



Detail from *El Sueño del Caballero*, a 1655 painting by Antonio de Pereda

MODERN EUROPEAN HISTORY, 1500–1815

Winter 2020 • HIS 70A • Merrill 102

Instructor: Prof. Benjamin Breen (bebreen@ucsc.edu)

Teaching assistants: Piper Milton (pmilton@ucsc.edu) and Leonard Butingan (lbutinga@ucsc.edu)

Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:20 - 6:55 pm

Office hours: 3 - 4:30 pm Wednesday or by appointment (Stevenson 279)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In a 1655 painting known as *El Sueño del Caballero* (“The Cavalier’s Dream”), the Spanish artist Antonio de Pereda depicted a young man sleeping amidst a pile of valuable objects: guns, globes, printed books, playing cards, violins, musical scores, a clock. All of these things were perfected or popularized during the period that this class studies. But perhaps it’s the skull haunting the edge of Pereda’s canvas that best symbolizes this era when death was ever-present and life was cheap.

The sleeping knight was living through a period of transformation that was unprecedented in human history. Moons and cells were being discovered by new tools called “telescopes” and “microscopes.” Diseases like syphilis and smallpox were

causing unprecedented destruction. The slave trade was nearing its hideous height. Warfare was transformed by rapid innovation in weapon technologies. New religions were born—and destroyed. The climate was lurching toward a “Little Ice Age” that many early modern people believed would usher in the apocalypse.

This world of technological innovation, warfare, climate change, and consumerism should seem familiar to you. Although *our* version of the young knight’s dream might contain smartphones rather than swords, there are deep links between Pereda’s world and our own. We, the people of the twenty-first century, are the inheritors of changes that began in early modern Europe. If we want to understand our contemporary world, and our common future, we have to understand the faded dreams – and nightmares – of this modern world in the making. This class will help you do so.

WHAT DO I HOPE YOU LEARN?

The core goal of this course is to teach you how to think and write in a compelling and convincing way. The second objective is to provide you with a solid understanding of the early modern history of Europe and the European colonies and empires. This is a course that is weighted heavily toward rewarding writing that is **original, persuasive, and meticulous**. You will need to think critically and creatively rather than simply memorize facts.

ASSIGNMENTS

There will be four assignments over the course of the semester, listed here in chronological order:

- 1) **Source analysis.** Familiarize yourself with the Old Bailey website (<https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/Crimes.jsp>) and select one report of a crime (or, if you chose, several reports of a series of linked crimes). Write a **4 to 5 page**, double spaced analysis of the criminal record, not just summarizing its contents but providing analysis of its *context* (using at least **2 secondary sources**). **Due at the beginning of Class 7.**
- 2) **Outline with annotated bibliography and three ideas for potential arguments.** A **5 page** outline of your chosen final paper topic (based on

prompts to be handed out in class #6) along with a list of sources you plan to use. **Due at the beginning of Class 12.**

- 3) At least **two pop quizzes** on assigned reading.
- 4) A **10-12 page** final paper. Your final paper (uploaded to Canvas as a PDF) should ideally feature an interesting, non-obvious thesis as well as error-free and persuasive prose. It should be 10-12 pages *not* counting bibliography, double spaced, in 12-pt Times New Roman font, and with 1-inch page margins. Use Chicago Manual of Style Guidelines (explained here: <https://politics.ucsc.edu/undergraduate/chicago%20style%20guide.pdf>). **Due at 8:00 pm on Friday, March 20th.**
- 5) **In-class participation** based on occasional in-class group work and attendance in required weekly discussion sections. (**Note:** You are allowed to miss a total of **three** discussion sections without penalty).

GRADING

In-class participation (including pop quizzes): 20%
Old Bailey Crime: 20%
Prospectus: 20%
Final: 40%

All assignments will be marked down by one letter grade (10%) for each day they are late. I am happy to offer extensions for a legitimate reason but only with at least **48 hour notice**.

Students are expected to spend 15 hours per week on the course, with 4.25 hours spent in class, approximately 8 hours for reading and the remainder spent on preparation for the final paper and other assignments.

Appealing Grades

If, after receiving a graded work back, you are confused by the grade or feel that it is not an accurate representation of your work, you can request clarification by explaining **in writing** (via email to me or to your TA) why you believe that your grade is inaccurate. If appropriate, I will then be happy to regrade your assignment.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC ETHICS



Doing good history – and, honestly, just being an ethical person – requires you to **properly attribute the work of others**. Claiming the words or ideas of others as your own without attribution is plagiarism – even if you change them slightly. Any student who plagiarizes will receive an F in the course in addition to referral to the university administration for academic misconduct.

Seriously, please don't plagiarize or hire someone else to write for you – cheating represents a colossal waste of your time, money and effort, and it won't help you in the long run.

DISABILITY-RELATED ACCOMMODATIONS

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me by the **first week of the quarter**. Contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu for more information.

If there's anything else I can do to help please don't hesitate to let me know via email or in office hours.



The two required texts are available at the Campus Bookstore: Merry Wiesner-Hanks, *Early Modern Europe* (2nd edition**), and Benvenuto Cellini, *Autobiography* (Penguin Classics edition, translated by George Bull).**

All other course readings are available on Canvas as PDFs. These are excerpted from: Fernand Braudel, *The Wheels of Commerce*; Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural*

Identity in Renaissance Europe; Timothy Brooks, *Vermeer's Hat*; Carlo Ginzberg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, and David Bell, *Napoleon*.

