

*A Medieval Woman's Companion:
Women's Lives in the European Middle Ages*

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About the Book

A Medieval Woman's Companion: Women's Lives in the European Middle Ages. By Susan Signe Morrison. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-78535-009-2. Available in paperback.
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Book Summary

What have a deaf nun, the mother of the first baby born to Europeans in North America, and a condemned heretic to do with one another? They are among the virtuous virgins, marvelous maidens, and fierce feminists of the Middle Ages who trail-blazed paths for women today. Without those first courageous souls who worked in fields dominated by men, women might not have the presence they currently do in professions such as education, the law, and literature. Focusing on women from Western Europe between c. 300 and 1500 CE in the medieval period and richly carpeted with detail, *A Medieval Woman's Companion* offers a wealth of information about real medieval women who are now considered vital for understanding the Middle Ages in a full and nuanced way. Short biographies of 20 medieval women illustrate how they anticipate and shape current concerns, including access to education; creative and emotional outlets such as art, theater, romantic fiction, and music; marriage and marital rights; fertility, pregnancy, childbirth, contraception and gynecology; sex trafficking and sexual violence; the balance of work and family; faith; and disability. Their legacy abides today in attitudes to contemporary women that have their roots in the medieval period. The final chapter suggests how 20th and 21st century feminist and gender theories can be applied to and complicated by medieval women's lives and writings. Doubly marginalized due to gender and the remoteness of the time period, medieval women's accomplishments are acknowledged and presented in a way that readers can appreciate and find inspiring. Ideal for high school and college classroom use in courses ranging from history and literature to women's and gender studies, an accompanying website invites you to visit and view educational links, images, downloadable curriculum guide [<http://amedievalwomanscompanion.com/curriculum-guide/>], and blog: amedievalwomanscompanion.com.

Glossary (pages 219-232 of A Medieval Woman's Companion by Susan Signe Morrison)

This glossary is also available for download at:

<http://amedievalwomanscompanion.com/curriculum-guide/>

- Affective Piety:** A form of intense spiritual practice in which the believer identifies emotionally with Christ's humanity and suffering.
- Anchorite/Anchoress:** Spiritually-minded woman who willingly allows herself to be walled into a cell to devote her life to prayer and meditation.
- Anglo-Norman:** The variety of French used at the English court. After the Norman Conquest in 1066, the court in England became French-speaking for roughly 300 years.
- Anglo-Saxon:** See Old English, the form of English spoken from about 450 until 1150 C.E.
- Anglo-Saxons:** Descendants of Germanic peoples who invaded Britain in the fifth century, taking over and ruling the country until the eleventh century.
- Annunciation:** When the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that she, a virgin, would bear Jesus.
- Anonymous:** A creator who has no name attached to her piece of written or oral verse.
- Archive:** A library containing original manuscripts and documents from the past.
- Baptism:** Christian sacrament whereby a person is accepted into the faith, comprising of the sprinkling of water and the ritual utterance of words. It is meant to mirror Christ's own immersion into the River Jordan by John the Baptist.
- B.C.E.:** Before the Common Era. Formerly B.C. See C.E.
- Beguines:** Laywomen living together and undertaking charitable work. Related groups include the *Umiliati* in northern Italy and followers of St. Francis and St. Clare.
- Benedictine Rule:** A Benedictine convent or monastery follows the Rule set forth by St. Benedict in the sixth century. A nun or monk is dedicated to poverty, chastity, and obedience and expected to work, study, and pray. They perform the eight offices of the Work of God, with prayers taking place at intervals starting before dawn until sunset. Food is limited to one meal in winter and two in the summer when the light lasted longer. And the diet varied depending on the church year. During Lent, the days between Ash Wednesday and Easter, fasting is undertaken (See Fast).
- Beowulf:** Most famous Old English poem written c. 1000 C.E., featuring the hero Beowulf and his battles with monsters, including a dragon.
- Bloodletting:** Standard medical treatment due to the humoral theory
- Book of Hours:** Popular prayer book; some copies have extraordinary artwork. Such books, dedicated to the Virgin, typically included psalms, hymns, and excerpts from Scripture.
- Byzantium:** The Byzantine Empire was based in Constantinople (now Istanbul, Turkey). Byzantium, also known as the Eastern Roman Empire, lasted until 1453, when Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople. The rituals in Orthodox Christianity practiced here sometimes differ from those in Western Europe.
- Canon Law:** Church law. It could conflict with secular laws.
- Canones:** Canonesses in the early Middle Ages had many privileges nuns lacked, including the ability to retain private property and to leave a religious community at will. Later on, canonesses became more like nuns due to reform pressures.

