

## “Prophets and Revolutionaries”

### Instructor Details

Professor: Dr. Johannes C. Wolfart  
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### Office Hours

Office hours will be held on Mondays and Tuesdays from 2:30-3:30.

### Email Communication

Carleton communications policy states that faculty must communicate with students through their Carleton email account. To ensure that this policy is upheld without too much trouble, you should send email to me via CULearn. Please be advised, further, that students can normally expect up to a 24hour turn-around time on e-mail communication, especially during high volume times (i.e. before examinations, at essay time, etc.).

### Course Objectives

The seminar will explore political dimensions of western Christianities in the modern period by means of a *comparison of two examples and their representation* in contemporary works of scholarship and/or engaged criticism. The underlying question of the seminar is: what makes some Christians and Christianities “radical,” in either practice or perception? The seminar will consider, comparatively, the material and ideological dimensions of:

- the so-called “Radical Reformers” in relation to the Peasants’ War of sixteenth century Germany
- prophetic leadership in Métis resistance politics (a.k.a. the Red River and Northwest “Rebellions”) in nineteenth century Canada

Our explorations will be guided by four works of very different genres: 1) an historical novel; 2) a monograph now widely regarded as a classic of “engaged” historiography; 3) a graphic novel with scholarly apparatus; 4) a monograph by a political scientist and “public intellectual.” These works may be supplemented by primary documents posted to CULearn, as well as by further bibliography appended to this syllabus.

Furthermore, the seminar will pursue critical understanding of :

- efforts, widespread and ongoing, to differentiate religious “belief” from political “ideology.”

- common claims that failure or refusal to differentiate (as above) constitutes a “radical” orientation or identity.
- assumptions about the unique and essentially “secular” nature of modernity.
- diverse approaches to representing and understanding “popular” (i.e., non-elite) politics and religion, separately or together.

The seminar will proceed as a workshop, assuming that discussion of a question is fruitful, even if it must ultimately remain inconclusive. Finally, please note that while many of the worldviews considered in this course are explicitly theological, the academic procedures and critical methods employed in the academic study of religion are not. This course presupposes your acceptance of the principles of the modern research university. Your understanding of these, especially as they pertain to the study of religion, will undoubtedly develop further during this course. Similarly, your development and presentation of the essay proposal, along with the completion of the term essay, should add to your academic skill set.

### **Required Reading**

- Luther Blisset, *Q*. Translated by Shaun Whiteside (London: Arrow Books, 2000).
- Norman Cohn, *In Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*. Revised and Expanded Edition (London: Temple Smith, 1970 [1959]) [now available from OUP]
- Chester Brown, *Louis David Riel: A Comic-Strip Biography* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly Publications, 2003) [paperback 2007]
- Thomas Flanagan, *Louis ‘David’ Riel: Prophet of the New World*. Revised Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

All of these books are available from Octopus Books on Third Avenue (just off Bank St.) <http://octopusbooks.ca/> The Luther Blisset is only available on a pre-paid/pre-order basis. You will have to go to the store (either virtually or in person) and pre-pay. The book will take about a week to arrive.

### **Evaluation**

Students will be evaluated on the basis of the following:

- 1) research proposal (10% -- due 23 January)
- 2) seminar presentation (20% -- 13 and 17 February)
- 3) ongoing seminar participation (30% )
- 4) research paper (40% -- due 3 April; 10-15 pages at 4000-level; 15-20 pages at the 5000-level)

### **Seminar Meetings**

The seminar will meet on Mondays from 11:35-2:25 (with a brief break). Please come prepared to discuss materials assigned for each week. In addition to doing the assigned readings, you should also consider at least one item from the suggested readings each week, to aid your ability to talk about the assigned materials.

