



HIS 218: SCANDINAVIA TO 1800

Autumn Semester 2013

Course Meeting:
MWF 12:30-1:20
Beck 321

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Office: Beck 333 (x7435)
Office Hours: MWF 11:30-12:30
and by appointment

Welcome to the exciting world of Scandinavian history! It is a history with courageous explorers traveling to places unknown, royal intrigue with eccentric (and sometimes mad) monarchs, intense rivalries and wars – particularly between Danes and Swedes, and overall a region of hardship and poor quality of life. Early Scandinavia is quite a contrast to the peace-seeking and prosperous European region of the modern era. This course surveys the history of Scandinavia from the earliest evidence of human presence to about 1800. Particular emphasis is placed on the Vikings, the spread of and conversion to Christianity, the emergence of early modern dynastic states in Denmark and Sweden, Sweden and its Baltic empire, and struggles between change and continuity in the 18th century.

History is much more than an overview of the various kings (and sometimes queens) ruling the various regions. While the political environment is important, just as important is the social aspects of history – how people of all levels of society lived and interacted, the beliefs and values they held, and how events far and near influenced their daily lives; all aspects of society helped shape the directions of Scandinavia. Our readings and discussions will touch on the political developments, but also focus on the social and cultural history.

One of the central questions for any history is *why do we care – why is this important?* Scandinavia is often overlooked in European history, except for brief interludes such as the Vikings and the Thirty Years' War. Some might even argue that Scandinavia is on the periphery. However, as we shall see, Scandinavia was actively involved with, interacted heavily with, and was influenced by the rest of Europe. Throughout this course (as well as the following course in the Spring Semester), we will ask why is Scandinavian history important and how it is relevant

for our understanding of European and world history. Perhaps you already have some ideas. Hopefully this course will give you a few more.

HIS 218 meets the **HIPHI** requirement – Historical and Philosophical Studies. By completing the requirements for this History course, students will:

1. Acquire a perspective on history and an understanding of the factors that shape human activity. This knowledge will furnish students with insights into the origins and nature of contemporary issues and a foundation for future comparative understanding of civilizations.
2. Develop critical thinking through the study of diverse interpretations of historical events.
3. Apply critical thinking through historical analysis of primary and secondary sources.
4. Develop communications skills in exams, papers, discussions.
5. Develop an understanding of the patterns of Scandinavian history, and how they inform present-day Nordic society, politics, and relations with its neighbors.

In addition to being a course in the History department, HIS 218 also counts towards a **Scandinavian Studies** major or minor. One component of the learning outcomes for the Scandinavian Studies department is for students to gain cultural knowledge: gain a broad-based knowledge of the Nordic countries historically and today, gain an appreciation of the Nordic area as a multicultural and multiethnic region, recognize links between the Nordic countries and the European community as well as the rest of the world.

Required Readings:

Buckley, Victoria. *Christina, Queen of Sweden: The Restless Life of a European Eccentric*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2005.
Byock, Jesse L., trans. *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki*. New York: Penguin Classics, 1999.
Evensen, Erik. *Gods of Adgard*. Columbus, Ohio: Studio E3, 2007.
Ferguson, Robert. *The Vikings: A History*. New York: Penguin Books, 2010.
Nordstrom, Byron J.. *Scandinavia Since 1500*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Additional Readings will be available on Moodle (gustavus.edu/moodle)

Reference Books

In addition to the required reading, you may find the following books useful:

T.K. Derry. *A History of Scandinavia*.
Karen Larsen. *History of Norway*.
Jason Lavery. *The History of Finland*.
Byron Nordstrom. *The History of Sweden*.
Stewart Oakley. *The Story of Denmark*.
Franklin Scott. *Sweden: The Nation's History*.

