

FRANCE DURING THE RENAISSANCE AND RELIGIOUS WARS
HIST 3110: FALL, 2014.

Department of History, The University of Manitoba

Erik Thomson
Erik.Thomson@umanitoba.ca
MWF: 11:30-12:20.

Fletcher Argue 452
Office hours: MW: 12:30-1:30, or
by appointment.

This course offers an introduction to French history from roughly 1450 until roughly 1650, a period in which the kingdom was transformed by a series of interrelated changes. These include, but are not restricted to, the printing revolution, successive reinventions of monarchy and governance, the influence of humanism, the religious controversies of the Reformation, convulsive civil wars, the beginnings of French overseas empire and the reshaping of a whole range of social, cultural, family, religious and political norms.

I plan to lecture roughly two times a week, and the third class of the week will be a workshop/seminar style discussion section where we will discuss primary sources, or important historical articles. I hope that you will learn not only the narrative of the period, but also begin to understand some of the historiographical issues that engage historians who conduct research in the period. Although the class does not have a requirement for a reading knowledge of French, students are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to read French materials if they have the ability to do so. All students of early modern French history should know that for more advanced study of the subject French is essential in order to read primary source material and much of the secondary literature, and that knowledge of Latin and modern European languages other than French is also highly desirable.

Required Texts

Available for Purchase at the Bookstore

Mack P. Holt, ed. *Renaissance and Reformation France*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. ISBN: 978-0-19-873165-8.

Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Works*. Donald Frame, trans. New York: Everyman's Library/Alfred A. Knopf, 2003. ISBN: 978-1400040216

Jean Bodin, *On the Demon-Mania of Witches*. Randy A. Scott, trans. Jonathan L. Pearl, ed. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies. 2001. ISBN: 0-9697512-5-7

René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method for Conducting one's Reason well and for Seeking Truth in the Sciences*. Donald Cress, Trans. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1998). ISBN: 0-87220-422-7.

Assignments

Paper One: 25 %: Historical Interpretations, 6-8 Pages: Due Friday, 10th October in class.

In 6 to 8 pages, compare the articles in one of the groups below. Answer the question, “What do these essays teach us about the history of early modern France?” Consider whether, how and why the historians differ. Do those contrasts result from varying regional, chronological or confessional conditions, the use of different source material, or from divergent interpretive frameworks? Can the historians’ work be reconciled? If so, how? Do their disagreements pose further questions for research?

All the articles are available in full text through the library in electronic form.

Group One: Peasant Politics?

Antoine Follain, « L’administration des villages par les paysans au XVII^e siècle, » *XVII^e Siècle*. No 234. (Jan. 2007); 135-156.

René Souriac, « Le ‘sens politique’ des paysans aux temps modernes en France: Culture et comportements paysans, vers 1550-vers 1650, » *XVII^e Siècle*. No 234. (Jan. 2007); 11-29.

Jean Marie Constant, « La Lecture des cahiers de doléances des villages entre 1576 et 1651 permet-elle de parler d’un imaginaire politique paysan au XVII^e siècle ? » *XVII^e Siècle*. No 234. (Jan. 2007); 31-48.

Group Two: Women and the Social Order

Suzannah Lipscomb, “Crossing Boundaries: women’s gossip, insults and violence in sixteenth century France,” *French History*, 25,4 (Dec. 2011); 408-426.

Leslie Tuttle, “From Cloister to Court: Nuns and the Gendered Culture of Disputing in Early Modern France,” *Journal of Women’s History*. 22, 2 (Summer, 2010); 11-33.

Robert I. Kalas, “Noble Women and Estate Management during the French Wars of Religion,” *Sixteenth Century Journal*. 39, 2 (summer, 2008); 357-370.

Group Three: Legal Reform & Monarchial Power

Marie Seong-Hak Kim, “Civil Law and Civil War: Michel de l’Hôpital and the Ideals of Unification in Sixteenth Century France,” *Law and History Review* 28, 3 (2010); 791-826.

Sarah Hanley, “What is in a name?: ‘Our French Law’”, *Law and History Review* 28, 3 (2010); 827-836.

Amilia D. Kessler, “Power, not progress: An Alternative Reading of L’Hôpital’s Legal Reforms,” *Law and History Review* 28, 3 (2010); 837-842.

Marie Seong-Hak Kim, “Response: L’Hôpital’s Laws, » *Law and History Review* 28, 3 (2010); 843-848.

Group Four: Violence and identity in the Religious Wars

Steven Thiry, "The Emblazoned Kingdom Ablaze: Heraldic iconoclasm and armorial recovery during the French Wars of Religion, 1588-95," *French History* 27, 3 (2013): 323-350.

Susan Broomhall, "Reasons and Identities to remember: composing personal accounts of religious violence in sixteenth century France," *French History* 27, 1 (2013): 1-20.

