

History 100: Western Thought to 1600

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Prof. Brian W. Ogilvie

Teaching Assistant: Christoph Strobel

Spring Semester 1998, Section 2B

Lecture: MW 12:20-1:10, Bartlett 301

Discussion: 4B, F 11:15-12:05, Bartlett 206
5B, F 12:20-1:10, School of Management 9
6B, F 1:25-2:15, School of Management 9

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Hours:	TuTh 10:00-11:30 AM, and by appointment. If you cannot come to scheduled office hours, please don't hesitate to make an appointment or to drop by. I'm usually in my office in the morning.	Hours:	MW 11:00 AM-12:00 noon, and by appointment.

This syllabus is also available on the World Wide Web at the following URL:

<<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~ogilvie/courses/100/index.html>>.

Updates to the syllabus, handouts, and assignments will be posted to this web page.

Brief course description

This course has two related purposes:

First, we will be reading classics of ancient Greek, ancient Roman, medieval, and Renaissance philosophy and literature, as a means of introduction to the Western intellectual tradition. This will necessarily be a selective introduction. My goal is not to "cover" all of Western thought in the last two and a half millennia—that would be impossible to do in a lifetime, let alone a semester. Instead, we hope to introduce you to the range of literature in this tradition and look at the ways in which different writers have dealt with some similar problems.

Second, we will consider the ways in which the Western tradition has been repeatedly reconstructed, as succeeding generations of thinkers turned to the past with new interests and aims. Classics, the "great books," are made, not born: from the variety of conflicting views expressed by past thinkers, societies select those which seem to offer guidance when confronting contemporary problems. This means that the interpretation of classic works can change dramatically as social and intellectual conditions change.

Course goals

The course description, along with the course schedule below, gives you an idea of the subject matter addressed by this course. At the end of the course, you should be familiar with the texts we are reading, the ideas that they raise, and the historical contexts that produced them. As an educated woman or man living in a western society, you will find this knowledge to be helpful in understanding our common culture and the differences which separate us from the past.

The course has another goal: to help you learn to think historically. What does it mean to “think historically”? Historians might disagree on a precise definition, but they would all agree that historical thinking involves these three attitudes or skills:

- Understanding human actions and thoughts in the context which produced them. The historian’s cardinal sin is *anachronism*, which means a confusion of time. Every human society, past and present, has its own values and ways of thinking, and they are often very different from our own. For example, the ancient Greeks used the word “democracy” to describe one kind of government, but their notion of “democracy” is, in many respects, very different from our own. Avoiding anachronism means understanding the past on its own terms.
- Exercising critical judgment about what you read and hear. “Critical judgment” does not mean always being negative. Rather, it means that you should always weigh and consider the validity of what you have been told, in light of the source’s possible biases and the strength of its argument. Historical sources are like legal testimony and argument: they aren’t always true or convincing. The historian, like a judge, has to weigh and consider his or her sources and decide whether they are reliable.
- Knowing how to use historical sources—texts and objects—as evidence to make an argument about what happened in the past. History is imagination disciplined by evidence. Historians want to know not only *what* happened in the past, but *why* it happened and what its consequences were. Historical sources are the building blocks of historical explanation, but they must be interpreted.

To reach these goals, you will have to engage in “active learning.” If your high-school history classes involved nothing more than reading the textbook, listening to the teacher, memorizing names and dates, and regurgitating these facts in papers and tests, you are in for a surprise. History is much more interesting than that. But you will have to work: to think about the lectures and readings, and participate actively in discussions.

Your goals for the course

You have just read my goals for the course. You should now take the time to reflect on those goals and think about any others you might have. Everyone takes a college course for a reason: it might be simply to fulfill a distribution or a major requirement, but you probably have other reasons: otherwise you could have taken another course that meets those requirements. In the space below, you can write the reasons *you* are in this course and any goals on which you wish to concentrate during it.

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Course structure

Lectures, by Prof. Ogilvie, take place on Mondays and Wednesdays. Discussion sections will be held on Fridays and will be led by Mr. Strobel. Both lectures and discussions are crucial parts of the course, and attendance at both is required. Reading necessary to

understand the lectures will be assigned in conjunction with that lecture, but all the readings for a week will be discussed on Fridays. If you fall behind in the readings during the week, you should catch up by Friday in order to be prepared for discussion.

