

## Pirates, Explorers, and the Frontiers of Empire

MW

In the late medieval period, Europeans began to push outwards, searching for lost empires and forgotten trade routes that had long existed only in myth and legend. The wealth they brought back – both green and gold – challenged Europe's ideas about the greater world, forcing them to find ways to reconcile new discoveries with existing natural philosophy and theology. Overseas expansion was as competitive as it was exciting, and as European states sought to consolidate their economic and political power at home through their territories overseas, the riches of the colonial economies became tempting prizes for enterprising individuals, pirates, and monarchs alike.

This course focuses primarily upon Spanish and Portuguese exploits, and to a lesser extent upon Dutch, French, and English piracy and exploration. We will read a mix of primary sources and scholarly works, with an emphasis on narratives of people pulled into the worlds of pirates and explorers as both victims and participants. As a freshman seminar, this course is intended to introduce students to the method and practice of history through the examination of a thematically defined topic. The course will be split between lecture and discussion, and your attendance at both is crucial.

### ***Books***

Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Alida Metcalf, *Go-betweens and the Colonization of Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).

C.R. Pennell, *Bandits at Sea: A Pirates Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

Markus Rediker, *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in a Golden Age* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004).

Kris Lane, *Pillaging the Empire: Piracy in the Americas* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

\*\* Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard as PDFs.

\*\* Additional primary source readings may be passed out in class.

***N.B. The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus throughout the course. You will be informed of any changes with reasonable advance notice. Please consult Blackboard for the most up-to-date course calendar.***

### ***Assessment***

- **Participation** (10%) – *Including attendance and participation in class discussion.*

- **Short papers** (45%) – *Three short (4-5 page) papers on set topics. More details to follow.*
- **Book Review** (10%) – *Of a monograph chosen in consultation with the instructor.*
- **Final Presentation** (10%) – *An in-class presentation on your portfolio during the final week of class.*
- **Research Portfolio** (25%) – *Including research questions, a list of titles, a prospectus, an annotated bibliography, and a literature review. More information to follow. You do not actually write this paper, but rather you plan a compelling research project.*

### **Course Calendar**

**Aug. 24 and 26**

#### **Week 1: Introductions**

Selections from Henry Kamen, *Empire: How Spain Became a World Power* (Blackboard).

"Libros de Repartimiento," trans. Thomas F. Glick, in *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim and Jewish Sources* (Blackboard)

Gaspar de Marquina, "Letter From Peru," in *Letters and People of the Spanish Indies*, trans. and ed. James Lockhart and Enrique Otte (distributed in class)

**Aug. 31 and Sept. 2**

#### **Week 2: Early Atlantic Colonies**

Selections from José-Juan López-Portillo, ed., *Spain, Portugal and the Atlantic Frontier of Medieval Europe* (Blackboard).

Selections from David Abulafia, *The Discovery of Mankind: Atlantic Encounters in the Age of Columbus* (Blackboard).

Selections from Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea* (Blackboard).

Christopher Columbus, "Letter from Christopher Columbus to the Catholic Monarchs," in *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim and Jewish Sources*, ed. Olivia Remie Constable (Blackboard).

**Sept. 9**

#### **Week 3: Conquest Culture: The Spanish Caribbean**

Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, chaps. 1, 3, 5, and 7.

**Sept. 14 and 16**

#### **Week 4: Conquest Culture: Portuguese America and Asia**

Selections from William B. Greenlee, trans., *The Voyage of Pedro Álvares Cabral to Brazil and India* (Blackboard).

Alida Metcalf, *Go-Betweens: The Colonization of Brazil*, skim chaps. 1 and 2, read chaps. 3, 4, and 5.

**FIRST SHORT PAPER IS DUE, Sunday, Sept. 20 at 5pm**

**Sept. 21 and 23**

**Week 5: Transmitting the Conquest**

Selections from Catalina de Erauso, *Lieutenant Nun* (Blackboard).  
Selections from Cabeza de Vaca, *Nafragios* (Blackboard).

**Sept. 28 and 30**

**Week 6: The North American Frontier**

Selections from Sean McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood in Mexico: Laying the Foundations, 1560-1840*. (Blackboard)

Selections from David Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*. (Blackboard)

The Coronado and De Soto Expeditions, in *Colonial North America and the Atlantic World*, ed. Paul Mapp and Brett Rushforth. (Blackboard)

**Oct. 5 and 7**

**Week 7: Of Prizes and Protestants: Galleon Routes and Armadas**

Selections from Carla Rahn Phillips, *Seven Galleons for the King of Spain* (Blackboard)

Selections from Kris Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*

**SECOND SHORT PAPER IS DUE, Sunday Oct. 11 at 5pm**

**Oct. 12 and 14**

**Week 8: Science, Empire and State Secrets**

Paula de Vos, "The Science of Spices." (Blackboard)

Alison Sandman, "Controlling Knowledge: Navigation, Cartography, and Secrecy in the Early Modern Spanish Atlantic," pp. 31-51 in Nicholas Dew and James Delbourgo, eds., *Beyond the New Atlantis: Science and Empire in the Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (New York: Routledge, 2008). (Blackboard)

**\* Special Library Visit\***

Meet the subject librarians, database tutorial, and library scavenger hunt.

**Homework: Come with 5-6 ideas for your research portfolios.**

**Oct. 19 and 21**

**Week 9: Piracy, Slavery and the Slave Trade**

Selections from John Hampden, ed. *Francis Drake, Privateer: Contemporary Narratives and Documents*. (Blackboard)

Selections from Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713*. (Blackboard)

"Portrait of Barbados," in *Colonial North America and the Atlantic World*, ed. Paul Mapp and Brett Rushforth. (Blackboard)

**Oct. 26 and 28**

**Week 10: Buccaneers of the Caribbean**

Selections from Alexander O. Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America*. (read pp. 82-104. The rest is OPTIONAL, but take a look at it if you are interested).

Selections from Kris Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*.

**Meetings with the Instructor**

**THIRD SHORT PAPER IS DUE, Sunday Nov. 1 at 5pm**

**Nov. 2 and 3**

**Week 11: Piracy and Perspective**

Pennell, *Bandits at Sea*, chaps. 2, 5, and 10. (OPTIONAL: Chaps. 7 and 9).

Selections from Captain Johnson, *A General History of Pyrates* (Blackboard)

**Nov. 9 and 11**

**Week 12: Piracy, Class, and Social Rebellion**

Marcus Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, Chaps. 1,2,3 and 4.

Selections from Captain Johnson, *A General History of Pyrates* (Blackboard)

**Meetings with the Instructor**

**Nov. 16 and 18**

**Week 13: Piracy and Gender**

Selections from B. R. Burg, *Sodomy and the Pirate Tradition: English Sea Rovers in the Seventeenth-Century Caribbean* (Blackboard)

Selections from Jo Stanley ed., *Bold in Her Breeches: Women Pirates across the Ages* (Blackboard)

Selections from Captain Johnson, *A General History of Pyrates* (Blackboard)

**BOOK REVIEW IS DUE, Sunday Nov. 22 at 5pm**

**Nov. 23**

**Week 14: Empire and Pirate Suppression**

Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, Chaps. 7 and 8.

**Special Activity: Mock Pyrate Trial!**

**DRAFTS OF PORTFOLIOS ARE DUE, Sunday Nov. 29 at 12noon**

**Week 15:**

**Presentations (Nov. 30 and Dec. 2)**

***FINALS PERIOD – Final portfolios are due.***