HIST 490B: Uses of the Past and the Perception of Golden Ages

Recent movements calling to "make America great again," to restore Britain's national sovereignty and former glory, and to recreate the original cultural conditions of early Islam by groups like ISIS have vividly demonstrated just how effective and malleable conceptions of the past can be for catalyzing action and thought in the present. This course will examine various earlier attempts—from ancient up to modern times—to harness and appropriate the intellectual and material resources of perceived "golden ages" and the famous figures associated with them. We will also, necessarily, consider the particular contexts, and consequences, of these uses of the past. Cases will include the Roman appropriation of Greek culture and literature; the amalgamation of Jewish and Gentile cultures, and their respective pasts, in the development of the early Christian movement; idealized views of the the apostolic age following the Roman Empire's official conversion to Christianity; conceptions of the Roman Empire and "ancient Christianity" in the time of Charlemagne; representations of Charlemagne and his early medieval world in later medieval centuries; uses of classical Greco-Roman antiquity together with Christian exemplars in the Italian Renaissance; the quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns in early modern France; and appropriations of the ancient Germanic and Roman pasts in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Together, these uses of the past form an important part of the long history of political ideology and trans-temporal discourse in the West across two millennia.

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READINGS

The only books that you will need to purchase are Denis Feeney's *Beyond Greek: The Beginnings of Latin Literature* and Christopher Krebs' *A Most Dangerous Book: Tacitus's* Germania *from the Roman Empire to the Third Reich*. **The former is assigned for Week 2, so please be sure to obtain a copy of this right away.** Both will be available for sale at the UBC Bookstore. They can often also be found in stock at commercial bookstores like Indigo. Alternately, you might consider purchasing e-book copies, especially of *Beyond Greek* if you are concerned that you may not otherwise have a copy to read in advance of our Week 2 class meeting.

For Augustine's *Confessions*, I highly recommend buying a copy of Sarah Ruden's superb recent translation (very accessible to contemporary Anglophone readers), which I have ordered into the UBC Bookstore as an "optional" text. However, it is acceptable to instead read the transcription of an older English translation, freely available online (see Week 6 below).

All other assigned readings are either available digitally through UBC's library system (as noted below) or will be posted as links on our course website. Web links for some readings available online are also provided below, on this syllabus.

Several of the books from which we'll be reading substantial portions are available as relatively inexpensive paperbacks or frequently turn up as cheap used copies on Amazon, Abe Books, etc.—an option worth considering if (like me) you prefer to sometimes give your eyes a break by reading from a printed book rather than a screen.

For the assigned New Testament texts, I prefer that we all work from a common version and English translation (to which I have provided links below).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

1. Keeping up with our weekly readings. Absolutely essential. To be sure, there is a significant load of week-to-week reading assigned for this course. However, it is not necessarily imperative that you read every single word of every item assigned. The main goal is for us to really immerse ourselves in each of these historical contexts through broader scene-setting readings, specific in-depth case studies, and some primary-source texts discussed therein. If you are already very familiar with some of these historical contexts, you may need only to lightly skim the readings that are more broadly contextual in nature. What is most important is that you spend the time to familiarize yourself adequately with all of the assigned scholarship; that you recognize each scholar's key arguments; that you closely, and critically, read the assigned primary sources; and that you are fully prepared to discuss these texts at our weekly class meetings.

2. Active participation in (virtual) classroom discussion. You are expected to participate actively in our discussions, and to do so in an informed, thoughtful, and considerate manner. Active participation requires critically reading and thinking about all the week's assigned texts. Complete understanding is not necessarily a consequence of this reading, but questions should be. To this end, each week you should submit **two discussion questions based on the week's assigned readings**. These questions can simply be added as 'comments' in response to my weekly readings post on our course website. They should be posted in advance of our weekly seminar meeting (<u>by 11:59 pm the preceding night</u>), so that your classmates can consider them before we meet. Of course, you should also pose some of these questions directly to the group during our weekly class meetings (via Zoom).

Additionally, for two seminar meetings (Weeks 3 and 12), you will be asked to select and **present on a particular primary-source text**. While highly formal presentations are not required or expected, you should nevertheless be well prepared to provide a cogent summary and analysis of the text you've selected.

3. Final paper "Uses of the past" and "golden ages" are extremely broad phenomena. Even in the somewhat more specific sense in which we will be applying these concepts—i.e., the cultural and political appropriation of the intellectual resources of idealized past ages—they are surely discernible in most periods and societies across time and space. Thus, for your essay, you may choose to write on uses of the past in some other historical context (though discuss your proposed topic with me first, if so), or else further explore one of the contexts or topics that we've examined together in this course. This will be **an essay of 15-20 pages, due around the end of the term** (due date TBA). We will discuss this assignment and its parameters in due course.

