

Robin Hardy, Ph.D. (Robin.Hardy@montana.edu)
Department of History and Philosophy
Montana State University, Bozeman
Lecture: Tuesday and Thursday 10:50-12:05, LINFIELD 125
Office Hours: Tues/Thursday 8:45-10:45 AM

HSTR 101 IH

Western Civilization: Neolithic Age through the early Renaissance

This course is designed to be an introduction to Western Civilization from the New Stone Age through the early fifteenth century. Special attention will be given to the transformation of human existence around 10,000 B.C.E. (early systems of agriculture) to the development of Levantine, Egyptian, Hellenistic, and European societies. Key themes are the impact of geography, religion, politics, economy, and warfare on early Western Civilization. Lectures and readings are intended to further students' general appreciation for ancient Mesopotamian society, Egyptian civilization, Israelite culture, classical Greece, the Roman Empire, and the Medieval and early Renaissance world of Europe.

As a Core 2.0 course, HSTR 101 is designated as Humanities (IH). For this reason, throughout the semester we will explore philosophy, art, and intellectual ideas, many of which shaped the human condition. Tests and written assignments will reflect these themes.

Weekly recitation periods will provide students the opportunity to read and analyze primary documents in a small group setting, and to learn to write thoughtfully about the past. In short, students will be expected to examine early human culture like an historian, from 10,000 B.C.E. to the early years of the fifteenth century.

Learning Outcome: With completion of HSTR 101IH students should be able to:

- Describe the characteristics of each major age of human experience between the Neolithic period and the Renaissance.
- Understand the importance of the Fertile Crescent region in the development of Western Civilization.
- Provide details for the importance of geography in formation of economy, military, and religious culture of each major empire/state studied in this course.
- Assign art and artefacts to the appropriate culture in which they flourished.
- Describe the general philosophical preoccupation for each major era discussed.

Required readings (available for purchase in the MSU bookstore):

Jackson J. Spielvogel, *Western Civilization: Volume 1: To 1715*, (9th Edition)

Homer, *The Odyssey*

Author Unknown, *Beowulf*

Classroom conduct:

Turn cell phones off. If you are expecting an important call during lecture or recitation periods, please program your cell phone to ring on vibration mode and sit in the back of the classroom, so that you may easily exit the hall. No video or audio recording of any kind without permission from the instructor. Any form of cheating or plagiarism will be met with a failing grade on the assignment and most likely a failing grade in the course, accompanied by a formal report to the Dean of Students.

Course requirements and grading:

- Attendance and participation is required in both lecture and recitation to succeed in this course (20%).
- Reading of the assigned texts is required to succeed in this course.
- The Midterm examination will include material discussed in the first half of the course (20%).
- The Final examination will cover material since the Midterm (20%).
- Over the course of the semester, you will be reading two additional books, aside from the textbook. You will be expected to read the assignments in the text for class discussion and to write two papers: first on Homer's *The Odyssey* and later in the semester on *Beowulf*. The papers are due **in class** on the day the book is discussed. No late papers will be accepted (20 % each for a total of 40%).
- Recitation sessions will be dedicated to discussing primary documents, which correspond to the themes presented during Tuesday and Thursday lectures. Please note that primary documents are located in the Spielvogel text and referenced below:

The numbers in parentheses refer to the chapters of *Western Civilization: Volume 1: To 1715* that you should read for the corresponding lecture. Not all material in the chapters will be addressed in lecture. However, you will be responsible for the assigned readings on exams.