Canonize/Canonization: The official process whereby someone is made a saint.

The Canterbury Tales: Written by Geoffrey Chaucer in the late fourteenth century, it contains many stories (both religious and funny) typical of the time period with much-loved characters.

Catholic/Catholicism: In the Middle Ages, Christians in Europe adhered to what we call Catholicism today. The Middle Ages took place before the sixteenth-century Reformation, when Western Christianity broke into two major faiths: Catholicism and Protestantism.

Catapult: Like a mechanical slingshot, such a machine would hurl stones and even flaming torches against enemies to maim and kill humans and destroy buildings and bridges. It uses force and gravity to propel heavy objects through the air to create mayhem and destruction.

C.E.: Common Era. Formerly A.D. (for *Anno Domini* or Year of Our Lord), but that favored a Christian view of history.

Celibacy: The state of being unmarried.

Chastity: Abstaining from sex.

Chivalry: From the French word *Chevalier* or knight, chivalry refers to an ideal behavior characterized by honesty, bravery, and courtesy.

Christianity: The religion that dominated Western Europe in the Middle Ages. The beliefs of today's Catholics follow those of medieval Christians, for whom the Pope was God's representative on earth. A Trinitarian religion, Christianity holds that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost or Spirit are aspects of this monotheistic (belief in one god) religion, with Jesus Christ as the Son of God. When I reference Christianity, I mean those beliefs dominant in the Western European Middle Ages.

Church Fathers: Holy male thinkers and theologians whose writings were considered to be authoritative.

Cistercian: The Cistercian order began in the twelfth century as part of a reform for those who wanted to live according to a stricter rule. One of the most famous Cistercians was Saint Bernard of Clairvaux who had dealings with Eleanor of Aquitaine, Hildegard, and Peter Abelard.

Clerk: Scholar, often religious.

College: Places of learning, often funded by nobility, including women. The College of Navarre was founded by Jeanne of Navarre. Several colleges at the University of Cambridge in England were founded by women: Queens' College by Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry VI, and Elizabeth, wife of Edward IV; Christ's College and St. John's College by Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII; and Clare College by Elizabeth de Burgh.

Consanguinity: Closeness of blood tie was a justification for divorce or as a prevention for marriage.

Courtly Love: See Fin' Amors/Fin' Amours.

Crucifixion: The form of torture used to kill Jesus Christ who was nailed to a cross. It becomes an image prevalent in medieval art and is referred to in literature.

Crusade: Conventionally it refers to an armed pilgrimage to the Holy Land from Europe. See First Crusade.

Cult: Saints often develop a cult, that is followers who pray to and rely on the saint's intervention in times of emotional and physical crisis.

Deaf Culture: The capital "D" as in "Deaf" refers to the Deaf culture and community; small "d" as in "deaf" refers to what is (in)audible.

Double Monastery: Not uncommon in the early Middle Ages in Germanic and Anglo-Saxon lands, a double monastery might have an abbess presiding over both male and female sections—a powerful position (see Hild of Whitby and Birgitta of Sweden).

Eucharist: In the Christian religious service called the mass, the priest utters words that transform the bread and wine into the actual body and body of Christ, according to Catholic belief. The bread that has been turned into Christ's body is called the Eucharist or the consecrated Host. The Host is the piece of bread or wafer that Christians consume in the Mass or service. Starting in

the sixteenth century with the Reformation, this transformation comes under pressure by Protestants who contend the host only symbolically represents Christ's body.

Excommunication: The ritual expulsion or exclusion of someone from the Christian faith.

Fast: To reduce or restrict one's food intake. Fasting does not mean to starve, rather to limit what kinds of foods you might partake in. For example, today many Catholics eat fish rather than red meat on Fridays. During Lent, the forty days before Easter, there were strict requirements and prohibitions, such as avoiding meat (flesh) for fish. Many spiritually inclined people would eat meagerly on what we would call a vegetarian or vegan diet. Sometimes people were punished by food restrictions. And others fasted so extremely for God, that they died (see Catherine of Siena and the Holy Anorexics).

