

# Early modern europe – middle ages

[History](#), [Middle Ages](#)



The period after the Dark Ages saw the rise of Europe as it wrestled with war, different ideas, the advent of the printing press and the weakening power of the Church led to a new Europe. With *Early Modern Europe*, Cameron, a British historian, gathered the writings and ideas of ten historians from the United States and the United Kingdom to look at the history of Europe from 1500 to 1800. During this period, European countries explored the world in search for spices and other goods across the world, South America was discovered and populated by Europeans, and the nation-state rose as the primary political power in the world.

More than the broad sweeps of history, the authors in this collection delved with the ordinary lives of people during the Middle Ages. Through the masterful and scholarly, although accessible writing style of the authors in this collection, the reader is able to grasp what life was like during the three centuries that Europe emerged as a global power. More than just the occurrences in their history, however, the response of the people portrayed in the vignettes and stories were also showcased.

The essays in the collection provide an introduction to the kind of world painted by the experiences of Europe. The religious upheavals, together with the intellectual developments and the political life of the nations as well as the emphasis on violence, revolution and redistribution of wealth form the centerpiece upon which modern Europe has been built upon. More importantly, the book tackles the lifestyle of the common folks as well as the aristocracy during the three centuries that the book covers and the implications of the decisions made by the ruling elite of the countries in Europe during this period.

## **A Sweep of European History**

More than just providing raw historical data, the contributors to this collection explored the themes of the unfolding and evolving economic and political situation. In addition to that, the book shows the impact of new ideas and concepts and the reaction of different institutions to these ideas. Early Modern Europe serves as introduction to the serious student of history as well as to those who are simply interested in the unfolding history of Europe.

The book approached the topic and presented the information in a chronological fashion. Through this, the book was able to show the developments of Europe in terms of economics, politics, religion, and the developments of new ideas and concepts. The information provided in the book was helpful in understanding not only the broad sweep of history but also the point of view of common folks as history unfolds around them.

The book was published to be used as a textbook. In a manner of speaking, the information presented in the collection is not new. Rather, what is new is the manner of presentation and the way that the book seeks to present a holistic perspective in the life of Europe in the Early Modern Period, thus making it accessible to everyone interested in the topic.

The book was written primarily for students of history. But it can also be accessed by people who are simply interested in history due to the ease of presentation and approach of the contributors. As a primary source in research, however, it offers little help since the materials considered in the book will be considered as secondary sources. As an introductory book,

however, it offers great help. The student who will use this for research would do well to consult sources with more in-depth discussion of the topic.

Although there are a number of benefits of presenting the book in a chronological order, the book is not helpful in the sense that the broader trends, themes and topics in the history of Europe were not highlighted.

In a general manner, Early Modern Europe provided a sweep of history and highlighted the different events and ideas that caused an upheaval in the fabric of Europe. The editor and the contributors then outlined the rise of Europe as a major power in the world in the period from 1500-1800. The contributors pointed out the necessity of the decline in the power of the Church, as well as the engine of war, in effecting change throughout Europe.

## **Conclusion**

Studying history need not be a tedious task. Moreover, taking on the broad sweep of history may take away the richness of the experiences of people during this period. Early Modern Europe in this sense takes into account the perspectives of the common folks and peoples in the period that the book tackles. The contributors to the collection have succeeded in painting the picture of Europe in the particular timeframes and topics that they explored. What is lacking, however, is an integration and cohesion of these narratives into a whole.

European history had been a colorful one. The countries in this continent have literally transformed the way that the world is organized in terms of

religion, economy, and politics among others. The book did justice to this colorful history.