Lecture Schedule:

WEEK ONE:

Introduction

8/29 Course introduction and the end of the Paleolithic Age

8/31 The Neolithic Revolution (Spielvogel, Chapter 1)

****Attend Recitation this week: Introductions**

WEEK TWO:

The Emergence of Western Civilization

9/5 The Ancient Mesopotamians (Spielvogel, Chapter 1)

9/7 The Ancient Egyptians (Spielvogel, Chapter 1)

****Recitation:** Spielvogel, 13, 20-21, 34-35

WEEK THREE:

The Ancient Near East

9/12 The Assyrians, Neo-Babylonian, and the Persian Empires
(Spielvogel, Chapter 2)

9/14 The Israelites (Spielvogel, Chapter 2)

****Recitation:** Spielvogel, 42-43 and Scholarly Writing
Tutorial

WEEK FOUR:

Ancient Greek Society

9/19 Homeric Greece and warfare (Spielvogel, Chapter 3)

9/21 Macedonia, Alexander, and Classical Greece (Spielvogel,
Chapter 4)

****Recitation:** Spielvogel, 67, 82, 98-99

WEEK FIVE:

The Hellenistic World

9/26 Religion and Culture in Hellenistic Society (Spielvogel,
Chapter 4)

9/28 **PAPERS DUE and Conversation regarding: Homer,
The Odyssey (NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED)**

****NO RECITATION****

WEEK SIX:

Rome: The Republic and Empire

10/3 Conquest, Culture, and Fall of the Republic (Spielvogel,
Chapter 5)

10/5 Augustus, Early Empire, and the Rise of Christianity
(Spielvogel, Chapter 6)

****Recitation:** Spielvogel, 143, 158-159, 187

WEEK SEVEN:

Mid-Term Review

10/10 Film: *Gladiator*

10/12 Mid-Term Review

**** Recitation:** Mid-Term Prep. Session

WEEK EIGHT: *Mid-Term and Late Antiquity*
10/17 Mid-Term
10/19 Reforms, New Religion, Byzantium and Islam (Spielvogel, Chapter 7)

** Recitation: Spielvogel, 206-207, 222

WEEK NINE: *Europe and the Early Middle Ages*
10/24 Charlemagne and the Carolingians (Spielvogel, Chapter 8)
10/26 The Emerging Feudal System (Spielvogel, Chapter 8)

**Recitation: Spielvogel, 247, 254-255

WEEK TEN: *Beowulf and the Expansion of Islam*
10/31 **PAPERS DUE and Conversation regarding: *Beowulf* (NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED)**
11/2 Abbasid Dynasty and Islamic Civilization (Spielvogel, Chapter 8)

****NO RECITATION****

WEEK ELEVEN: *Europe and the Middle Ages*
11/7 New Agriculture and early Urbanism (Spielvogel, Chapter 9)
11/9 Universities, Scholasticism, Gothic Culture (Spielvogel, Chapter 9)

**Recitation: Spielvogel, 282, 286-287

WEEK TWELVE: *Kingdoms and The Crusades*
11/14 Europe and the Holy Roman Empire (Spielvogel, Chapter 10)
11/16 The Crusades (Spielvogel, Chapter 10)

**Recitation: Spielvogel, 308-309, 338-339

WEEK THIRTEEN: *Cathedrals and Thanksgiving Break*
11/21 Film: *Pillars of the Earth*
11/23 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – NO CLASS**

****NO RECITATION*****

WEEK FOURTEEN: *Chaos and the Late Middle Ages*
11/28 Black Death (Spielvogel, Chapter 11)

11/30 Hundred Years War and the Great Schism (Spielvogel, Chapter 11)

**Recitation: Spielvogel, 347, 350, 373

WEEK FIFTEEN: *The Early Renaissance and Final Exam Review*

12/5 Early Renaissance: Politics, Art, Economy (Spielvogel, Chapter 11)

12/7 Final Exam Review

**Recitation: GTA Meetings with students

Final Examination:

Please see Final Exam Schedule published on Montana.edu. Bring a bluebook and a pen.