## **Policy on Attendance**

It is common practice to evaluate participation in discussion and contribution to a seminar. Likewise, it is also customary that habitual non-attendance be considered unacceptable performance. Such non-attendance entails a failure to contribute that is simply un-collegial. Moreover, since it is impossible to make up a missed seminar, a member who does not attend regularly cannot really be said to have taken the course. **Therefore, any member who is absent from more than 3 meetings of the seminar will not receive course credit.** In other words, all members of the seminar must be present (and active!) for (minimally!) three quarters of all meetings of the seminar. Period.

## **Schedule**

Week 1 (9 January) – Introduction to the Seminar. What *is* a seminar? Why do comparison? Modes of representing religion, academic and extra-academic.

Week 2 (16 January) – The ‘European condition’ at the cusp of the middle ages to early modernity. READ: first half of Cohn, *Pursuit*.

Week 3 (23 January) – The contours of dominant Christianity in the Holy Roman Empire circa 1500 C.E. READ: second half of Cohn, *Pursuit*.

Week 4 (30 January) – Elements of “radical” Christianity in the Holy Roman Empire circa 1500 C.E. READ: first half of Blisset, *Q*

Week 5 (6 February) – Moments of crisis: The Revolution of 1525 and the Anabaptist Kingdom of 1534. READ: second half of Blisset, *Q*

Week 6 (13 February) – Student Presentations

## **WINTER BREAK**

Week 7 (27 February) – Student Presentations

Week 8 (6 March) – The ‘Northwest condition’ on the cusp of colonialism to imperialism. READ: first half of Brown, *Riel*.

Week 9 (13 March) – Contours of dominant religion in the Northwest circa 1850. READ: second half of Brown, *Riel*.

Week 10 (20 March) – Elements of “radical” Christianity in the Northwest circa 1850. READ: first half of Flanagan, *Prophet*.

Week 11 (27 March) – Moments of crisis: Red River, 1869-70 and the Northwest, 1885. READ: second half of Flanagan, *Prophet*.

Week 12 (3 April) – Concluding seminar: precise topic and reading to be determined by the seminar.

### **Suggested Further Readings**

#### **Generally on Christian “radicalism” etc.:**

Lorne Dawson, “The Neglected Role of Charismatic Authority in the Study of Terrorist Groups and Radicalization,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 37 (2014), 348-368.

Hans Kippenberg, “Searching for the Link between Religion and Violence by Means of the Thomas-Theorem,” *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 22 (2010), 97-115.

Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*. 2 vols. (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991-1997).

Roger N. Lancaster, *Thanks to God and the Revolution: Popular Religion and Class Consciousness in the New Nicaragua* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

Bruce Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification*. Expanded edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Erin Prophet, *Prophet’s Daughter: My Life with Elizabeth Clare Prophet Inside the Church Universal and Triumphant* (Lyons Press: Guildford CT, 2009).

James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

Ann Taves, *Revelatory Events: Three Case Studies of the Emergence of New Spiritual Paths* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

Catherine Wessinger, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Millennialism* (Oxford: OUP, 2011).

#### **On “radical reformation” and “revolution” in Germany**

Michael G. Baylor, *The German Reformation and the Peasants’ War: A Brief History with Documents* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2012).

Michael G. Baylor, ed. and trans., *The Radical Reformation* [Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought] (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Peter Blickle, *The Revolution of 1525: The German Peasants' War from a New Perspective*. Trans. Thomas A. Brady, Jr. and H.C. Erik Midelfort (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981).

Peter Blickle, *From the Communal Reformation to the Revolution of the Common Man*. Trans. Beat Kümin (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

Friedrich Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*. Transl. by Mossaiye J. Olgin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967 [1926]).

Abraham Friesen, *Thomas Muentzer, A Destroyer of the Godless: The Making of a Sixteenth-century Religious Revolutionary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

Werner O. Packull and Geoffrey Dipple, eds., *Radical Reformation Studies: Essays Presented to James M. Stayer* (Aldershot U.K.: Ashgate, 1999).

James M. Stayer, *The German Peasants' War and Anabaptist Community of Goods* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991).

