Historical Tripos, Part I, Paper 16

Early Modern Europe, 1450-1760

1. Perceptions of Self and Society
2. Demographic, Household and Lifecycle Structures
3. Social Structures
4. The Politics of Communities
5. Reformations
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16. Encountering Non-Christian Worlds
17. Muslim and Habsburg Spain
18. The Renaissance
19. The Dutch Golden Age
20. Ottoman Urban and Imperial Culture
21. The Enlightenment

Revised September 2017

Dr William O’Reilly
The following booklists suggest some approaches to key issues in Early Modern European History on which questions may be set in Tripos. Supervisors will often propose their own emphases and alternative readings.

Three textbooks which are particularly useful are:

  A very good textbook to buy at the start of the course and keep reading alongside supervisions to develop a fuller picture of the period.
  This book is lively and broad in vision – a very good textbook to buy at the start of the course and keep reading alongside supervisions to develop a fuller picture of the period.
  An up-to-date narrative that is readable and introduces you to the key issues of the period.

Additional works which will help you to get a sense of the period and may be read in preparation include:


Of particular use for revision, the following collections include thematic chapters, written by leading scholars in the field


This paper’s main aim is to overcome distinctions between political, social, economic or cultural history and help you to understand early modern society from as many perspectives as possible. The reading should enable you to get a grasp of broad questions which we have outlined in the pathways and to illuminate their significance and argue with them through evidence from two or three more detailed case-studies. This will give you independence to get away from stale debates. We hope you will find this stimulating. If you find yourself in need of general chronologies for particular countries we suggest you consult any of the following:


Your supervisor will be able to direct you to textbooks and outlines; we especially recommend the Cambridge University Press Series *New Approaches to European History*, which has a great range of themes for the early modern period, from gender to the nobility, and ritual to the Habsburgs; and are all reasonably priced so that you or your College Library might consider buying some.

Please tell your lecturers or your supervisor any suggestions you want to make.

William O'Reilly

September 2017
1. Perceptions of Self and Society

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Castiglione, B., *The Book of the Courtier*
Della Casa, G., *Galateo*, chs 1-3, 5, 7, 10-13, 20-24, 28-30

Groebner, V., *Who are you? Identification, Deception, and Surveillance in Early Modern Europe* (2007), chs 1, 3, 4
Wintle, M., *The Image of Europe* (2009), esp. chs 1, 2, 5

ii. Approaching Early Modern Lives


iii. Modes of Self-fashioning

Biagioli, M., *Galileo Courtier: The Practice of Science in the Culture of Absolutism* (1993), ch. 1
Nummedal, Tara, *Alchemy and Authority in the Holy Roman Empire* (2007), esp. ch.2
Rublack, Ulinka, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in the Renaissance* (2010), esp. chs 2, 6
Scribner, R. W., *For the Sake of the Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (1981), ch. 2
Villari, R., ed., *Baroque Personae* (1995), chs 8, 9
White, C., and Buvelot, Q., eds, *Rembrandt by Himself* (1999), 1-74
This essay is designed to help you engage with the people you are going to write about. If you concentrate on sections i and ii, read a source and note which reflections seem strange or familiar, imagine the worlds early modern people inhabited, assess the importance of religion on their lives, or of kinship or any other aspect which comes out of the material. If you concentrate on sections i and iii, reflect on questions such as: How have historians described early modern views of the ‘self’? Does diary-keeping, for example, indicate that the period saw a birth of the ‘individual’? Or do we witness a process of increasingly elaborate ‘self-fashioning’?

Account for the early modern interest in people who pretended to be what they were not. (2016)

Did different ‘emotional communities’ in early modern Europe shape different ideas of the self? (2015)

Does conduct literature tell us anything about early modern identity?

Was the self discovered in the early modern period?
2. Demographic, Household and Lifecycle Structures

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Le Roy Ladurie, E., *The Peasants of Languedoc* (1979), chs 1, 2

ii. Plague

Calvi, G., *Histories of a Plague Year: The Social and the Imaginary in Baroque Florence* (1993), esp. chs 1, 4

iii. Life-Cycles

Muir, E., *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (1997), chs 1, 2
Wiesner, M., *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (1993), ch. 2

iv. Family and Household

Klapisch-Zuber, C., *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (1985), esp. chs 2, 6, 7, 9, 11
If you focus on sections i, ii and iii, get a sense of key demographic patterns in the period, birth and death rates, how rich and poor, men and women were diversely affected by them, how these patterns shaped social structures and how social structures in turn shaped them. Which mentalities were engendered by relatively high infant death rates? How important was ‘youth’ as part of the male or female life-cycle? How was plague explained and what was its impact? If you concentrate on sections i and iv, discuss the importance of the nuclear family, wider kinship and ‘households’ for the social and economic networks early modern people formed. Get a sense of arguments about the changing nature of family ties during the period, and of how notions of social order came to rest on a vision of the ‘holy household’ (see also Essay 12).

Did fathers rule in the early modern period? (2016)

‘The household was the most important unit of early modern society.’ Discuss. (2015)

‘Experience of the life cycle remained essentially unchanged in Europe during the period 1450 to 1760.’ Discuss.

‘The conjugal household was the smallest political building block of early modern rule.’ Discuss.

Were early modern families bound by love?
3. Social Structures

i. Primary Material and General Reading

For visual representations of different social groups, see:
Moxey, K., Peasants, Warriors and Wives: Popular Imagery in the Reformation (1989), chs 1, 3, 5
Schama, S., The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age (1987), chs 1, 5

Literary accounts:
Lazarillo de Tormes (first published 1554; 2003 edn): a humorous Spanish take on what makes a ‘gentleman’
Molière, Bourgeois Gentleman (first performed 1670; several English editions): a comic play about social climbing in seventeenth-century France

Herzog, Tamar, Defining Nations. Immigrants and Citizens in Early Modern Spain (2003), esp. chs 2, 4, 6-8

ii. Elites

Amelang, J., Honored Citizens of Barcelona: Patrician Culture and Class Relations, 1490-1714 (1986)
Crummey, R. O., Aristocrats and Servitors: The Boyar Elite in Russia, 1613-89 (1983)
Dewald, J., Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture: France 1570-1715 (1993), chs 1, 5
Doyle, William, Aristocracy and its enemies in the age of revolution (2009), chs 1, 2.
Swann, Julian, Provincial Power and Absolute Monarchy. The Estates General of Burgundy, 1661-1790 (2003), esp. chs 6-8
Zmora, H., Monarchy, Aristocracy and the State in Europe, (2001), Intro. chs 1, 2, 3, 5.

iii. Peasants, Artisans

Goubert, P., The French Peasantry in the Seventeenth Century (1986), chs 1, 3, 6, 9, 12
MacIntosh, T., Urban Decline in Early Modern Germany (1997), ch. 3
Poska, A. M., Women and authority in early modern Spain (2005), esp. chs 1, 2, 3, 6.
Scott, T., ed., The Peasantries of Early Modern Europe, 1998, Intro, chs 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 12

iv. Poverty and the Poor

Bercé, Yves Marie, History of peasant revolts: the social origins of rebellion in early modern France (1990), chs 1-3
Grell, O., Cunningham, A., eds, *Health Care and Poor Relief in Protestant Europe 1500-1700* (1997), chs 2, 3, 4, 6, 8
Jütte, R., *Poverty and Deviance in Early Modern Europe* (1994), chs 2, 3, 6, 7
Pullan, B., ‘Support and redeem: charity and poor relief in Italian cities from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century’, *Continuity & Change* 3 (1988)

Early modern European society was highly polarised: this essay will help you to answer questions on how social hierarchies were legitimised and sustained, but also undermined by social mobility. Changes and differences in among the same social group can be observed through comparing different nobilities and other elites within Europe (section ii). Section iii shows how the distinction between peasants and artisans could become increasingly blurred in these centuries. (See also Essay 9, section ii) It allows you to assess to what extent ‘peasants’ and ‘artisans’ had different mental outlooks and social practices. Section iv is about life in a society of need: what was poverty like and how did responses to and definitions of the ‘poor’ problem change?

