Spring 2010  
Thurs 2-4pm  
Location: CGIS S450 (located at 1730 Cambridge St)  
Course website: http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k16917

**History 81a**  
**History in early modern Europe**  
Research seminar

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This course will examine the cultural significance of history as a discipline and as a practice in Europe from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. We will consider the nature and purposes of different kinds of historical writing and the ways in which histories were read and used. Histories were written to justify disciplines, states and religions; at the same time historical research prompted the development of new scholarly methods and subdisciplines. Students in the course will be guided through the stages of writing a major research paper.

**Requirements:**
- regular attendance; active and informed participation, including one or more brief presentations on the assigned reading and various written exercises (25%)  
- short paper (4-6pp) due (Week V) (15%)  
- oral presentation on the final paper in Week XIII (20%)  
- final research paper (20-25pp) on a topic of student's choice (that meets with the instructors' approval) due at the end of reading period. (40%)

**Books available for purchase at the COOP** (prices listed here are from Amazon). All purchases are optional--these books are also on reserve at Lamont:
Lloyd Kramer and Sarah Maza ed., *A Companion to Western Historical Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006); 978-1405149617; $46.95  
Jose de Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, tr. Frances López-Morillas (Duke University Press, 2002); 978-0822328452; $26.95  
Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, abridged ed (Penguin, 2001); 978-0140437645; $10.88
Starred items will be made available in class. “Further readings” are strictly optional, offered as suggestions for investigating a paper topic related to that week’s reading.

**Syllabus**

**Week I (Jan 28): introduction**
course topics and goals; overview of the historiography in the field; in-class reading of examples

**Week II (Feb 4): Humanism I—history and philology**
**Reading:**
- *Rice, Foundations of Early Modern Europe* (2nd ed 1994), ch. 3 (on humanism)
- Peter Burke, "A survey of the popularity of ancient historians 1450-1700," *History and Theory* 5:2 (1966), 135-52 (skim; on-line through HOLLIS)
- Lorenzo Valla, *Treatise on the Donation of Constantine* (from ms of 1451), entire
- *Peter Burke, The Renaissance Sense of the Past*, pp. 21-69

For further reading: special issue on Valla in *Journal of the History of Ideas* (1996); Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics* (1990)

**Week III (Feb 11): HOUGHTON LIBRARY methods of doing history—material bibliography**

**Reading:**
- Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, "How Gabriel Harvey Read his Livy;" *Past and Present* (1990), pp. 30-78 (on-line through HOLLIS)

**Week IV (Feb 18): library resources (with Hannah Callaway and Fred Burchsted)**
**Assignment for class:** Hollis quiz
SHORT PAPER DUE FRIDAY FEB 19 AT 5PM (choice of topics to be circulated)

**Week V (Feb 25): Humanism II—history and rhetoric**
**Assignment:** meet with one of your instructors this week about final paper topics
**Reading:** Guicciardini, *History of Italy* (composed 1537-40, left in ms; this translation in 1969), bk 1 to p. 43 (skim the rest), bk 4, pp. 140-51 (on church claims to secular power), bk 8 (speech of Trevisan), bk 18 (sack of Rome)
*Peter Burke, The Renaissance Sense of the Past, pp. 105-30.
**For further reading:** Felix Gilbert, Guicciardini and Machiavelli; Mark Phillips, “Machiavelli, Guicciardini and the tradition of vernacular historiography,” AHR 84 (1979), pp. 86-105; Mark Phillips, "Disenchanted witness: participation and alienation in Florentine historiography," JHI (1983), on Florentine chroniclers before Guicciardini

Week VI (March 4): exemplar history and imperial mythography
Assignment: meet with the other of your instructors this week about final paper topics
Reading: *Jean Bodin, Method for the easy comprehension of history (1566; this translation 1945), pp. 1-56 [skim ch. 2], 63-65 [Plutarch], 73-75 [Guicciardini], 85-105 (on method), 291-303 (refutation of four monarchies)
  Grafton, What was History? ad indicem “Bodin”
  *Montaigne, "Defense of Seneca and Plutarch," Essays (written 1580-95) II, 32 and II:10, pp. 303-6 on historians.
  George Nadel, "The Philosophy of History before Historicism," History and Theory (1964) (on-line through HOLLIS)
  *Burke, The Renaissance Sense of the Past, pp. 77-104.