Feast Day: A feast day, often associated with a saint, is a day designated by the Church as a holy day and, as such, subject to certain rules.

Feminism: The political and social movement and scholarly approach committed to understanding and improving the lives of women and female-identified people.

Feudal/Feudalism: The political system whereby the king owns all the land, "shares" it with his barons or lords, who—in turn—show their homage by supporting the king with knights and warfare when necessary.

Fin' Amors/Fin' Amours: Also called Courtly Love. It is a system of love, fidelity, and affection typically imagined between a (married) woman and a young man. The woman might be married to a powerful king or lord whose servant or knight was the man. While it appears as a kind of ideal in literature, many debate whether such forms of affection existed historically.

First Crusade: From 1096-99, Christian European armed pilgrims made their way to present-day Middle East in order to reclaim lands for Christianity. They succeed in capturing Jerusalem, only to massacre Muslims and Jews.

Fortune: A Roman goddess who was said to spin the wheel of fortune of our lives. When we are doing well, she might spin the wheel so that we descend in our happiness; or if we suffer, she might allow us some pleasure.

Friars: Followers of St. Francis, an early thirteenth-century saint who spoke on behalf of radical poverty and has been declared the patron saint of ecology for his love of nature and animals. Friars sometimes lived in friaries.

Galen: This second-century physician, who recognized that both men and women provided a "seed" for the creation of a child, also elaborated on Hippocrates' humoral theory of the body.

Gandersheim: Almost like a queen, Abbess Gerberga II, the niece of emperor Otto I, ruled Hrotsvit's convent, one that functioned like a small country or principality ruled and populated by women.

Gender Studies: The exploration of gender identity and how gender is represented; often seen as the socially influenced aspects of gender performance.

Gentry: Gentleman or gentlewoman; the class just below the nobility.

Geoffrey Chaucer: Fourteenth-century English writer, whose tragic romance *Troilus and Criseyde* and pilgrimage poem *The Canterbury Tales* are frequently studied masterpieces.

Gothic Cathedral: Stunning architectural masterpieces, such as Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, soar up towards heaven.

Gregorian Chant: A form of sacred music developed in monastic communities.

Guild: A guild is like a union, where workers in a common trade come together, pay dues, and support one another professionally. Paris, for example, had five guilds for women silkmakers.

Hebrew Bible: Including the Torah or Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). These books comprise the first part of what Christians call the Old Testament.

Heresy: Deviation from an accepted form of a religion.

Hermit: Religious person living a solitary life devoted to God.

Hours of Our Lady: Readings including hymns, psalms, and scriptural passages in honor of the Virgin Mary.

Hundred Years War: War between England and France, waged on and off from 1337-1453. It centered on who had the right to rule France. The king of England thought he had justification through familial connections to rule. Naturally, the French disagreed. Ultimately, with the help of Joan of Arc, the French won.

Indo-European: This family of languages includes Greek, Latin, French, Sanskrit, Hindi, Russian, Celtic, German, English, and many others.

Indulgence: Means by which sins could be more quickly made up for. It was increasingly seen as a corrupt system that favored the rich and exploited the poor, the abused, and the gullible as seen in Chaucer's story *The Pardoner's Tale*.

Infanticide: The killing of infants, often female or deformed.

Inquisition: Official judicial group of the Catholic Church charged with combatting heresy. It had power to question and prosecute suspected heretics. Later, it evolved into persecuting alleged witchcraft. Torture could be used and punishment was harsh. Once released to secular authorities, heretics who refused to repent could be burnt at the stake. Records kept by prosecutors sometimes contain opinions of common people, of high importance to historians today.

Islam: The faith founded by Mohammed in the seventh century. A monotheistic religion, it was much misunderstood by many Christians in the Middle Ages. On the Iberian peninsula in present-day Spain and Portugal, Muslim, Jews, and Christians lived in close proximity. While their political association concluded in violence, there was more familiarity and mutual influence on each other than in other parts of Europe.

Jews: Followers of Judaism. They were expelled or banned from England in 1290 under the Edict of Expulsion by King Edward I.