(a) How was artisanal life structured? (2016)
(b) What strategies of self-presentation did artisans employ? (2016)

How were poverty and wealth moralized during the early modern period? (2015)

To what extent was social mobility possible in this period?

Did the status of nobles and/or peasants change in this period?

How did artisans perceive their place in the social fabric of early modern Europe?

Discuss the relationship between identity and social status in this period.

How closely entwined were material wealth and circumstances on the one hand, and social status on the other, in early modern Europe?
4. The Politics of Communities

i. Primary Material and General Reading


Blockmans, W., et al., eds, Empowering Interactions. Political Cultures and the Emergence of the State in Europe 1300-1900 (2009), esp. introduction, ch. 22 on approaches to state-building, and individual chs covering a wide range of European examples.

Brewer, John and Susan Staves (eds), Early modern conceptions of property (1996), esp. Part III

Burke, Peter, Culture and Belief in Europe 1450-1600. An Anthology of Sources (1990), section 2 ‘Civic Pride and Patronage: Venice and Antwerp’


Blockmans, W., et al., eds, Empowering Interactions. Political Cultures and the Emergence of the State in Europe 1300-1900 (2009), esp. introduction, ch. 22 on approaches to state-building, and individual chs covering a wide range of European examples.

ii. Politics in the City

Amelang, J., Honored Citizens of Barcelona: Patrician Culture and Class Relations (1986), chs 2, 3, 8


Burke, P., ‘The Virgin of the Carmine’ in idem., Historical Anthropology of Early-Modern Italy (1987)


Friedrichs, C., Urban Society in an Age of War: Nördlingen 1580-1720 (1979), chs 1, 6, 7.


Haliczer, S., The Comuneros of Castile. The Forging of a Revolution 1475-1521 (1981), chs 1, 6-8


iii. Politics in the Country


Cohen, T. ‘Communal Thought, Communal Words, and Communal Rites in a Sixteenth-Century Village Rebellion’ in Nicholas Eckstein and Nicholas Terpstra (eds), Sociability and its Discontents: Civil Society, Social Capital, and their Alternatives in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe (Brepols, 2010).

MacHardy, K. J., *War, Religion and Court Patronage in Habsburg Austria* (2003), esp. chs 1, 2

To the vast majority of early modern people, ‘nationhood’ was an alien concept. Territories were fragmented, political customs varied on a local basis. This essay aims to locate political identity during this period, focusing on towns and villages (sections ii and iii). Investigate the traditions of political autonomy which existed within these communities and sub-communities, and consider how they responded to the challenge of expanding states.

*When and in what circumstances were minorities tolerated in the early modern period?* (2016)

‘The community was more powerful than the state in imposing social discipline during this period.’ Discuss. (2015)

*To what extent did the strength of regional traditions contribute to the weakness of early modern monarchies? Answer with reference to one or more countries.*

*How was order maintained in rural communities?*

*What forms of political engagement were open to ordinary people in the early modern period?*

*By what means other than violent revolt could early modern peasants attempt to achieve their political objectives?*

*By what means, and how successfully, could the mass of the early modern population air their grievances against their rulers?*
5. Reformations

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Baylor, Michael ed., *The Radical Reformation* (1991), To the Assembly of the Common Peasantry
Englander, D., et al., ed., *Culture and Belief in Europe 1450-1600* (1990), pt III, docs 3, 6, 7

Roper, Lyndal, *Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet* (2016), esp. intro. and chs 1, 4, 5, 8, 17
Rublack, Ulinka (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Protestant Reformations* (2017); some chs online – login via University of Cambridge

ii. Diversifying faith: Reformations as movement

Brady, Thomas A., *German Histories in the Age of Reformations, 1400-1650* (2009), esp. 6-12.
Hsia ed., *A Companion to the Reformation World* (2004); ch. 3 on the radical reformation
Rublack, U., *Reformation Europe* (2005), 1, 2, 4

iii. Discipline, piety, and the creation of confessions

Boyd Brown, C., *Singing the Gospel*; *Lutheran Hymns and the Success of the Reformation* (2005), chs 5, 6
Murdock, G., *Beyond Calvin: The intellectual, political and cultural world of Europe’s reformed churches* (2004), chs 4-5
Richardson, C., T. Hamling, D. Gaimster (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Abingdon, 2016); ch. 5
This period is renowned as the age of Luther, Calvin, the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, events which had dramatic and far-reaching implications for European society. Section ii focuses on the initial impact of the reformation movements. Who were the authors of the seismic changes that swept through Europe? To what extent did ordinary people participate in the process of reform, embracing, resisting or negotiating the demands for religious uniformity? Section iii takes a longer-term look at the consequences of the Reformations. Are we right to associate the religious changes that took place with secular moves towards enforcing social discipline? How did new communities of belief take form?

(a) Is the concept of charismatic leadership more useful in explaining Lutheranism than Calvinism?
(b) ‘Rationalisation was a key effect of Protestantism.’ Discuss. (2016)

Examine the differences in approach to music during the Reformation in two or more areas of Europe. (2016)

(a) Why was music so controversial in the Reformations?
(b) Can cities any longer be regarded as the key to explaining the success of the Reformations? (2015)

To what extent did Lutheranism change early modern church, politics and society? (2014)

‘Calvinism was an exclusive faith and a faith of exclusion.’ Discuss. (2014)

Is Martin Luther best seen as a political helpmate of the German princes?

Why did Luther’s reform movement gain such broad support in the Holy Roman Empire?

‘Calvin’s tight control of morals in Geneva was impossible to replicate elsewhere.’ Discuss.