Grading

Participation	20%	Christina Response Paper	10%
Transcription Project	10%	Research Proposal	5%
Midterm Take-Home	10%	Research Paper	25%
Final Take-Home	15%	Research Presentation	5%

Grading Scale:

	B+: 87-89.9%	C+: 77-79.9%	D+: 67-69.9%
A: 93-100%	B: 83-86.9%	C: 73-76.9%	D: 62-66.9%
A-: 90-92.9%	B-: 80-82.9%	C-: 70-72.9%	F: > 62%

Participation, Deadlines, and Assignment Submissions:

It is expected that students regularly attend class having read the assigned material and ready to participate in discussions. "Ready" means you have completed and thought carefully about the readings; you are encouraged to make notes and jot down questions when doing the readings. Students can also participate by meeting me during office hours or by e-mailing me questions and comments.

Everyone should consistently demonstrate common courtesy to both me as the instructor and your fellow classmates. With that in mind, if there are occasions when you are late to class you should enter as quietly as possible without making a scene. Cell phones should be turned off or silent (yes, vibrations still make noise). And we should all treat each other's comments and questions with the respect they deserve.

All assignments for this course (except the transcription project) are to be submitted in **electronic format** through Moodle. Your completed assignment needs to be uploaded prior to the start of class on the day the assignment is due. Papers turned in late without requesting an extension ahead of time will be reduced in grade for each day it is late; requests for an extension must be made at least 24 hours before the assignment is due.

Exams:

There are two take-home exams in this course. The exam question and parameters will be handed out in class one week before the due date. Responses are to be based **only** on course materials – readings and class discussions – and are **NOT** to include any outside sources (such as the Internet or additional library research). As with any paper, your response should have a thesis statement and sufficient examples with citations to support your argument.

- The Midterm take-home exam is due **Wednesday, October 16**.
- The Final take-home exam is due **Wednesday, December 18 by 3:30pm**.

Disability Services:

If you have a physical, psychiatric/emotional, medical, learning or attentional disability that may have an effect on your ability to complete assigned course work, please contact Laurie Bickett, Disability Services Coordinator, in the Advising Center (x6286). She will review your concerns and decide with you what accommodations are necessary. I will be happy to work with you, upon receipt of documentation from her.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:

As a student at Gustavus, you are expected to know and abide by the College's Academic Honesty Policy as printed in the academic catalog. The policy states, in part, "In all academic exercises, examinations, presentations, speeches, papers, and reports, students shall submit their own work. Footnotes or some other acceptable form of citation must accompany any use of another's words or ideas. Students are especially cautioned that quoting or paraphrasing from electronic sources without proper citation is as serious a violation as copying from a book or other printed source."

All instances of academic misconduct (such as plagiarism) will result in a zero for that assignment and be reported to the Office of the Provost. A continuing pattern of academic misconduct could result in academic probation or expulsion.

By turning in any assignments for this course you are agreeing to the **honor pledge**: "On my honor, I pledge that I have not given, received, or tolerated others' use of unauthorized aid in completing this work."

Andrea A. Lunsford offers the following suggestions to "Avoid Plagiarism" in *The Everyday Writer*:

- Maintain an accurate and thorough working bibliography.
- Establish a consistent note-taking system, listing sources and page numbers and clearly identifying all quotations, paraphrases, summaries, statistics, and visuals.
- Identify all quotations with quotation marks – both in your notes and in your essay. Be sure your summaries and paraphrases use your own words and sentence structures.
- Give a citation or note for each quotation, paraphrase, summary, arguable assertion or opinion, statistic, and visual that is from a source.
- Prepare an accurate and complete list of sources cited according to the required documentation style. (192)

Formatting Guidelines for Typed Assignments:

- All writing assignments are to be typed, with one-inch margins and page numbers;
- Use only 12-point font size, Times or Times New Roman, double-spaced;
- Correct spelling and grammar; proofread your paper before turning it in;
- Proper citations using **Chicago style** (a works-cited page is **not** necessary except for the research paper);
- Read and re-read the question asked to make sure you are answering it fully;
- For additional help, please visit the Writing Center or talk to me during office hours.

