

HIS 508

The Caribbean: Conquest to Plantations

Fall 2006
MW 2:00-3:15
Classroom: HHRA 1304

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Office hours: W 3:30-5:30 pm and by appointment (HHRA 2106)

Overview

This course examines the changing but always central role of the Caribbean and its people in the development of early modern European empires, as well as the intermixing of peoples that occurred in emerging Caribbean societies. We will trace the emergence of multi-ethnic societies over two hundred years, from the arrival of the first Europeans, through the age of piracy, to the consolidation of plantation economies. Special emphasis will be given to the interactions between the diverse peoples who formed these developing societies and cultures and to the power structures that shaped their unequal interactions in the context of the wider Atlantic world.

Readings

Course readings include articles and books. All articles will be on e-reserves, which is accessible via the class Blackboard site. The following books can be purchased in the UNCG bookstore (if you order them elsewhere make sure you get the same edition):

Bartolomé de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (Penguin, 1992)
Phillip Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, Second Edition (Cambridge University Press, 1998)

Richard Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves. The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (UNC Press, 1972)

Kris Lane, *Pillaging the Empire. Piracy in the Americas, 1500-1750* (Sharpe, 1998)

Sidney Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective* (Beacon, 1992)

Always bring a copy of the assigned reading to class.

Class Etiquette

A classroom is a communal space where we all gather for a brief period to pursue a common goal via group interactions. Electronic devices, including laptop computers, cell phones and food should only be brought to class if they will be shared by the entire group in pursuit of our collective endeavors. You are welcome to bring an individual drink.

Requirements and Grading

Blackboard responses (20% of grade): Students will post weekly responses to the readings via the class Blackboard site for 14 of the 17 weeks of the course. It is entirely your choice which three weeks you do not post. However, there will be no exceptions granted for any reason. Plan wisely. Postings are due by 10 pm each Tuesday. Late postings will not be counted. Students are expected to read and think about their fellow students' postings, and to come to class prepared to continue the discussions that begin on Blackboard.

Specifications:

- Postings should be clear and to the point. Focus on a single issue or theme and state your position or argument succinctly, with relevant references to the readings. Think through your ideas before you begin writing.
- Develop the art of articulate written conversation. Use full sentences, minimal abbreviations and acronyms, and correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Proof read and edit carefully before you hit the "send" button. This is not an IM forum.
- You are encouraged to express questions, doubts, confusion, and (within reasonable limits) emotional reactions to the material and/or to the postings of your fellow students. Of course, you always will be respectful and courteous.
- Sign every posting at the bottom.

Blackboard is an important tool for this course. Check the Announcements and Course Documents regularly.

Papers (each 20% of grade): There are three short papers for this class, 5-7 pages each, one for each of the course units. Papers are due the Monday after the conclusion of each unit. Late papers will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances and only after prior consultation with the professor. You will receive details about the corresponding assignment at the beginning of each unit.

Class Participation (20% of grade): All students are expected to attend class, to have read and thought about the material, and to participate actively in discussions. Students will also be expected to give occasional in-class presentations.

Students are responsible for all the material that is discussed and handed out in class, as well as the readings and Blackboard postings. Cultivate networks among your fellow students so you can get copies of class notes, announcements, etc. if you have to miss class.

UNIT I: CONTACT AND CONQUEST***Monday, August 14: Introduction******Wednesday, August 16: The Pre-Contact Caribbean***

Readings: David Watts, "The Caribbean Environment and Early Settlement;" Jalil Sued-Badillo, "The Indigenous Societies at the Time of Conquest" (e-reserves)

Monday, August 21: Europe in the Late Middle Ages

Readings: Eric Wolf, "Europe: Prelude to Expansion;" Seymour Phillips, "The Outer World of the European Middle Ages" (e-reserves)

Wednesday, August 23: Iberia: Reconquest and Expansion

Reading: Miguel Angel Ladero Quesada, "Spain Circa 1492" (e-reserves)