Judaism: The religion of the Hebrews. The Jewish Pentateuch or Torah contains much of the history and beliefs of these ancient peoples. The Christian Bible refers to these works as the Old Testament, suggesting that the New Testament supersedes or builds on them (thus offending Jews).

Judith: Jewish widow who beheads the tyrant Holofernes. Many wonderful paintings of this scene exist, including some by the seventeenth-century woman painter, Artemesia Gentileschi.

Jesus Christ: Prophet considered the Son of God by Christians.

Lai: Short romance or tale that focuses on love.

Latin: The language of the Roman Empire remained a powerful force in the Middle Ages and was the language of the Christian Church. It developed into several vernacular languages: Spanish, French, Portuguese, Romanian, and Italian. Latin ability was considered vital for scholars, theologians, and lawyers.

Lay (People): Those who have not taken religious vows and are not in religious orders.

Legal Records: Legal records can include, for example in England, Coroners' Rolls, with details of ordinary people's lives; Close Rolls, the king's private letters to subjects; Charter Rolls, public pronouncements; Patent Rolls, orders to subjects or granting a right or privilege; and Law Codes.

Leper: Leprosy, today called Hansen's disease, caused great terror in the Middle Ages, when it was little understood. Lepers were sometimes segregated and isolated, though Christian charity demanded kindness to them, such as creating leper hospitals. Matilda of Scotland is even said to have washed and kissed the feet of lepers as a way to imitate Christ's compassion to lepers.

Magna Carta: Thirteenth-century charter limiting the English king's power.

Manuscript: Book made from vellum, or sheepskin, that had been scraped and treated so that it could absorb the ink and paint the scribe and illuminator might use.

Martyr/Martyrdom: Person who dies for her faith or a cause she believes in. The act of having been martyred.

Mass: Christian ritual during which the bread and the wine are transformed into Christ's body and blood, according to Catholic belief.

Middle English: The form of the English language spoken between 1150 and 1500. See Old English and Anglo-Saxon.

Misogyny: Anti-woman or hatred of women.

Modesty Topos: A rhetorical device used to humble oneself. Many writers in the Middle Ages would often humble themselves at some point in their writing, calling themselves a simple servant of God or a lowly creature. A women writer referred to her gender as well, calling herself weak, humble, or lowly. Some declared themselves to be “unlettered” or unversed in Latin, even if they did, in some cases, know some Latin, the language of scholars. This device was used to gain permission from male advisors to make their works known and to signal to the reader that they are aware of the audacity of a woman writing. Some writers subvert it to daring effect (see Hrosvit von Gandersheim, Hildegard von Bingen, Marie de France, and Christine de Pizan).

Monastery: In this religious architectural complex lived those who took vows, devoting their lives to God.

Moneylending: Christians were forbidden to lend money at interest (the basis of modern capitalism) due to a prohibition of usury. But some Christians got around this; the Knights Templar, for example, “rented” money.

Monk: Male religious who lived in a monastery, obeyed strict rules, and devoted his life to God.

Muslims: Followers of Islam.

Mystic/Mysticism: A person who experiences the divine; mysticism is the act of experiencing the divine through seeing visions, hearing voices, or coming to a profound understanding of spiritual truths.

Normans: The Viking descendants who came to rule in northern France (present-day Normandy). Related to Anglo-Saxon rulers through marriage (see Emma of Normandy), the Normans invaded England in 1066. They came to speak a variety of French called Anglo-Norman that ultimately added many French words to the English language.

Norman Conquest: 1066 invasion of Norman French who took over the Anglo-Saxon kingdom.

Nuns: Female religious woman who lived together in a convent or nunnery, taking vows to spend their lives focused on the spiritual praise of God and performing charitable deeds or mastering scholarship.

Old English: The form of English spoken from about 450 until 1150 C.E.

Optics: The study of light and vision.

Pagan: Non-Christian, sometimes believing the system of multiple gods.

Patron: Someone who either financially or emotionally supports an artist, musician, or writer.

Patron Saint: A patron saint specializes in helping a particular cause or group of people. Saint Dymphna, for example, is a patron saint of runaways.

Penance: After acknowledging a sin or fault, a person makes up for it by undergoing penance. It might be accomplished by prayers, fasting, or even going on a pilgrimage.

