Comparative Seaborne Empires, 1415-1700 (Francis Dutra, Fall 1992)

Page published by Kolt Ewing on Friday, May 23, 2014

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Fall 1992 Hours: Tuesdays, 3-5
History 153: Comparative Seaborne Empires 1415-1700
University of California, Santa Barbara

ORIENTATION: September 28

PART I: OVERVIEW & OLD WORLD ANTECEDENTS

I. THE EXPANSION OF EUROPE & THE OLD WORLD ECONOMY: AN OVERVIEW

Sept. 28 II. OLD WORLD ANTECEDENTS Sept. 30, Oct. 5 III. NORTH AFRICA & THE ATLANTIC ISLANDS Oct. 7 and 12

PART II: THE DISCOVERY OF THE SEA & THE VOYAGES

IV. NAVIGATION AND SHIPPING Oct. 14 V. THE COASTING OF WEST AFRICA & THE SEARCH FOR A ROUTE TO

INDIA Oct. 19 and 21 VI. THE NORTH AND SOUTH ATLANTIC & THE PACIFIC & INDIAN OCEANS:
EUROPEAN VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES Oct. 26 and 28

MIDTERM EXAMINATION: Nov. 2 (Monday): 7-8:30 p.m. >From the discussion questions in Part I and Part II at least six questions will be chosen. Students will answer two of these questions, one from Part I and one from Part II, for 40% of the grade.

PART III: CONQUEST & THE SOCIETY OF EXPANSION

VII. CONQUEST IN THE NEW WORLD & IN ASIA: A COMPARISON Nov. 4 VIII. THE FOUNDING OF COLONIES Nov. 9 IX. RACE RELATIONS IN AFRICA, ASIA & THE AMERICAS Nov. 11 X. SEAFARERS AND THE SOCIETY OF EXPANSION Nov. 16

PART IV: THE EUROPEAN PRESENCE IN ASIA, AFRICA & AMERICA TO 1700

XI. PEOPLING THE OVERSEAS EMPIRES Nov. 18 XII. GOVERNING THE OVERSEAS EMPIRES Nov. 23

Thanksgiving Holiday Nov. 25

XIII. THE ECONOMIES OF THE OVERSEAS EMPIRES Nov. 30 XIV. THE ROLE OF RELIGION AND CULTURE IN THE OVERSEAS EMPIRES

Dec. 2

FINAL EXAMINATION: December 11 (Friday): 7-8:30 p.m. At least eight questions will be chosen from the discussion questions in Parts III and IV. Everyone will answer two of these questions, one from Part III and one from Part IV, for 40% of the grade.

REQUIRED PAPER: Due Nov. 23. 20% of grade. See the last page of the syllabus.
Attendance at lecture is expected.

PART I: OVERVIEW AND OLD WORLD ANTECEDENTS

I. THE EXPANSION OF EUROPE AND THE WORLD ECONOMY: AN OVERVIEW

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. In his introduction to C.R. Boxer's The Dutch Seaborne Empire, J.H. Plumb observed: "One of the great shifts in world power and economic strength took place between 1450 and 1700. Before that time Western Europe had been of little consequence in the affairs of the world." Discuss and analyze how Immanuel Wallerstein in the book listed above attempts to explain this shift in world power and its repercussions. Do you agree? Discuss. (This question is a "wild card" question and may be used for any of the four parts of the course.)

II. OLD WORLD ANTECEDENTS

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. "Hispanic expansion in America (and Asia) was not a sudden or random phenomenon. It was a temporal and spatial extension of centuries of experiences gained in peninsular wars against the Moors; dynastic and commercial enterprises in the Mediterranean; and discoveries, conquests and colonizations in Africa and the Atlantic islands." Do you agree? Discuss and give examples.
2. K. G. Davies points out that "no part of the New World was effectively occupied in 1600 save by subjects of the King of Spain (who was also king of Portugal, 1580-1640)." Discuss the reasons why England, France and the Netherlands were slow to promote overseas expansion. Why were Spain and Portugal at the forefront of overseas expansion in the 15th and 16th centuries?

III. NORTH AFRICA AND THE ATLANTIC ISLANDS

Required reading:


Recommended reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:
1. Discuss and analyze the Iberian experience in North Africa, 1415-1700.
2. Discuss and analyze the conquest of the Atlantic islands by Portugal (Azores, Madeiras and Cape Verdes), by Castile (Canaries) and by England (Ireland) and its effect on conquest and settlement in the Americas.
3. Describe and discuss how a careful reading of Fernand Braudel's The Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II gives (or fails to give) an insight into the Mediterranean world of the sixteenth century.

**PART II: THE DISCOVERY OF THE SEA AND THE VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY**

**IV. THE DISCOVERY OF THE SEA: NAVIGATION AND SHIPPING**

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss and analyze the development of reliable shipping, the ability to navigate over great distances of water, and the various other technical problems and solutions the European nations were faced with in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.
2. THE COASTING OF WEST AFRICA AND THE SEARCH FOR A SEA ROUTE TO INDIA

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. "The coasting of West Africa was a major stage in the discovery of the sea." Do you agree? Discuss and analyze Portuguese maritime achievements in the South Atlantic in the fifteenth century. What were the main reasons for Portuguese exploration down the coast of Africa? Who were the chief explorers and what were their achievements?
2. Describe and compare Columbus's crossing of the Atlantic and Vasco da Gama's voyage to India and their achievements.

