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# Internet Medieval Sourcebook

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**[Paul Halsall](#)**, ORB sources editor

*Last Modified: January 8, 2000*

*[linked pages may have been updated more recently]*

The **Internet Medieval Sourcebook** is located at the **[Fordham University Center for Medieval Studies](#)**.



Part of [ORB](#),  
Online Reference  
Book for Medieval  
Studies.

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Music courtesy of [The Internet Renaissance Band](#)

*Play any of the above for appropriate music for browsing!*

## Sourcebook Contents

The *Internet Medieval Sourcebook* is organized as three main index pages, with a number of supplementary documents. Each individual section is still large - an organizational goal here is to avoid incessant "clicking" to get between pages and to information.

- **[Selected Sources](#)**

This is an index of selected and excerpted texts for teaching purposes. Since it had grown too large for many users to manage, as of October 10 1998, it has been extensively reorganized. For teachers who wish to refer students to the *Sourcebook*, this page is the best starting point.

- **[Full Text Sources](#)**

Full texts of medieval sources arranged according to type.

- **[Saints' Lives](#)**

Devoted to Ancient, Medieval and Byzantine hagiographical sources.

### Selected Sources Sections

[Studying History](#)

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[States & Society](#)  
[Renaissance](#)  
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## Supplementary Documents

- **Help!**  
A help page, on use of the *Sourcebook*, for research questions, and on use of the Internet..
- **Search the Sourcebook**  
Search the full texts of all the **Sourcebook** texts physically located on Fordham servers, at ORB, or selected ancient, late antique, and medieval text databases.
- **Sourcebook Accessions**  
A listing of primary sources in all parts of the site **in order of accession**. This enables return users to determine what is new.
- **Selected Secondary Sources**  
A Section of the **Sourcebook** devoted to secondary articles on the subjects covered by the source documents. Its arrangement mirrors that of the primary source pages.
- **Medieval Source Projects**  
A Section of the **Sourcebook** devoted to presentation at this site, or links to other sites, of projects (longer papers, dissertations, theses) which are based on and/or include editions of primary sources.
- **Medieval Legal History**  
A Section of the **Sourcebook** bringing together, and organizing, all the texts on the history of law.
- **Livre des Sources Médiévales**  
A Section of the *Sourcebook* devoted to texts available in French. This section begins life with an ample selection of over 150 etexts from the middle ages until the end of the Ancien Regime. Most are in French, but some are in Latin, Langue d'oc and Langue d'oïl. Other texts will be added as they are submitted. Since I read French fluently, but write it with less facility, I welcome collaboration on this part of the project.
- **Libro de fuentes medievales de Internet**  
A Section of the *Sourcebook* devoted to texts available in Spanish. There are only a few available at the moment, but as they are submitted, they will be added. Since I am not fluent in Spanish, I welcome collaboration on this part of the project.

## Internet Sourcebook: Multimedia

- **Maps and Images**  
A Section of the **Sourcebook** providing a wide array of public domain, and copy-permitted maps and images. [US Law]
- **Medieval Films**  
A thematically organized guide to over 200 medieval-themed films.
- **Medieval Music**  
An extensive guide to the periodization of music from ancient times until

the Baroque with an annotated guide to recordings illustrating each period.  
[At UNF]

## Internet History Sourcebooks Project: Content Information

- **Courses Using the Medieval Sourcebook**

A list of courses and colleges using the Medieval Sourcebook, with links to those courses which are online. If you do use the Sourcebook, either in an online course, or as course packet material, please send a note to [halsall@murray.fordham.edu](mailto:halsall@murray.fordham.edu).

- **The Honor Roll**

The texts in the *Sourcebook* have come from a number of different sources, printed and electronic. A number of people have helped by allowing use of their translations, or by entering text. See for a roll of honor and thanks.

- **Newly Translated Texts**

Although most texts in the *Sourcebook* are from 19th and early 20th century translations, a significant number of texts have been newly translated by a number of people for this web project. These texts are all copy permitted for non commercial use, but are not public domain.

- **Desiderata**

The *Sourcebook* now contains hundreds of texts, but there are still many more to be added. This is a list of top priorities for full text source additions. If you are willing to take on one of these texts, contact me.

- **How to Cite Internet and World Wide Web Documents**

- **Secondary Sources in the Sourcebook**

On the various secondary texts and encyclopedias linked to within the main **Sourcebook** pages.

## Internet History Sourcebooks Project: The Other Sourcebooks

- **Ancient History Sourcebook**

A companion project to the Medieval Sourcebook - for teachers of Ancient history civilization courses. It covers Pre-History, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Israel, Greece, and Rome.

