

First Paper: Topics

Requirements

- 1) Write an essay in response to ONE of the topics below. Your paper must be 1250 words (around five pages) long, using 12-point font and one inch margins. All students should submit the paper online on the eruu site, in pdf or word format, by Uguukqp"36.
- 2) Your paper must be computer-processed. Please give your paper a title, and write your name on the back of the last page. Do not write your name elsewhere on the paper. All pages should be numbered. Refer to the editing handout or Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*, posted on the class web site, for further editing suggestions. You may also consult with tutors at the Writing Center or with Professors Ravel or McCants about your paper.
- 3) Citations to texts read in this course should be made in parentheses in your paper. For example, if you refer to a passage on page 13 of Pettegree's *The Book in the Renaissance*, indicate this in the following manner at the end of your sentence, after the period: (Pettegree, 13). Full citations to any work not assigned in class should be made in footnote or endnote form, but for this paper you do not need to consult any outside readings.

Topics

- 1) "The advent of movable type printing in Europe in the middle of the fifteenth century democratized communication. The printing press was the decisive factor for change in the political and religious hierarchies of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe." Write an essay in which you agree or disagree with this statement. Draw broadly on our readings, class discussions, and examinations of holdings in MIT's Rare Book Collection. Be sure to cite specific examples from our readings, discussions, and rare book examinations to bolster your argument.
- 2) The year is 1520. Imagine you are one of the following: the Pope, the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, the owner of a printing business specializing in religious publishing in the Holy Roman Empire, a Catholic theologian, a Protestant theologian, or a literate peasant. Write a journal entry, a letter to a friend or associate, or in the case of the printer a business plan in which you comment on the way that print has amplified the impact of contemporary Catholic and Protestant reform movements and impacted you. Be sure to refer to specific ideas and events in your discussion.

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