Penitentials: Religious guides explaining how various sins should be punished.

Penthesilea: The queen of the Amazons who were mythical women warriors.

Periculoso: This rule appears at the end of the thirteenth century, a period when women actively sought out ways to maintain religious lives through bypassing traditional male-imposed authority, as with the Beguines. See Christina of Markyate.

Piety: Devout religious focus.

Pilgrim: A pilgrim typically undertook journeys to fulfill a vow, a pact with a saint who may have healed the pilgrim due to prayer. Sometimes a pilgrimage was taken to affect a cure. Visiting a holy site with healing relics, the body parts of those people considered saintly by the church, a pilgrim hoped for a miraculous healing for herself or on behalf of another. In art, a pilgrim is often identified by a hat, a walking stick, and a scribe or pouch for carrying food in.

Pilgrimage: Pilgrimages were undertaken by devout Christians in the medieval period to shrines or holy places, usually in a church or cathedral. The shrine would have a relic, or body part like a finger bone, of a dead saint. Pilgrimage exists in many religions, including the famous Muslim

hajj. Jewish pilgrims in the Middle Ages were known to buy souvenir metal badges in the Holy Land from vendors who also sold Christian badges.

Pilgrimage Shrines: Many of the miracles associated with saints had to do with healing. A person sick with an illness might undertake a holy journey or pilgrimage to a shrine—either local or far distant—to seek a cure from a particular saint. Saints would become associated with different kinds of healing cures.

Postpartum Depression: A psychological affliction women can suffer after giving birth.

Priory: A monastery where monks or nuns reside, pray, and work.

Prosopography: Rather than focusing on one individual, this type of history looks at a group of people who are related in a family or due to some other reason (a group of pilgrims going to the same shrine, or a set of farmers in an area of a country). At the same time, it is not without problems, since sources were often generated by privileged groups like men, upper classes, or educated religious. In trials, testimony of a witness speaking in the vernacular or everyday speech, such as English, French, or German, might be translated into Latin by the scribe listening to the words. Prosopography is the basis for the study of the Pastons (see Paston chapter) since we can read an entire group's dynamics through their letters.

Protestant Reformation: Also known as Holy Harlots. The seeds of this movement extend back to the late medieval period. In the sixteenth century, some Christians broke away from the authority of the Papacy and Rome where the Pope lived. The most famous incident in the Protestant Reformation occurred by Martin Luther, a German monk, wrote his *Ninety-Five Theses* with criticisms of the church in 1517, setting off a chain of events leading to a split among European Christians. Henry VIII joined in this break with Rome due to his desire to divorce Catherine of Aragon and marry Anne Boleyn.

Prostitute Saints: Prostitute saints constitute a subcategory of women saints, who, despite an sinful past, could partake of God's mercy and salvation in heaven. The first such example appears in Scripture with Mary Magdalene, a prostitute who becomes a follower of Jesus and is the first witness to his resurrection. Her name becomes synonymous with that of devout women who may have strayed from the straight and narrow, but whose dedication more than makes up for this. In fact, there were legends that she lived after Christ's crucifixion and ended up in France, living penitently in the wilderness. Legend says her relics survived and became housed in a church in Vézelay, becoming a hugely popular pilgrimage destination.

Provençal or Occitan: Language spoken in the region of southern France called Occitania.

Psalter: A Psalter contains the Psalms from the Bible.

Purgatory: Purgatory became increasingly developed as a concept in medieval Christian thought. It was envisioned as a space between Heaven and Hell where souls could work off their sins and eventually enter Heaven. The most famous depiction of it is in the *Inferno* section of the Italian poet Dante's great masterpiece, *The Divine Comedy*.

Quadrivium: See *Trivium*.

Queen Regent: The power of the queen when her husband has died and her male child is still too young to rule. In some cases the queen would function in the child's place.

Queen Regnant: A queen who rules in her own right, not on behalf of another.

Reformation: Religious upheaval in the sixteenth century. Martin Luther is often seen as the catalyst for attacks on the Catholic Church, but many Reformation beliefs and thoughts had been discussed for decades previously.

