

**MALS/ENGL 667-040**  
***Medieval and Renaissance Autobiography***  
Summer 2009  
June 7--July 29  
MW 6-9

Professor L. G. Duggan  
219 Munroe Hall (main campus, Newark)  
831-6501 (office), 453-0564 (home, only 'twixt 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.) lgjd@udel.edu  
Office hours: immediately before and after this class, and by appointment

This is a seminar on a distinctive Western literary form which emerged in the High Middle Ages, not (as many might think) in Antiquity or in the Renaissance. We shall focus on the origins and development of autobiography down to the 16th century, and with few exceptions we shall immerse ourselves in the intensive study of the primary texts rather than in modern commentaries on them.

In addition to active participation in class discussion of these texts (which will count for at least 40% of the grade), each student will write two 7-15(+) page papers, one on one of the common readings, the other on an additional autobiography or autobiographical materials. Each of these papers will be read aloud in class. I will be happy to look at proposals and drafts before submission of the final papers.

Although I will by times supply some biographical background information on some of the (more obscure) authors we will be reading, each student is expected to read a brief biography of each author in some standard reference work such as The Encyclopaedia Britannica (available online).

Common reading (available in paperback):

St Augustine, Confessions  
Guibert of Nogent, Self and Society in Medieval France  
The Letters of Abelard and Heloise  
Petrarch, The Secret  
The Book of Margery Kempe  
Benvenuto Cellini, Autobiography  
Ignatius of Loyola, "Reminiscences," in Personal Writings, pp. 3-64  
Various handouts (marked with \*)

Schedule of classes, readings, and discussions:

- June**    8    Introduction
- 10    The Res gestae of the Emperor Augustus (r. 31 BC-AD 14)\*
- 15    Augustine of Hippo, Confessions

17 " and selections from Colin Morris, The Discovery of the Individual, pp. xiii-xviii, 1-19, 64-95\*

HIST/ENGL 667 Medieval and Renaissance Autobiography 2

22 Guibert of Nogent, Self and Society in Medieval France

24 The Letters of Abelard and Heloise

29 Petrarch, The Secret

**July** 1 Emperor Charles IV, Autobiography (r. 1347-78)\*

6 The Book of Margery Kempe

8 " and the short autobiographies of Christine de Pisan\* and Leonor Lopez de Cordoba\*

13 + 15 Autobiographies of two artists, Leonbattista Alberti\* and Benvenuto Cellini

20+ 22, 27 Martin Luther, "Autobiographical Fragment,"\* and Ignatius of Loyola, "Reminiscences"; final presentations of second papers and conclusion

Some additional autobiographies and autobiographical materials for second papers:

Did Julius Caesar write an autobiography?

The "autobiography" of Paul as revealed in his letters (and checked against the Acts of the Apostles)

The Complete Works of Rather of Verona (c. 887-974)

I. Giralduus. The Autobiography of Giralduus Cambrensis (1145-1223)

Pope Pius II (1458-64), Commentaries (the only autobiography ever penned by a pope)

The Autobiography of Lorenzo the Magnificent (Lorenzo de' Medici, 1449-92)

Autobiographical materials revelatory of Hildegard of Bingen, 13th-and 14th-century German nuns and mystics, Michelangelo, Machiavelli, and others.