

## History 3520—The History of Early Modern Europe, 1500-1789

TTH 1:00 to 2:40

Sparks Hall 304

Dr. Jake Selwood

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Office hours: Mon. and Weds., 3 pm – 4 pm

### Course Description:

This course will examine the history of Europe from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The early modern period saw a series of dramatic changes: the spread of print culture, the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, the growth of state power, changes in agriculture and the economy, and conceptual revolutions in science and philosophy. What do these tell us about the development of the modern world and the eclipse of the medieval? What role did ordinary men and women play, and how did these changes affect their daily lives? How are developments inside of Europe related to exploration, imperialism and global trade beyond the continent's borders? History 3520 will address the connections between these disparate areas, while critically examining traditional interpretations and dominant narratives.

This course, then, aims to give students a solid grounding in the political, social and cultural history of early modern Europe. It aims to provide students with the tools to critically evaluate the work of historians writing on these topics, to analyze for themselves primary sources from the period, and to cogently express in writing their own informed conclusions.

### Texts:

John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Age of Napoleon* (Norton, 2004).

Carlo Ginzburg. *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos Of A Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Johns Hopkins UP, 1992).

Most readings will be made available through electronic reserves (<http://www.library.gsu.edu/reserves/>).

The password for accessing e-reserves is 1nbkmq8fS.

All students are required to come to class having read the assigned readings and should be prepared to contribute to class discussions.

NB: Successful completion of assignments will depend in a large part on having completed the assigned readings.

### ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Reading questions (three questions, relating to the day's reading, to be handed on paper at the beginning of each class): 10%

Mini-paper (10%), due Jan. 29 (2-3 pp. short examination of reading[s], with emphasis on primary source)

Second paper (25%), due Mar. 12 (4-6 pp. exploration of topic, using primary and secondary sources)

Final paper (30%), due Apr. 16 (8-10 pp.; primary and secondary sources; must use external article from Historical Abstracts)

Final exam (25%), Tuesday, April 28, 12:30 p.m. (short identifications and an essay)

NB: No make-up exam will be permitted as the examination takes place at the end of the course.

**Late papers/assignments:** Late papers submitted without a legitimate, *documented* excuse (e.g. illness, jury duty, etc) will be graded down a plus/minus grade (if handed in one class late). Chronically late papers (a week late or more) will be graded down a full letter grade.

**Plus and minus grades:** This course will use the plus and minus grading system. Hope Scholarship students please note that Hope will use a separate GPA system, so that a B- in this course will still count as a B for Hope Scholarship purposes.

Attendance policy: All students are required to attend every class. Attendance will be measured by the handing in of questions related to the reading at the beginning of each class (see above). Compelling reasons for absence will be taken into account (e.g. jury duty, medical excuses *with supporting documentation*, recognized religious holidays, etc). Non-compelling reasons for absence will be ignored (e.g. overslept, MARTA made me late).

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY**

Plagiarism in papers and cheating on examinations will be swiftly and severely punished. Please refer to the College of Arts & Sciences' academic honesty policy, available here:

<http://www.cas.gsu.edu/files/policies/files/AcademicHonesty.doc>

Remember: when in doubt, provide a citation.

### **REGISTRATION AND WITHDRAWALS**

You are responsible for making sure that you have correctly registered for this course. Be sure to confirm that your registration is in fact valid.

Students withdrawing from the class after drop/add and *before* the semester mid-point will receive a 'W' grade. Students withdrawing after the semester mid-point will receive a 'WF' if permitted to do so by the registrar.

**Please note: this syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.**

Reading assignments and paper due dates may change. All changes will be announced in class, so it is **your responsibility** to attend or, if a class is not attended, find out what you have missed.

Email announcements/correspondence will be sent to your official GSU email address. All students **MUST** check their GSU email regularly, or make sure it is set up to automatically forward mail to any other address that they might use.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1: Introduction: Europe in 1500

Tues Jan 6 - Introduction: geography; what is “early modernity”?

Thurs Jan 8 - Religion in 1500: ritual and lifecycle

Reading:

John Bossy, *Christianity in the West*, Ch. 1 (5-13), Ch. 2 (14-34).

Merriman: Ch. 1

### Week 2: The Renaissance legacy

Tues Jan 13 - The Renaissance city-state; civility; southern humanism

Reading:

Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*, book one.

Thurs Jan 15 - Northern humanism:

Reading:

Erasmus, *Colloquies*: “The Shipwreck”, “Pilgrimage for Religion’s Sake.”

Merriman: Ch. 2, Ch. 3 (pp. 85-90)

### Week 3: The Protestant Reformation, from above and below

Tues Jan 20 - Theology: Luther and Calvin

Reading:

Martin Luther, “Bondage of the Will”, in John Dillenberger, ed., *Martin Luther: Selections from his Writings* (New York: Anchor, 1951), pp 166-203.

Thurs Jan 22 - The Reformation from below

Reading:

Robert W. Scribner, “The Reformation, Popular Magic, And The “Disenchantment Of The World.” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 1993 23(3): 475-494.

