PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS
THE RISE AND FALL OF THE SPANISH EMPIRE
HIST179, LALS179
HISTORY AND TRADITION SECTOR
Fall 2014

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Description

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a solid knowledge of the general trends that characterized the Spanish Empire from 1450 to 1800s. Through readings of primary and secondary sources that offer a complex vision of the cultural, religious, ethnic, intellectual and economic contexts and processes, students will be able to appreciate the intricacies of historical evolution and human undertakings. Spain in the middle of the fifteenth century was a country in disarray, ripped by civil and foreign wars. Less than a century later, Spain was a worldwide power with control over the entire Iberian Peninsula, parts of Italy, Central Europe, and numerous colonies in the Americas, Asia, and Africa. By the second half of the seventeenth century, however, Spain had lost its power in Europe and in Asia.

The course focuses on the rise and decline of the Spanish monarchy: the conditions that enabled Spain to become the most powerful monarchy in early modern times, and the conditions that led to its decline. This course also touches upon other important aspects critical to understanding Spain: the relationships between Christians, Muslims and Jews, and when and why these relationships shifted from coexistence to persecution and expulsion. The analysis of this topic requires an examination of the Spanish militant church (best represented by the Inquisition and the Jesuits), as well as of the opposition to the imposition of religious orthodoxy.

This course also covers the conquest and colonization of the Americas; the cultural repercussions of the encounter with the Inca, Aztec and Maya civilizations; the debates on Spain's rights to control the Americas and on Spanish destruction of the indigenous societies and cultures. We will also discuss Spanish expansion in Asia and Africa. Last, we will study the events that led to Spain's defeat by other European powers as well as rebellions against the authority of the Spanish monarchy, both inside and outside the Iberian Peninsula.

The course will end with discussions of the attempts at reforming the monarchy and empire during the eighteenth century, the Napoleonic wars of the early 1800s, and the final disintegration of the Spanish empire in the early 19th century.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are required to attend lectures, do the weekly readings, and to complete all assignments.

EVALUATION METHOD:

Final grades for the course will be determined by: attendance (10%), first exam (35%), a 7-page paper (20%), and a final exam (35%). Students should note that the reading for the term paper is in addition to the weekly readings listed on the syllabus. For the paper students have to write on an assigned topic based on some of the primary documents for the class.

All readings on the course’s Blackboard

Three textbooks that could be useful:

John H. Elliott, Imperial Spain (orig. publication date 1963)
William Maltby, The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Empire (2009)
James Lockhart and Stuart Schwartz, Early Latin America: A History of Spanish America and Brazil (1983)

TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

August 29: Introduction to the course

End of the civil wars and the consolidation of a new state (1450-1515)

September 3: The end of civil Wars
Docs: Lope de Vega, Fuentovejuna

September 5: The End of Jewish Spain
Beinart, The expulsion of the Jews from Spain, chapters 2 & 10

September 10: The End of Muslim Spain
Harvey, Islamic Spain, 1250-1500, chapters 19 & 20

The consolidation of Spanish Power (1516-1580)

September 12: From Monarch to Emperor
Te Brake, “Charles V and his Contentious Subjects”
Docs: Protestant and Catholic Reformations

September 17: Fighting for European Hegemony
Elliott, Europe Divided, chapters 4, 5, & 9
Docs: The Dutch Revolt

September 19: Spain and the Ottoman Empire
Hess, “Lepanto and its place in Mediterranean history”
Docs: European views of the Ottoman Empire

The wider world (1492-1610)

September 24: Expansion: Around the World
Docs: Columbus, Papal Bull (Inter Caetera), Treaty of Tordesillas, Amerigo Vespucci, and Magellan

September 26: Conquest to Colonization. The Two Republics
Elliott, “Conquest and Settlement.”
Docs: Las Casas and Sepúlveda

October 1: Slavery
Klein, “The Atlantic Slave Trade to 1650”
The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces

A Christian society (1500-1600)

October 3: Spains and Spaniards: Society and Territory
Casey, A social history of early modern Spain, chapter 6
Docs: El Lazarillo de Tormes

October 8: Men and Women
Socolow, The women of Colonial Latin America, chapters 1, 4, & 5
Docs: Zayas y Sotomayor, “Too late undeceived.”

October 10: No class. Fall break

October 15: Moriscos, Conversos, and Purity of Blood
Carr, Blood and faith, chapters 9-13
Stafford Poole, “The Politics of Limpieza de Sangre” Juan de Ovando and his circle in the reign of Philip II.”
Nuñez Muley, A memorandum for the President of the Royal Audiencia of the Kingdom of Granada

At the crossroads (1580-1621)

October 17: War and Peace
Thompson, “The Invincible Armada.”
Elliott, Europe Divided, chapter 11
Docs: Peace agreements with France, England, and the Dutch

October 22: A Sick Body
Elliott, “Self-perception and Decline in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain”
Carr, Blood and faith, chapters 17-20
Docs: Expulsion of the Moriscos

October 24: Paper, Review, Exam
OCTOBER 29: FIRST EXAM

Reform, War and Rebellion (1621-1665)

October 31: Reform and Revolt
García Sanz, “Castile 1580-1650: economic crisis and the policy of reform.”
Elliott, “Revolts in the Spanish Monarchy.”
Doc: Olivares’ Program of Reforms; Revolt of Catalonia; Restoration of Portugal

November 5: Defeat
Wilson, The Thirty Years War, chapters 18-21-22
Docs: Images and Docs Thirty Years War

November 7, No Class

The Overseas Empire (1620-1700)

November 12: The Economy of the Empire
Doc: Guaman Poma de Ayala, The first new chronicle and good government, 104-170

November 14: Varieties of Peoples and Identities
Herzog, “Identities and processes of identification in the Atlantic world.”
Docs: Castas, Images and documents

From crisis to civil war (1665-1716)

November 19: War of Succession: An International and Civil War
Docs: Decrees on Political centralization; The Treaty of Utrecht; Montesquieu

Bourbon reforms (1730-1780)

November 21: All must be reformed
Herr, “Flow and Ebb, 1700-1833”
Docs: Bourbon reforms, social commentaries

November 26: Imperial reforms and rebellions
McFarlane, “Rebellions in Late Colonial Spanish America: A Comparative Perspective.”
Doc: American identities

November 28: No class. Thanksgiving

From Empire to Nation

December 3: Monarchical crisis and Resistance to Napoleon
Esdaile, War and Politics in Spain, 1808-1814
Docs: Constitution of Cadiz, resistance to Napoleon, Return of Despotism
December 5: Independences
Doye and van Young, “Independence and Nationalism in the Americas,” pp. 17-41
Docs: Constitutions and New Societies

PAPER

December 10: General Review

FINAL EXAM