**VI. THE NORTH AND SOUTH ATLANTIC AND THE PACIFIC AND INDIAN OCEANS: EUROPEAN VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES IN THE 15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES**

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss the northern voyages 1497-1612. In your answer discuss and analyze Portuguese, French, English and Dutch maritime activity in North America, 1497-1612.
2. Discuss and analyze the Iberian voyages of discovery in the New World, 1492-1560. What were their principal achievements? What were the chief obstacles to be overcome? What was Vespucci’s role?
3. Based on lecture, the required and the recommended reading, discuss and compare the circumnavigation of the world by Magellan and Drake.

PART III: CONQUEST AND THE SOCIETY OF EXPANSION

VII. CONQUEST IN THE NEW WORLD AND IN ASIA: A COMPARISON

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss and compare the different Amerindian civilizations that the Europeans encountered in the New World (North, South and Central America).
2. Discuss, analyze and compare the various justifications used by the European nations in their conquest of Africa, Asia and the Americas.
3. Discuss and compare the Spanish conquest and colonization of Mexico and Peru with the Portuguese conquest and efforts at colonization in India.

VIII. THE FOUNDING OF COLONIES

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss, analyze and compare the founding of colonies (and their success and failure) by the Spaniards in the Caribbean (1492-1532), the Portuguese in Brazil (1534-1570), and England, France and the Netherlands in North America and the Caribbean (1607-1660).

IX. RACE RELATIONS IN AFRICA, ASIA AND THE AMERICAS

Required reading:


Recommended reading:

Charles R. Boxer, Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire, 1415-1825 (On Reserve).
Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss, analyze and compare race relations in the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Dutch overseas empires to 1700.
2. Discuss and analyze the impact (e.g. disease, treatment, trade, etc.) Amerindians, Africans and Europeans had on each other in the Atlantic World, 1415-1700.
3. "At home Europeans perpetrated appalling things upon one another; much of what they proceeded to do to non-Europeans was an extension of that." Do you agree? Discuss and give examples.
4. SEAFARERS AND THE SOCIETY OF EXPANSION

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss and compare the problems mariners and passengers encountered on the Atlantic crossing and the carreira da India. Discuss and analyze the similarities and differences in the ways the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Dutch treated their seafarers.
2. Based on a careful reading of B. R. Burg, Sodomy and the Pirate Tradition, examine and analyze the social and economic background of the seafarers discussed by Burg and the nature and the extent of sexual behavior patterns among buccaneers in the Caribbean in the seventeenth century. (This is a "wild card" question and may be used for either Part III or Part IV.)
3. Analyze and compare the societies that developed in the various parts of the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Dutch seaborne empires to 1700.

PART IV: THE EUROPEAN PRESENCE IN ASIA, AFRICA AND THE AMERICAS

TO 1700

XI. PEOPLING THE OVERSEAS EMPIRES

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss and compare the peopling and the populations of the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Dutch overseas empires to 1700.
2. Discuss and analyze territorial expansion, contraction and adjustments in the overseas empires of Portugal, Spain, England, France and the Netherlands to 1700.

XII. GOVERNING THE OVERSEAS EMPIRES

Required reading:

Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss and compare the governance of their overseas empires by Portugal, Spain, England, France and the Netherlands.
2. Discuss, analyze and compare the problems of defense and their solutions in the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Dutch seaborne empires.
3. Discuss, analyze and compare the reactions of those of European background as well as Asians, Africans, and Amerindians to colonial rule to 1700.
4. Discuss and analyze the role of military might in the conquest and maintenance of the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Dutch seaborne empires.

**XIII. THE ECONOMIES OF THE OVERSEAS EMPIRES**

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss in detail and compare the economies of the New World to 1700.
2. Discuss and compare both local and international commerce in the seaborne empires of the Portuguese, Spaniards, English, French and Dutch.
3. Based on a careful reading of Holden Furber's Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800, discuss how "the few thousands Europeans" attempted to dominate trade in Asia and East Africa. What was the role of the various East India companies? What were the chief products involved in the trade?

**XIV. THE ROLE OF RELIGION AND CULTURE IN THE OVERSEAS EMPIRES**

Required reading:


Discussion questions [guide to the required reading]:

1. Discuss and compare the efforts by Portugal, Spain, England, France and the Netherlands to convert Amerindians, Africans and Asians to Christianity.
2. Discuss the role of religion in the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Dutch seaborne empires.
3. Discuss and analyze the educational and cultural achievements of the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Dutch seaborne empires.
Paper: 1500-word review paper due 23 November 1992 (for 20% of the course grade) on either of the following:

2. Carla Rahn Phillips, Six Galleons for the King of Spain.

Information provider:
Unit: H-Net program at UIC History Department Email: H-Net@uicvm.uic.edu
Posted: 16 Sep 1994