Paper Two: 25 %: Montaigne, Bodin and their Contexts, 6-8 Pages: Due Monday, 24th November in class.

In six to eight pages, read the selections indicated and answer one of the following questions:

1. Read the first sections of Montaigne's *Travel Journal*, say—pp. 1056-1112. You are free, however to read more. Answer either: a: How does Montaigne perceive religious difference? Or b: What differences between European locales does Montaigne find interesting and significant?
2. Read Book I, Essay 20, "That to philosophize is to learn to die," 67-82 and Book III, Essay 2. "Of Repentance.", 740-753. Does religion play the same role in the two essays, or has Montaigne's view of his soul changed as he grew older?
3. Read Book II, Essay 16, "Of glory," 568-581 and Book III, Essay 1, "Of the Useful and the honorable," 726-740. What do these essays reveal about the pressures on central concepts of noble self-understanding during the Wars of Religion?
4. Read Book I, Essay 26, "Of the education of children," 129-160, and Book II, Essay 8, "Of the affection of fathers for their children," 337-356. How does Montaigne understand the relations between parents and children, the duties and their purposes?
5. Read Book I, Essay 28, "Of Friendship," 164-176 and Book III, Essay 8, "Of the art of discussion," 854-876. For Montaigne, is friendship an alternative to politics, or the most important part of it?
6. Read Jean Bodin's *On the Demon-Mania of Witches*. Answer either a.) Why does Bodin invoke both the authority of non-Christian and Christian authors to discuss the power and nature of witchcraft? Or b.) How does Bodin distinguish between legitimate means of seeking the truth and demonic power?

You are more than welcome to write on another topic of interest to you, should your fancy take you to another essay or other part of Montaigne's work. Please do consult with me, however, at least a week before the paper is due.

Workshop preparation: 20%. Five, due at the beginning of the workshop in which the reading will be discussed. No late assignments will be permitted.

Write a question and a paragraph long observation about the reading assigned for the day; the paragraph need not answer your question, but may address another facet of the readings.

Final Examination: 30%. The exam will consist of map sections, identifications, interpretations of textual gobbets, and a broad synthetic essay.

A note on academic honesty: Education and scholarship depends upon a certain sort of basic honesty. I expect that when you claim to have done work, you will actually have done it. When you use the work or ideas of another scholar or student, you should respect them by treating their work fairly and accurately, and give them public credit by citing them openly. Always err on the side of giving too much credit to others than too little. In formal essays, I prefer citations in footnotes using the form known as the Chicago humanities style; see the quick guide at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

The University cares about academic honesty as well, because it has to maintain a standard of fairness and equity. You can find its mandate on “Plagiarism and Cheating” and on “Examination Impersonation” in the section on “Academic Integrity” of General Academic Regulations of the University Undergraduate Calendar (<http://crscalprod1.cc.umanitoba.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx>), but the Faculty of Arts requires me to repeat it here, as well.

“The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism on a written assignment is a grade of F on the paper and a final grade of F (DISC) (for Disciplinary Action) for the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as purchase of an essay and repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five (5) years from registration in courses taught in a particular department/program in Arts or from all courses taught in this Faculty.

The Faculty also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism or to other experts for authentication.

The common penalty in Arts for academic dishonesty on a test or examination is F for the paper, F (DISC) for the course, and a one-year suspension from courses acceptable for credit in the Faculty. For more serious acts of academic dishonesty on a test or examination, such as repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five years from registration in courses taught in a particular department or program in Arts or from all courses taught in or accepted for credit by this Faculty.”

Marking: I will make every effort to return papers within a week, and you will thus have considerable feedback before the voluntary withdrawal (VW) date of November 12, 2014. I will take into account the quality and diligence of research, the creativity, strength, and coherence of thought and argument, and the correct use of grammar, usage, proofreading and citation. Since this is a course that meets the University Senate's W requirement, students must complete all essay assignments with a passing grade to pass the course. Extensions will not be granted except in highly unusual circumstances, which will usually require documentation. 4 % a day will be deducted for unexcused lateness.

A +, 90-100 %: Exceptional: Astonishingly excellent work, which demonstrates originality and a singular command of the subject.

A, 80-89 %. Truly excellent work, free from errors.

B+, 75-79 %. Very good work.

B, 70-75 %. Good.

C+, 65-69 %. Satisfactory.

C, 60-64 %.

D, 50-59 %.

F, 0-49 %.

Other things the Faculty thinks you should know: “Students who wish to appeal a grade given for term work must do so within 10 working days after the grade for the term work has been made available to them.” If you do not pick up your work for four months after the end of the course, you will not only lose the incalculable benefits of my comments, but, as the Faculty puts it, the work “will become the property of the Faculty of Arts and will be subject to confidential destruction.”

Useful References

Databases: *Historical abstracts* and *Iter* are useful bibliographies to find journal articles, books and dissertations about French history in this period. More complete bibliographic information can be found in the *Bibliographie annuelle de l'Histoire de France*.

