

History of France: Middle Ages to 1715

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Tuesday/Thursday 11-12:20, Armitage 225

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Joan of Arc circa 1485

This course traces the rise of the French state from a fragmented kingdom in the Middle Ages to the most powerful state in Europe by the end of the seventeenth century. The class will cover the manner in which the French monarchy manifested its power through lavish rituals, architectural styles, and court dance. Topics also include the myth of Joan of Arc, the bloody Wars of Religion; women and demonic possession, the duel, and the rise of the French absolutist state.

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 30% (There are NO MAKEUP EXAMS for the midterm or final.)

Paper 1\*: 20%

Paper 2\*: 20%

Each paper will be 5 pages in length. There will be a total of THREE topic choices and you MUST choose TWO. One of your papers must be written prior to the midterm.

Attendance/Participation: 10%

Attendance is crucial to this course. You are allowed only **two missed classes**. More than two missed classes will result in a lower grade. You are expected to come to class on time. Repeated tardiness will lower your grade. In addition to attendance, this portion of the grade includes participation in class discussions and the submission of three one-page “thought” pieces on the three books for purchase due on designated discussion days. No late assignments accepted.

**PAPER and EXAM SUBMISSION:** All papers must be submitted with a hard-copy in class AND through the Assignments Tool on the Sakai website. Only Word, RTF and PDF documents will be accepted. The documents will be checked by Turn-it-In for plagiarism. **No late papers or exams accepted.**

**READING:** The three books that are for purchase at the bookstore are listed below. Shorter readings will be posted online. You must do all the reading to do well on the exams and the papers.

#### BOOKS FOR PURCHASE:

Chretien de Troyes, *Lancelot: The Knight of the Cart* (Yale University Press)

Marguerite de Navarre, *The Heptameron* (Penguin Classics)

Pierre, Corneille, *The Cid, Cinna, The Theatrical Illusion* (Penguin Classics)

**NOTE:** All other Readings will be posted online.

#### LEARNING GOALS BY END OF COURSE:

- Understand the main events in the history of France from the Middle Ages to 1715.
- Describe the development of the French state including the rise of monarchy, centralization, and the processes that laid the foundation for the modern state.
- Identify French artistic and literary styles from the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and seventeenth-century France.
- Understand the Roman Catholic Church in medieval and early modern France and the rise of competing religious discourses and how this affected the state of France.
- Analyze primary source texts within their historical context.
- Compose well-written, organized, and persuasive essays.

ETIQUETTE: Please come on time, silence cell phones, and refrain from surfing the Internet during class. It is your responsibility to obtain any missing notes from a fellow student. Feel free to email me with a respectful, formal email and I will try my best to reply as promptly as possible.

PLAGIARISM will be taken very seriously and will be reported. Feel free to discuss the course material and your paper ideas with other students but you can only hand in your own individual work. All documents will be checked through Turn-it-In for plagiarism so don't do it!

Week 1

Sept. 2: Francia after Rome: Charlemagne to the year 1000

Sept. 4: Knights and Nobles

Reading: Excerpt from Einhard, *The Life of Charlemagne*

Week 2

Sept. 9: Capetian France

Sept. 11: Courtly Love

Readings: Excerpt from *The Song of Roland*

**Christian de Troyes, *Lancelot: Knight of the Cart***

Week 3

Sept. 17: Coronation and the Gothic Architecture in France

Sept. 19: The Valois Dynasty and the Hundred Years' War

Readings: Abbot of Suger, *On his Administration*

Week 4

Sept. 23: Joan of Arc

Sept. 25: Return of the Plague, Economic and Political Crisis

Readings: Excerpt from the Trial of Joan of Arc

**Marguerite de Navarre, *The Heptameron***

**\*Paper Due Chretien de Troyes, *Lancelot: Knight of the Cart*\***

Week 5

Sept. 30: The Renaissance and Francis I

Oct. 2: Queens and Mistresses of the Renaissance Part I

Readings: Selection from Michel de Montaigne, *Essays*

Selection from Rabelais, *Pantagruel*

Week 6

Oct. 7: Queens and Mistresses of the Renaissance Part II

Oct. 9: France and the Ottoman Empire

Readings: Selections from Marguerite de Valois, *Memoirs*

**\*Paper Due on Marguerite de Navarre, *The Heptameron* Oct. 9\***

Week 7

Oct. 14: Henry III and the Leagues

Oct. 16: Henri IV and the Pacification of France: How did he do it?

**\*MIDTERM EXAM DUE OCT. 16\***

Week 8

Oct. 21: Henry IV's Reign and Propaganda

Oct. 23: History of the Duel and Ballet

Readings: Pierre Corneille, *Le Cid and Cinna*

Week 9

Oct. 28: Demonic Possession at Loudon

Oct. 30: Richelieu and the Day of the Dupes

Readings: Excerpt from Jean Bodin, *On the Demon-mania of Witches*

*Excerpt from A relation of the deuill Balams departure out of the body of the Mother-Prioressse of the Ursuline nuns of Loudun...* (London, 1636) (microfilm: Early English books, 1475-1640; reel 823, no.1)

Week 10

Nov. 11: Richelieu: Governing France

Nov. 13: **No Class**

Readings: Excerpt from Richelieu's *Political Testament*

*Edict of 1626 Ordering the Demolition of Feudal Castles*

Week 11

Nov. 18: Women in the 17<sup>th</sup> century

Nov. 20: The Fronde

Readings: Excerpt from Memoirs of the Grande Mademoiselle

Excerpt from Madame de Lafayette, *The Princess of Clèves*

Week 12

Nov. 25: **Paper due - No Class**

Nov. 27: Thanksgiving

**\*Paper Due Pierre Corneille, *Le Cid and Cinna* Nov. 25\***

Week 13

Dec. 2: Louis XIV and Versailles

Dec. 4: Resistance

Readings: Portraits of Louis XIV

Jean-Baptiste Colbert, "On Trade"

Description of Versailles Etiquette

Week 14

Dec. 9: End of the Reign and into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

**Final Exam Due Date: TBA**