Please note: papers submitted after the determined due date will be penalized at 5% per business day. Papers submitted more than 10 business days after the due date may not be accepted. Should unexpected circumstances arise, please be sure to contact me immediately.

4. Learning outcomes Through active participation and engagement with readings and discussions, students should develop a sharper and more wide-ranging understanding of the myriad ways in which ideas or aspects of the past have long been (and still are) appropriated for the particular purposes of a later culture. Students will demonstrate these critical skills in their final paper project.

GRADING

40% Class participation (including 2 weekly discussion questions)

20% Source presentations x 2 (10% each)

40% Final Paper

5. Academic Honesty and Integrity Plagiarism will not be tolerated. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with UBC's academic honesty and plagiarism rules and regulations. Remember that all written work must be your own. All quotations and material drawn from another source must be properly cited, in the form specified in your assignment. Failure to acknowledge your sources constitutes plagiarism, which will have serious consequences (ranging from failure of an assignment to failure of the course or suspension from the University). A good rule of thumb is to CITE EVERYTHING.

Professor Leslie Paris of the History department has written up a concise definition of plagiarism in the academic context: "Plagiarism means claiming someone else's work (arguments, evidence, or words) as your own, without crediting that person. Plagiarism can include 1) pasting material from the internet or another essay into your work, without any attribution, 2) citing a source in your footnotes, but retaining the original author's sentences outside of quotation marks (or changing only a word or two of their original writing), or 3) using another scholar's specific arguments or historical evidence, in your own words, but without acknowledging your source in the footnotes. You can face severe penalties from the university if you are found to have plagiarized. If you have questions about when and how to ascribe information or ideas to others, please come see me so that we can discuss appropriate citation techniques."

Details on University policies on misconduct are available here: http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0

More details on citation and plagiarism are available at the History Department Writing Centre at:
http://www.history.ubc.ca/content/common-questions-about-citations

6. Academic Concession Details regarding UBC's Academic Concession policies are available here: https://www.arts.ubc.ca/degree-planning/academic-performance/academic-concession/

7. Values & Resources UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here: https://senate.ubc.ca/policiesresources-support-student-success.

8. Managing your mental health Amidst the current outbreak of COVID-19, you may be developing feelings of fear, stress, worry, and isolation. These feelings are natural when facing threats that are beyond our control. Everyone reacts differently to these feelings and they can be overwhelming for some. If you need help in coping with these feelings, please go to the website https://students.ubc.ca/covid19/mental-health-during-covid-19-outbreak
which will provide resources that will guide you in managing your mental health.

Resources available online or on the phone (click for links)

- **UBC Counselling Services**
  Counselling Services appointments are all being offered by phone during the COVID-19 outbreak. Students can call Counselling Services, 604 822 3811, to schedule an appointment by phone.
- **EmpowerMe**
  Get online or phone counselling on topics you're concerned about, free for UBC students.
- **MindhealthBC**
  Take a quick online assessment on your mental health and get resources for a variety of related concerns.
- **Here to Help**
  Browse strategies to help you take care of your mental health.
- **HealthlinkBC**
  Call 811 to speak with a registered nurse, or access online resources for health-related questions.
- **Crisis Centre BC**
  If you or someone you know is feeling hopeless or at risk of harm, call or chat online with a crisis responder any time.
- **TAO Self-help resources**
  Manage your well-being with tools on stress, relationship problems, substance use, and more. Register with a UBC email, which you can set up for free.
- **Mental Health Commission of Canada**
  Check out the COVID-19 Self-care & Resilience Guide and build self-care into your routine to improve resilience and prevent burnout.
- **BC Virtual mental health supports**
  Access new and existing virtual mental health supports provided by the BC government.
- **Government of Canada's Mental Health supports**
  Sign-up for free online resources, tools, apps and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals.
- **Understanding Stress**
  Know how to recognize your signs of stress and manage the stress response.
- **Psychology Today**
  Learn how to stay emotionally healthy during the coronavirus outbreak.
- **World Health Organization**
  See ways you can support the mental and psychological wellbeing of others.
- **Canadian Mental Health Association**
  Understand what the coronavirus is, including signs of infection, prevention recommendations, and the current risk to Canadians.
- **Anxiety Canada**
  Consider specific steps to take if you're anxious or worried about the COVID-19 situation.
- **Foundry BC**
  Find ways to take care of yourself when you're feeling anxious about the news and updates around the outbreak.
  Related COVID-19 resources
- Student resources during the COVID-19 outbreak