Monday, August 28: European Explorations in the Atlantic

Readings: J. H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance*, Chapters 1-2, and *The Establishment of the European Hegemony*, Chapters 1-3 (e-reserves)

Wednesday, August 30: Africans in the Emerging Atlantic World

Readings: John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, Chapters 1 & 2 (e-reserves)

Monday, September 4: Labor Day. No class.***Wednesday, September 6: Conquest and Demographic Disaster***

Readings: Patricia Seed, "The Requirement: A Protocol for Conquest;" Alfred Crosby, "Pestilence and Conquest"

Monday, September 11: The Spanish Sea

Readings: Horst Pietschmann, "Spanish Expansion in America;" Ruggiero Romano, "The Sixteenth-Century Caribbean Economy" (e-reserves)

Wednesday, September 13: The Americas in the European Imagination

Readings: Peter Burke, "American and the Rewriting of World History;" Henny Lowood, "The New World and the European Catalogue of Nature;" David Buisseret, "The Cartography of the Caribbean, 1500-1650" (e-reserves)

******* Paper 1 is due in class on Monday, September 18 *******

UNIT 2: EMERGENCE AND CONSOLIDATION OF IMPERIAL SPHERES***Monday, September 18: Religious Conflict and Changing European Geopolitics***

Reading: Dunn, "Calvinism vs. Catholicism in Western Europe" (e-reserves)

Wednesday, September 20: Developing European Rivalries

Readings: Anne Pérotin-Dumon, "French, English and Dutch in the Lesser Antilles: From Privateering to Planting" (e-reserves)

Monday, September 25: The French Religious Wars and Corsairs

Reading: Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, Introduction and Chapter 1

Wednesday, September 27: French Colonies

Boucher, "The Frontier Era of the French Caribbean" (e-reserves)

Monday, October 2: English Privateering

Reading: Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, Chapter 2

Wednesday, October 4: English Colonies

Readings: Taylor, "The West Indies, 1600-1700" (e-reserves)

Monday, October 9: Fall break. No class.***Wednesday, October 11: The Dutch Revolt and Overseas Expansion***

Reading: Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, Chapter 3; P. C. Emmer, "The Dutch and the Making of the Second Atlantic System" (e-reserves)

Monday, October 16: Buccaneers and Freebooters

Reading: Lane, *Pillaging the Empire* Chapter 4 and Chapter 6, pp. 164-80; Curtin, *Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, Chapter 7.

Wednesday, October 18: Creolization

Readings: David Buisseret, "The Process of Creolization in Seventeenth-Century Jamaica" (e-reserves); Sidney Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African American Culture*, selections

Monday, October 23: Comparisons

Presentations

Wednesday, October 25: Comparisons

Presentations

***** *Paper 2 is due in class on Monday, October 30* *****

UNIT 3: THE PLANTATION SYSTEM***Monday, October 30: Origins of the Plantation System***

Readings: Curtin, *Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, Chapters 1,2, 4

Wednesday, November 2: Rise of the Caribbean Plantation

Readings: Curtin, *Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, Chapter 6; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, Chapter 1.

Monday, November 7: Rise of the Atlantic Slave Trade

Readings: Curtin, *Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, Chapter 3; Newton, "The Beginnings of the African Slave Trade" (e-reserves)

Wednesday, November 9: Growth of the Atlantic Slave Trade

Palmer, "The Slave Trade, African Slavers and Demography" (e-reserves)

Monday, November 14: The Planter Class

Readings: Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, Chapters 2-5.

Wednesday, November 16: Commodities

Readings: Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, Chapter 6

Monday, November 21: Enslaved Labor

Readings: Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, Chapter 7

Wednesday, November 23: Thanksgiving Break. No class.***Monday, November 27: Life and Death in Caribbean Plantation Society***

Readings: Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, Chapters 8-10

Wednesday, November 29: Beyond the Plantation

Readings: Curtin, *Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, Chapter 8

Monday, December 4: Conclusions

******* Paper 3 is due in class on Monday, December 4. *******