Transcription Project

Around the turn of the millennium many of the oral histories from the Viking period were put down on paper. Long before the advent of the printing press, these texts were copied by hand. But no matter how much we talk about scribal activity and no matter how many pictures we see of hand-written manuscripts, we can never fully appreciate what medieval scribes were doing until we do it ourselves. Experience is a great way to learn history, so we

will create our own manuscripts, copying a section from *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki* by hand.

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an experiential sense of how manuscripts were produced – how books were made in an age of hand copying. As you copy the manuscript, think about your relationship to the text itself, and how the process of copying a text shapes that relationship. These are the basic requirements for the manuscript:

1. The manuscript must be stitched together with needle and thread.
2. The writing area must be ruled (by dry point or pencil). The number of rows on the page is up to you.
3. The manuscript must be written in ink. You do *not* need to use a calligraphy pen or write in a “fancy” or medieval-looking script. You *do* need to write legibly.
4. You may not use whiteout. Corrections must be made the medieval way, with dots underneath the incorrect letters or words and the correct text in the margin.
5. The manuscript must have at least one decorated initial.
6. The manuscript must have a colophon (a scribal signature) at the end of the text – e.g., “Here ends this work of King Hrolf Kraki, copied this [date] by me, [your name].” You may add a brief reference to a contemporary event (e.g., “...copied by me, [your name], at the time of the...”). You may also make appropriate thanksgivings or appeals for prayers if you wish. **Do not have a “title page”** or write your name on the manuscript anywhere except for the colophon.
7. You should copy approximately 6 pages from the Saga. Try to select sections so that your manuscript tells a complete story with a beginning, middle, and end.



Everything in the manuscript must be done by hand, and by *your* hand! I do not expect your manuscript to rival those from Iceland, but sloppy, careless, or lazy scribes will lose points. **Copying is a time-consuming task. Start early!** Your manuscript should demonstrate your own artistic flourishes and personality, but I am not grading you on how well you draw. Have fun with this assignment, as you put yourself into the medieval era.

Due: **Monday, October 7**

Christina Response Paper

We will be reading Veronica Buckley's historical biography *Christina, Queen of Sweden*. Write a 3-4 page response paper considering the historical nature of the biography.

Does Buckley treat Queen Christina fairly? As this is a work of historical fiction, what is the historical basis for Buckley's novel? In what areas can we reasonably trust Buckley's interpretation of the history? Are there examples where we should be more suspect of the interpretation?

You are strongly encouraged to compare aspects of Buckley's book with our other readings relating to Queen Christina. Due: **Monday, November 11**

Writing Assignment: Research Paper, 5-7 pages

Throughout this course, we explore numerous themes. Choose an aspect of early (pre-1800) Scandinavian history that interests you and write an analytical research essay. While your paper topic should emerge from a reading or a class discussion, you should use the class materials only as a starting point to doing outside research on the topic, to delve into the topic with greater depth and analysis; your paper should not simply summarize our discussions, but rather should go significantly beyond our class work and represent your own ideas, analysis, and original conclusions.

You should include at least 3 additional scholarly sources not used in class (Wikipedia, as an encyclopedia, is not what I would consider a "scholarly" source). As with any paper, there must be sufficient citations to support your argument with concrete examples, and all sources you used must be listed in a "Works Cited" page.

A research paper proposal is due by **Monday, November 4**. The proposal, approximately a half to one page, should briefly present your research topic, the central questions you are exploring, and the sources that will help inform you of this topic. The proposal will help you begin the research process early, narrow your focus, and enable me to offer suggestions on your topic.

During the week of December 9 you will present your research topic and conclusions to the class. Your presentation should be between 5 and 10 minutes long and should also include a discussion of the sources that inform your research. Although not required, you may also wish to locate images and create a PowerPoint presentation.

The completed research paper is due on **Monday, December 9**.