Did state interest or theology play the greater part in the success of the German reformation?
6. Catholic Renewal

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Englander, D., et al., ed., *Culture and Belief in Europe 1450-1600* (1990), pt IV, docs 4, 5, 6
Ignatius Loyola, *Personal Writings* (1996), including his spiritual diary and *The Spiritual Exercises*
Decrees of the Council of Trent: https://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent.html

A. Bamji et al. (eds) *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation* (2013)

ii. Catholic reform

A. Bamji et al. (eds) *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation* (2013), esp. chs 1, 2, 5, 6
Kamen, Henry, *The Spanish Inquisition* (1998), esp. chs 1, 3, 4, 7
Louthan, H., *Converting Bohemia. Force and Persuasion in the Catholic Reformation* (2009), intro. and esp. chs 5-9, conclusion
Michelson, M. *The Pulpit and the Press in Reformation Italy* (2013), intro and chs 3-4

iii. Catholic piety and devotional identities

A. Bamji et al. (eds) *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation* (2013), esp. chs 2, 4, 9, 15, 18, 21
Fulton, E., *Catholic Belief and Survival in Late Sixteenth-Century Vienna* (2007), esp. ch. 6
Pollmann, J., *Catholic identity and the revolt of the Netherlands, 1520-1635* (2011), esp. intro., chs 1 and 6
Richardson, C., T. Hamling, D. Gaimster (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Abingdon, 2016); chs 19 and 20
van Whye, C. ed., *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe* (2008), 7, 8, 10

iv. Global Catholicism

Alberts, T, *Conflict and Conversion: Catholicism in Southeast Asia, 1500-1700* (2013), chs 1, 4, 5, 7
Clossey, L. *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (2008), esp. chs 1-4
Bamji, A. et al. (eds) *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation* (2013), esp. chs 7, 8, 23
During the early modern period, the ‘universal catholic church’ was shattered by the Protestant Reformations. At the same time, Catholicism became one of Europe’s most significant exports, as missionary orders conveyed the old faith to the furthest reaches of the world. This reading list encourages you to explore how Catholic identities were disrupted and energized in a time of intense change. Section ii focuses on attempts by secular and religious authorities to reform and purify the church in head and members. Section iii investigates how Catholic communities embraced and challenged the age of reform. Finally, section iii invites you to analyse the effect of Catholic renewal as a global phenomenon.

(a) ‘The renewal of Catholicism was rooted in the landscape.’ Discuss.
(b) ‘By the end of the seventeenth century, Catholicism was a truly global religion.’ Discuss.

(a) Was the Catholic Reformation more successful in urban or rural areas?
(b) ‘The triumph of global Catholicism rested on the creation of a distinctive Catholic aesthetic.’ Discuss. (2015)

(a) How far did early modern Catholicism’s global missionary endeavours shape its initiatives for reform and renewal in Europe?
(b) ‘The counter-reformation could not have succeeded without the support of political elites.’ Discuss. (2014)

‘Rome, not the regions, directed the Catholic Reformation.’ Discuss.

How did religious orders act as a ‘globalising’ force after the Council of Trent?

How important was locality in defining the experience of the Counter-Reformation?
7. Practices of Government

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Machiavelli, N., *The Prince* (many English editions available)

Ertman, T., *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (1997); chs 1, 5, 6, 7
Snyder, J. R., *Dissimulation and the culture of secrecy in early modern Europe* (2009), esp. chs 3, 4
Spellman, W., *European Political Thought, 1600–1700* (1998), chs 1, 2, 5
Te Brake, W., *Shaping History: Ordinary People in European Politics, 1500-1700* (1998), chs 1, 5

ii. Structures of Government

Elliott, J.H., *Spain, Europe and the Wider World 1500-1800* (2009), chs 1, 5, 9
Greengrass, M., ed., *Conquest and coalescence: the shaping of the state in early modern Europe* (1991), chs 1-3, 8-10
Shlapentokh, D., *Societal breakdown and the rise of the early modern state in Europe* (2009), chs 1, 2, 5, 6
Wilson, P., *Absolutism in Central Europe* (2000), intro, chs 1, 3
Wilson, P., *The Holy Roman Empire 1495-1806* (1999), chs 2-3

iii. Practices of Government

*Focus on France*
Burke, P., *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (1992), chs 1, 5, 9, 11
Crawford, Catherine, *Perilous performances: gender and regency in early modern France* (2004), chs 3, 4, 6, 8, 9
Darryl Dee, *Expasion and Crisis in Louis XIV’s France* (2009), 1, 2, 4, 6-8
Soll, Jacob, *The Information Master: Jean-Baptiste Colbert’s secret state intelligence system* (2009), esp. ch.1,
‘Between public and secret spheres’ and ch. 6, ‘Managing the system’.
Comparative Perspectives


Duchhardt, H., et al., *European Monarchy: Its Evolution and Practice from Roman Antiquity to Modern Times* (1992); chs by Flier (Ivan the Terrible) and Bryant (Henri II) on royal ceremonial


Kirshner, J., ed., *The Origins of the State in Italy, 1300-1600* (1996), articles by Chittolini and Guarini


Raef, M., *The well-ordered police state: social and institutional change through law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600-1800* (1983), pts II, III


Historians have often suggested that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed ‘the emergence of the modern state’. In particular, France has been identified as a laboratory for state-formation. Section ii aims to provide you with a more subtle appreciation of the varieties and complexities of government across early modern Europe. Associated with the growth of the state and centralization is the ‘rise of absolutism’. Section iii encourages you to explore different styles of monarchy and other forms of government, and to examine the strategies and policies of early modern rulers. Here you may decide to focus on the case of France but you should try to establish some comparisons with other regions of Europe. Was absolutism ‘just a myth’?, or did the ‘myth of absolutism’ have an important part to play in the practice of government?

How important were questions of language to state formation in this period? (2016)

How did early modern states attempt to impose their authority on rural areas? (2016)

The nobility played the key role in the formation of the seventeenth-century state.’ Discuss. (2015)

In what ways did the court contribute to the power of the monarch? (2015)

‘Whatever turbulence might have arisen from religious fervour, burgeoning states always trumped the churches in early modern Europe.’ Discuss. (2014)

Has the concept of ‘absolute monarchy’ outlived its utility? (2014)

‘The Spanish Empire can only be understood along with its Italian and Netherlandish possessions.’ Discuss. (2014)

‘A powerful nobility was a precondition of, not a limitation on, a powerful monarchy.’ Discuss with reference to one or more monarchies. (2014)

Identify the principal characteristics of the ‘new monarchies’ of sixteenth-century Europe.

Consider the role of the court in the early modern state.

Did early modern governments have social policies?
8. Conflict and Revolt

i. Primary Material and General Reading

‘A Defence of Liberty against Tyrants’, in Hillerbrand, H., ed., The Protestant Reformation (1968), doc. 18

Bonney, R., Society and Government in France under Richelieu and Mazarin, 1626-61 (1988), sections 4 and 5
Bruun, M. and David Cowling (eds), Commonplace culture in western Europe in the early modern period: Reformation, Counter-Reformation and Revolt (2011)
Kaplan, Benjamin J., Divided by Faith. Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early-Modern Europe (2007), esp. chs 2-4, 9-12
Schwartz, Stuart, All can be saved: Religious tolerance and salvation in the Iberian Atlantic world (2008)
Terpstra, N., Religious refugees in the early modern world: an alternative history of the Reformation (2015), esp. chs 1, 3
Zagorin, P., Rebels and Rulers, 1500-1660, 2 vols (1982)
Zagorin, P., How the Idea of Religious Toleration came to the West (2003), esp. chs 3, 5, 8

ii. Revolts and Protests

The German Peasants’ War
Scribner, B., & Benecke, G., eds, The German Peasant War of 1525 (1975)