Week VII (March 11): confessional histories
Assignment due by class time: paper prospectus presenting your ideas for the final paper, including the primary source you plan to analyze and the questions you plan to investigate (1-2pp)
Reading: Versions of History, pp. 311-45 (Luther, Bucer, Sleidan, Calvin, Foxe, Clarendon). Choose one of these authors and browse their works as available on EEBO –note the size of the original, the number of editions, the presentation and nature of the contents.
  *Brad Gregory, Salvation at Stake (1999) on martyrologies: “the midcentury martyrologies” (pp. 165-87), “Protestant martyrologies in national contexts” (pp. 187-96).
**For further reading:** on Catholic historiography: Simon Ditchfield, Liturgy, sanctity and history in Tridentine Italy (1995); Paolo Sarpi, History of the Interdict in Brendan Dooley ed. and tr., Italy in the Baroque, pp. 148-83.

SPRING BREAK
Week VIII (March 25): the impact of contact with other cultures
Assignment due by class time: bibliography of primary and secondary sources for your final paper
Reading: Jose de Acosta, Natural and Moral History of the Indies (1590; this translation 2002), book I, chs. 1-7, 13, 19-25; II, chs 1-3; III, ch. 1; V, chs. 1-6; VI, chs. 1-4, 7-8; skim book VII, ch. 1.

*Peter Burke, “America and the Rewriting of World History,” in America in European Consciousness 1493-1750 (1995), pp. 33-51


Week IX (April 1): new kinds of historical evidence, new audiences
Assignment due by class time: sample close reading for your primary source (2-3pp)


Week X (April 8): Enlightenment (I)—Edward Gibbon
Assignment due by class time: report on the context of your primary source (e.g. comparison with 2-3 other works, relation of your source to political, social, intellectual context)
Reading: Edward Gibbon, Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire (1776) (available in multiple copies in the library; pp #s from Womersley unabridged ed). Book 1, ch 1 entire, ch 15, esp beginning and end (I, 446-54 and 507-513). Book 3, ch 28 end (II, pp. 96-97), ch 31 end (II, pp. 231-34), ch 34 near end (II, pp. 312-4), and general observations (II, 508-16). Book 4, ch 40 (II, 585-86). Book 6, ch. 71 (pp. 1063-85).

John Clive, Not by Fact Alone, pp. 25-33, 48-65

For further reading: J.G.A. Pocock, Barbarism and Religion (1999), on Gibbon; Montesquieu and his Considerations on the causes of the greatness of the Romans and their decline; Voltaire, History of Charles XII, King of Sweden or The Age of Louis XIV
Week XI (April 15): Enlightenment (II)—Condorcet and conjectural history (led by Hannah Callaway)
Assignment due by class time: statement of your thesis and your historiographical position
Reading: Condorcet, *Sketch for a historical picture of the progress of the human mind* (1795), selections, and other readings TBA

Weeks XII-XIII (April 22-29): student presentations on their papers in progress

FULL DRAFTS of final papers DUE FRIDAY APRIL 30 AT NOON

FINAL PAPERS DUE THURSDAY MAY 6, 2008 AT NOON; NO FINAL EXAM
Further suggestions for final paper topics:

In addition to the authors and extra readings mentioned in the syllabus, we offer some other primary and secondary sources to consider. You may focus on a particular author and/or work or on a theme (as long as the topic is articulated as to be manageable!). If you have proficiency in one or more foreign languages, please speak to the instructors about topics that would make best use of your skills.

**Biographies**

of religious figures: Melanchthon, *Life of Luther* (in English, 1561 as *A famous and godly history*); Theodore Beza, *Life of Calvin*


**History in poetic form:**

Samuel Daniel (1562-1619), wrote English history in verse
Pierre de Ronsard, *La Franciade* (requires French)

**Histories of disciplines—historiographical leads:**


**Methods of history:**

See sources cited in Grafton, *What was history?*
Degory Wheare (1573-1647), *The method and order of reading histories*
Thomas Blundeville, *True order and method of wryting and reading histories*

**Universal/biblical history**

Examine how a biblical episode was interpreted by an early modern author: e.g. Moses, Noah, the size of the Temple, the Ark. Authors include Athanasius Kircher, Isaac Newton among others. Bossuet, *Discourse on universal history*

**History in national contexts**

Gaspar Contareno, *The commonwealth and government of Venice*
Orest Ranum, *Artisans of Glory* (on French royal historiographers--would require French)
John Selden, *A History of Tithes*
John Twyne, *De rebus angliis et albionicis et britannicis*, available in unpublished English tr’n

**Enlightenment:**

Giambattista Vico, *The New Science* –difficult!
Jena-Jacques Rousseau, *First and Second Discourses*
David Hume, *History of England*