

HISTORY 205: EUROPE AND THE MILLENNIUM
PROF. LANDES

Office: 226 Bay State Road #507
Office Hrs: Tuesday 11-12:30, Thursday, 3-4:30
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Classroom: History #504
T-Th 9:30-11 AM
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The purpose of this course is to explore the role of *apocalyptic millennial expectations* (the belief in an imminent and radical transformation of this world) in the development of the Modern World. Dealing with the moments when either calculations or exceptional conditions (natural disasters, cultural collapse) triggered widespread apocalyptic expectations and the formation of millenarian groups, the survey pivots around the years 1000-1033, when such beliefs took new and more aggressive forms and set the West on its peculiar course to modernity. We follow the gradual secularization of millenarian hopes – from a passive expectation of God's actions to an ever-larger role for human agency – and examines the emergence of modern, industrial society as partly the product of redirected disappointed millennial expectations. Now, in the wake of the second Christian millennium, the world is faced with at least two empirically based apocalyptic threats: Global Warming and Global Jihad.

READING: Reading assignments vary; students will lose a great deal by not keeping up with the reading. Reading Assignments are subject to change. Check your email regularly.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Lectures will cover a certain amount of material, but you are free at any time to raise your hand and ask questions (just as I am free to ignore you if I want to finish a point). Please introduce material and problems from your reading that I have not covered; but don't feel disappointed if I don't take up your point right away. If I can integrate an answer into my lecture I will, if not, see me afterwards. Good comments and questions are worth extra credit on your grade.

CYBERSPACE: Since cyberspace is to 2000 as printing was to 1500, this medium is intensely apocalyptic at its present stage; it proliferates the most intense articulations of millennial desire from the paranoia of conspiracy and hate mongering to the blissful images of planetary renewal. Most students are expected to maintain a presence in cyberspace and contact the rest of the class about their discoveries.

REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) a bibliographical essay on a given topic [20%] DUE February 13
- 2) a research essay, focusing on some apocalyptic movement or moment anywhere in the world at any time (millennialism is a global phenomenon with expressions in every culture); in this essay, use the methods of the seminar to assess both initial evidence and earlier historians' treatment of the evidence [40%] DUE APRIL 3
- 3) final take home exam [40%]

Late work without an extension granted previously will be graded down a degree for every day it is late (e.g., from A to A-, etc.). I expect you to work alone unless you clear a collaborative project with me. Students are expected to know and understand the CAS Conduct Code. Copies available in CAS 105.

Purchase the following books at Amazon:

Norman Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium* (Oxford)

Arthur Mendel, *Vision and Violence* (U. Michigan Press)

Richard Landes, *Heaven on Earth: The Varieties of the Millennial Experience*

SYLLABUS

I. January 16: **Why Millennialism is Important**

II. January 21-23: **The Millennial Aviary**

Tuesday: **Introduction: Owls and Roosters, Chicken Littles and Ostriches**

Readings: N. Cohn, *Pursuit*, 1-18; Landes, *Heaven on Earth*, chap. 1-2.

Thursday: **The Documentation: Bats and Turkeys**

Reading: Landes, *Heaven on Earth*, chap. 3.

III. January 28-30: **Monotheistic Millennialism**

Tuesday: **Judaism and the Millennial Vision**

Primary: Genesis, 1-4, Leviticus, 19, Deuteronomy, 1-7, 15, 16:18-20, 17:14-21, 23:15-17; Micah; Isaiah, 65; Daniel, 7-12; Secondary: Mendel, *Vision and Violence* chap. 1 (pp. 3-45); Cohn, *Pursuit*, 19-36; Landes, "Under every Fig and Vine"*

Thursday: **Christianity and the Non-arrival of the Kingdom**

Matthew: 5-7; Revelation all; I and II Thess. and Landes, "Christian Origins"

Suggested: Ehrman, *Jesus*, pp. 125-238

IV. February 4-6: **Christian Reorientations: From Delay to Empire**

Tuesday: **Library Tour**

Thursday: **The Oxymoron Christian Empire**

Readings: Hippolytus, *On Daniel*, 19*; Landes, "Delay of the Parousia"* "In Praise of Constantine"*; "Kingdom and Polity in Eusebius"*; Landes, "Christian Empire."*

V. February 11-13: **Augustine, 6000 AM I, and the Fall of Rome**

Tuesday: **Augustine, the Great Horned Owl**

Augustine, *The City of God*, XX 1-12; *Letters* 197-99;

Suggested: Landes, "The Sabbatical Millennium in the Empire"* and "Augustine's Millennium"*

Thursday: **Y6K and the Fall of the Western Empire**

Readings: Joshua the Stylite's Chronicle*; Hydatius' Chronicle*; Landes, "Apocalyptic Expectations and the Fall of the Roman Empire."*

Suggested: Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks*, II, 27-43;* Landes, "Clovis and the Year 6000"*

Bibliographical Paper Due.

VI. February 18-20: **"Christianization" of Europe, Charlemagne and 6000 AM II**

Tuesday: **The Conversion of Tribal Europe [Bibliographical Essays Due]**

Readings: Martin of Braga, "On the Correction of the Peasants;" Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks*, Preface, X, 23-25, 31; Boniface, *Letters**; Cohn, *Pursuit*, 37-52; Landes, "Conversion of the Tribes"*.

Thursday: **Charlemagne and the Coronation of the Year 6000**

Texts on the Imperial Coronation*; Capitulary of 802*; Two texts from the 9th Century*; Nelson, "Why are there so many Accounts of the Imperial Coronation,"* Landes, "Countdown to 6000 AM II,"* and "Imperial Coronation."*

VII. February 25-27: **The Apocalyptic Year 1000**

Tuesday: ***The Approach***

Readings: *Primary*: Adso, *On the Antichrist*; “Documents on the Year 1000”;
Glaber, *Quinque Libri historiarum** [note: the work is divided into books (I-V),
chapters (i-viii...) and sections (1-34...). i refer to these as 1.4.8, 2.11.32, etc.
and give the page numbers of the France edition in parentheses (65-72). lest
you become alarmed in reading the assignment, remember it is about half of
what you see, since the facing page (even numbered) is Latin, and I don't
expect you to read that side. ⁺ = pay close attention; ⁺⁺ = rare autobiography]
Introduction lxiii-lxx; Book I: 1.1.0 (pp.3-5) ⁺, 1.5.24-26 (41-47); Book II:
2.5.8-10 (65-71), 2.9.19 (83-85); Vita Guillelmi 23 (293-97) ⁺⁺;

Suggested: Landes, “Glaber and the Year 1000”*

Thursday: ***The Peace of God***

Reading: Head and Landes, *The Peace of God*, 327-42 [Documents];* Landes and
Head, *Peace of God*, “Introduction,” pp.1-20;*

Suggested: Paxton, “Historiography” pp. 21-41*

VIII. March 4-6: **“Early Modern” Europe: Religious Millennial Centuries: 1100-1500**

Tuesday: ***From Tanchelm to Joachim***

Readings: Mendel, *Vision*, chap. 2, pp. 47-95; Cohn, *Pursuit*, chap. 3-5

Friday: ***From 1260 to the Black Death: Catastrophe and Transformation***

Readings: Cohn, *Pursuit*, chap. 6-7

Suggested: George Huppert, *After the Black Death*

IX. March 11-13: Spring Recess, NO CLASSES

X. March 18-20: **Millennial Printing**

Tuesday: ***Renaissance and Reformation***

Readings: Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium*, chaps. 10, 11, 12; Mendel, *Vision*, pp.
63-93; Pico della Mirandola, “[On the Dignity and Excellence of Man](#)”; Landes,
“Millennialism and the Protestant Reformation”; Erik Middlefort, “Madness and the
Millennium at Münster,” *Fearful Hope*, pp. 115-34*

Suggested: Weinstein, *Savonarola*; Blickle, *Peasant Revolution of 1525*, selections*

Thursday: ***Science***

Readings: Poimander*; Yates, “The Hermetic Tradition”*;

Suggested: Noble, *The Religion of Technology*, Selections*

XI. March 25-27: **Democratic Millennialism**

Tuesday: ***The English and American Revolutions***

Readings: Mendel, *Vision*, pp. 63-135; Landes, *Heaven on Earth*, chaps. 8; Steve
Marini, “Millennialism and the American Revolution”*; Susan Juster, “[Demagogues
or Mystagogues?](#)”

Suggested: Christopher Hill, “Popular Religion and the English Revolution”*; Clarke
Garret, “Popular Religion in the American and French Revolution”*

Thursday: ***The French Revolution***

Reading: Landes, *Heaven on Earth*, chap. 9; Popkin, *Messianic Revolution*, pp. 107-
41*

XII. April 1-3: Totalitarian Millennialism

Tuesday: **Communism**

Primary: *The Communist Manifesto**; Mendel, *Vision and Violence*, pp. 137-94; Landes, *Heaven on Earth*, chaps. 11-12; Scott Lowe, "Western Millennial Ideology Goes East,"

Thursday: **Nazism**

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, Selections*; Mendel, *Vision and Violence*, pp. 194-221; Landes, *Heaven on Earth*, chap. 13.

Suggested: Robert Ellwood, "Nazism as a Millennial Movement," *Millennialism, Persecution and Violence*, pp. 241-260; Cohn, "Postscript"

Final Paper Due.

XIII. April 8-10: Millennialism in the Holy Land

Tuesday: **Zionism**

Readings: Mendel, *Vision and Violence*, pp. 265-322; Popkin, *Millennial Revolution*, chap. 6 (pp. 142-69).

Thursday: **Muslim Apocalyptic**

Readings: Gold, *The Fight for Jerusalem*; Cook, *Contemporary Muslim Apocalyptic*; Gorenberg, *End of Days*; Bowman, *Honour*, chap. 1*

Suggested: David Pryce-Jones, *The Closed Circle*, pp. 184-221*

XIV. April 15-17: Post-War Millennialism: Radical Chic and Global Jihad

Tuesday: **Sixties and New (Last) Age** FINAL PAPERS DUE

Readings: "Port Huron Statement of SDS," (1962)*; Mendel, *Vision and Violence*, "Paradise Now: The Counterculture," pp. 223-63; Daniels, *A Doomsday Reader*, pp. 79-92; Paul Boyer, "Apocalyptic in the 20th Century," in *Fearful Hope*, pp. 149-69.

FINAL PAPERS DUE

Thursday: **Global Jihad in the 21st Century**

Readings: David Cook, "America, The Second `Ad: Prophecies About The Downfall Of The United States" at <http://www.mille.org/scholarship/papers/ADAM.html>;

Landes, *Heaven on Earth*, chap. 14; Bat Yeor, *Eurabia*, TBA.*

XV. April 22-24: The Challenge of the 21st Century

Tuesday: **Journalism and the Cognitive War of the 21st Century.**

Readings: Stuart Green, *Cognitive War*; Landes, TBA; Chomsky, *9-11*, TBA*;

Bruckner, *The Tyranny of Guilt*.

Thursday: NO CLASS

XVI. April 29-May 1

Tuesday: **Global Warming vs. Global Jihad**

Readings: Landes, *Heaven on Earth*, chap. 16; TBA.

Thursday: Review.