

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE
Department of History

History 2b
Spring 2011
MWF 10:30 - 11:20 am
Trotter 203

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EARLY MODERN EUROPE

The modern world began to be born in Europe and its colonies between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries—replete with all the contradictions that have marked modernity ever since. Using printed and visual primary sources, as well as recent scholarship, this course explores the manifestations of that paradoxical civilization: Renaissance and Reformations, secular state building and religious war, Scientific Revolution and witch hunts, absolutism and republicanism, emergent capitalism and renewed serfdom, cosmopolitan Enlightenment and localistic everyday life, revolution and enslavement. The lectures, discussions, readings, viewings, and essays, which combine chronological and topical approaches, introduce the rich variety of sources, genres, modes of analysis, and interpretations that historians employ to understand the past and its relation to the present.

The requirements for the course include:

- 1) Regular, on-time attendance in class.
- 2) Regular, informed participation in the weekly discussions.
- 3) A short paper (length: 1000-1500 words; i.e., 4-5 typed pages), due via email by noon on Sunday, February 13. A fuller explanation of the assignment will be distributed separately (this is Paper 1).
- 4) An hour examination on Friday, 4 March.
- 5) A very short paper due at the beginning of class, Monday, 21 March (this is Paper 2).
- 6) A final examination, which will be scheduled by the Registrar.

All students should purchase the following paperback books:

Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil* (also available in electronic version on Tripod)

Richard Kagan, *Lucrecia's Dreams: Politics and Prophecy in Sixteenth-Century Spain*

Raffaella Sarti, *Europe At Home. Family and Material Culture 1500-1800*

Students wishing a narrative survey of the period are advised to consult the following textbook, two copies of which are on General Reserve: John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, volume 1. The appropriate pages are listed in the assignments below as JM.

This course, like any other, is premised on mutual respect and honesty. Thus I expect that the work you submit is your own. Plagiarism will be severely penalized: any work containing plagiarized material will be granted the grade of no credit and may subject you to prosecution before the CJC. In order to clarify the issue of academic honesty, I will distribute copies of the History Department's guidelines. When in doubt, especially about citations, check with me.

The history department has implemented the following policy on attendance: Students are required to attend all classes and fulfill on time all required work for the successful completion of the course. Unexcused absences and late submission of written work will result either in a lower grade or failure to pass the course.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

- I. 17 Jan. Lecture: Introduction
- 19 L: Europe at the End of the Middle Ages
Reading: JM, pp. 3-38
- 21 Discussion: Doing History
Reading: primary documents (handout)
- II. 24 Jan. L: The Context of the Renaissance in Italy
JM, pp. 47-86
- 26 L: Renaissance Structures and Cultures
Reading (all available on Blackboard):
Petrarch, "Ascent of Mont Ventoux"
Salutati, "Letter to Giuliano Zonarini"
Cassandra Fedele, "Oration in Praise of Letters," and Laura Cereta,
"Defense of the Liberal Instruction of Women," in *Her Immaculate Hand*, nos. 12 and 14 **only** (pp. 74-77 and 81-84)
- 28 D: Humanist Modes of Thinking and Writing: letters, orations, dialogues
Reading: (both on Blackboard):
Leonardo Bruni, "The Dialogues"
Poggio Bracciolini, "On Nobility"
- III. 31 Jan. L: The Coming of the Reformations
Reading:
Desiderius Erasmus, from *The Praise of Folly* (Blackboard)
JM, pp. 87-99
- 2 Feb. L: Patterns of Reformation
Reading (all available on Blackboard):
Martin Luther, from *The Freedom of a Christian*
"The Schleithem Confession of Faith"
JM, pp. 99-137
- 4 D: Reforming Christian Doctrine and Practice: a colloquy
Reading:
Ignatius Loyola, from *The Spiritual Exercises* (Blackboard)
Council of Trent documents (Blackboard)
Lucas Cranach the Younger, "Two Kinds of Preaching" (handout)

IV. 7 Feb. L: Religion and Civil Strife I: Empire and War in Central Europe

Reading:

JM, pp. 159-177

Start reading Kagan, *Lucrecia's Dreams*

9 L: Religion and Civil Strife II: States and Revolts in Western Europe

Reading:

JM, pp. 138-159

Continue reading Kagan, *Lucrecia's Dreams*

11 No Class: Prophecy and Power in the Sixteenth Century

Paper due via email by noon, Sunday Feb. 13 (see #3, above)

V. 14 Feb. L: France and Spain: Absolutism, Stability, and Rebellion

JM, pp. 181-197, 222-231, 274-299

16 L: The United Provinces and England: Revolt, Republic, and Restoration

JM, pp. 197-222, 232-273

18 D: Representations of Power

See separate assignment sheet

VI. 22 Feb. L: The First European Empires

Reading: Léry, *History of a Voyage*, pp. xv-lxii, 225-231

JM, pp. 38-46

23 L: The First Global Empires

Reading: Léry, *History of a Voyage*, pp. 3-111, 232-243

JM, pp. 316-323, 451-462

25 D: Intercultural Encounters: "Europeans" and "Others"

Reading: Léry, *History of a Voyage*, pp. 112-224, 243-256

VII. 28 Feb. L: Nobility over Monarchy: Poland, Sweden, and the Ottoman Empire

JM, pp. 310-311, 487-491

2 Mar. L: Monarchy over Nobility: Austria, Prussia, and Russia

JM, pp. 299-310, 311-316, 432-436

4 **HOURLY TEST**

SPRING VACATION

VIII. 14 Mar. L: Classical and Renaissance Science

JM, pp. 327-330

16 L: The "Scientific Revolution"

- 18 L: New Directions in Early Modern History
Assignment: Attend the symposium this morning about developments in the study of early modern history
Write up a short (1-2 page) opinion piece on why you find one new development particularly interesting, or, why you found none particularly interesting. The paper is **due on Monday, 21 March**, at the beginning of class.
- IX. 21 Mar. L: Social Structures and Social Strains
Reading: Sarti, *Europe At Home*, preface, introduction, chapter I
JM, pp. 354-366, 384-393
Paper due at the beginning of class. This is paper 2 (#5 above).
- 23 L: Families Made and Unmade
Reading: Sarti, *Europe At Home*, chapter II
- 25 D: Home and Family
Reading: Sarti, *Europe At Home*, chapter III (Review chaps. I and II)
- X. 28 Mar. L: Economies: From “Long 16th Century” to “17th-Century Crisis”
JM, pp. 354-366
- 30 L: Atlantic Transformations
JM, pp. 384-397
- 1 Apr. D: Material Culture
Reading: Sarti, *Europe At Home*, chapters IV-VII
- XII. 4 Apr. L: Economic Transformations in the 18th Century
JM, 366-384
- 6 L: Imperial Competition and World Wars
JM, pp. 442-72, 484-87
- 8 D: Empires Compared
Reading: see separate sheet on Blackboard
- XI. 11 Apr. L: “Official” Culture and “Popular” Culture
Reading: Bob Scribner, “Is a History of Popular Culture Possible?”
(Blackboard)
- 13 L: Witchcraft and Witch hunting: What, Why, When, and Where?
Reading: Witch Persecutions at Bamberg:
<http://history.hanover.edu/texts/bamberg.html>
- Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, Statement of Thesis and Notes (Blackboard)

- 15 D: Witch Crazes
 Reading: see separate sheet on Blackboard
- XIII. 18 Apr. L: The Material Conditions of Knowledge: Printing and Literacy
 Reading: H. J. Martin, "Publishing Conditions and Strategies in Ancien
 Regime France" (Blackboard)
 Rab Houston, "Literacy and Society in the West" (Blackboard)
- 20 L: What was the Enlightenment?
 Reading: start Friday's reading (see separate sheet)
 JM, pp. 399-427, 436-441
- 22 D: Enlightenment Ideologies and Prejudices
 Reading: finish assignment (see separate sheet on Blackboard)
- XIV. 25 Apr. L: What was Enlightened about Enlightened Absolutism?
 Reading: start Friday's reading (see separate sheet)
 JM, pp. 427-436
- 27 L: Atlantic Revolutions
 Reading: continue Friday's reading (see separate sheet)
 JM, 472-484, 491, 495-547
- 29 D: Rights and Revolutions
 Reading: see separate sheet on Blackboard
- Date TBA **FINAL EXAMINATION**