- **Modern History Sourcebook**

A companion project to the Medieval Sourcebook - for teachers of Modern European history and Modern Civilization courses.

The following **Sourcebooks** are primarily based on subsets of documents from the three main chronologically arranged collections. They do contain a number of extra links to other websites, and some additional texts.

- **African History Sourcebook**

- [East Asian History Sourcebook](#)
  - [Indian History Sourcebook](#)
  - [Islamic History Sourcebook](#)
  - [Jewish History Sourcebook](#)
  - [People with A History: LGBT History](#)
  - [Women's History Sourcebook](#)
  - [Global History Sourcebook](#)
  - [History of Science Sourcebook](#)
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## HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you have any suggestions, or etexts or translations of short passages you are willing to have included in this *Sourcebook*, please contact me at [halsall@fordham.edu](mailto:halsall@fordham.edu). If you teach a class and have reading guides prepared for any of the material here, I would be happy to include it with the various texts. Finally, If you come across typographical errors - and you will - please also inform me.

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## INTRODUCTION: MEDIEVAL SOURCES ON THE INTERNET

Historians teaching medieval history surveys almost always want to combine a textbook, a sourcebook, and additional readings. Textbooks, as an ever-evolving form, are probably worth the cost, but sourcebooks are often unnecessarily expensive. Unlike some modern history texts, the sources used for medieval history have been around a long time. Very many were translated in the 19th century, and, as a rapid review of any commercial source book will show, it is these 19th century translations which make up the bulk of the texts. Indeed the genealogy of such texts is a minor area of possible historiographical research. Although publishers need make no copyright payments to use these texts, there is no real cost reduction, compared with sourcebooks for modern history surveys. Many of these nineteenth-century texts are now available on the Internet, or are easily typed in to etext form.

**GOAL:** The goal here then has been to construct an *Internet Medieval Sourcebook* from available **public domain and copy-permitted** texts. [A few short extracts - abiding by the standard 300 word "fair use" rule may be posted.] The problem with many of the Internet available texts is that they are too bulky for classroom assignment. For instance, all of Pope Gregory I's letters are available, but in one 500 page document. The *Sourcebook* then is in two parts. The first is made up of fairly short classroom sized extracts, derived from public domain sources or copy-permitted translations, the second is composed of the full documents, or WWW links to the full documents.

**DOCUMENT SIZE:** The size of documents for teaching purposes is an issue. Some commercial selections are composed of very small - paragraph long - snippets from many sources [see for example Deno John Geanakoplos, *Byzantium*]. Sometimes the documents themselves are short, but for the most part the choice here has been for texts which would be three or more printed pages in length. Such documents allow students to see a larger context, and to escape from being spoon fed.

**COVERAGE:** After two and half years of steady development, the *Sourcebook*, while continuing to make available a wide range of texts which address elite governmental, legal, religious and economic concerns, now also includes a large selection of texts on women's and gender history, Islamic and Byzantine history, Jewish history, and social history . The similarity of the contents of a book like Tierney's *The Middle Ages* and the collections of ninety years ago is striking. The desiderata here has been to expand the number of texts addressing the other areas/groups mentioned.

**SELECTION:** The main principle of selection here has been availability of texts. Since it is foreseen that there will be a variety of uses for this sourcebook, the principle of exclusion - necessary for printed material - does not operate. Although many survey classes do not include much discussion of Byzantium and Islam, I have been eager to include material which would be useful for classes which gave these two other successor civilizations of Antiquity equal billing. This is especially the case for Byzantium, which, apart from its own intrinsic interest, provides a parallel case for many western developments.

**TEXTS** Since these texts come from a variety of printed materials, translators, and sources, they will vary in quality. In particular there may be better modern translations available [for instance for the works of Bede, Froissart, or Joinville.] More modern translations offered with copy permission by modern translators have not been checked, and in some cases could not be, by the compiler of these pages. All the texts are, it seems, suitable for class purposes, but check printed material for any intended publication usage. *Caveat emptor!*

**USAGE:** This **Sourcebook** is specifically designed for teachers to use in teaching. There are several ways that this might be done:-

- By pointing students to this web site.
- By downloading the documents, and printing/Xeroxing them for distribution in course packets or as class handouts.
- By creating syllabi and course outlines at local websites with links to the documents here.
- **[Please DO NOT download and incorporate the texts permanently into your local network websites. The files are updated and corrected: multiple versions on the web makes this difficult to do.]**

All such projects are specifically allowed, permitted, and encouraged. Not all the

documents here are out of copyright, and **I claim copyright on the the specific electronic form, modernized versions of texts and any notes** (this is not to prevent you using the material freely, merely to prevent others using it commercially).

