

**COURSE DATA****DATA SUBJECT**

Code: 34045
Name: Economic and social history of the Middle Ages
Cycle: Undergraduate Studies
ECTS Credits: 6
Academic year: 2025-26

STUDY (S)

Degree	Center	Acad. year	Period
1005 - Degree in History	Facultat de Geografia i Història	4	Second quarter

SUBJECT-MATTER

Degree	Subject-matter	Character
1005 - Degree in History	Economic and social history of the Middle Ages	ELECTIVES

COORDINATION

GARCIA-OLIVER GARCIA FERRAN

SUMMARY

The module focuses on the genesis and development of the economic system and social structures from the late Antiquity to the beginning of the Early Modern Era. Attention is paid to the factors of growth, the technical innovations and levels of productivity, the increase of population and the processes of social differentiation and crisis both in the countryside and the city.

The module presents a correlation between the theoretical explanation, complemented with the student's readings, and the analysis of texts, both in the lectures and the evaluation.

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE SAME DEGREE**

There are no specified enrollment restrictions with other subjects of the curriculum.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Students are recommended to have knowledge of the process of formation, expansion and consolidation of Europe in the Middle Ages, between the 5th and the 15th century, and also of the history of the Crown of



Aragon and the history of the Iberian kingdoms in the Middle Ages.

COMPETENCES / LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Be able to give narrative form to research results according to the critical canons of the discipline.

Be able to make abstractions, to analyse and to synthesise.

Be familiar with the methods and issues of the different branches of historical research: economic, social, political, cultural, gender-related, etc.

Show critical awareness of the relationship between current events and processes and the past.

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS

1.

A new situation. The court estate and the small property. Transformations of the Courtense system. The resumption of trade.

After a decline in the economy that has dragged on since the 3rd century, accentuated by the traumatic shock of the invasions and the plague of the 6th century, the West shows the first signs of recovery. Agriculture advance through diffusion of the regime of the great property and the progression of small property. In the commercial field, due to the foundation of portus, burhs and wiks, that is, small commercial centres located by the sea, especially towards the Atlantic coast.

2.

The peace of God and the three orders. Nobility and chivalry. lineages Marriage, women and young people.

The recovery of the West is not alien to the ideological formulations that support the new feudal system, particularly the ideology of the three orders and the Peace and Truce movement. Likewise, the transmission of power within the political frameworks monarchy, counties, lordships corresponds to the transformation of the family structures of the powerful and the new conception of the nobility and chivalry.

Growth indicators. Villages, parishes, families. The lordship Peasant farms. Rural mobility.

Between the end of the 10th century and the first half of the 14th century, the West witnesses a formidable agrarian expansion. The best indicator is the colonization, with the founding of villages and the creation of parishes. Within the framework of manor and technical improvement, the small farm generates surpluses



3.

Growth indicators. Villages, parishes, families. The lordship Peasant farms. Rural mobility. and connects with rural markets. Peasant mobility is one more reflection of agrarian dynamism.

4.

The origin of the medieval city. The conquest of the field. The commercial boom: markets, routes and techniques. The manufacture

The expansion of cities has even more profound consequences than the strictly agrarian ones in the economic system. The commercial networks contribute for the first time to shaping an economy of European scope, which means improvements in the transport system, especially maritime, and in commercial techniques. However, the city extends its influence in the countryside and submits it to the logic of its own interests.

5.

Agricultural techniques. Social organization of landscapes. You cultivate them. The livestock

Against the traditional view that accentuates stagnation and low yields, turning its back on agronomic knowledge, European agriculture appears to us in the light of documentary, literary, archaeological and artistic testimonies, with a great capacity for growth, development and adaptation to environmental conditions. These virtues stand out in agricultural techniques, diversity of crops and in the power of livestock.

6.

An adverse situation. The unrest of the lordship. Peasant revolts. The precariousness of material life. A turbulent society.

Since the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century, some European regions show a change of conjuncture. The overall European economy continues to grow, but at a much slower pace. The first famines and shortages indicate that the problems are systemic rather than temporary. The Black Death of 1348 and the successive waves will cause a great recession. Manor rents plummet, peasants and craftsmen revolt, the poor get poorer, and violence runs through the entire social spectrum.

Agrarian reconstruction and the emergence of commercial agriculture. The spread of credit. Urban economy: from crisis to reconversion. Trade progress and new areas of development. Markets and the peasant economy.

