UCLA Department of History  
European MA/PhD Written Exam  
March 23, 24, 25 2009

EUROPE 1550-1800: REFORMATION TO FRENCH REVOLUTION

Please answer any two questions. You are allowed a total of four hours to complete this exam (two hours per question.) You are on your honor not to consult any materials, including notes or papers or anything stored in your computer. You are also on your honor not to discuss the exam or its content with any faculty or student until the exam period is over.

1. What was secularization and how did it work in Western Europe from the late Middle Ages to the late seventeenth century?

2. What set of factors had determined the geographical distribution of Lutheranism, Calvinism (including its Anglican variant) and Catholicism in Europe by the time of the Treaty of Utrecht?

3. Both the Renaissance in Italy and the Scientific Revolution that swept parts of western Europe in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries had their counterpart in elite embrace of astrology, alchemy, hermeticism, magic, and in widespread popular belief in witches. How do you make sense of this seeming contradiction?

4. The history of the Mediterranean in the age of Philip II has long been seen through the lenses of Braudel’s epic work. How has Braudel been revised in the last decade and a half of studies of the Mediterranean?

5. Since Norbert Elias’ influential work, historians have seen courts as shaping social and political structures during the early modern period. What were his major emphases, and how valid do you think they remain?

6. How would you periodize the sequence of major wars in Europe, from the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559 to the Treaty of Amiens in 1802?

7. “Popular and elite culture” are terms often used to describe aspects of early modern European culture. What was the nature of the interplay between them in Western Europe between 1520 and 1715, and how has our understanding of these concepts changed?

8. Historians have recently questioned the perception of early modern states as absolutist and even questioned the concept of the state itself. Monod advances a novel approach to these in The Power of Kings. How do you evaluate it?

9. What were the major features of the changes termed in some recent historiography the ‘Industrious Revolution’ in Europe, preceding the Industrial Revolution. How far do you regard the concept as a persuasive?
10. The term ‘Enlightenment’ is widely used to describe a general trend of cultural development in 18th century Europe? How many different kinds of Enlightenment – national or typological – does it make sense to speak of?