- Student Services Changes during the COVID-19 outbreak
- International Students: Immigration and Health Insurance FAQ on COVID-19
- How to get and give support during the COVID-19 outbreak

SCHEDULE

10 SEPTEMBER
1. General introduction—and some recent examples of "uses of the past" and "the perception of golden ages"

Walter Pohl and Ian Wood, "Introduction: Cultural Memory and the Resources of the Past," in Clemens Gantner, Rosamond McKitterick, and Sven Meeder, eds., *Resources of the Past in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 1–12.*

François Hartog and Jacques Revel, "Historians and the Present Conjuncture," in Giovanni Levi and Jacques Revel, eds., *Political Uses of the Past: The Recent Mediterranean Experiences* (London, 2002), pp. 1–12.*

[***note:** These two short pieces touch on particular contexts that we will later examine in detail. For now, focus more on their general, theoretical introductions to the study of uses of the past.]

S. Romi Mukherjee, "Make America Great Again as White Political Ideology," *LISA e-journal*, vol. XVI-n°2: https://journals.openedition.org/lisa/9887

Robyn J. Whitaker, "Trump's photo op with church and Bible was offensive, but not new," *The Conversation*, posted 4 June 2020: https://theconversation.com/trumps-photo-op-with-church-and-bible-was-offensive-but-not-new-140053

Matthew Teague, " 'He wears the armor of God': Evangelicals hail Trump's church photo op," *The Guardian*, posted 3 June 2020: https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jun/03/donald-trump-church-photo-op-evangelicals

Alex von Tunzelmann, "The Imperial Myths Driving Brexit," *The Atlantic*, August 2019 issue: https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/08/imperial-myths-behind-brexit/595813/

Graeme Wood, "What ISIS Really Wants," *The Atlantic*, March 2015 issue: https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/

17 SEPTEMBER
2.   The Roman takeover/translation of Greek "literature"

Denis Feeney, *Beyond Greek: The Beginnings of Latin Literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 2016).

Primary sources: selections from the fragments of Ennius's *Annals*.
Loeb Classical Library: *Fragmentary Republican Latin, Volume I: Ennius, Testimonia. Epic Fragments*. Read "Introduction to the Annals" and fragments from Book I, pp. 97–164.
[accessible through UBC library: https://www-loebclassics-com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/view/ennius-annals/2018/pb_LCL294.109.xml]

24 SEPTEMBER
3.   Jewish and Hellenistic pasts in early Christianity, pt. 1

Frances Young, "Books and Their 'Aura': The Functions of Written Texts in Judaism, Paganism, and Christianity during the First Centuries CE," in Judith Frishman, Willemien Otten, and Gerard Rouwhorst, eds., *Religious Identity and the Problem of Historical Foundation: The Foundational Character of Authoritative Sources in the History of Christianity and Judaism* (Leiden, 2004), pp. 535–552.

Paula Fredriksen, *From Jesus to Christ: The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus* (New Haven, Conn., 1988), chapters 1–5, pp. 3–93.
[UBC LIBRARY: EBOOK]

Primary sources: One of the four canonical Gospels or Acts of the Apostles.*
[Read from the translations available here: http://www.drbo.org/; or, if available to you, from a print version of the **Douay-Rheims translation of the Vulgate**.]

At our Week 2 meeting, students will be assigned one of these five texts, and then, in Week 3, will report to the class on their text.

1 OCTOBER
4. Jewish and Hellenistic pasts in early Christianity, pt. 2

<u>Case study: Paul</u>

Richard A. Horsley, "Rhetoric and Empire–and 1 Corinthians," in *idem*, ed., *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl* (Harrisburg, Penn., 2000), pp. 72–102.

Pamela Eisenbaum, "Paul as the New Abraham," in *Paul and Politics*, pp. 130–145.

Mark D. Nanos, "The Inter- and Intra-Jewish Political Context of Paul's Letter to the Galatians," in *Paul and Politics*, pp. 146–159.

Paula Fredriksen, *Paul: The Pagan's Apostle* (New Haven, 2017): chapter 4, pp. 94–130.

Primary sources: Paul's Letters: Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians.
[Read from the translations available here: http://www.drbo.org/; or, if available to you, from a print version of the Douay-Rheims translation of the Vulgate.]

8 OCTOBER
5. Uses of the early Christian (and pagan) past in the later Roman Empire and the works of the Church Fathers, pt. 1

R.A. Markus, "Introduction: The West" and "The Latin Fathers," in J.H. Burns, ed., *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought, c. 350–1450* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 83–122.