Relic: Typically a body part like a finger bone belonging to a dead saint, a relic was seen as exuding supernatural healing powers. So valuable were these, that sacred thefts of relics were not uncommon. A relic could also be something associated with a holy person, such as the Virgin's veil or the swaddling clothes in which the infant Jesus was wrapped. Notorious people would

sell false relics, as the Pardoner does in Geoffrey Chaucer's late fourteenth-century masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*.

Reliquary: A container, often beautiful and ornate, contains relics, typically bones, of a saint.

Renaissance: A time when the ideals of Classical Antiquity became the model for emulation and admiration.

Roman Empire: Lasting over four hundred years (roughly 30 B.C.E.-395 C.E.), it governed huge areas of lands and peoples in present day Europe, north Africa, and the Middle East. It was divided into the Eastern and Western Roman Empires in 395. The Western half collapsed in 476 and the Eastern half in 1453. Rulers later in the Middle Ages revived the idea of a Holy (Christian) Roman Empire and were called the Holy Roman Emperors.

Rome: Many martyrs were killed in Roman during the early years of Christianity. Later it became the centre of the Western Christian (Catholic) Church where the Pope resides. Today, the Vatican is an independent city-state ruled by the Pope.

Saint: A person killed for his or her Christian faith. After the age of martyrs, when the Roman Empire accepted Christianity, a saint was a holy person whose life, good works, or contributions to theological teachings made him/her worthy of the designation "saint." While some early saints were legendary or deemed saintly by popular acclaim, in the later Middle Ages the Church designed a more organized and bureaucratic method for determining sainthood, including proof of miracles, through the formal process of canonization.

Saint Agnes: Legendary virgin martyr.

Saint Andrew: One of Christ's apostles or followers.

Saint Augustine: Dominant theological intellect in the Middle Ages, this Church Father (d. 430) wrote his *Confessions* and *The City of God*.

Saint Catherine of Alexandria: Legendary fourth-century saint, she outwitted fifty pagan philosophers and was tortured on a wheel which fell apart, injuring her enemies. In the legend, she was finally beheaded and became a bride of Christ. A twelfth-century Anglo-Norman nun, Clemence of Barking, wrote Catherine's life story. See: University.

Saint Francis: Much beloved saint said to especially care for animals and children.

Saint Jerome: Very important Church Father—one of the key male thinkers of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages. Fourth-century theologian, writer, and translator of the Bible into Latin. This translation was the fundamental book of Western Europe throughout the Middle Ages. While some of his writings are misogynistic in character, he also maintained strong and supportive relations with various Christian women, like the Saints Marcella, Paula, and Eustochium, with whom he corresponded. Paula and Eustochium, likewise well-versed with Biblical languages, should also be credited with this translation.

Saint John the Baptist: The cousin of Jesus Christ who baptized him. He was killed by King Herod at Salome's request.

Saint Leonard: A sixth-century hermit with a popular cult. He was seen as helpful to pregnant women and prisoners of war.

Saint Margaret: St. Margaret's legend tells how she was swallowed by a dragon, whose belly burst when she made the sign of cross within its bowels. This freedom of the saint from inside the body of another led St. Margaret to be the patron saint of childbirth. Women in labor would call on St. Margaret for help. Just as she was freed safely from within the dragon, so too women begged for the safe delivery of their soon-to-be-born infants.

Saint Michael: Archangel who, in the Book of Revelations, fights the devil.

Saint Olaf: A former Viking pirate (995-1030), he became king (1016-29) and Christianized Norway.

Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross: Jewish convert to Christianity who was killed in Auschwitz during World War II. Born Edith Stein.

Saint Ursula: Legendary saint martyred in Cologne, said to have been killed while accompanied by 11,000 other virgins.

Saint's Life or Legend: Story about a saint. Typically the saint withstands torture and condemnation before dying heroically as a martyr. Also known as hagiography.

Saladin: A brilliant leader and tactician, the Muslim Saladin (late 1130s-1193) came in conflict with Christian crusaders in the late twelfth century during the Third Crusade. He ruled Egypt and Syria and managed to regain control of Palestine that had been lost almost one hundred years earlier during the First Crusade. He also laid siege to Jerusalem as we see in Margaret of Beverley's story. Saladin showed mercy on numerous occasions, allowing Jews to return to Jerusalem after his successful takeover and Christian pilgrims to visit. Medieval Christian commentators acknowledged Saladin's chivalric behavior.

