History 600. European historiography from Antiquity to the Enlightenment
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Fall Semester 2000
Wed. 9–12, Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies (or Herter 400)

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Office hours: Tues. 11-11:45, Wed. 2-3:30, Thurs. 11-11:45, and by appointment.

Brief description of course
Examination of the method, style, and purpose of history from antiquity (Greek and Hebrew historiography) through the eighteenth century. We will read selected histories from the past and recent studies on the nature of historiography. Some questions that will motivate our discussions include:
• Is history a unitary discipline? Do specific traits separate it from other ways of looking at the past? Are these traits methodological, metaphysical, or both?
• How have the subject matter and style of history changed within the Western tradition?
• Did history undergo a radical transformation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries? If so, what changed and why?
• What have different cultural traditions contributed to Western approaches to understanding and explaining the past?
• What can historians in the twenty-first century learn from the history of their discipline?

Summary of requirements: 3 10-page papers, oral presentations, discussion.

Course goals
At the end of this course, you should be better able to:
• Understand the development of the Western historical tradition from antiquity to the Enlightenment and speak knowledgeably about them.
• Understand how modern historians address the history of their field.
• Relate these developments to your own historical interests and writing.
• Reflect critically on the adequacy of historians' explanations, both your own and those of others.

Course structure
This course is a seminar. Each meeting will last 2-1/2 to 3 hours with a brief pause about halfway through. Meetings will open with a brief (15 minute max.) presentation of the issues at stake in the week's readings. Afterwards, we will discuss the readings and the issues. If circumstances warrant, I may give occasional mini-lectures, but these will not be a regular feature of the course.

The seminar format places much of the burden of learning on you and your fellow students. Not preparing for discussions will harm them as well as you. A good graduate course teacher does not tell students what to do or think; he or she guides them in the process of education. Much of my work consists in preparing this syllabus carefully and in identifying issues for discussion.

Discussion serves several purposes. First, it helps clarify difficult or obscure points in the readings. Second, it helps you decide between conflicting positions or to reach a synthesis. Third, it allows me to observe how you approach readings and problems. Fourth, it prepares
you for thinking on your feet—an important part of academic life as well as life outside the academy.

Requirements and grading
Your grade for this course will be based on the following three requirements:

1. Attendance and participation in discussion
For the reasons mentioned above, attendance and participation are crucial for this course. Therefore, I have instituted a draconian policy: you are allowed one absence. If you miss class more than once, your maximum course grade will be “C” (which, in graduate school, is tantamount to “F”). This policy reflects the importance I attach to discussion. Exceptions will be made only due to illness or extraordinary personal circumstances.

2. In-class presentation(s)
Depending on the number of students who are enrolled in the course, each student will make one or two presentations introducing a seminar meeting. These presentations will set out, briefly, the thesis, argument, and issues in each reading and raise general questions for discussion. They should be ten to fifteen minutes long.

3. Three short (10-page) papers
Every four weeks or so, you will be responsible for a short paper on the course readings. These papers will be due one week after we complete the relevant readings. They will require reflection on the questions that are raised by the readings and will serve to clarify your own positions and to allow me to evaluate your ability to sustain refined analysis.

The final course grade will be balanced among these three elements, with the most weighting going to the short papers. A rough breakdown is as follows:
- Short papers—60%
- Attendance and participation—25%
- Presentation—15%

If necessary, however, I will re-weight the elements of the course to your advantage. Grades in graduate courses reflect my professional assessment of your achievements and potential as an apprentice historian. Here is a rough key to their interpretation:
- A..........good to excellent
- AB.......acceptable to good
- B...........marginal to acceptable
- BC.......unacceptable to marginal
- C.........unacceptable

In addition to the grade, you will receive written comments at the end of the semester reflecting my assessment.

Books for course
The following books are available at Food For Thought Books (106 N. Pleasant St., Amherst, 253-5432). I have included the ISBNs in case you want to order your books elsewhere; I encourage you to support local booksellers. If you do not buy a book, you should take especially careful notes on it.


The following books have not yet been ordered but are required. I did not order them because the enrollment of the course was still quite tentative when I placed the book order. You may order them yourselves, or if you prefer, I will place an order at Food For Thought.


All required readings will also be on reserve in the DuBois Library. They are on three-day reserve because two-hour reserve is too short for most of them. Please be courteous to your fellow students by reading reserve books as soon as possible after checking them out and returning them as soon as you are done.

**Suggested**

These books have not been ordered. You may find Breisach useful as an overview. Kelley’s book contains short excerpts from dozens of historians from the period addressed in this course.


