

## HISTORY 385: EUROPE IN THE AGE OF ABSOLUTISM

Spring 2000  
Christine Adams  
Office: 231 Kent Hall, Ext. 4446  
Office hours: 2:00-3:00, Tues.-Thurs.

This course will focus on the social, cultural and political history of the turbulent 16th and 17th centuries in Western Europe. We will explore the ramifications of the Reformation, the Counterreformation, and the Wars of Religion; the conflicts between a constitutional and an absolutist conception of government; and the development of both courtly and popular culture.

### Requirements

1. Class attendance, preparation, and participation. More than two absences, except for certified illness or a death in the family will result in your grade being lowered 1/3 grade (i.e., from B to B-) for each additional absence. Any student missing more than 5 class periods for any reason will be considered to have dropped the course. A reading is assigned for every class, and you must prepare it beforehand and come to class with questions and observations. If necessary, pop quizzes on the readings will be administered during the semester and factored into your participation grade.

The following are required readings for the course:

### Books

Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*

Richard Dunn, *The Age of Religious Wars, 1559-1715*, 2nd Edition

Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*

David Underdown, *Fire From Heaven: Life in an English Town in the Seventeenth Century*

Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe*

Cardinal Richelieu, *The Political Testament of Cardinal Richelieu*

### Articles (on reserve in library)

Merry E. Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers: Women and the Reformation in Germany"

J.W. Smit, "The Netherlands Revolution"

F. Ellen Weaver, "Erudition, Spirituality, and Women: The Jansenist Contribution"

Excerpts from *Elizabeth I*, ed. by Joseph M. Levine

J.H. Elliott, "The Court of the Spanish Habsburgs: a Peculiar Institution?"

Excerpt from Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*

"Characteristics of the Court-Aristocratic Figuration" from Norbert Elias, *The Court Society*

Orest Ranum, "Courtesy, Absolutism, and the Rise of the French State"

Roland Mousnier, "The Fronde"

Louis XIV, First Book from *Mémoires for the Instruction of the Dauphin*  
Orest Ranum, "The Court and Capital of Louis XIV: Some Definitions and Reflections"  
Excerpt from Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* and John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Government*  
Margaret Jacob, "The Crisis of the European Mind: Hazard Revisited"

2. Three essays of 4-6 pages, each focused on a particular theme suggested by the readings for the class. These essays will require no readings beyond those assigned for the class. Essays must be typed, double-spaced, and properly footnoted (see syllabus for dates of assignments). Papers will be graded on presentation, grammar, and organization as well as content. You should follow Kate Turbian's *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. Any paper handed in late will be subject to a penalty of 1/3 grade (i.e., from B to B-) for each day after the due date.
3. A mid-term exam
4. A cumulative final exam

Grades will be weighted as follows:

Class participation	10%
Essays	15% each
Mid-term Exam	20%
Final Exam	25%

#### COURSE SCHEDULE

Jan 16	Introduction: A Survey of Europe in 1500
Jan 18	An Age of Crisis and Reform: The German Reformation Dunn, pp. 1-9 Ozment, pp. 1-49
Jan 23	An Age of Crisis and Reform: The Reformation Spreads Dunn, pp. 11-18 Ozment, pp. 50-131
Jan 25	The Reformation in Action Ozment, pp. 132-77 Davis, pp. 1-16; 65-95 Article by Wiesner
Jan 30	Wars of Religion Dunn, pp. 40-45 Article by J.W. Smit

- Feb 1 France: From Religious Strife to Absolutism  
Dunn, pp. 30-40  
Davis, pp. 152-187
- Feb 6 Catholicism Responds to the Challenge: The Counterreformation  
Article by Ellen Weaver
- Feb 8 Elizabethan England \*PAPER DUE  
Dunn, pp. 45-53  
Excerpts from *Elizabeth I*
- Feb 13 Spain and Austria under the Habsburgs  
Dunn, pp. 18-29; 54-82  
Article by J.H. Elliott
- Feb 15 The Social World: the Nobility  
Excerpt from Fernand Braudel  
Excerpt from Norbert Elias
- Feb 20 Movie: The Return of Martin Guerre
- Feb 22 The Social World: Peasants and Serfs  
Ginzburg, pp. ix-68  
Davis, 189-267
- Feb 27 The European Witchcraze  
Dunn, pp. 128-34  
Ginzburg, pp. 69-145
- Mar 1 Popular Culture  
Davis, pp. 97-151
- Mar 6 The New Commercial Base: Urban Life and Capitalism  
Dunn, pp. 103-28; 134-51
- Mar 8 Midterm Exam
- SPRING RECESS
- Mar 20 The Rise of Absolutism: France  
Dunn, pp. 152-64  
Richelieu, pp. v-63