Revolts against Castile
Burke, P., ‘The Virgin of the Carmine and the revolt of Masaniello’ in his Historical Anthropology of Early-Modern Italy (1987)
Elliott, J.H., The Revolt of the Catalans (1963)
Espinosa, A. The Empire of the Cities: Emperor Charles V, the Comunero Revolt, and the Transformation of the Spanish System (Leiden: Brill, 2009), ch. 1.
Halicyzer, S., The Comuneros of Castile: the forging of a revolution 1475-1521 (1981), chs 1, 6-8

French Revolts
Beik, W., Urban Protest in Seventeenth Century France (1997)
Bercé, Y.-M., History of Peasant Revolts: the social origins of rebellion in early modern France (1990)
Kettering, S., ‘Patronage and Politics during the Fronde’, French Historical Studies (1985-86)
Knecht, R., The Fronde (1975)
Le Roy Ladurie, E., Carnival in Romans (1981)
iii. Religious Conflict

French Wars of Religion
Benedict, P., Rouen during the Wars of Religion (1981)
Davis, N., ‘The Rites of Violence’, Past and Present (1973), repr. in her Society and Culture in Early Modern France (1975), ch. 6. See the special issue of Past and Present (2012) 214 (suppl 7) for historical responses
Diefendorf, B., Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Hugenots in Sixteenth Century Paris (1991), chs 1-3, 6
Gould, Kevin, Catholic Activism in South-West France 1540-1570 (2006), esp. chs 1, 2, 10
Hamilton, T., Pierre de L’Estoile and his World in the Wars of Religion (2017), intro., ch. 5
Le Roy Ladurie, E., Carnival in Romans (1979)
Luria, K., Sacred Boundaries: Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early-Modern France (2005)
Roberts, Penny. Peace and Authority during the French Religious Wars, c. 1560-1600 (2013)
Scott Dixon, C., Dagmar Freist, Mark Greengrass (eds), Living with religious diversity in early-modern Europe (2009)

Dutch Revolt
Crew, P., Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm in the Netherlands, 1544-69 (1978)
Duke, A., Reformation and Revolt in the Low Countries (1990), esp. chs 8, 11
Gelder, M. van, ed., The Dutch revolt (1993)
Israel, J., The Dutch Republic: its rise, greatness, and fall, 1477-1806 (1995), part I, chs 5-10
Parker, G., The Dutch Revolt (1977)
Rowen, H., The Low Countries in Early Modern Times (1972), e.g. docs 6, 9 and 20
Schama, S., Embarrassment of Riches (1987), ch. 2
Stensland, Monica. Habsburg Communication in the Dutch Revolt (2012)

What caused the conflicts and revolts which regularly punctuated early modern life? If you choose to focus on section ii, think about the interests and allegiances which united and divided social groups. Section iii concerns the violent aftermath of the Reforms and considers the ways in which religious rituals and ideas figured in early modern conflicts. Whichever examples you decide to concentrate on, try to get a more general sense of the social, religious and political tensions which are revealed through violent conflicts. For example, can the recurrent rebellions that characterized some regions be seen as the consequence of state-building?

By what strategies and practices did religious communities in early modern Europe strive to maintain their coherence and identity in exile? (2016)

Why did the French monarchy find it so difficult to put an end to the Wars of Religion? (2016)
‘No matter how hard you look, you will never find genuine religious toleration during this period.’ Discuss. (2015)

‘By 1650, the notion of European Christendom had lost its meaning.’ Discuss. (2015)

Does the concept of ‘wars of religion’ have any analytical coherence in this period? (2014)

‘Politics cloaked by religion.’ Are the French Wars of Religion misnamed?

Why did Philip II not succeed in suppressing the Dutch Revolt?

In what ways did inflation and demographic growth fuel social unrest among the European peasantry in the sixteenth century?

Do the revolts against Castile reveal the weakness of the Habsburg monarchy or the strength of regional political traditions?

Why did the Spanish monarchy face so many rebellions in the 1640s?

Class conflict is conspicuously absent as a factor in early modern revolts.’ Discuss.

How did early modern rebels justify resistance to authority?
9. War

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Benecke, G., ed., *Germany in the Thirty Years' War* (1978), e.g. docs 4, 9, 39 and 59
Helfferich, Tryntje (ed.), *The Thirty Years War. A Documentary History* (2009)

Burckhardt, J., *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, (first published, 1860); section entitled ‘War as a Work of Art’
Carroll, Stuart, *Blood and Violence in early Modern France* (2006), esp. chs 8-10
Glete, J., *War and the State in Early Modern Europe: Spain, the Dutch Republic and Sweden as Fiscal-Military States, 1500-1660* (2002), chs 1-2, 6
Hale, J., *War and Society in Renaissance Europe* 1450-1620 (1985)
Raab, Ted, *The Artist and the Warrior* (Yale, 2011),
Tatlock, L., *Enduring loss in early modern Germany* (2010), chs 1, 3, 7

ii. Conduct of War

Duffy, C., *Siege Warfare vol. 2. The Fortress in the Age of Vauban and Frederick the Great, 1660-1789* (1985), chs 1-3, 7-8
Mallett, M., *Mercenaries and their Masters* (1974); chs 6-8
Mallett, M., ‘The soldier in Germanic graphic art of the Renaissance’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17 (1986)
Pepper, S., and Adams, N., *Firearms & Fortifications: military architecture and siege warfare in sixteenth-century Siena* (1986), chs 1, 8

iii. Military Organisation

Asch, R., *The Thirty Years War. The Holy Roman Empire and Europe, 1618-48* (1997), ch. 6
Rowlands, G., *The Dynastic State and the Army under Louis XIV. Royal Service and Private Interest, 1661 to 1701* (2002); introduction and conclusion
Stevens, C., *Soldiers on the steppe: army reform and social change in early modern Russia* (1995), chs 1-4
Wilson, P., *German Armies, War and German Politics, 1648-1806* (1998), chs 2, 5
iv. Navies

Bruijn, J., ‘States and their navies from the late sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth centuries’ in Contamine, P., ed., War and Competition between States (2000)
Harding, R., Seapower and Naval Warfare, 1650-1830 (1999)

v. Diplomacy and International Relations

Mattingly, G., Renaissance Diplomacy (1955), pts III, IV
Osborne, T., Dynasty and Diplomacy at the Court of Savoy. Political Culture and the Thirty Years' War (2002)

vi. Thirty Years’ War

Asbach, O., and P. Schröder (eds), The Ashgate research companion to the Thirty Years’ War (2014), Introduction and Part I
Asch, R., The Thirty Years War (1997), intro., ch. 1, conclusion
Benecke, G., ed., Germany in the Thirty Years' War (1978), e.g. docs 4, 9, 39 and 59
Evans, R.J.W., The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550-1700 (1979), chs 1-3
Langer, H., The Thirty Years’ War (first published, 1978; reprinted, 1990); extraordinarily rich in visual records
MacHardy, K., War, Religion and Court Patronage in Habsburg Austria (2002)
Medick, H., Experiencing the Thirty Years War. A Brief History with Documents (2013)
Parker, G., The Thirty Years’ War (1987), esp. ch. 6
Steinberg, S.H., The Thirty Years’ War and the Conflict for European Hegemony, 1600–1660 (1967)
Theibault, J., German Villages in Crisis Rural Life in Hesse-Kassel and the Thirty Years War, 1580-1720, (1995), intro.
Whaley, J., Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, 2 vols, (2011), esp. vol.1, ch. 7.
Wilson, P., Europe’s tragedy: a history of the Thirty Years War (2009)

As states developed their administrative and military capabilities, the potential for large-scale war grew ever greater. If you concentrate on sections ii-iv, consider how these developments influenced the nature and experience of war. Do you find the concept of a ‘military revolution’ a useful one? Think about the ways in which military expansion affected relations between different states (section v). In investigating the broader social implications of war, you may choose to use the Thirty Years War as a case-study (section vi).