Education specialists sometimes denigrate lectures as a form of “passive learning.” In their view, a lecturer imparts information to students, who merely take it in. But effective attendance at a lecture requires more than passive absorption. You should think about what the lecture is about, distinguish important points from illustrative examples, and take careful notes. You should also ask yourself—and, if it seems important, the lecturer—any questions you might have. You should take the same approach to your reading. If you do this, you will have no problem finding something to say in the discussions; on the contrary, you will find that an hour goes by very quickly!

Course requirements

This course is an introductory survey. It has no prerequisites and requires no background in history or Western thought. Some of the readings are difficult, but they will be explained so that everyone can understand them, and discussions will help you deepen your understanding. But the course is not easy. You will need to consistently do the readings and attend class regularly in order to pass. To succeed in this class, you should plan to spend six to ten hours every week reading and studying. Some weeks won't require that much; other weeks may require more.

There are five basic requirements for the course:

1. Attendance at lectures and discussion sections.

If you must miss a class, you should inform Prof. Ogilvie or Mr. Strobel in advance of the reason, or provide documentation (such as a note from the doctor) afterwards. You may send e-mail or leave messages on Prof. Ogilvie's voice mail or with the History Department (545-1330). Athletes should present a complete schedule of the days they will miss by February 11. If a religious holiday will prevent you from attending class, please inform Prof. Ogilvie or Mr. Strobel by February 11.

2. Reading all assignments.

There will be frequent quizzes on the readings in lectures and discussion sections. If you have done the readings, the questions will be straightforward. The quizzes will also be used to monitor attendance at lectures.

3. Two papers

Two short (5-7 page) papers will be required. Paper topics will be announced February 25 and April 22. They will be due one week later: i.e., **March 4** and **April 29**. Papers will be graded on content (what you say), organization (how effectively you say it), and style (how clearly you say it). If you are dissatisfied with your grade on a paper, you will have the opportunity to rewrite it.

4. Midterm

A midterm examination will be given on March 30. You will receive a study guide in advance.

5. Final exam

The final will be given during exam week. The exact date will be announced after the exam schedule has been published. You will receive a study guide in advance.

The course grade will be determined according to the following criteria:

Attendance and participation in discussion:	25%
Two papers @ 15% each:	30%
Midterm examination:	20%
Final examination:	25%

Policy on academic honesty

Plagiarism is grounds for failure in the course. Plagiarism consists of either (a) copying the exact words of another work without both enclosing them in quotation marks and providing a reference, or (b) using information or ideas from another work without providing credit, in notes, to the source of the information or ideas. Submission of a paper copied from another work, or which contains fictitious or falsified notes, will result in automatic failure of the course. Please refer to the *Undergraduate Rights and Responsibilities* booklet for the University's full policy on academic honesty.

Books for course

The following paperback books are available for purchase at Food for Thought Books (106 N. Pleasant, Amherst). They are also on reserve in the DuBois Library. The Montague Book Mill, Raven Books in Northampton, and many other local used bookstores have copies of some of these books. You are advised to purchase all the books early in the semester, because bookstores begin to return unused copies before the end of the semester. I have tried to select the least expensive editions.

Aristotle, *The Politics and the Constitution of Athens*, ed. Stephen Everson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). \$10.

The Holy Bible, King James Version (New York: Ivy Books, 1991). \$6. Feel free to use your own Bible if you have one.

Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. Robert Fagles (New York: Viking Penguin, 1991). \$9.

Seamus Heaney, *The cure at Troy: A version of Sophocles's Philoctetes* (London: Faber and Faber, 1990). \$10.

The Rule of St. Benedict in English. Ed. Timothy Fry. (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1982). \$3.

Dante Alighieri, *The Inferno of Dante*, trans. Robert Pinsky (New York: Noonday Press, 1996). \$8.

Thomas More, *Utopia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989). \$9.

Martin Luther, *Christian liberty* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1943). \$3.50.

In addition, there is a course packet at Campus Design & Copy (Student Union 401-403, M-F 9:30 AM-5 PM). This packet contains the rest of the readings for this course, and you should plan to buy it. There will be a few copies of the packet on reserve.

A note on readings

You should plan to read each selection twice: once to get an overview, and a second time to take notes on the main points. Before the discussion, you can then go over your notes and skim the text a final time to make sure you have not missed anything.

It is important to take careful notes. You will find it much easier to write papers and study for the exams if your notes are well organized and easy to read. This is true of lecture notes as well as reading notes. If you are not sure how to take notes efficiently, Learning Support Services (DuBois Library, 10th floor) offers a Note Taking Workshop several times each semester. They also offer workshops in time management and test taking should you feel in need of help in those areas.

For students who are interested in pursuing the course topics in more depth, I have indicated optional readings after the course schedule. These readings are not on reserve. If you check them out of the library, please return them as soon as you are done so that

other students may use them.

N.B. The edition of Dante's *Inferno* that is on reserve contains the same translation as the one in the bookstore, but the pagination is different because it contains illustrations. The reading assignments from Dante are given by canto rather than by page numbers.

Course schedule, with assigned readings

Wed. 1/28 Lecture—Introduction to Western Civilization

Part I: Ancient Greece

Fri. 1/30 Discussion

Reading: Read the syllabus carefully; handout from Wednesday.

Mon. 2/2 Lecture: Archaic Greece

Reading: Homer, *Iliad*, Books 1, 2, 6.

Wed. 2/4 Lecture: The rise of classical Greek culture

Reading: Homer, *Iliad*, Books 9, 12.337-381, 16, 18; Archilochus and Sappho (in reading packet).

Fri. 2/6 Discussion: Homer, Archilochus, Sappho

Mon. 2/9 Lecture: Greece and the barbarians

Reading: Homer, *Iliad*, Books 19-21; Herodotus, *History* (reading packet).

Wed. 2/11 Lecture: The Peloponnesian war

Reading: Homer, *Iliad*, Books 22-24; Thucydides, *Peloponnesian war* (reading packet).

Fri. 2/13 Discussion: Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides

Mon. 2/16 NO CLASS (Presidents' Day)

Wed. 2/18 Lecture: Greek religion and literature

Reading: Heaney/Sophocles, *The cure at Troy*.

Fri. 2/20 Discussion: Sophocles

Mon. 2/23 Lecture: The Greek *polis*

Reading: Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*.

Wed. 2/25 Lecture: Greek philosophy

Reading: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 7.

*** First paper topic announced ***

Fri. 2/27 Discussion: Aristotle

Part II: Rome, the Jews, and Early Christianity

- Mon. 3/2** **Lecture: The Roman Republic**
Reading: Sallust, *Conspiracy of Catiline* (reading packet); Cicero, *On duties* (reading packet), 1.1-18, 1.43-45.
- Wed. 3/4** **Lecture: Roman ideals**
Reading: Cicero, *On duties*, 3.1-6, 3.12-15, 3.28-32.

*** First paper due ***
- Fri. 3/6** **Discussion: Sallust, Cicero**
- Mon. 3/9** **Lecture: The Roman Empire**
No reading for today; begin reading for Wednesday.
- Wed. 3/11** **Lecture: The Hebrews**
Reading: *Genesis* 1-22; *Exodus* 1-12; *I Kings* 1-11; *Job*.
- Fri. 3/13** **Discussion: Old Testament**
- Mon. 3/23** **Lecture: The origins of Christianity**
Reading: *Gospel according to St. Matthew*.
- Wed. 3/25** **Lecture: Christians, Pagans, and the Roman Empire**
Reading: *Acts of the Apostles*.
- Fri. 3/27** **Discussion: New Testament**
- Mon. 3/30** **MIDTERM**

Part III: The Christian Middle Ages

- Wed. 4/1** **Lecture: Foundations of medieval Christianity**
Reading: Augustine, *City of God* (reading packet); Jerome, *Letter 22* (reading packet).
- Fri. 4/3** **Discussion: Augustine, Jerome**
- Mon. 4/6** **Lecture: "Pray and Work," the monastic ideal**
Reading: *Rule of St. Benedict*.
- Wed. 4/8** **Lecture: The Christianization of Europe**
No reading for today; start reading for next week.
- Fri. 4/10** **Discussion: Rule of St. Benedict**
- Mon. 4/13** **Lecture: High medieval culture**
Reading: Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos 1-13.

- Wed. 4/15** **Lecture: Dante's vision of the world**
Reading: Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos 15, 19-23, 26, 29-34.
- Fri. 4/17** **Discussion: *Inferno***
- Mon. 4/20** **NO CLASS (Patriots Day)**

Part IV: Renaissance and Reformation

- Wed. 4/22** **Lecture: The origins of the Renaissance**
No reading for today; begin reading for Thursday.

