Answer two questions from the list below. You are allowed four hours to complete this examination (two hours per question). You are on your honor not to consult any other materials, including notes or papers stored on your computer. Please return your completed exam paper to the graduate office by 5 PM today. Good luck.

1. The invention and spread of the printing press throughout most of western Europe from the late fifteenth century onwards transformed European culture. While noting the extensive historiography on printing, reading, and new technologies of knowledge, discuss the genesis of printing and its impact on European society.

2. The recovery of classical texts during the Renaissance and the early modern period deeply influenced western Europe’s mental landscape. While discussing the impact of these texts on cultural production, science, philology, and other areas, also discuss in some detail the political implications of such textual recoveries.

3) Religious violence played a unique role in the early modern period. Discuss the place of violence in historical processes, provide some historiographical information on the perceptions and representations of violence by recent scholarship and specifically examine the role of violence in France’s religious wars.

4. Enlightenment ideas about progress, new technological forms, and the whole range of intellectual transformations which have come to be described as the “Enlightenment Project” contrasts with the Enlightenment fascination with the representations of the so-called “noble savage.” Discuss.

5. How did “public” opinion emerge in Renaissance and early modern Europe? What were the characteristics of “public” opinion and its role in political developments? Discuss.

6. Early modern historians have seen the Thirty Years war as a watershed in shaping Europe’s later development. Discuss the importance of the war, its legacy, and its place within the historiographical debate on the seventeenth century crisis.

7. The Reformation and Counter-Reformation shaped social, political, cultural, and religious discourse in Europe throughout most of the late sixteenth century and beyond. Choose two areas and/or traditions and discuss similarities and differences.

8. Historians have recently questioned the perception of early modern states as absolutists and even questioned the concept of the state itself. In Monod’s *The Power of Kings*, the author advances a novel approach, linking the emergence of a “Christian self” to new forms of political power and political discourse. Review some of the older historiography on absolutism and the state and compare those views to new ideas about the nature of state power. Provide examples from two different countries.
9. "Popular and elite culture" are terms often used to describe aspects of early modern European culture. How has our understanding of these concepts changed over the last three decades? What was the nature of the interplay between popular and elite culture in western Europe between 1520 and 1715? Select some specific examples.

10. Discuss European overseas expansion from the early sixteenth century to 1650 and compare two different models for expansion and colonization. How did the discovery of the New World and the opening of direct trade with the East affect the Old World?

11. Can one speak of a "scientific revolution" during the early modern period? If so, what were its characteristics? If not, how would you interpret the intellectual life of the period from late Renaissance to the Enlightenment? Discuss at least two areas of intellectual achievements.

12. Compare Britain and the Netherlands and their different paths towards more centralized forms of government.

13. Since Norbert Elias' influential work on court society historians have seen courts as shaping social and political structures during the early modern period. How valuable are Elias' views on the role of the early modern court and the emergence of the state? Discuss with examples.

14. How have recent works on the social history of art in the Renaissance changed the way we think about that period and the evolution of European culture in succeeding centuries? Discuss with examples.