

## **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)

Prof. Brian W. Ogilvie

Office: Herter 624, (413) 545-1599

Home Phone: (802) 388-9676 Thursday – Monday (before 10 PM please)

E-mail: ogilvie@history.umass.edu

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.

Brettler, Marc Zvi. *The creation of history in ancient Israel*. London: Routledge, 1995. ISBN 0-415-19407-5. \$24.95.

Eusebius of Caesarea. *The history of the Church from Christ to Constantine*. Translated by G. A. Williamson. New York: Penguin, 1990. ISBN 0-14-044535-8. \$15.95.

Finley, M. I., ed. *The portable Greek historians: The essence of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius*. New York: Viking, 1977. ISBN 0-14-015065-X. \$16.95.

- Kelley, Donald R. *Faces of history: Historical inquiry from Herodotus to Herder*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998. ISBN 0-300-07558-8. \$18.00.
- Momigliano, Arnaldo. *The classical foundations of modern historiography*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990. ISBN 0-520-07870-5. \$14.95.
- Tacitus. *The annals of imperial Rome*. Revised ed. Translated by Michael Grant. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1989.

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.

- Bayle, Pierre. *Historical and critical dictionary: Selections*. Translated by Richard H. Popkin. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1991. ISBN 0-87220-103-1. \$16.95.
- Bede. *Ecclesiastical history of the English people*. New York: Penguin, 1991. ISBN 0-14-044565-X. \$12.95.
- Gibbon, Edward. *The decline and fall of the Roman Empire: An abridged version*. New York: Penguin, 1983. ISBN 0-14-043189-6. \$14.95.
- Grafton, Anthony. *The footnote: A curious history*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997. ISBN 0-674-30760-7. \$14.00
- Guicciardini, Francesco. *The history of Italy*. Edited and translated by Sidney Alexander. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. This ed. first published in New York, 1969. ISBN 0-691-00800-0. \$22.95.
- Montesquieu, Charles, Baron de. *Considerations on the causes of the greatness of the Romans and their decline*. Translated by David Lowenthal. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1999. ISBN 0-87220-496-0. \$12.95.
- Valla, Lorenzo. *The treatise of Lorenzo Valla on the Donation of Constantine*. Translated by Christopher B. Coleman. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993. ISBN 0-802-07734-X. \$17.95.

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.

- Breisach, Ernst. *Historiography: Ancient, medieval, and modern*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. ISBN 0-226-07278-9. \$19.00.
- Kelley, Donald R., ed. *Versions of history from antiquity to the Enlightenment*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991. ISBN 0-300-04776-2. \$20.00.

### 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).
- Momigliano, Arnaldo. *Studies in historiography*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966. Collection of essays in English (or translation) by the great scholar of European historiography.

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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**

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**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).

Momigliano, *Classical foundations*, pp. vii-39.

Finley, M. I. "Myth, memory, and history." In Finley, *The use and abuse of history*, pp. 11-33. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1990.  
First published 1975. **(Reserve)**

Suggested reading:

Breisach, *Historiography*, chapter 1.

Kelley, *Versions*, pp. 1-28.

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**Sept. 20            Ancient Greek historiography II: History and politics**

Required reading:

*Portable Greek historians*: Thucydides, Polybius

Kelley, *Faces*, ch. 2 (pp. 28-47).

Momigliano, *Classical foundations*, pp. 39-53.

Suggested reading:

Breisach, *Historiography*, chapters 2-3.

Kelley, *Versions*, pp. 28-68.

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**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.

Kelley, *Versions*, pp. 69-116.

Fornara, Charles William. *The nature of history in ancient Greece and Rome*.  
Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983.

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**PART II: THE HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS****Oct. 4 Hebrew historiography**Required reading:

Tanakh/Old Testament: Joshua, Judges, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah.

Brettler, *The creation of history in ancient Israel*.

Review Momigliano, *Classical foundations*, chapter 1.

Suggested reading:

Friedman, Richard Elliott. *Who wrote the Bible?* New York: Summit Books, 1987.

Lane Fox, Robin. *The unauthorized version: Truth and fiction in the Bible*. New York: Vintage, 1993.

Halpern, Baruch. *The first historians: The Hebrew Bible and history*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988.

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

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

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**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).

Chesnut, Glenn F. *The first Christian histories: Eusebius, Socrates, Sozoman, Theodoret, and Evagrius*. 2nd ed. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986.

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**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.

Kelley, *Versions*, pp. 167-217.

Goffart, Walter A. *The narrators of barbarian history, AD 550-800:*

*Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Partner, Nancy F. *Serious entertainments: The writing of history in twelfth-century England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

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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*.

