Europe between the Renaissance and Waterloo Midterm Essay Instructions Historians use a wide range of primary sources to answer questions about the past. The most important of the primary sources are the written and printed ones, e.g. letters, diaries, personal papers, edicts, legal codes and more. They can help us understand and make sense of the past. In this Midterm Exam Assignment, you will analyze a primary source and submit a four-five page essay that examines its historical significance and makes conclusions about what the document can tell us about Europe between the Renaissance and Waterloo. I know the instructions “to analyze” may induce anxiety among some of you, but this midterm is designed to help you develop analytical skills and to bolster your confidence when examining a primary document. You will use four steps - we’ll call them the 4 Cs of analysis - in this assignment: Chronology Context Causation And Contingency. First, let me explain a little about each one. Chronology. Historian Scott Alan Metzger called chronology the most basic and essential element in understanding history. Knowing the order in which events happened is the first step towards discerning the relationship between the events and broader historical forces. Think back to Module One for a moment. The fascination with the numbers of plague victims in and around Avignon makes more sense when we know that the papacy was residing in Avignon when the disease struck Europe. Context. Historical context is important when analyzing primary sources, and it requires close attention to the person producing the work and the circumstances in which it was produced. What was happening at the time that influenced the author and the document? What problems was the document’s author addressing or trying to solve? Causation. Once you have a good understanding of chronology and context you can move on to causation, or examining the chain of events or connected influences that shape or cause specific historical outcomes. In other words, you can look at how the document fit in to the chain of events of the larger historical movement. How had events preceding the document’s creation influenced the solutions the author was proposing? Contingency. This term describes our final step, which will be to examine why things turned out the way that they did. What specific factors led to this particular outcome? Midterm Essay Assignment Instructions For the midterm exam you will write one 4-5 page (typed, 12-point font, double-spaced) essay that analyzes a primary source document using the four steps described above. The essay must be written in prose (i.e. not in bullet points) with an introduction and conclusion. The primary source document you will analyze is an excerpt from Martin Luther’s Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate (1520) which is provided in a PDF below. Use the following sources to help you write the essay, which will be particularly helpful for establishing the chronology and context. You may only use these sources for writing this midterm essay. Be sure to cite all of your sources using the Chicago Manual of Style footnote citations. I have included instructions on footnote citations in the assignment instructions and drop box. Books ○ Jackson J. Spielvogel, Western Civilization, Volume B: 1300-1815 (10th Edition, 2018). ○ James M. Estes, “Introduction,” in To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, 1520: The Annotated Luther Study Edition, James M. Estses and Timothy J. Wengert, editors (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2016), 369-75. A link to a PDF copy is provided below. Journal Articles ○ David M. Whitford, “The Papal Antichrist: Martin Luther and the Underappreciated Influence of Lorenzo Valla,” Renaissance Quarterly 61, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 26-52. This article can be accessed using the JSTOR database on the UCO library website. If you are unsure how to find articles on JSTOR, please check out this great user guide and contact the course instructor with questions. Scholarly Websites ○ “Address to the German Nobility,” Reformation 500, accessed July 18, 2018, https://reformation500.csl.edu/timeline/address-to-the-german-nobility/. ○ “War of Words. War of Images,” Reforming the Word: Martin Luther in Context, University of Michigan Library Online Exhibits, accessed July 18, 2018, https://www.lib.umich.edu/online-exhibits/exhibits/show/reforming-the-word/war-of-words--war-of-images-. Remember, you may only use the above-listed secondary sources for this essay assignment. Before you begin writing, read the primary document and the secondary sources. Begin making notes about the chronology, context, causation, and contingency. From your notes you can begin formulating your essay outline. Pay special attention to the conclusions you can draw about the 4 Cs, and what evidence you can use from the primary document and secondary sources to support your conclusions. The type of essay your will write is known as an argumentative essay. If you have not written one of these before, take a look at Purdue University’s excellent Online Writing Lab that explains how to write this type of assignment. Once you have an outline you can proceed to writing the essay. Make sure you have an introduction and conclusion to the essay, as well as a body that discussed the 4 Cs. The essay should be 4-5 pages, typed, double-spaced, and margins should be 1.0 inches. Use footnotes to cite your secondary sources. Citations of the primary source excerpt are not needed. A PDF style guide is provided to help with footnote formatting.