Journals: The standard English journals on French history are *French Historical Studies* and *French history*. The second journal, published in England, tends to have more content on early modern subjects. Book reviews are available at H-France, on line. Articles also appear in a wide range of other historical journals in English, but *Sixteenth Century Journal* and *Renaissance Quarterly* contain a particular concentration of articles and book reviews.

Reference works: For French institutions in English, a useful place to start is Roland Mousnier, *The Institutions of France under the Absolute Monarchy* Brian Pearce and Arthur Goldhammer, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1979-1984). For readers of French, consult the invaluable Lucien Bély, ed. *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien Régime* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1996).

Other text books: Though old, J.H.M Salmon's *Society in Crisis: France in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's, 1975), remains useful. David Potter's *A History of France, 1460-1560: The Emergence of a Nation State* (New York: St. Martin's, 1995) is good for the beginning of the course, and Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd ed. 2005), for the Wars of Religion.

If you read French, consulting the relevant volumes of the Belin *Histoire de France* is an excellent place to start. See Philippe Hamon, *1453-1559: Les Renaissances* (Paris: Belin, 2009), Nicolas Le Roux, *1559-1629: Les guerres de Religion*. (Paris: Belin, 2009), and Hervé Drévillon, *1629-1715: Les Rois absolus*. (Paris : Belin, 2011).

Reading Schedule, Workshops, and Lectures
Subject to modification

R&RF=Holt, ed. *Renaissance and Reformation France*.

F: 5 September: Introduction

I

Read: Holt, "Introduction" and "The Kingdom of France." In *R & RF*, 1-26, and Philip T. Hoffman, "Rural, urban and global economies," in *R & RF*, 62-98.

M: 8 Sept: Diversity

W: 10 Sept: Constructing unity

F: 12 Sept: **WORKSHOP I:** Read excerpt of Jehan Masselin, *Journal of Estates General 1484*.

II

Read: Jonathan Dewald, "Social Groups and Cultural Practices," in *R & RF*, 27-61.

M: 15 Sept: Printing

W: 17 Sept: Humanism

F: 19 Sept: **WORKSHOP II:** Read Guillaume Budé, *On Establishing the Study of Letters*.

III

Read: Barbara B. Diefendorf, "Gender and the family," in *R & RF* 99-118.

M: 22 Sept: Renaissance Monarchy

W: 24 Sept: The Gallican Church and Catholic Religion.

F: 26 Sept: **WORKSHOP III:** Read excerpts from Claude de Seyssel, *The monarchy of France*.

IV

Read: Philip Benedict and Virginia Reinburg, "Religion and the Sacred," in *R & RF*, 119-146.

M: 29 Sept: Reform to Mid Century

W: 1 Oct: Mid Century Dynamics

F: 3 Oct: **Workshop IV:** Read excerpts from Calvin.

V

M: 6 Oct: Late Reign of Francis I

W: 8 Oct: Inevitable war?

F: 10 October: **Paper # 1 Due: Workshop V:** Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Rites of Violence."

VI

Read: Philip Benedict, "The wars of Religion, 1562-1598," in *R & RF*, 147-176.

M: 13 October: Thanksgiving: No class.

W: 15 October: Outbreak of War

F: 17 Oct: No class.

VII

Reread: Philip Benedict, "The wars of Religion, 1562-1598," in *R & RF*, 147-176.

M: 20 October; First and Second Wars

W: 22 October: St. Bartholomew

F: 24 October: WORKSHOP VI: Monarchomachs & Jean Bodin, *The Republic*.

VIII

Read: Jean Bodin, *On the Demon-Mania of Witches*.

M: 27 October: Governance?

W: 29 October: Demons & Order

F: 31 October WORKSHOP VII: Jean Bodin, *Demon-Mania*.

IX

Read: Barbara Diefendorf and Virginia Reinburg, "Catholic Reform and religious Coexistence," in *R & RF*, 176-201.

M: 3 November: Trent, Jesuits and Reason of State

W: 5 November: Assassination

F: 7 November: WORKSHOP VIII: Montaigne, "Cannibals," and other selected essays.

X

No Set Readings for this week, work on Paper #2.

M: 10 November: Henri IV

W: 12 November: Bourbon visions of order

F: 16 November: No class.

XI

Read: Mack Holt, "Redrawing the Lines of Authority," in *R & RF*, 202-228.

M: 17 November: Assassination and Regency

W: 19 November: Charting Cultural Change

F: 21 November: WORKSHOP IX: Descartes, *Discourse on Method*.

XII

Read: Mack Holt, "Conclusion," in *R & RF*, 229-233.

M: 24 November: Paper # 2 Due: Richelieu

W: 26 November: Fronde

F: 18 November: WORKSHOP X: Richelieu, *Political testament*.

XIII

M: 1 December: Retrospect

W: 3 December: Review and Exam Discussion