Merriman: Ch. 3

### Week 4: Print and Print Culture

Tues Jan 27 - From orality to literacy

Reading:

Jean-Francois Gilmont, “Printing at the dawn of the sixteenth century,” [pp 10-20] in Jean-Francois Gilmont, *The Reformation and the Book* (Ashgate, 1998).

Thurs Jan 29 - Cheap print and popular culture

Reading:

Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk*, Ch. 4, “Popular Culture” [pp. 59-94]

This week: also start *Cheese and the Worms*.

**MINI-PAPER DUE IN CLASS, JAN 29**

### **Week 5: The Catholic Reformation**

Tues Feb 3 - Council of Trent, Catholicism and the State

Reading:

Ginzburg, *Cheese and the Worms*, first half.

Thurs Feb 5 – Heresy and Orthodoxy on the Ground

Reading:

Ginzburg, *Cheese and the Worms*, second half.

### **Week 6: Women, Order and the Reformation**

Tues Feb 10 - Gender in the sixteenth century

Reading:

Lyndal Roper, “Was there a crisis in gender relations in sixteenth-century Germany?”, in *Oedipus and the Devil*, pp. 37-52.

Merry Wiesner, “Gender and Power”, in *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 288-317.

Thurs Feb 12 - The question of witchcraft

Reading:

Lyndal Roper, “Witchcraft and fantasy in early modern Germany,” in *Oedipus and the Devil*, 199-225.

### **Week 7: Borderlands and Expansion**

Tues Feb 17 - Europeans and the East

Reading:

Daniel Vitkus, “Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe,” in David R. Blanks and Michael Trassetto, eds., *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), pp. 207-30.

Thurs Feb 19 - Europeans and the New World

Readings:

Michel de Montaigne, “Of Cannibals.”

Merriman: Ch. 5

### **Week 8: War and Violence**

Tues Feb 24 - The military revolution

Reading:

Rogers, Clifford J. *The military revolution debate : readings on the transformation of early modern Europe*. History and warfare. Boulder: Westview Press, 1995. Ch. 1: Michael Roberts, "The Military Revolution, 1560-1660" and Ch. 2: Geoffrey Parker, "The 'Military Revolution, 1560-1660' - A Myth?"

Thurs Feb 26 - Civil war, urban violence and atrocity

Reading:

Davis, Natalie Zemon. *Society and culture in early modern France: eight essays*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975, Ch. 6: “Rites of Violence.”

Merriman: Ch. 4

**Week 9: SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS****Mar 2: Semester mid-point. Last day to withdraw and receive a ‘W’ grade.****Week 10: The State**

Tues March 10 - Louis XIV, absolutism and the State

Reading:

Louis XIV, *A King's Lessons in Statecraft*, trans. Herbert Wilson (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1924), pp. 39-59; 169-71.

Thurs March 12 - The practice of the state

Reading:

Hanley, Sarah. "Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France." *French Historical Studies* 16, no. 1 (1989): 4-27

Merriman: Ch. 7

**SECOND PAPER DUE IN CLASS, MARCH 12****Week 11: Ways of Knowing: Scientific Revolutions**

Tues March 17 - Galileo, Courtier?

Reading:

Galileo, *Letter to the Grand Duchess*, available online at:  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/galileo-tuscany.html>

Thurs March 19 - Ways of knowing/implications

Reading:

Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution*, Ch. 1, "What was known?"

Merriman: Ch. 8

**Week 12: The "Old" Enlightenment: Elite Thinkers**

Tues March 24 - Preconditions and early thought

Reading:

John Locke, *Second Treatise, Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, selections.

Thurs March 26 - The traditional Enlightenment

Reading:

Voltaire, Rousseau, selections.

Merriman: Ch. 9

**Week 13: The "New" Enlightenment: Social Context**

Tues March 31 - Print and power

Reading:

Darnton, *The Literary underground of the Old Regime*, Ch. 1, "The High Enlightenment and the Low Life of Literature."

Thurs April 2 - Salons and Salonieres

Reading:

Goodman, *The Republic of Letters*, Ch. 2, "Philosophes and Solinnieres."  
Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, small selection.

Merriman: Ch. 10

#### **Week 14: Imperialism, Consumerism and Race**

Tues April 7 - The global economy and European expansion

Reading:

Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, selections.

Thurs April 9 - Race and Enlightenment thought

Reading:

Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, ch. 2, "Science, Planetary Consciousness, Interiors."  
Carl von Linne, "The God-given order of Nature," in Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, ed. *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader* (Blackwell, 1997/2001), pp 10-14.

Merriman: Ch. 11

#### **Week 15: Towards Revolution: Modern Modernity?**

Tues April 14 - Causes Celebres and the Public Sphere

Reading:

Sarah Maza, "The Social Imagery of Political Crisis," in *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The Causes Celebres of Prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993).

Thurs April 16 - The crisis of the Old Regime

Reading:

Roger Chartier, *Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, Ch. 6, "A Desacralized King."

Merriman: Ch. 12

#### **FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS, APRIL 16**

#### **Week 16: Summary and review**

Tues April 21 – Summary

Thurs April 23 – Review

**Final Examination: Tuesday, April 28, 12:30 p.m.**