PAPER ASSIGNMENT # 1

Due: 9/28 in class

Homer, born sometime around 725 B.C.E., is the author of the famous poem, *The Odyssey*. The work recounts the arduous and adventure-filled mythical story of Odysseus's return from the Trojan War. *The Odyssey* sheds important light on the religious beliefs, politics, and aesthetic culture of ancient Greece. With Books I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VIII, IX, XIII, XVI, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV (1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9,13,16,21,22,23, and 24) in mind, please address the following questions:

- 1. Identify the importance of gods in ancient Greek culture. Provide examples from the text to make your argument.**
- 2. Discuss the themes of masculinity and warfare in ancient Greek culture. Provide examples from the text to make your argument.**
- 3. What characteristics does Homer assign to Odysseus that allow the hero to survive the perils of his ten-year voyage from Troy to Ithaca? How might these personality traits reflect ancient Greek cultural values? Provide examples from the text to make your argument.**
- 4. Explain the roles of slaves and women in ancient Greek society. Provide examples from the text to make your argument.**
- 5. In summary, what can Homer's work tell us about lifeways in ancient Greece?**

Your paper should be five pages in length, double-spaced. Please see the attached "paper format" to guide the construction of your document.

PAPER ASSIGNMENT # 2

Due: 10/31 in class

Sometime between 975 and 1025 C.E. the manuscript *Beowulf* appeared in old English society. Produced as early as the seventh century, the poem is an important lens through which scholars can gaze upon European lifeways and culture during the early Middle Ages. In essay format, please answer the following questions:

- 1. Describe the worldview as represented in *Beowulf*. Specifically, what features emerge as dominant in the poem? Pay special attention to superstition, warfare, heroism, and group/cultural consciousness in your analysis. Provide examples from the text to support your arguments.**
- 2. Describe the tension between old and new religious culture as represented in *Beowulf*. Provide examples from the text to support your arguments.**
- 3. In summary, what can *Beowulf* tell us about European lifeways in the early Middle Ages?**

Your paper should be five pages in length, double-spaced. Please see the attached “paper format” to guide the construction of your document.

PAPER FORMAT

1. Title: Whether on the first page of the paper, or better yet on a proper “title page,” you should list your paper title, name date, class, and instructor.
2. Instruction: Make general comments about the topic – for example, think of a story or incident from your reading or research that will “hook” the reader. Moreover, take the time to explain why it is that your topic, narrative, and argument are original and significant.
3. Thesis: In a sentence or two (usually toward the end of the introduction), clearly state your argument and describe your paper’s organization. In its most concise form, a thesis may read something like, “In this paper, I intend to demonstrate that...” or “This paper argues that...” In terms of organization, say something like, “For this purpose, I have divided this paper into three parts. Part one illustrates...” The purpose of the thesis is to establish your interpretation of a book, or a collection of books, sources, and other documents. Summarize what you intend to say in the paper and how you intend to set up your paper to most effectively say it. A lucidly articulated thesis and organizational statement strengthen the basic nature of your argument and paper.
4. Body: The body of the paper should be divided according to the organization you described in the thesis; be sure to stick to the organization you outlined in the thesis or the logic of your argument, not to mention the paper’s basic coherence, will be lost. Cite evidence from the source material that best supports the main points of your argument. In this course, parenthetical references following quotations are sufficient. Ideas drawn from lectures, discussions, and textbooks do not need to be cited; but if you consult them, you should include them in the paper’s bibliography. Of course, if you quote from a textbook or borrow an original idea, you should cite it. A proper bibliography can be found in *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Examples of book references:

Bibliography:

Cooper, Frederick. *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Footnotes or endnotes:

Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 25.

5. Conclusion: Restate your thesis and summarize your argument. For example, “In this paper I have shown...” This is a good chance to go back through your paper and make sure you’ve done what you’ve said you’ve done.
6. Bibliography: A bibliography should be attached at the end of the paper and list, in the proper form, all of the sources consulted in your paper.
7. Page numbers: should appear on all but the first page of the text.

Montana State University seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the instructor, who will make the necessary arrangements.

Some of the readings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that may conflict with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience.