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Fall 2009

**History 223: Special Topics in European History – Invasions of Britain**

MWF 12:05-12:55 p.m.

1221 Humanities

**Course objectives:**

This course seeks to explore the many invasions into Britain over the course of history. From the Celts, to the Roman, the Angles and Saxons, the Vikings and finally the Normans, the cultural and social development of Britain was influenced, shaped, adapted and blended to meet the needs of both the inhabitants and the invaders. By the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, England emerged as a distinct nation, different than its continental counterparts in several ways due to its complex heritage, and the island of Britain had become an amalgamation of marauding influences.

**Required materials:**

Books:

Edward James, *Britain in the First Millenium*

David Howarth, *1066: The Year of the Conquest*

Robert Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075-1225*

Course Packet: Containing excerpts from Tacitus, *The Agricola and the Germania*, *Vindolanda: Life and letters on the Roman Frontier*, Bede, Gildas, Beowulf, Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, Alfred's Law Codes, The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, The Saga of Harald Hardrada, William of Poitiers, Bayeux Tapestry, Orderic Vitalis as well as chapters from Frank Barlow's *Edward the Confessor* and *William the Conqueror*.

**Course assessment:** Two midterm exams, one final exam (non-cumulative).

**Grading:** Your class grade will be determined based on your performance on two midterm exams (at six- and twelve-weeks) and one final exam.

1<sup>st</sup> midterm: 30%

2<sup>nd</sup> midterm: 30%

Final exam: 40%

Exams will be divided into two parts. Part one will consist of a mix of ten identification and short answer questions (5 points each) and part two will consist of two essay questions (25 points each). You will be given a choice on both sections of the exam.

If you are an honors student, you will be expected to write an additional research paper, 10-15 pages in length. The topic of the paper may be of your choosing, although you will need to get my approval. Papers will require five to ten sources (no Wikipedia or Google) and are due when we meet for the final exam.

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend lecture on a regular basis. Excessive absence will result in a negative impact upon your grade.

Please make sure that your cell phone is on silent during class. There will be no texting, IMs, emails or other Internet communications during lecture. Please do not read newspapers or other non-course material during class. If you are seen doing any of these things, you will be asked to leave.

Prior to each lecture, you are expected to have done the required reading as listed on the syllabus. Please bring relevant materials (books, notes, etc.) to class each time we meet.

### Part One: Celts and Romans

#### Week One

Wed., Sept. 2: Syllabus, go over policies, course objectives and expectations

Fri., Sept. 4: James, Chapter 1, "Introduction"

    Early Britain, geography, sources, peoples

    Pre-Roman Britain

    Celtic social structures, tribal relationships

    Stonehenge

#### Week Two

Mon., Sept. 7, Labor Day, No Class

Wed., Sept. 9: James, Chapter 2, up to page 29 and Tacitus, *The Agricola*

    Caesar and the Britons

    The relationship between Briton and Gaul

    Britain after Caesar—tribes, place names

Fri., Sept. 11: James, Chapter 2, rest

    The Claudian invasion of 43 AD

#### Week Three

Mon. Sept., 14: James, Chapter 3, Portions of *Vindolanda: Life and Letters on the Roman Frontier*

    Britain as a Roman province

    Roman social and political institutions in Britain

        Administration, Army, Legions, Forts, *civita*

    Rebellion and revolt: Boudica, 60 AD

Wed., Sept. 16: James, Chapter 3

    Cultural life in Roman Britain

    Town, rural societies, language

    The "Romanization" of Britain

Fri., Sept. 18: Life in Roman Britain according to the sources

#### Week Four

Mon., Sept. 21: James, Chapters 4, Selections from Bede

    Religion in Britain before the Romans

Paganism, cults

Wed., Sept. 23: James, Chapter 4, Selections from Bede

Early Christianity in Britain

Pelagius, Patrick

Fri., Sept. 25: The Northern Frontier: Antonine's and Hadrian's Wall

Week Five

Mon., Sept. 28: Women and gender in Roman and early Anglo-Saxon England

Wed., Sept. 30: The Age of King Arthur

Fri., Oct. 2: First Midterm Exam

Part Two: Angles, Saxons and Vikings

Week Six

Mon., Oct. 5: James, Chapter 5

"The Migration Period" in Western Europe—The Continent and Britain

Barbarian Raid into Roman Britain

Sources of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries—Gildas, Bede

Wed., Oct. 7: James, Chapter 5, Selections from Gildas and Bede

Settlement in Post-Roman Britain

Picts, Scots, British

Jutes, Angles, Saxons

Fri., Oct. 9: Britain AD: The Invasion that Never Was/The Not-So Dark Ages

Week Seven

Mon., Oct. 12: James, Chapter 6, Portions of *Beowulf* and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

Kingdoms, Kingship and Society in the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Centuries

The formation of kingdoms in the North

Wed., Oct. 14: James, Chapter 6

The formation of kingdoms in the South

Fri., Oct. 16: Anglo-Saxon language, art, literature, architecture, and culture

Week Eight

Mon., Oct. 19: James, Chapter 7

Christianity in the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Centuries

Columba, Augustine and early missionary activity

Wed., Oct. 21: James, Chapter 7

Celtic vs. Roman Christianity

Irish monasticism and its influence

Fri., Oct. 23: James, Chapter 8

Monasteries and their role in society

Jarrow, Lindisfarne, Iona

Literacy in the monasteries

Week Nine

Mon., Oct. 26: James, Chapter 8

Community and Commerce in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries

Wed., Oct. 28: James, Chapter 9, Portions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle  
Viking raids in the late 8<sup>th</sup> and early 9<sup>th</sup> centuries  
Fri., Oct. 30: Wales and Scotland during the Early Middle Ages

#### Week Ten

Mon., Nov. 2: James, Chapter 9, Selections from Asser's *Life of King Alfred*  
King Alfred and the English reactions to the Vikings  
The earliest Viking settlements  
Wed., Nov. 4: Anglo-Saxon Law – Selections from Alfred's Law Codes  
Fri., Nov. 6: Scandinavian Sagas, English Sources, and the Viking legacy

#### Week 11

Mon., Nov. 9: James, Chapter 10, Portions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle  
The Vikings in the 10<sup>th</sup> century – raids and settlements; Danegeld  
Wed., Nov. 11: James, Chapter 10  
Kingship and the Church in 10<sup>th</sup> Century England  
The Battle of Maldon  
Fri., Nov. 13: England at the turn of the first millennium – culture, politics, society,  
religion, law, women, military, warfare

#### Week 12

Mon., Nov. 16: England in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century  
Wulfstan, Aethelred and Cnut  
Wed., Nov. 18: Emma of Normandy – a case study  
The wife of two Kings, mother of two Kings, stepmother of two Kings; and great-aunt of  
a Conqueror  
Fri., Nov. 20: Second Midterm Exam

### Part Three: Normans and Beyond

#### Week 13

Mon., Nov. 23: Portions of Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*  
England c. 1050, Edward the Confessor, Godwin  
Wed., Nov. 25: Portions of Barlow, *William the Conqueror*  
Normandy and the Continent in the early 11<sup>th</sup> Century  
Fri., Nov. 27: No Class, Thanksgiving Recess

#### Week 14

Mon., Nov. 30: Howarth (whole book), excerpts from William of Poitiers, Orderic Vitalis  
Harold Godwin, William the Bastard and Claims to the throne  
Wed., Dec. 2: Howarth, cont., Portions of the Bayeux Tapestry  
The Battle of Hastings and the Bayeux Tapestry  
Fri., Dec. 4: Debate on the Norman Conquest: issues and arguments

#### Week 15

Mon., Dec. 7: Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, excerpts from Orderic Vitalis  
Post-Conquest England: Government, land and institutions

Wed., Dec. 9: Anglo-Norman England

William's successors: William Rufus, Henry I and Stephen

Fri., Dec. 11: Looking forward: Anglo-Norman and Angevin England

England in the late 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries: Henry II and John

Week 16

Mon., Dec. 14: Legend and Identity in England: From King Arthur to Robin Hood

Final Exam: Friday, December 18, 7:25 p.m. – location TBA

\*\*\*\*\* Syllabus subject to change, with notice.