‘Early modern wars were won not on the battlefield but by the bureaucracy.’ Discuss. (2016)

‘War revealed the inadequacy of the state.’ (2015)
To what extent is the 'Thirty Years War' merely a historiographical concept? (2014)

In what ways was the relationship between Germany and east-central Europe changed by the Thirty Years' War?

How did early modern rulers legitimate their foreign policy?

How decisive was the part played by technology in early modern warfare?
10. Economic Structures and Strategies

i. Primary Sources and General Reading

Mandeville, Bernard, *The Fable of the Bees; or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits* (1795)
Smith, Adam, *An Inquiry into the Wealth of Nations* (1776)

Braudel, F., *The perspective of the world* (1985), chs 2-4

ii. Changing Economies - Diversification, Expansion, Decline

Ogilvie, S., ed., *Germany: a new social and economic history, 1630-1800* (1996); chs 1-4, 9
Tracy, James, *The political economy of merchant empires* (1997)
iii. Cultures of Consumption


Burke, Peter, ‘Conspicuous consumption in 17th-century Italy’, in id., The Historical Anthropology of early modern Italy (Cambridge, 1987).


Burke, Peter, Venice and Amsterdam (1994), chs 4, 5, 7, 8


Goldgar, Anne, Tulipmania: Money, Honor and Knowledge in the Dutch Golden Age (2007)


Goldthwaite, Richard A., Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy 1300-1600 (1993)


Le Roy Ladurie, E., The Peasants of Languedoc (1979), chs 3, 4


Sarti, R., Europe at Home - Family and Material Culture 1500-1800 (2002), ch.5.


de Vries, Jan, The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behavior and the Household 1650 to the Present (2008)

Welch, E., Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer cultures in Italy, 1400-1600 (Yale, 2005), esp. 1-3, 9, 10.

iv. Managing the Land and its Products

Abel, W., Agricultural Fluctuations in Europe from the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Centuries (1980), chs 3-6


van Bavel, B. and Thoen, E., Land productivity and Agro-systems (1999), chs 1, 3, 5, 16.

Christiansen, P., A Manorial World (1996), ch.3.

Grigg, D., Population Growth and Agrarian Change (1980); chs 2-5, 9, 12.

Hoppenbrouwers, P., & van Zanden, J.L., Peasants into Farmers? (2001), chs 1-2, 4-5, 12


This essay is about transitions in the economy of early modern Europe, often referred to as a ‘transition to capitalism’. What do we know about changes in ordinary people’s aspirations to acquire goods (de Vries, Brewer and Porter, Roche)? How did states seek to regulate the economy (Epstein, Israel, Robisheaux)? How did ordinary men and women shape the economy and the environment through their work, the development of expertise and their market strategies? Did some regions undergo a process of ‘proto-industrialisation’? How can historians assess the rise and failure of national economies (Kagan, de Vries and van der Woude)? Did this period witness a global shift in the economy, from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic?

How do we account for the relative success of different economies in this period? (2016)

Did religious belief inhibit or stimulate consumption in the early modern period? (2016)

When and where did a new consumer society arise in Europe? (2015)

What effect did the discovery of the Cape route around Africa have on the European economy? (2015)

How, and to what extent, did the European economy become ‘global’ in the seventeenth century? (2014)

How best can the impact of the Atlantic economy be measured in Europe in this period?

What impact did global trade have on European culture in this period?

Did early modern Europe experience a transition to capitalism?

Why did the Mediterranean experience decline from the end of the sixteenth century?
11. Nature, Culture and Science

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Boyle, R., *Free Enquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature* (1996)
Paracelsus, *Selected Writings*, tr. N. Guterman (1951)

Moran, Bruce, *Patronage and institutions: science, technology and information at the European court, 1500-1750* (1991)
Siraisi, N., *Late Medieval and Early Renaissance medicine* (1990)

ii. Uses of nature

Daston, L. and K. Park *Wonders and the order of nature, 1150-1750* (1998), ch. 5 on monsters.
Findlen, P., *Possessing nature: museums, collecting, and scientific culture in early modern Italy* (1994), chs, 1, 7 & 8 about how museums became an important part of investigating nature in this period.
Golinski, J. et al., eds *The sciences in enlightened Europe* (1999); intro. & Schaffer on enlightened automata (126-65).
Grafton, A., *Cardan’s cosmos: the worlds and works of a Renaissance astrologer* (1999), chs 6 & 7
Grafton, A., *Commerce with the classics: ancient books and Renaissance readers* (1997), ch. 5: Johannes Kepler, the new astronomer reads ancient texts.
Niccoli, O. *Prophecy and people in Renaissance Italy*, (1990)


Smith, P. H. and P. Findlen, eds, *Merchants and marvels: commerce, science and art in early modern Europe* (2002), ch. 3 (on sea charts and Spanish territorial claims); ch. 7 (on H. J. Fugger and his Wunderkammer); ch. 8 (practical alchemy); ch. 9 (commerce, art and science in cabinets of curiosities); ch. 13 (Tulip as nature and art)


### iii. Advance of science – advance of reason?

Biagioli, M., *Galileo, courtier: the practice of science in the culture of absolutism* (1993), prologue, chs 2, 4 and 5


Nummedal, T., *Alchemy and Authority in the Holy Roman Empire* (2007), esp. chs 1, 4-6


The seventeenth-century has traditionally been seen as the age of Newton, Descartes and a ‘scientific revolution’. Section iii allows you to investigate what the term has implied and what it should imply, and to analyse, for example, the extent to which the advance of ‘science’ or even of ‘genius’ was conditioned by patronage networks. Another theme is how the image of science as superior, ‘rational’ and ‘true’ began to be constructed during the period, and whether this was set against a view of ‘nature’ as inferior. Section ii focuses on what positive and negative views of ‘nature’ were available to contemporaries.

(a) *What did most to change views of nature in early modern Europe between 1450 and 1760?*

(b) *Is ‘early modern science’ a helpful term to describe developments in the study of nature in this period?* (2016)


(a) *There was no such thing as the Scientific Revolution.* Discuss.

(b) What can historians learn from considering the places in which early modern knowledge about nature was constructed and transmitted? (2014)

What made European states interested in the advancement of scientific knowledge in this period?

Assess the role of audience in the development of studies of nature in early modern Europe.
Did the study of nature become more or less ‘enchanted’ in early modern European society?

How useful are *either* natural *or* material objects in understanding early modern attitudes towards nature?