Thomas Graumann, "The Conduct of Theology and the 'Fathers' of the Church," in Phillip Rousseau, ed., *A Companion to Late Antiquity* (Chichester, 2009), pp. 539–555.
[UBC LIBRARY: EBOOK]

Mark Vessey, "The Forging of Orthodoxy in Latin Christian Literature: A Case Study," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4 (1996), pp. 495–513.

Mark Vessey, "Reinventing History: Jerome's Chronicle and the Writing of the Post-Roman West," in Scott McGill, Cristiana Sogno, and Edward Watts, eds., *From the Tetrarchs to the Theodosians: Later Roman History and Culture, 284–450 CE* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 265–289.

Mark Vessey, "History of the Book: Augustine's *City of God* and Post-Roman Cultural Memory," in James Wetzel, ed., *Augustine's* City of God*: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 14–32.

Primary sources: selected excerpts from Augustine of Hippo, *City of God* and Jerome, *Lives of Illustrious Men*.

15 OCTOBER

6. Uses of the early Christian (and pagan) past in the later Roman Empire and the works of the Church Fathers, pt. 2

Case study: Augustine & Paul

Paula Fredriksen, "Paul and Augustine: Conversion Narratives, Orthodox Traditions, and Retrospective Self," *Journal of Theological Studies* 37 (1986), pp. 3–34.

Paula Fredriksen, "The *Confessions* as Autobiography," in Mark Vessey, ed., *A Companion to Augustine* (Chichester, 2012), pp. 87–98.
[UBC LIBRARY: EBOOK]

Thomas F. Martin, "*Vox Pauli*: Augustine and the Claims to Speak for Paul, An Exploration of Rhetoric at the Service of Exegesis," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 8 (2000), pp. 237–272.

Benjamin Myers, "A Tale of Two Gardens: Augustine's Narrative Interpretation of Romans 5," in Beverly Roberts Gaventa, ed., *Apocalyptic Paul: Cosmos and Anthropos in Romans 5–8* (Waco, Tex., 2013), pp. 39–58.

Aaron Canty, "Saint Paul in Augustine," in Steven R. Cartwright, ed., *A Companion to St. Paul in the Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 115–142.

Primary source: Augustine, *Confessions**: Book 7, chapters 24–27; all of Book 8; and Book 13, chapters 38–41.
 [*You may work from this free web transcription of E.B. Pusey's English translation: https://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/Englishconfessions.html but Sarah Ruden's more recent translation is highly recommended:
https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/239720/confessions-by-augustine/]

22 OCTOBER
7. Classical and "ancient Christian" pasts in the "Carolingian Renaissance," pt. 1

Conrad Leyser, "Late Antiquity in the Medieval West," in *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, pp. 29–42.
[UBC LIBRARY: EBOOK]

Giles Brown, "Introduction: The Carolingian Renaissance," in Rosamond McKitterick, ed., *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 1–51.

Lawrence Nees, *A Tainted Mantle: Hercules and the Classical Tradition at the Carolingian Court* (Philadelphia, 1991): chapter 1 ("The Problem of the Carolingian Renaissance in Modern Historical Literature"), pp. 3–17, and selections from chapters 2–5 (on Theodulf of Orléans' "Against the Judges").

Primary sources: Carolingian poems:
-Theodulf of Orléans, "Against the Judges" and "On the Books That I Used to Read and How the Stories of Poets Should Be Interpreted Allegorically by Philosophers"
-Alcuin of York, "On the Court," "On Scribes," and a short excerpt from "Poem on the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York"
-Moduin, "*Egloga*: Poetry and the New Age"

29 OCTOBER
8. Classical and "ancient Christian" pasts in the "Carolingian Renaissance," pt. 2

Case study: the *Epitaphium Arsenii*

David Ganz, "The *Epitaphium Arsenii* and the Opposition to Louis the Pious," in Peter Godman and Roger Collins, eds., *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 537–550.

Courtney M. Booker, *Past Convictions: The Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians* (Philadelphia, 2009), pp. 42–50.

Mayke de Jong, "Becoming Jeremiah: Paschasius Radbertus on Wala, Himself, and Others," in Richard Corradini, Matthew Gillis, Rosamond McKitterick, and Irene van Renswoude, eds., *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages* (Vienna, 2010), pp. 185–196.

Mayke de Jong, "Paschasius Radbertus and Pseudo-Isidore: The Evidence of the *Epitaphium Arsenii*," in Valerie L. Garver and Owen M. Phelan, eds., *Rome and Religion in the Medieval World: Studies in Honor of Thomas F.X. Noble* (Farnham, UK/Burlington, Vt., 2014), pp. 149–177.