Primary sources include: *The Other Voice in Renaissance Europe* book series; Thomas More, *Utopia*; Shakespeare, *The Tempest* and *Twelfth Night*; Madame Fouquet, *Recipes*; Samuel Pepys, *Diary of Samuel Pepys*; Mary Rowlandson, *Narrative of the Captivity*; Margaret Cavendish, *Observations Upon Experimental Philosophy*; George Psalmanazar, *Memoirs*; Rousseau, *Confessions*.

Optional novels/films

- A great novel: Hilary Mantel, *Wolf Hall*.
- A weird novel: Umberto Eco, *Foucault's Pendulum*
- A history book that reads like a novel: Natalie Zemon-Davis, *Return of Martin Guerre*
- Recommended movies/TV: *A Man for All Seasons*, *The Return of Martin Guerre*, *Elizabeth*, *Vatel*, *Wolf Hall* (BBC), *Marie Antoinette*, *Barry Lyndon*, *Black Robe*, *Silence*, *A Field in England*, *Mary Queen of Scots*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Elizabeth* (the one starring Cate Blanchett).
- Other movies/TV: *The Tudors*, *The Borgias*, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* (*Magnificent Century*)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

CLASS 1: INTRODUCTION

- No advance reading.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

CLASS 2: WHAT IS 'EARLY MODERNITY'?

- Reading due by beginning of class: Wiesner, *Early Modern Europe*, intro and ch. 1.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

CLASS 3: HISTORICAL RESEARCH – THREE WAYS

- Reading due by beginning of class: Braudel, "Daily Bread."

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16

CLASS 4: THE LIMITS OF THE POSSIBLE

- *Early Modern Europe*, ch. 2.
- Excerpt from: “Early Modern Voices” [first-hand accounts of early modern life].

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21

CLASS 5: WAS THERE A RENAISSANCE?

- First 65 pages of Cellini, *Autobiography*.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

CLASS 6: SOLDIERS, SCULPTORS, AND STATE-FORMATION

- Cellini, pages 70-100
 - *Early Modern Europe*, ch. 3.
- + also read (and look at the images within) “A Renaissance Merchant’s Life in Clothing”: <https://resobscura.blogspot.com/2011/07/renaissance-merchants-life-in-clothing.html>

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28

CLASS 7: THE REFORMATION AND COUNTER-REFORMATION

- *Cheese and the Worms* excerpt
 - *Early Modern Europe*, ch. 5.
- + Optional: watch *The Seventh Seal* (1957), by Ingmar Bergman

 **HOMEWORK DUE.** 

On Canvas before class, submit your 4 to 5 page analysis of an [Old Bailey](#) crime of your choosing. Be prepared to discuss your chosen crime in class.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30

CLASS 8: GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND THE FAMILY

- Reading due by beginning of class: “Lt. Nun” and “Francisca de los Apostoles.”
- + Optional: watch *Barry Lyndon*.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4

CLASS 9: DRUGS, WITCHES, AND WIZARDS

- + Reading due by beginning of class: King James, “Counterblaste to Tobacco.”
- + Matthew Hopkins, *A Discovery of Witches* excerpt.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6

CLASS 10: WHAT DID EARLY MODERN FOOD TASTE LIKE?

- Select and read **three** articles of your choice from the Recipes Project: <http://recipes.hypotheses.org>.
- Locate a **primary source** relating to early modern food on a scholarly database and be prepared to discuss it in class.
- + Optional: watch *Vatel*.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

CLASS 11: RESEARCH TUTORIAL

- *Early Modern Europe*, ch. 6.
- **Work on prospectus.** Come to class prepared to discuss **one** secondary source.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13

CLASS 12: CITIES, EMPIRES, AND SLAVERY

- James Sweet, “The Hidden Histories of African Lisbon.”



PROSPECTUS DUE.



A **5 page** outline of your chosen final paper topic along with a list of sources you plan to use and three potential arguments.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

CLASS 13: MORE AND CROMWELL: THE RISE OF STATE POWER

- Read Thomas More *Utopia* excerpts and account of his trial.
- *Early Modern Europe*, ch. 7.
- + Watch episode of *Wolf Hall*. Optional: *A Man For All Seasons*.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20

CLASS 14: EARLY MODERN GLOBALIZATION?

- Psalmanazar, *Description and Memoirs* + Rowlandson's *Captivity*.

- “Made in Taiwan?”: <http://theappendix.net/issues/2013/10/made-in-taiwan-an-eighteenth-century-frenchmans-fictional-formosa>

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

CLASS 15: WAS THERE A SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION?

- *Early Modern Europe*, ch. 8.
- Galileo + Elizabeth/Descartes letters.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

CLASS 16: THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND ABSOLUTISM

- *Early Modern Europe*, ch. 9 and 10.
- *The Haitian Declaration of Independence* (1804):
<https://today.duke.edu/showcase/haitideclaration/declarationstext.html>

TUESDAY, MARCH 3

CLASS 17: NAPOLEON

- David Bell’s Napoleon biography excerpt on Canvas.
- + Optional: watch *The Duellist* and/or *Marie Antoinette*.

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

CLASS 18: AGE OF EMPIRES AND MACHINES

- Byron’s Luddite speech and de Quincey on opium on Canvas.
- *Early Modern Europe*, ch. 12.
- Watch Sashi Tharoor’s speech at the Oxford Union:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7CW7S0zxv4>

TUESDAY, MARCH 10

CLASS 19: THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND BEYOND

- *Early Modern Europe*, ch. 13.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

CLASS 20: **NO CLASS**

FINAL PAPERS DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 20TH AT 8:00 PM.