In what ways did ‘science’ become more relevant to society in early modern Europe?
12. Supernatural Powers

i. Primary Sources and General Reading


ii. Uses of the Supernatural

Flint, V., *The Rise of Magic in Medieval Europe* (1991); conclusion
Gentilcore, D., *From Bishop to Witch: The System of the Sacred in Terra d’Otranto* (1992), chs 4-8
Kiekhefer, R., *Magic in the Middle Ages* (1990), conclusion

iii. Witchcraft

Behringer, W., *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria* (1997), ch. 1
Koslofsky, Craig, *Evening’s Empire; A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (2011), ch. 8

Rowland, Alison, *Witchcraft and Masculinities in Early Modern Europe* (2009), esp. chs 1, 3.

This essay explores the presence of the supernatural in the early modern world, and tries to help you find answers to questions such as: Why did early modern people believe in witches? Why were women prosecuted as witches? Why was there no witch-craze? What were the uses of ‘magic’ or talking to the dead – and how
did church and state attitudes towards the supernatural shift? Did Protestantism foster ‘magic’ rather than disenchanting the world (see also Essay 5)? Was the devil an equally important figure in Catholicism and Protestantism?

How integral were ideas about the sabbath to the witch craze? (2016)


(a) ‘Demonology and communities were equally important in the persecution of witches.’ Discuss.
(b) ‘Early modern witch trials reflected not the strength of the state, but its weakness.’ Discuss. (2014)

Consider the origins and nature of the witchcraft persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

What were the functions of magic in early modern society?

How integral was ‘magic’ to the belief system of early modern Europe?

In what circumstances were witchcraft fantasies plausible?
13. Sex and Gender

i. General Reading


ii. What is Woman? Contemporary Debates

Crawford, Katherine, *European Sexualities, 1400-1800* (2007), Introduction, ch.1
D'Aragona, T., *Dialogue on the Infinity of Love* (1547), 55-110
Agrippa, H. C., *Declaration on the Nobility and Pre-eminence of the Female Sex* (1997 ed.)

iii. Meanings of Manhood

Buttigieg, E., *Nobility, Faith and Masculinity* (2011), intro., ch. 4
Hayward, Maria, “‘The sign of some degree?’: The social, financial, and sartorial significance of male headwear at the courts of Henry VIII and Edward VI’, *Costume*, 36 (2002)
Wiesner, M.E., *Gender, Church and State in Early Modern Germany* (1997), chs 9, 10

iv. Authority, Confessional Change and Meanings of Gender

Cohen, E., ‘Honor and Gender in Early Modern Rome’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 4 (1992), 597-626
Davis, N.Z., *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (1975), ch.5
Suzanne Desan and Jeffrey Merrick (eds), *Family, Gender, and Law in Early Modern France* (2009)
Farr, J., *Authority and Sexuality in Early Modern Burgundy* (1995), chs 1, 5
In the early modern period women represented the ‘desirous’ sex. Their political rights were restricted, but even so they enjoyed considerable agency in many spheres of every-day life. Sections i and ii of this essay guide you through contemporary ideas about the status of womankind and opinions which Renaissance humanist men and women voiced in print. Sections iii and iv concentrate in changing constructions of gender roles in this period and on how they shaped the lives of men and women. Section iv in particular focuses on how homosexuality was lived and regulated and what this tells us about early modern culture.

Did fathers rule in the early modern period? (2016)

Was the church or the state more influential in defining gender roles? (2015)

(a) To what extent was female honour tied to sexuality?
(b) How did young men in cities shape experiences of gender in particular ways? (2014)

‘In an age of intense change, gender roles remained remarkably static.’ Discuss.

To what extent did early modern religion have different meanings for men and women?

How was sexual deviance defined in the early modern period?

Compare the impact of the Renaissance and Reformation on gender relations.

‘The structures of patriarchy were undermined more profoundly by men than by women.’ Do you agree with this reflection on gender during the early modern period?
14. Crime, Deviance and the Law

i. Primary Sources and General Reading


ii. Prosecution


iii. Practices

Farr, J., *Authority and Sexuality in Early Modern Burgundy (1550-1730)* (1995), chs 1, 4, 5
Wiltenburg, J., *Crime and Culture in Early Modern Germany* (2013), chs 1, 3, 6

iv. Punishment

The growth of ‘state’ activity and influence over people’s lives during the period necessitated a growth in bureaucracies (to tax and administer subjects) and, crucially, penal policies to implement obedience to moral norms. This essay allows you to assess who was defined as ‘criminal’ or ‘deviant’, why ‘crimes’ were committed, and developments in inquisition and prosecution process. Were executions a highly politicised ‘theatre of horror’? Did people experience the law as an instrument of state repression? (See also Essay 5 and the role of the Inquisition). Was the threat of punishment vital to a process of social disciplining? Why were women and men prosecuted for different types of crime and deviance?

How did early modern states attempt to impose their authority on rural areas? (2016)

‘The community was more powerful than the state in imposing social discipline during this period.’ Discuss. (2015)

(a) Account for the rise of law and order in European states in the early modern period.
(b) ‘Crimes against property in early modern Europe were strategies for survival.’ Discuss. (2014)

How successful was the early modern state in controlling crime?

Did the early modern state principally deal with deviance and crime through a “theatre of horror”?
15. The Word, the Image

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Avery, V., Calaresu, M. and Laven, M, Treasured Possessions from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment (2015) – on the material and visual culture of the period
Englander, D., et al., ed., Culture and Belief in Europe 1450-1600. An Anthology of Sources (1990), section 6
Eucharius Rösslin, When midwifery became the male physician’s province: The sixteenth century handbook The rose garden for pregnant women and midwives, ed. Wendy Arons. (1994)
Houston, R., Literacy in Early-Modern Europe: Culture and Education, 1500-1800 (1988)

ii. Literacy and Print

Bethencourt, F., Egmond, F. eds, Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700 (2007), intro., esp. chs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10.
Burke, P., Popular culture in early modern Europe (1978), chs 4-6, and 9.
Burke, P., ‘The Uses of Literacy in Early-Modern Italy’, The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy (1987)
Chartier, R., ‘The Figure of the Other: Peasant reading in the age of enlightenment’, in id., Cultural history between Practices and Representations (Cambridge, 1988), 151-71.
Grafton, A., The Culture of Correction in Early Modern Europe (2011)
Salzberg, R., Ephemeral City: Cheap Print and Urban Culture in Renaissance Venice (2014)

iii. Oral and Visual Culture

Alpers, S., The Art of Describing (1983), intro., chs 1, 5
The printing press—inevitably around 1450—made possible the mass distribution of written texts. But, in the context of a largely illiterate population, has the ‘printing revolution’ been exaggerated? (section ii). In this essay you should consider the extent to which the printed word dominated early modern communications and think about the interactions between oral, visual and literate culture (section iii).

In what ways did the printing press promote humanist pedagogical ideals? (2016)

Can a focus on material and visual culture enhance our understanding of change in early modern Europe? (2015)

Which was a greater stimulus for the expansion of literacy in early modern Europe: the search for spiritual improvement or the pursuit of social advancement? (2014)

How did printed texts interact with oral and visual culture in early modern Europe?