Primary source: selections from Paschasius Radbertus, *Epitaphium Arsenii*: Book I, Introduction and chapters 1–2 (pp. 83–91) and Book II (pp. 147–204).

5 NOVEMBER
9. Charlemagne and the Carolingians in the High Middle Ages

Rosamond McKitterick, "The Legacy of the Carolingians," in *Carolingian Culture*, pp. 317–323.

Matthew Gabriele, "Introduction: Looking for Charlemagne," in *idem*, *Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 1–9.
[full Intro. accessible through Google Books preview:
https://books.google.ca/books?id=7tgUDAAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false]

Anne Latowsky, *Emperor of the World: Charlemagne and the Construction of Imperial Authority, 800-1229* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2013): Introduction, chapter 1, and chapters 4–5, pp. 1–18, 19–58, and 139–214.
[UBC LIBRARY: EBOOK]

BBC Radio 4: Neil MacGregor, "The Battle for Charlemagne," *Germany: Memories of a Nation*: https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b04k6rlg (14 minutes)

Primary sources: Explore the websites of the Aachen Cathedral and Aachen Cathedral Treasury, focusing in particular on representations of Charlemagne after the Carolingian era, especially in the Hohenstaufen context discussed in chapters 4–5 of Latowsky's *Emperor of the World*.

a. On the Aachen Cathedral website (https://www.aachenerdom.de/en/), read through the "History of Aachen Cathedral" slideshow and take a "3D Virtual Tour" of the cathedral.

b. On the Cathedral Treasury website (https://www.aachener-domschatz.de/), examine some of the fascinating objects connected to Charlemagne and his legendary medieval afterlife— including the iconic "Karlsbüste" reliquary and another containing his arm bone.

12 NOVEMBER
10. Engaging with the Past in the Italian Renaissance, pt. 1

Peter Burke, *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (London, 1969): Parts I and II, pp. 1–49.

Kenneth R. Bartlett, "Chapter One: Defining the Renaissance" and "Chapter Four: Petrarch," in *idem*, *A Short History of the Italian Renaissance* (North York, Ont., 2013), pp. 1–14 and 55–66.

Carol E. Quillen, Introduction to Francesco Petrarch, *The Secret* (Boston/New York, 2003), pp. 1–41.

Alexander Lee, *Petrarch and St. Augustine: Classical Scholarship, Christian Theology and the Origins of the Renaissance in Italy* (Leiden, 2012): chapter 1, pp. 31–61.
[UBC LIBRARY: EBOOK]

Primary source: selections from Francesco Petrarch, *Secretum*: Author's Preface and Third Dialogue.
English translation available here: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/49450/49450-h/49450-h.htm

19 NOVEMBER
11. Engaging with the Past in the Italian Renaissance, pt. 2

Case study: History-writing during the Renaissance: Machiavelli & Guiccardini

Kenneth R. Bartlett, "Chapter Thirteen: The Counsel of Experience in Challenging Times," in *idem*, *A Short History of the Italian Renaissance*, pp. 265–283.

Mark Salber Phillips, *On Historical Distance* (New Haven, 2013): chapters 1–2, pp. 25–60.

Primary sources: selections from Niccolò Machiaevilli, *Discourses on Livy* and Francesco Guiccardini, *History of Italy*.

<div align="center">**26 NOVEMBER**
12. The Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns</div>

Larry F. Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient: Literature and History in Early Modern France* (Chicago, 2011).
[UBC LIBRARY: EBOOK]

primary sources: "Crowdsourcing" as in Week 3: Locate a primary-source text (or manageably short excerpt thereof) discussed in *The Shock of the Ancient*, and report on this primary-source text and its author's perspective at our Week 12 class meeting.
[*I will circulate a Google Docs file to make sure we're selecting a variety of texts. Consult Norman's bibliography; many of his sources are accessible in English translation. I can also provide suggestions and links if needed.*]

<div align="center">**3 DECEMBER**
13. The Roman, Germanic, and Medieval Pasts in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy</div>

Christopher Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book: Tacitus's* Germania *from the Roman Empire to the Third Reich* (New York, 2011).

Øystein Rygg Haanæs, "Using language as a weapon: How Mussolini used Latin to link fascism to the mighty Roman Empire," University of Oslo: Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas, posted 3 July 2019: https://www.hf.uio.no/ifikk/english/research/news-and-events/news/2019/using-language-as-a-weapon-how-mussolini-used-lati.html

Victor Plahte Tschudi, "Plaster Empires: Italo Gismondi's Model of Rome," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 71 (2012), pp. 386–403.

David Wallace, "Medieval Studies in Troubled Times: The 1930s," *Speculum* 95 (2020), pp. 1–35.