Burke, Peter. *The Renaissance sense of the past*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970. **(Reserve)**

Suggested reading:

Breisach, *Historiography*, chapter 10.

Greene, Thomas M. *The light in Troy: Imitation and discovery in Renaissance poetry*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.

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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.

Struever, Nancy S. *The language of history in the Renaissance: Rhetoric and historical consciousness in Florentine humanism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970. **(Reserve)**

Suggested reading:

Breisach, *Historiography*, chapter 11.

Kelley, *Versions*, pp. 218-271.

Cochrane, Eric. *Historians and historiography in the Italian Renaissance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Landfester, Rüdiger. *Historia magistra vitae: Untersuchungen zur humanistischen Geschichtstheorie des 14. bis 16. Jahrhunderts*. Genève: Librairie Droz, 1972.

Gilbert, Felix. *Machiavelli and Guicciardini: Politics and history in sixteenth-century Florence*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965.

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

Required reading:

Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, pp. 191-end.

Ranke, Leopold von. "Critique of Guicciardini." In Ranke, *The secret of world history: Selected writings on the art and science of history*, ed. Roger Wines, pp. 77-98. New York: Fordham University Press, 1981. **(Reserve)**

Kelley, *Faces*, ch. 7.

Suggested reading:

- Breisach, *Historiography*, chapter 12.  
Kelley, *Versions*, pp. 272-369.  
Cochrane, Eric. *Florence in the forgotten centuries, 1527-1800: A history of Florence and the Florentines in the age of the grand dukes*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1973. (Chapter 2 is on the historian Scipione Ammirato.)  
Kelley, Donald R. *Foundations of modern historical scholarship: Language, law, and history in the French Renaissance*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1970.  
Huppert, George. *The idea of perfect history: Historical erudition and historical philosophy in Renaissance France*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1970.  
Levine, Joseph M. *Humanism and history: Origins of modern English historiography*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987.
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**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.  
Grafton, Anthony. "The Renaissance." In *The legacy of Rome: A new appraisal*, edited by Richard Jenkyns. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. **(Reserve)**  
Momigliano, *Classical foundations*, pp. 54-79.  
Momigliano, Arnaldo. "Ancient history and the antiquarian." In Momigliano, *[Primo] Contributo alla storia degli studi classici*, pp. 67-106. Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1955 (reprinted 1979). Essay reprinted in *Studies in historiography*, New York: Harper & Row, 1966. **(Reserve)**

Suggested reading:

- Kelley, *Versions*, pp. 370-438.  
Barkan, Leonard. *Unearthing the past: Archaeology and aesthetics in the making of Renaissance culture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.  
Cunnally, John. *Images of the illustrious: The numismatic presence in the Renaissance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.  
Grell, Chantal. *Le dix-huitième siècle et l'antiquité en France, 1680-1789*. 2 vols. Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1995.  
Weiss, Roberto. *The Renaissance rediscovery of classical antiquity*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969.
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**Nov. 29      Enlightenment historiography I**

Required reading:

- Montesquieu, *Considerations*.  
Voltaire. *The age of Louis XIV*. Translated by Martyn P. Pollack. London and Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1926. Read pp. 1-19, 86-102, 251-381 (chapters 1-2, 10, 24-34). **(Reserve)**  
Kelley, *Faces*, ch. 9.

Suggested reading:

Breisach, *Historiography*, chapter 13.

Kelley, *Versions*, pp. 439-496.

Gay, Peter. *The Enlightenment: An interpretation*. Vol. 2, *The science of freedom*, pp. 368-396. New York: Knopf, 1969.

Muhlack, Ulrich. *Geschichtswissenschaft im Humanismus und in der Aufklärung: Die Vorgeschichte des Historismus*. Munich: C. H. Beck, 1991.

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**Dec. 6 Enlightenment historiography II: Gibbon's synthesis**Required reading:

Gibbon, *Decline and fall*.

Momigliano, Arnaldo. "Gibbon's contribution to historical method." In Momigliano, *[Primo] Contributo alla storia degli studi classici*, pp. 195-211. Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1955 (reprinted 1979). Essay reprinted in *Studies in historiography*, New York: Harper & Row, 1966.

**(Reserve)**

Grafton, *The footnote*.

Suggested reading:

Breisach, *Historiography*, chapter 14.

O'Brien, Karen. *Narratives of Enlightenment: Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon*. New York: Cambridge U. Pr., 1997.

Pocock, J. G. A. *Barbarism and religion*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

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**Dec. 13 Conclusion: Ranke's renunciation**Required reading:

Kelley, *Faces*, ch. 10.

Suggested reading:

Breisach, *Historiography*, chapters 15-16.

Kelley, *Versions*, pp. 497-504.

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**Dec. 18 FINAL PAPER DUE AT NOON IN HERTER 624**