What was the impact of print on politics in the early modern period?

How best can the effects of the printing press be measured?
16. Encountering Non-Christian Worlds

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Two excellent anthologies of primary documents on this theme:
Englander et al., Culture and Belief in Europe, 1450-1600 (1990); section V.
Mancall, P., Travel Narratives from the Age of Discovery: An Anthology (2006)

Díaz, B., The Conquest of New Spain (1963), 189-244.
Foy de la Nuville, A curious and new account of Muscovy in the year 1689 (1994 ed.)
Forster, E.S., (ed.), The Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, Imperial Ambassador at Constantinople, 1554-1562 (1927).

Colley, Linda, Captives: Britain, empire and the world, 1600-1850 (2002)
Grafton, A., New Worlds, Ancient Texts (1992)
Hsia, R. Po-Chia, ed., The Cambridge History of Christianity (2007); pt VI, ‘Christianity and other faiths’, chs 26-30
Hunt, L. et al., The book that changed the world: Picart and Bernard’s Religious ceremonies of the world (2010)
Kamen, Henry, Spain’s Road to Empire: The Making of a World Power 1492-1763 (2002).
Pagden, A., European Encounters with the New World (1993), esp. chs 1, 4
Schwartz, S., All can be saved: Religious tolerance and salvation in the Iberian Atlantic world (2008)

ii. Encounters with Muslims and Jews

Bell, Dean Phillip, Jewish identity in early modern Germany: memory, power and community (2007)
Bell, Dean Phillip, Jews in the Early Modern World (2008), esp. chs 3-5.
Davis, N.Z., Trickster Travels: A sixteenth-century Muslim between worlds (2007)
Haliczer, S., Inquisition and Society in the Kingdom of Valencia, 1478-1834 (1990), chs 5-6.
Hsia, R. Po-Chia, ed., In and Out of the Ghetto: Jewish-Gentile Relations in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany (1995), chs 5, 10, 17, 20
Israel, J., European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism: 1550-1750 (1989)
Meserve, M., Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thoughts (2008), intro.
Mather, J., Pashas: Traders and travellers in the Islamic world (2009)
Sugar, P. and D. Treadgold, South-Eastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354-1804 (1977)

iii. The Americas

Canny, Nicholas, and Philip Morgan (eds), The Oxford Handbook of the Atlantic World, 1450-1850 (2011), esp. chs 1, 6, 8, 18, 19.
Clendinnen, I., Cortés, Signs, and the Conquest of Mexico., in A. Grafton and A. Blair (eds), The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe (1990).
Ganson, Barbara, The Guaraní under Spanish Rule (2003), esp. chs 1, 3, 4
MacLachan, C.M., Spain’s Empire in the New World (1988).
Magasich-Airola, Jorge and Jean-Marc de Beer, America Magica. When Renaissance Europe thought it had Conquered Paradise (2007), esp. chs 1, 4-7
Velez, Karin, ‘Catholic Missions to the Americas’, ch. 8 in: A. Bamji et al. (eds) The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation (2013)

iv. Western Encounters with Africa and Asia

Alberts, T., Conflict and Conversion: Catholicism in Southeast Asia, 1500-1700 (2013), intro., chs 6-9
Cooper, M., ed., They Came to Japan: An Anthology of European Reports on Japan 1543-1640 (1965-81, primary sources of Westerners’ views of Japan)
Cooper, M., ed., *The Southern Barbarians* (1971); Japanese views of the West

The early modern period is traditionally seen as an age in which ‘new worlds’ were discovered, so the question is how this changed the outlook of Europeans, how they made sense of Non-Europeans and ‘encountered’, missionised, marvelled at and maltreated them. Europe itself was not just ‘Christian’ either, and you can explore how Jews and Muslims could be part of this society, or the limits of Christian tolerance towards them (section ii).

*To what extent was Europe a meaningful and well-defined unit in the early modern period?* (2016)

*Did travel have a transformative effect on the mindsets of early modern Europeans?* (2016)


*Why did Europe turn to the Atlantic in this period?* (2014)

‘Avarice, not interest, drove Europeans abroad in the early modern period.’ Discuss. (2014)

*How, and to what extent, did travel alter and create early modern identities?*

*In what ways did European exploration and colonisation affect European concepts of barbarism and civilization?*

*Did encounters with new worlds foster tolerance among early modern Europeans?*

*Did educated Europeans revise their perception of the world as a consequence of exploration and discovery between 1450-1760?*
17. Muslim and Habsburg Spain

i. Primary Material and General Reading

ii. Early Modern Spain's Muslim Heritage and Connections
Amelang, J. S., Parallel Histories: Muslims and Jews in Inquisitorial Spain (Baton Rouge, 2013)
Elena Martínez, M., Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico (Stanford, 2008)
Fuchs, B., Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain (Philadelphia, 2009)
Nirenberg, D., Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages (Princeton, 1996), introduction.
Wright, E. R., The Epic of Juan Latino: Dilemmas of Race and Religion in Renaissance Spain (Toronto, 2016)

iii. Habsburg Spain
Boyden, J. M., The Courtier and the King: Ruy Gómez de Silva, Philip II, and the Court of Spain (Berkeley, 1995)
Defourneaux, M., Daily Life in Spain in the Golden Age (Stanford, 1971)
Johnson, C. L., Cultural Hierarchies in Sixteenth-Century Europe: The Ottomans and Mexicans (Cambridge, 2011)
Levin, M. J., Agents of Empire: Spanish Ambassadors in Sixteenth-Century Italy (Ithaca, 2005)
Martínez, Miguel, Front Lines: Soldiers' Writing in the Early Modern Hispanic World (Philadelphia, 2016)
O'Reilly, W., 'Turks, Indians and the Margins of Europe', Belleten. Dört Ayde Bir Cikar (Journal of the Turkish Academy of Arts and Sciences) (April, 2001), pp. 243-256.
O'Reilly, W., 'Lost Chances of the House of Habsburg', in: Austrian History Yearbook 40 (2009), pp. 53-70

One of the main paradigms of the historiography on Islamic Spain is the ‘convivencia’. Explain and critically engage with this term and discuss its impact on the history and historiography of early modern Spain.

Discuss courtly and urban life in early modern Spain by responding to ONE of the following two questions: (a) How did the Habsburg court shape the city of Madrid and to what extent did this form a sense of urban identity? OR (b) How did court factionalism and patronage shape the bureaucratic administration of the empire?