The slow recovery, continually threatened by the intermittent return of the plague and the political crisis,



7.

Agrarian reconstruction and the emergence of commercial agriculture. The spread of credit. Urban economy: from crisis to reconversion. Trade progress and new areas of development. Markets and the peasant economy.

has accelerated since the middle of the fifteenth century. Once again, the most visible sign is the colonization of land, in addition to the irruption of commercial agriculture. In the urban area, we are witnessing a reconversion of the productive sectors, fundamentally the wool manufacturing, closely linked to commercial progress and the Atlantic as an area of expansion to the detriment of the Mediterranean area.

8.

Perception and representation of the city. Social integration frameworks: parishes, confraternities and almshouses. Poverty, work and begging. Domestic ideals. The Jews, a significant minority.

Urban society is complex and shows enormous economic cracks, which the crisis aggravates. In order to curb poverty and achieve urban peace, always precarious and unstable, the city deploys the devices of parishes, brotherhoods, alms and hospitals. However, it continues to segregate the marginalized and the minorities, one of the most significant of which is the Jewish.

9.

The rise of rural elites. Peasant culture, popular culture. Sociability networks. Peasants and bourgeois literature.

The countryside also reflects the difference in fortunes, not as accentuated as in the city, but no less effective. At the top of the peasant hierarchy are well-to-do families, due to their economic power, the control of local power and the practices of distinction and affirmation. However, along with the rest of the peasantry, they share a culture fundamentally oral, with still strong pagan resonances. This culture arouses contempt and ridicule, as well as fear of the city, as it is reflected in bourgeois literature.

WORKLOAD

PRESENCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Hours
Theory	30,00
Other activities	15,00
Classroom practices	15,00
Total hours	60,00

NON PRESENCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Hours
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Attendance at other activities	0,00
Individual or group project	0,00
Independent study and work	0,00
Preparation of lessons	0,00
Preparation for assessment activities	90,00
Resolution of case studies	0,00
Total hours	90,00

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Ü LECTURES IN THE CLASSROOM:

Lectures will have a theoretical and practical component, from the teacher's explanations with critical analysis and historical documents of the period and current historiographical materials (maps, graphs, texts ...).

Ü PREPARATION OF THE CLASSROOM (theoretical): reading and discussion of each one of the topics that will be delivered by the teacher before starting the course. Reading also recommended bibliography.

Ü COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES: during the course will be held complementary activities which will be indicate timely.

EVALUATION

The final evaluation of the course in the first semester will be as follows:

1st) Written theoretical and practical examination on the date fixed by the administration of the center, which it will assess the level of knowledge achieved by students in accordance with the objectives of the course as well as the correction of writing and the ability to relate, facts, concepts and historical processes.

2nd) Written tests related to the complementary activities, which will make brief comments on its contents.

3rd) The percentage that each of the evaluation tests on the final grade of the course is as follows:



Written examination theoretical and practical	70 %
Practical tests	20 %
Tests of complementary activities	10 %
TOTAL	100 %

Students must achieve a minimum grade of 5 points between the theoretical and practical examination to incorporate the grade of the complementary activity in the final grade of the course.

The evaluation of the course in the second call will be as follows:

1st) Written theoretical and practical examination on the date fixed by the administration of the center, with the same criteria than the previous evaluation.

2^{on}) It will keep the qualification obtained in the complementary activity.

Excepting Erasmus students, grammar and spelling problems will score negatively on the qualification of all written tests and academic works. Their accumulation may lead to a failing grade in the course.

REFERENCES

- DUFOURCQ, Ch. y GAUTIER-DALCHÉ, J., Historia económica y social de la España cristiana en la Edad Media, Barcelona, El Albir, 1983.
- DUBY, G., Guerreros y campesinos: desarrollo inicial de la economía europea, 500-1200, Madrid, Siglo XXI, 2009
- BOIS, G., La revolución del año mil, Barcelona, Crítica, 1991.



- BOIS, G., La gran depresión medieval siglos XIV-XV: el precedente de una crisis sistémica, Valencia, Universitat de València, 2001.
- FOSSIER, R., La sociedad medieval, Barcelona, Crítica, 1996
- POUNDS, N.J.G., Historia económica de la Europa medieval, Barcelona, Crítica, 1981.
- EPSTEIN, S.R., Libertad y crecimiento. El desarrollo de los estados y de los mercados en Europa, 1300-1750, Valencia, Universitat de València, 2009