What is asked is that **reference to the source of the material is included**, and that no commercial use be made of the material. If you feel a need to pay up, do so by contributing texts you have made available in etext form.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** Throughout this sourcebook, I have made special reference to

- Patrick J. Geary, *Readings in Medieval History*, (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview, 1989, 1991), 834 pages, and to
- Brian Tierney, *The Middle Ages, Volume I: Sources of Medieval History*, 5th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992), 415 pages

These books were used to orient me as to what is needed in a sourcebook, and what problems there are with current books. Tierney and Geary are probably the most frequently used sourcebooks in the US, although I have not checked sales figures, and so I have indicated equivalents for all the documents in those books, and their availability in etext form. Tierney tends to reproduce the selection criteria, and often the texts, of older sourcebooks and includes excerpts from medieval literary works. Geary focuses on much longer excerpts of historical documents and historiography, tends to use more recent [and hence less available for etext] translations, and has virtually no literary texts. Neither book provides much material on Byzantine and Islamic cultures, and in both women's history is underrepresented and more recent studies of gender and sexuality avoided. Selections within larger documents have been suggested by these and other published texts. Please note that although I have been influenced by the selection criteria of these authors, I have accessed the texts independently, have not always used the same translations as they, and have added other texts, or longer selections, as I think useful. Note also that the arrangement and selection of texts, while reflective of basic chronology as in all such collections, is also independent of any published collection.

The now out of copyright sources for documents include:

- Coulton. C.G., ed, *Life in the Middle Ages*, (New York: Macmillan, c.1910)
- Henderson, Earnest F., *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1910)
- Ogg, Frederic Austin, ed., *A Source Book of Medieval History*, (New York: 1907) [Note that Ogg sometimes simplifies translations - he was directing his 500+ page book of sources a students of the "better class" of secondary school!].
- Robinson, James Harvey, ed., *Readings in European History: Vol. I:* (Boston: Ginn and co., 1904)

- Thatcher, Oliver J., and Edgar Holmes McNeal, eds., *A Source Book for Medieval History*, (New York: Scribners, 1905)
- University of Pennsylvania. Dept. of History: *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European history*, published for the Dept. of History of the University of Pennsylvania., Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press [1897?-1907?].

In some places, essential texts used to illustrate important points are copyrighted versions. In these cases I have first tried to find alternate, non-copyrighted, versions. Secondly, I have tried, and will continue to try, to find alternate texts which illustrate the point. In some cases though, the copyrighted text is the only one to use, and that provides a reason to buy the book I suppose.

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If any copyright has been infringed, this was unintentional. The possibility of a site such as this, as with other collections of electronic texts, depends on the large availability of public domain material from texts translated before 1923. [In the US, all texts issued before 1923 are now in the public domain. Texts published before 1964 may be in the public domain if copyright was not renewed after 28 years. This site seeks to abide by US copyright law: the copyright status of texts here outside the US may be different.]

Efforts have been made to ascertain the copyright status of all texts here, although, occasionally, this has not been possible where older or non-US publishers seem to have ceased existence, or where texts were collected and added in the early years of the Internet.

The **recently-translated** texts here are copyright to the translators indicated in each document. These translators have in every case given permission for non-commercial reproduction.

**No representation is made about the copyright status of texts linked off-site.** This site is intended for educational use. Notification of copyright infringement will result in the immediate removal of a text until its status is resolved.

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## NOTES:

**Dates of accession** of material can be seen in the [New Accessions Page](#). The date of inception of the *Internet Medieval Sourcebook* was 1/20/1996.

Links to files at other site are indicated by [At *some indication of the site name or location*]. No indication means that the text file is local.

**WEB** indicates a link to one of small number of high quality web sites which provide either more texts or an especially valuable overview.

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Since January 20, 1996, this site has been accessed **8541364** times  
[the counter is approximate since it only records graphical hits.]

**The *Internet Medieval Sourcebook* participates in [ORB](#), the *Online Reference Book* for Medieval Studies.**

The **Internet History Sourcebooks Project** is located at the [History Department](#) of [Fordham University](#), New York. The **Internet Medieval Sourcebook**, and other medieval components of the project, are located at the [Fordham University Center for Medieval Studies](#).

The **IHSP** recognizes the contribution of Fordham University, the Fordham University History Department, and the Fordham Center for Medieval Studies in providing web space and server support for the project.

The **IHSP** is a project independent of Fordham University. Although the IHSP seeks to follow all applicable copyright law, Fordham University is not the institutional owner, and is not liable as the result of any legal action.



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