**A note on readings**

The following course schedule lists required and suggested reading for each week. In addition, a few general studies may be useful; their scope makes it hard to suggest them for any specific week or topic. The bibliographies and notes in required and suggested readings will suggest any number of further sources, primary and secondary, that you can pursue.

Fueter, Eduard. *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie*. München und Berlin: R. Oldenbourg, 1911. Dated but still useful study, focusing on historical research (and therefore not always fair to earlier historians on their own terms).

Course schedule with readings

NOTE: Readings from the list of required and suggested books are indicated by author, short title, and page range (if applicable). Other readings, including books and articles on reserve, are indicated by a complete citation (the first time they are mentioned). Some suggested readings address the particular historians whose works we are considering; others are broader in their treatment or deal with other aspects of the week’s general topic.

Sept. 6 Introduction

PART I: THE CLASSICAL TRADITION

Sept. 13 Ancient Greek historiography I: Myth, epic, and history

Required reading:
Portable Greek historians: Herodotus, Xenophon.
Kelley, Faces, ch. 1-2 (through p. 28).

Suggested reading:
Breisach, Historiography, chapter 1.

Sept. 20 Ancient Greek historiography II: History and politics

Required reading:
Portable Greek historians: Thucydides, Polybius
Kelley, Faces, ch. 2 (pp. 28-47).

Suggested reading:
Breisach, Historiography, chapters 2-3.
Kelley, Versions, pp. 28-68.

Sept. 27 Ancient Roman historiography

Required reading:
Tacitus, Annals.
Kelley, Faces, ch. 3.
Momigliano, Classical foundations, pp. 80-131.

Suggested reading:
Breisach, Historiography, chapters 4-6.
PART II: THE HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

Oct. 4  Hebrew historiography

Required reading:
Brettler, The creation of history in ancient Israel.
Review Momigliano, Classical foundations, chapter 1.

Suggested reading:

Oct. 11  NO CLASS (Monday class schedule in effect)

*** FIRST PAPER DUE AT NOON IN HERTER 624 ***

Oct. 18  Early Christian historiography

Required reading:
Eusebius, History of the Church.
Kelley, Faces, ch. 4.
Momigliano, Classical foundations, pp. 132-156.

Suggested reading:
Breisach, Historiography, chapter 8.
Kelley, Versions, pp. 117-166.
Augustine, City of God (many editions and translations).

Oct. 25  Medieval Christian historiography

Required reading:
Bede, History of the English Church and people.
Kelley, Faces, ch. 5.

Suggested reading:
Breisach, Historiography, chapter 9.

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**PART III: FROM HUMANISM TO ENLIGHTENMENT**

**Nov. 1**  
**The Renaissance sense of history**

**Required reading:**  
Valla, Treatise on the Donation of Constantine.  

**Suggested reading:**  
Breisach, Historiography, chapter 10.  

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**Nov. 8**  
**Humanist historiography I**

***SECOND PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS***

**Required reading:**  
Guicciardini, History of Italy, through p. 190.  
Kelley, Faces, ch. 6.  

**Suggested reading:**  
Breisach, Historiography, chapter 11.  
Kelley, Versions, pp. 218-271.  

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**Nov. 15**  
**Humanist historiography II**

**Required reading:**  
Guicciardini, History of Italy, pp. 191-end.  
Kelley, Faces, ch. 7.

**Suggested reading:**
Breisach, Historiography, chapter 12.
Kelley, Versions, pp. 272-369.

Nov. 22  Antiquarianism, criticism, and historiography

Required reading:
Bayle, Historical and critical dictionary: Introduction; articles on Abimelech, Bonfadius, Bunel, Chrysis, David, Jonas, Jupiter, Manicheans, Rufinus; Clarifications (pp. viii-xxix, 3-15, 30-42, 44-63, 104-119, 144-153, 255-264, 395-444). Read other articles if you have time.
Kelley, Faces, ch. 8.
Momigliano, Classical foundations, pp. 54-79.

Suggested reading:

Nov. 29  Enlightenment historiography I

Required reading:
Montesquieu, Considerations.
Kelley, Faces, ch. 9.
Suggested reading:
Breisach, Historiography, chapter 13.
Kelley, Versions, pp. 439-496.

Dec. 6 Enlightenment historiography II: Gibbon's synthesis

Required reading:
Gibbon, Decline and fall.
Grafton, The footnote.

Suggested reading:
Breisach, Historiography, chapter 14.

Dec. 13 Conclusion: Ranke's renunciation

Required reading:
Kelley, Faces, ch. 10.

Suggested reading:
Breisach, Historiography, chapters 15-16.
Kelley, Versions, pp. 497-504.

Dec. 18 FINAL PAPER DUE AT NOON IN HERTER 624