Santiago de Compostela: One of the main pilgrimage goals in the Middle Ages (along with Rome, Italy; the Holy Land; Cologne, Germany; and Canterbury, England), Santiago lies in western Spain. Many pilgrims would come there from as far away as Scandinavia, even Iceland. It is dedicated to St. James, one of Christ's disciples, whose remains are alleged to have arrived there. A pilgrim who makes it to Santiago can be identified by the emblem of the scallop shell.

Saracen: A term to designate a Muslim or person faithful to Allah.

Scribe: Someone who writes down what is dictated or who copies a text into a manuscript.

Second Crusade: Following up the First Crusade (1096-1099), the Second Crusade lasted from 1145-1149 and failed in its goal to retake the Crusader state of Edessa (today in Turkey) from Muslim hands.

Secular: Non-religious.

Shrine: Housing the relics of saints, it also referred to the holy place associated with pilgrimage.

Stigmata: Wounds Christ suffered on the cross as imagined or experienced by various saints and visionaries.

Theology: The study of religious concepts, God, and the divine.

Thomas Becket: Archbishop of Canterbury whose murder instigated by Eleanor of Aquitaine's husband, Henry II, caused Becket to become a saint and Canterbury a prominent pilgrimage goal.

Trivium and Quadrivium: In Hrotsvit of Gandersheim's play *Pafnutius* or the *The Conversion of the Harlot Thais*, there is a simple lesson on music, ideal for an audience to learn the basics of music theory. The standard education, typically for men, included the *trivium*—grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic—and the *quadrivium*—music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. A scholar could pursue canon law, theology, or medicine.

Troubadour: Singing poet. Troubadour poetry was composed and performed in southern France. Women troubadours are called *trobairitz*.

Trobairitz: Female troubadour.

Trota: She would have been known as Trocta in her native land and is often referred to as Trotula for the manuscripts she was credited with in the Middle Ages. As Trota expert Monica H. Green points out, there were many women with the name of Trota in Salerno. In fact, we know “[v]irtually nothing”¹ about her.

University: While in the early Middle Ages monasteries and convents housed educational resources, the advent of universities in the twelfth century sprang from cathedral schools where masters and students associated. Although the patron saint of students and young girls was Catherine of Alexandria, women were not allowed to attend university.

Vernacular: Common, everyday speech. The language spoken by everyday people. For all practical purposes, whatever language was *not* Latin and often mentioned in opposition to Latin. Texts written in Latin (St. Jerome's translation of the Bible, medical and legal works, etc.) were identified with men, while the vernacular was associated with a non-elite audience, such as women and lower class people. However, many women did know Latin. And everyday people recited prayers in Latin. These are the three Latin prayers even illiterate people could recite: the *Pater noster* (“Our Father”), *Ave* (“Hail Mary”) and *Credo* (“I believe” or Nicene Creed which

sets out the major beliefs and tenets of the Christian faith). Joan of Arc tells how her mother taught her the “Our Father,” “Hail Mary,” and “I believe.”

Virago: A man-like or heroic woman; *vir* means *male* in Latin.

Virgin Martyr: Maiden who fearlessly stands up to authority and dies for her faith, retaining her purity and defying male authority.

Virgin Mary: Mother of Jesus Christ. In Catholic belief, she is believed to be a virgin mother.

Visions: Mysterious and difficult to prove, visions are an integral element in many world religions. The visionary (the person experiencing the vision) has an experience that is beyond the normal and everyday world, generally accessing a divine and spiritual realm by seeing holy beings or hearing voices. While our scientific age may be dubious, it is important to remember that visions were accepted as possible in the medieval world. A visionary woman or mystic often needed to have male endorsement to avoid being accused of heresy or false visions. If sanctioned or approved by the Church, they lent power to the visionary (see Hildegard von Bingen or Birgitta of Sweden). If the Church was dubious, the visions could bring about the visionary’s downfall (see Joan of Arc).

Wicca: Modern day pagan religion.

ⁱ Monica H. Green, "Who/What is 'Trotula'?" Latest update November 2, 2013. Accessed April 11, 2015.

https://www.academia.edu/4558706/Monica_H._Green_WHO_WHAT_IS_TROTULA_2013_013.