HISTORY OF EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION I

Autumn 2023

This course is the first part of a two-part sequence. This part examines the period from approximately 500 to 1700 in European history. It challenges students to question two-dimensional, rigid narratives about the fall of Rome, the Dark Ages, the Renaissance and Reformation, and the early Enlightenment by reading historical sources with empathy and
attention to their authors’ own perspectives. For example, we explore the entanglement of
the political, economic, and religious by reading a chronicle written by a monk; we
examine gender relations and daily life by reading men’s and women’s personal letters;
and we investigate the earliest contacts between Europeans and the peoples of the
Americas by reading eyewitness accounts of their interactions. In the process of
recovering the lived experiences of medieval and early modern Europeans, the course
engages with the sophisticated societies and cultures of premodern Europe, which many
subsequent generations post-1700 would come to label backwards and uncivilized.

BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE SEMINARY CO-OP BOOKSTORE
(All books also on reserve in Regenstein Library)


William Levitan, Stanley Lombardo, and Barbara Thorburn (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007) [ISBN 9780872208759]


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. *Careful study of the assigned readings.* As one of the main purposes of this course is
to enable you to read different kinds of texts from different historical periods and to
develop your confidence in approaching unfamiliar texts in the future, it is very
important that you read each of the assigned selections as carefully as possible before
coming to class each day. As you are reading, pay careful attention to what the author
tells us (explicitly or implicitly) about why he or she was writing and for whom. Why
was the author’s subject so important that he or she considered it worth writing
about? What does the author’s interest in the subject tell us about the historical
circumstances in which he or she was writing? Try, if you can, to imagine a context in
which the text you are reading would have been of vital importance, so important that
an author felt the need to commit its contents to writing. What was the text that you are reading intended to do?

2. Attendance and participation in class discussion (15% of your final grade).

3. Two textual analyses (4-5 pages, double-spaced). First paper due October 22 on Canvas (15% of your final grade). Second paper due November 19 on Canvas (25% of your final grade). File format: YOUR_LAST_NAME TEXTUAL_ANALYSIS

4. Final paper (7-8 pages, double-spaced, 45% of your final grade). Paper due December 8 on Canvas. File format: YOUR_LAST_NAME EUROCIV_FINAL

READING AND DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS

September 27 Why study history? Analogies, deep patterns, and roots

October 2 Teaching the faith I

October 4 Monsters of God
   Appendix C, nos. 1-2, 4-5, pp. 275-77, 281-85
   Appendix D, nos. 1 and 3, pp. 287-91, 297-99

October 9 Fighting for God I

October 11 Love letters I

October 16 Life in the monastery

October 18 Defining Christendom I
Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) [https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/lateran4.asp]
Eyewitness Account of the Fourth Lateran Council (RWC 4, pp. 369-76) [on eReserve]

October 23 Keeping count I
The Manor of Alwalton (1279) [https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/alwalton.asp]
***First textual analysis due October 22 by 11:59pm on Canvas***

October 25  Teaching the faith II
Dante Alighieri (d. 1321), *The Divine Comedy II: Purgatorio* [PQ4315.M97]

October 30  The Black Death

November 1  Love letters II
Alessandra Strozzi (d. 1471), *Selected Letters* [DG737.58.S7A5 1997]

November 6  Teaching the faith III
Martin Luther, “95 Theses” (October 31, 1517) [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/95_Theses], *On Christian Liberty* (1520) [BR332.S6 G7 2003]
Twelve Articles of the Peasants (1525) (RWC 5, pp. 333-38) [on eReserve]
Martin Luther, *Admonition to Peace* (1525) (RWC 5, pp. 339-57) [on eReserve]

November 8  Defining Christendom II
Ignatius Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises* (1522-1524) [http://spex.ignatianspirituality.com/SpiritualExercises/Puhl]
*The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848) [http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent.html]
- Bull of Indiction (1542)
- First, Second, Third, Fifth, and Sixth Sessions (1545-1547)

November 13  Fighting for God II

November 15  A New World Order
Francis Bacon, *The New Atlantis* (1627) [https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2434/2434-h/2434-h.htm]

***Second textual analysis due November 19 by 11:59pm on Canvas***
November 20-22 NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 29 Teaching the faith IV

December 1 What is civilization?
Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), pp. 5-108 (up to "I cannot say that after this, for five years, any extraordinary thing happened to me") [PR3403.A2 R53 2001]

***Final paper due December 8 by 11:59pm on Canvas***