*** Second paper topic announced ***
- Thurs. 4/23** **Lecture: Renaissance culture and politics
(Monday schedule in effect)**
Reading: Machiavelli, *Discourses* (reading packet).
- Fri. 4/24** **Discussion: Machiavelli**
- Mon. 4/27** **Lecture: Renaissance humanism**
Reading: More, *Utopia*, Book I (pp. 3-41).
- Wed. 4/29** **Lecture: The Old World and the New**
Reading: More, *Utopia*, Book II (pp. 42-111); Montaigne, "Of Cannibals" (reading packet).

*** Second paper due ***
- Fri. 5/1** **Discussion: More, Montaigne**
- Mon. 5/4** **Lecture: The Protestant Reformation**
Reading: Luther, *Christian Liberty*.
- Wed. 5/6** **Lecture: The Catholic Reformation**
Reading: Montaigne, "That it is folly...", "Of the inconstancy..." and "Of freedom of conscience" (reading packet).
- Fri. 5/8** **Discussion: Luther, Montaigne**
- Mon. 5/11** **Lecture: Review, part 1**
- Wed. 5/13** **Lecture: Review, part 2**
- Final Exam: Date to be announced**

Suggested reading

These books are only a starting-point for further inquiry. Please see Prof. Ogilvie if you would like more suggestions. Selections are arranged in roughly chronological order, when possible.

Part I: Ancient Greece

Finley, M. I. *The world of Odysseus*. 2nd ed. London: Chatto and Windus, 1977. The most widely read text on Dark Age Greece.

Martin, Thomas R. *Ancient Greece: From prehistoric to Hellenistic times*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996. Poorly illustrated but concise and readable overview. A companion to the online Perseus Project < <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/>>, a collection of ancient Greek texts, translations, and archeological images.

Finley, M. I., ed. *The legacy of Greece: A new appraisal*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981. Collection of introductory articles by leading scholars on specific aspects of Greek culture.

Part II: Rome, the Jews, and early Christianity

Vaux, Roland de. *Ancient Israel: Its life and institutions*. Trans. John McHugh. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961. Systematic account based on Biblical texts and archeological investigation. Long.

Weber, Max. *Ancient Judaism*. Trans. and ed. Hans H. Gerth and Don Martindale. New York: Free Press, 1952. Classic account by a great sociologist.

Crawford, Michael. *The Roman republic*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993. Concise political and social history, with selected bibliography and a chronological table.

Garnsey, Peter, and Richard Saller. *The Roman empire: Economy, society and culture*. London: Duckworth, 1987. Short introduction to the subject. Easy to read.

Frend, W. H. C. *The rise of Christianity*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. Massive, detailed account of the first six centuries of Christianity.

Lane Fox, Robin. *Pagans and Christians*. Harmondsworth: Viking, 1986. Long study of ancient paganism, early Christianity, and their conflicts.

Brown, Peter. *The making of late antiquity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978. A brief survey by the acknowledged master of the subject. Brown's biography of St. Augustine is also a good introduction to many aspects of the period, though it presumes some background knowledge.

Jenkyns, Richard, ed. *The legacy of Rome: A new appraisal*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. Collection of introductory articles on specific aspects of Roman culture and its impact on Europe from the Middle Ages to the present.

Part III: The Christian Middle Ages

(See also Frend, Lane Fox, and Brown in the suggestions for part II.)

Le Goff, Jacques. *Medieval civilization, 400-1500*. Trans. Julia Barrow. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988. The French original is now 34 years old, but this is still an excellent account. The first part of the book provides a chronological overview; the second part addresses several important themes in medieval civilization.

Bartlett, Robert. *The making of Europe: Conquest, colonization and cultural change, 950-1350*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. Recent synthesis focusing on the "homogenization" of western and central Europe.

Southern, R. W. *Western society and the Church in the Middle Ages*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970. Standard survey by a distinguished scholar.

Part IV: Renaissance and Reformation

- Bossy, John. *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985. A clear, persuasive account of late medieval Christianity and the changes wrought in it by Protestant and Catholic Reformations.
- Hale, J. R. *The civilization of Europe in the Renaissance*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994. Recent survey by a great living historian; detail often drowns out any generalizations.
- Nauert, Charles G., Jr. *Humanism and the culture of Renaissance Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Useful survey, very clear on important concepts. Excellent bibliography of material in English.
- Grafton, Anthony T., with April Shelford and Nancy Siraisi. *New worlds, ancient texts: The power of tradition and the shock of discovery*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992. Lucid, well-illustrated introduction to the impact of overseas discoveries on European scholarship and culture. Brief bibliography.

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