## Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcome

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### Assessment tasks

- Bio Presentation
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## Changes since First Published

Date	Description
07/03/2016	I have changed my consultation hours.