

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

HIST 4680: The Thirty Years War

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Course Description. This course is about the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), the first pan-European war, and until the twentieth century, the most devastating war in European history. We will study the background and origins to the war, the major developments and battles, eyewitness accounts and experiences of civilians and soldiers, the search for peace, and the significance of the war for later periods.

Course Format. Students will prepare readings independently outside of class; class sessions will consist of a combination of lectures and discussions. Some group "war games" are also scheduled throughout the semester.

Course Requirements. 1. Students are responsible for attending all class sessions, arriving to sessions on time, and remaining until they are over. Allowances will be made for a handful of absences, late arrival and early leaves because of illness or emergency, but it is the students' responsibility to make up missed work by getting notes from a fellow student (or even better from two students), and consulting with the instructor during office hours to verify the understanding of key points. 2. Students are expected to do the assigned readings *before* coming to class and to bring to class readings assigned for that class session. 3. Students are expected to *actively* participate in class discussions. 4. Written assignments include weekly map, identification and short answer questions; and two essays (details to be discussed later). Assignments will *only* be accepted on the scheduled due date from students who personally attend the entire class on the scheduled due date. 5. Two one-hour in-class exams and one two-hour final exam are also scheduled. See schedule below for assignment due dates and exam dates.

Grading. Your final grade will be computed as follows: Participation (20%); Weekly Skills Assignments (20%); Essays (15% each for 30% total); In-class Exams (10% each for 20% total); Final Exam (10%).

The following grading scale will be used in this course: A=93-100, BA=88-92, B=83-87, CB=78-82, C=73-77, DC=68-72, D=60-67, E=0-62.

Academic Integrity. You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate Catalog (pp. 274-76) that pertain to Academic Integrity. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism,

complicity and computer misuse. If there is a reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe that you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with me (i.e. the instructor) if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

Communications. All questions and concerns which are not addressed in class, including those relating to assignments, grading, etc., should be discussed with the instructor in person during office hours. The instructor holds open office hours (listed above). Students may also contact the instructor in person, by email or telephone to schedule an appointment or to send notification of an emergency. The only email address that should be used for communication between WMU students and WMU faculty and staff is the email address associated with a BroncoNet ID. This email address typically takes the form "firstname.middleinitial.lastname@wmich.edu." An example is buster.h.bronco@wmich.edu. Students cannot automatically forward email from this address to other addresses. Students can access this email account or get instructions for obtaining a BroncoNet ID at GOWMU.wmich.edu.

Course Materials (in alphabetical order)

Ronald G. Asch, *The Thirty Years War. The Holy Roman Empire and Europe, 1618-48* (New York: Palgrave, 1997) - ISBN #0-312-16585-4

Richard Bonney, *The Thirty Years' War 1618-1648* (Oxford: Osprey, 2002) - ISBN #1-84176-378-0

Hans Jacob Christoffel von Grimmelhausen, *The Adventures of a Simpleton (Simplicius Simplicissimus)*, trans. Walter Wallach (New York: Continuum, 2002; first German edition 1669) - ISBN # 0-8264-1482-6

Günter Grass, *The Meeting at Telgte*, trans. Ralph Mannheim (New York: Harvest Books). ISBN # 0-1565-8575-8

Geoffrey Parker, ed., *The Thirty Years' War*, 2nd edition (Routledge: London/New York, 1997) - ISBN #0-415-12883-8

Course Schedule & Outline

I. Introduction

Tuesday - First Class Session - Introduction to the Course

Thursday - Introduction to the Issues, Events, and Significance of the War

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, ix, 1-8; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, xii-xv; Bonney, *The Thirty Years War*, 7-10

II. Background and Origins (1520s-1590s)

Tuesday - Reformation in the Holy Roman Empire - How to Take Notes in Class

Reading: There are no common readings for the next four sessions, as these lectures are meant to prepare you for the readings to follow. Students who wish background reading are referred to the chapters on the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in any Western Civilizations textbook.

Thursday - Reformation in other places in Europe

Tuesday - Unresolved Issues in Spain & Low Countries

Thursday - Unresolved Issues in Italy, the Alps & the Baltic

Tuesday - Unresolved Issues in the Holy Roman Empire - How to Take Notes on Readings

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 9-26; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, 1-22; Excerpts of the Peace of Augsburg (1555) at <http://www.uoregon.edu/~sshoemak/323/texts/Augsburg.htm>

III. The Path to War (1590s-1618)

Thursday - Local/Regional Disputes & the Growing Religious-Political Polarization of Europe as a whole

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 26-46; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, 22-41; Bonney, *The Thirty Years' War*, 11-17

IV. The Outbreak of War (1618)

Tuesday - The Catalyst: The Prague Defenestration (23 May 1618)

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 47-65; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, 42-55; Bonney. *The Thirty Years' War*, 35-38

Thursday - EXAM #1

V. From Regional Conflict into a European War (1620-1635)

Tuesday - From White Mountain to the Palatinate (1620-24)

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 65-72; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, 55-73; Bonney. *The Thirty Years War*, 39-40

Thursday - Struggle over the Alpine Passes, Spanish forces attack Breda, Sweden invades Poland (1620-24)

Tuesday - Danish Intervention & the Catholic-Imperial Response (1625-29)

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 73-100; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, 74-98; Bonney. *The Thirty Years War*, 40-42; Excerpt from the Edict of Restitution (1529) at <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Sparts/5414/Restitution.htm>

Thursday - War Games: Early War Scenario - Essay #1 due

Tuesday - No class - Recess

Thursday - No class - Recess

Tuesday - Swedish Intervention

Reading: Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 101-109; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, 99-137

Thursday - The Sack of Magdeburg (20 May 1631) & the First Battle of Breitenfeld (17 September 1631)

Reading: Bonney, *The Thirty Years' War*, 42-50

Tuesday - The Battles of Lützen (16 November 1632) and Nördlingen (5-6 September 1634), and the Blockage of "the Spanish Road"

Reading: Bonney, *The Thirty Years' War*, 50-55

Thursday - Exam #2

VI. The Search for Peace (1635)

Tuesday - The Peace of Prague

Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 110-25

VII. The War Lingers on (1635-48)

Thursday - War Games: Intervention Scenarios

Tuesday - War by Proxy

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 126-34; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, 138-60; Bonney, *The Thirty Years' War*, 56-67

Thursday - Eyewitness Accounts & Experiences of Civilians & Soldiers I

Reading: Bonney, *The Thirty Years' War*, 68-81; *The Adventures of a Simpleton*, first half

Note: There will be a visitor participating in this session's discussion - Mr. Ben Gurk, a history teacher in Westland, Michigan, who is a WMU History alumnus and former U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant with two tours in Iraq.

Tuesday - Eyewitness Accounts & Experiences of Civilians & Soldiers II - Essay #2 due

Reading: *The Adventures of a Simpleton*, second half

VIII. End of Fighting & The Making of Peace (1648)

Thursday - The Peace of Westphalia

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 134-49; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, 160-69; Bonney, *The Thirty Years' War*, 82-87; Excerpt of the Peace of Westphalia at <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/Avalon/westphal.htm>

IX. Meaning & Significance of the War

Tuesday - What was the War about? Politics? Religion? State Finance?

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 150-84; Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, 170-202

Thursday - Legacy of the War in Modern Culture

Reading: Asch, *The Thirty Years War*, 185-94; Grass, *The Meeting at Telgte*, part I

X. War Games

Tuesday - War Games: Apocalypse Scenario

Reading: Grass, *The Meeting at Telgte*, part II

Thursday - Last Class Session - Final Discussion

Final Exam