‘The production of art in the Spanish Golden Age was closely related to religion.’ Discuss
18. The Renaissance

i. Primary Material and General Reading
Englander, D., et al., eds, *Culture and Belief in Europe 1450-1600* (1990), pt I, sections 8-12 (Erasmus, Machiavelli, Castiglione, Rabelais)
More, T., *Utopia* (many editions)
Goody, J., *Renaissances: The one or the many?* (2010), intro and ch. 1

ii. Intellectual Culture
Meserve, Margaret, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (2008)

iii. Visual Culture / Material Culture
Johnston, G. and S. Matthews Grieco (eds), *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy* (1997), chs 4-6
Haskell, F., *Patrons and Painters* (1963), chs 1, 3, 4, 5.
Poole, J., *Italian Maiolica* (1997); a guide to the collections in the Fitzwilliam Museum
Thornton, D., *The Scholar in his Study* (1997), intro. and ch. 6
Welch, E., *Art and Society in Italy, 1350-1500* (1997), ch. 4 ‘on artists and patrons’; ch. 5 on ‘the sacred setting’
Welch, E., *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy, 1400-1600* (2005), part 4
The concept of the ‘Renaissance’ is a nineteenth-century invention. It has been associated with the celebration of the individual, the prestige of education, learning and the arts, and the ‘rebirth’ of classical antiquity. But did how did people at the time understand, experience and participate in the cultural changes that were taking place? Working through section ii, explore the problems that preoccupied Renaissance men and women, and think about how you would define and delimit the Renaissance. Some of the same problems—for example, the relationship of classical to Christian culture—recur in Renaissance art. Section iii encourages you to think not just about artists but also about consumers of art and other precious objects. How did Renaissance patrons determine the value of their purchases? Did this period witness the first consumer revolution?

How has the study of objects transformed our understanding of the Renaissance? (2016)

Did humanism undermine the old certainties on which European knowledge was founded? (2016)

To what extent did the Renaissance foster cultural exchange? (2015)

What effect did Humanism have on attitudes towards the Bible? (2015)

To what extent did Renaissance humanism reshape European culture in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries? (2014)

Why did Renaissance Humanism become such an important part of European culture between 1450 and 1600?

What can material culture tell us about the ideas and ideals of the Renaissance?

In what ways did the Renaissance in either Italy or Europe revive the classical world?

How can the impact of Renaissance Humanism best be measured?
19. The Dutch Golden Age

i) Primary Material and General Reading

H. Rowen, *The Low Countries in early modern times* (1972), Section IX.

NB: The Fitzwilliam has an excellent collection of early modern Dutch paintings.

ii) Golden Age or decline?


de Vries, J., *The Dutch Rural Economy in the Golden Age, 1500-1700* (1974), chs 1, 2, 4, 7

iii) Dutch society


iv) Dutch art as a historical source

The Dutch Republic was celebrated by early modern contemporaries in Europe as a model of modern republicanism, technological innovation, and economic prosperity, during what has become known as the ‘Dutch Golden Age’. The strength of this contemporary characterisation has continued in modern historiography until, more recently, historical research has shown that ‘All that glitters is not gold’ and that the social, economic and political foundations of the Dutch republic were much weaker than suggested by this contemporary rhetoric (Section ii). Historians have been especially interested in the particularity of the republic and Dutch society in comparison to the rest of Europe, and students should attempt to consider and compare these differences over the term (Section iii). The remarkable output of paintings in the period and the extent of the ownership of art in Dutch society in this period certainly mark out the Dutch republic, and early modern historians have studied the paintings as historical evidence which, in turn, has allowed them to reflect more generally on the meaning and function of art in early modern European society (Section iv).

To what extent did people’s experience of the Dutch Golden Age depend on their religious identity? (2016)

How different culturally and socially were the early modern northern and southern Netherlands? (2015)

Account for the popularity of the art of the Low Countries in either the sixteenth or the seventeenth century. (2014)

To what extent do Dutch paintings of the ‘Golden Age’ depict the social realities of the early modern period?

What conditions precipitated the Dutch Golden Age?

What can the art of the seventeenth-century Dutch provinces tell us about their economic history?
20. Ottoman Urban and Imperial Culture

i. Primary Material and General Reading

Michael Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmmed the Conqueror* (trans. Riggs) (1460s)
Evliya Celebi, *Seyahatname* (trans. Dankoff & Kim in *An Ottoman Traveller*) (1630s-1660s)

Imber, C., *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650* (2002).
İnalcık, H. and Quataert, D., eds, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire* vols 1&2 (1994)
Quataert, D., *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (2005)

ii. Influences and Exchanges

Casale, G., *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (2010), intro., ch. 1
Goffmann, D., *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (2002), intro., chs 5-6
Kafesçioglu, C., *Constantinople/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital* (2009), intro., ch. 2
Krstić, T., *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (2011), esp. intro., ch. 4

iii. Empire and Power

Baer, M., *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (2008), chs 3-5
Barkey, K., *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (2008), chs 2-3
This topic encourages you to look beyond the conventional limits of European history in order to engage with a society that was deeply connected to its Christian neighbours through conflict – of course – but also through trade, diplomacy and culture. Section ii focuses on Ottoman interactions with various regions and polities, especially Byzantium and Europe. You might start your exploration with Michael Kritovoulos’s History of Mehmed the Conqueror, which tells the story of the capture of Constantinople from the Greek perspective. Section iii treats Turkish languages and institutions of rule. How did the Ottomans control such a diverse and expansive empire? Finally, section iv deals with social and cultural issues, especially sociability, pleasure and literacy. Consider whether Islamic precepts kept Ottoman inhabitants from the pursuit of pleasure. For primary sources, read Ahmad al-Aqhisari or Katib Çelebi on smoking and coffee as a point of entry for considering social and moral prescriptions.

‘Ottoman society was characterized by discipline, not pleasure.’ Discuss. (2016)

‘Early modern Europeans interacted with Ottomans primarily through warfare.’ Discuss. (2015)

Why did the Ottoman Empire reach the limits of its European expansion by the late seventeenth century? (2014)
21. Enlightenment

i. General and primary sources


Siskin, C. and Warner, W., eds, *This is Enlightenment* (2010).
Zwierlein, Cornel (ed.), *The Dark Side of Knowledge. Histories of Ignorance, 1400 to 1800* (2016)

ii. The Republic of Letters


iii. Radicalism

Chapters 3 and 4 of *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, above.

iv. The public sphere


v. Mechanical philosophies


vi. Order and knowledge

Many studies of the enlightenment have focused on the importance of key texts written and published in French and their influence across Europe (section ii). While such texts develop key concepts which help define the main contours of the cosmopolitan enlightenment, more recent works have attempted to understand the variety of particular enlightened movements outside of France. Section iv addresses key questions such as ‘Was Paris the centre of the enlightenment?’ and ‘Was the enlightenment a unified movement?’ Section v links with earlier topics on the Reformation and the Scientific Revolution by continuing to explore the role of religious change and scientific developments in the intellectual history of early modern Europe. Section vi on ‘Printing and the public sphere’ looks at the mechanisms for the spread of enlightened culture across geographical and social boundaries as well as the development of centres of intellectual debate outside of royal courts. More generally, students can compare the variety and breadth of cultural exchange among intellectual communities across Europe from the Renaissance to the enlightenment.

(a) What transformations of learned culture have led historians to argue for an Enlightenment before 1750?
(b) ‘The mechanical philosophy was central to the Enlightenment.’ Do you agree? (2016)

(a) How was the Enlightenment linked to the Republic of Letters?
(b) Discuss the role of the mechanical philosophy in the Enlightenment. (2015)

How cosmopolitan was the Enlightenment?

Was the Enlightenment in Europe characterised by its national contexts?

Were there limits to the spread of enlightenment culture in the eighteenth century?

Did a ‘public sphere’ emerge in eighteenth-century Europe?