Tom Scott, *The Early Reformation in Germany: Between Secular Impact and Radical Vision* (Farnham UK: Ashgate, 2013).

Tom Scott and Bob Scribner, eds. and trans., *The German Peasants' War: A History in Documents* (Atlantic Highlands NJ: Humanities Press, 1991).

George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962).

### **On religion (especially prophetic) and "resistance" in the Northwest**

Alvyn Austin and Jamie S. Scott, eds., *Canadian Missionaries, Indigenous Peoples: Representing Religion at Home and Abroad* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

Gilles Martel, *Let Messianisme de Louis Riel* (Waterloo ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984).

James B. Mooney, *The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991 [1892-93]).

George Nelson, *"The Orders of the Dreamed": George Nelson and Northern Ojibwa Religion and Myth*. Edited by Jennifer S.H. Brown and Robert Brightman (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988).

Jason Redden, “ ‘Boil them Hearts’: The Role of Methodist Revivalist Piety in Indigenous Conversion and Evangelization in Late Nineteenth-century Coastal British Columbia,” *Studies in Religion* (2016), 1-25 [DOI: 10.1177/0008429816660883]

Jennifer Reid, *Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada: Mythic Discourse and the Postcolonial State* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008).

Louis Riel, *The Collected Writings of Louis Riel/Les écrits complets de Louis Riel* (Edmonton, University of Alberta Press, 1985).

Louis Riel, *The Selected Poetry of Louis Riel*. Translated by Paul Savoie and edited by Glen Campbell (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1993).

Nicole St-Onge, Carolyn Podruchny and Brenda Macdougall, eds., *Contours of a People: Metis Family, Mobility, and History* (Norman OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012).

Maggie Siggins, *Riel: A Life of Revolution* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1994).

### **On Varieties of Historiography**

Jennifer S. H. Brown, “Ethnohistorians: Strange Bedfellows, Kindred Spirits,” *Ethnohistory* 38 (1991), 113-123. [Text of a presidential address...there is a history, especially in Religious Studies, of considering such documents as “data”]

Jennifer Graber, “Religion in Kiowa Ledgers: Expanding the Canon of American Religious Literature,” *American Literary History* 26 (2014), 42-60. [non-textual narrative representation/histories documenting religion of the Plains peoples]

Sigurdur Magnusson, “The Singularization of History: Social History and Microhistory within the Postmodern State of Knowledge,” *Journal of Social History* 36 (2003), 701-735.

Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero, eds., *Microhistory ad the Lost Peoples of Europe: Selections form Quaderni Storici* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

Robert W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk* [esp. the introduction on non-textual and/or hybrid narrative representations/histories in early modern Germany]

Bruce Trigger, “Ethnohistory: Problems and Prospects,” *Ethnohistory* 29 (1982), 1-19. [ethnohistory as an alternative to both established nationalist modes of historiography AND to conventional ethnography]

Richard C. Trexler, *Religion in Social Context in Europe and America, 1200-1700* (Tempe AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies) [historiography that defies both conventional geographical or temporal specializations]

## REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

### COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

### PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course

### GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B = 73-76 (8)	C - = 60-62 (4)
A = 85-89 (11)	B- = 70-72 (7)	D+ = 57-59 (3)
A- = 80-84 (10)	C+ = 67-69 (6)	D = 53-56 (2)
B+ = 77-79 (9)	C = 63-66 (5)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points
ABS	Absent from final examination, equivalent to F
DEF	Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)
FND	Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

### WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 9, 2016**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 7, 2017**.

### REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: [carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/](http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/)

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by **Nov. 11, 2016** for the Fall term and **March 10, 2017** for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/](http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/)

### PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment. If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please [contact](#) the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of a final assignment or take home, in courses without a final examination, must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **3 working days** of the original final exam.

### ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809	300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic & Career Development Services 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937	501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Library