HIS 1510 – 2014

*Introduction to Western Civilisation (I)*

http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/hist1510/

[The definitive version of this syllabus, subject to updates, is posted at the above website]

**Instructor:** Oren Falk  
**Lecture times:** Tue. & Thu. 10:10-11:25  
**Office:** McGraw 340, 255-3311  
**Lecture room:** Goldwin Smith Hall 142  
**e-mail:** of24@cornell.edu  
**Office hours:** Wdn 14:00-16:00 or by appointment

**Section rooms:**  
- McGraw Hall 365  
- McGraw Hall 365  
- McGraw Hall 365

**Section times:**  
- Thu. 13:25-14:15  
- Thu. 14:30-15:20  
- Thu. 15:35-16:25

This course surveys European history from remote Antiquity to the sixteenth century. We will consider developments in technology, economy, politics, religious institutions and faith, cultural media and social ideals; together, these themes add up to civilisation in the West. At the same time that we acquaint ourselves with these dimensions of the past, we will seek to acquire the basic skills professional historians use to learn about this past.

**Week**  
**Schedule of Classes**

I. August 26 & 28: Introductory: a civilisation? in the West?
II. September 2 & 4: Beginnings of civilisation
III. 9 & 11: Ancient Greece
IV. 16 & 18: Mediterranean empires
V. 23 & 25: Early Christianity
VI. 30 & October 2: Neighbours of the West
VII. 7 & 9: The early medieval West 1st essay due
VIII. 16: On the margins
IX. 21 & 23: Reform of the Church
X. 28 & 30: Beyond Latindom midterm
XI. November 4 & 6: The High Middle Ages
XII. 11 & 13: The late Middle Ages and Renaissance
XIII. 18 & 20: New worlds
XIV. 25: Early modern Europe 2nd essay due
XV. December 2 & 4: The end of Christendom

**Assigned texts:**
- Leonard Doyle (ed.), *St Benedict’s Rule for Monasteries* (1948) [also online]
Recommended texts:

for getting a richer sense of the historical background, try:

Barbara H. Rosenwein, A Short History of the Middle Ages, 3rd edn (2009)

for improving your writing & style, you should get at least one of these titles:

Diana Hacker, A Pocket Style Manual, 6th edn (2011)
Joseph M. Williams, Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace, 11th edn (2013)

Evaluation:

Attendance & participation (15%)
Movie response assignment (5%)
Two essays (25% each = 50%)
Midterm exam (10%)
Final exam (20%)

(A passing grade in each component is needed for getting a passing grade in the course.)

You are expected to attend all classes, both lectures & sections. Three absences (or more) will affect your final mark. If you cannot attend a class, it is your responsibility to find out the substance of what you’ve missed. It's crucial that you prepare for classes & participate in them. This means allowing yourself sufficient time to read through the assigned materials, to think about them and to research any questions you may have. Please bear in mind that active participation involves asking good questions, as well as proposing some good answers, and is not limited to section discussions.

You should always have with you in class a copy of the text(s) assigned for any given week. You're welcome to bring your laptop, iPad, or other computer-like device to class in order to access your texts. I strongly recommend you don't take typed notes in class, as comprehension and retention have been shown to be much better when students take (selective) hand-written notes; still, how you wish to process what you learn is ultimately up to your discretion. If, however, you use electronic devices for non-academic purposes, you will be required to leave them at home. Also, please make sure to turn off your cellphone ringer in class and refrain from texting.

You're encouraged to come to office hours anytime, to consult about your work or just to chat about course materials. It's a good idea to schedule meetings in advance so I know to expect you. If you're not completely comfortable speaking in public, office hours offer a reasonable alternative for exploring your ideas, questions and concerns. You are expected to come to office hours at least twice during the term for consultation on assignments, well in advance of due dates. Your first appointment should be no later than Week V, the second no later than Week XII.

You will write two essays during the term, each about 1000-1500 words long (ca. 4-6 pages, 12-pt font, double-spaced). The first essay is due on 9 October, the second essay is due on 25 November; both are to be submitted electronically using BlackBoard (details TBA). These essays will focus on analysis of some of the primary sources assigned in this course; you will be asked to offer close readings of the selected sources, but you should
also draw on the themes covered in lecture, section discussions and textbook readings. We will discuss the essays further in class.

Over the course of the term, we will watch several movies on historical themes related to our topic. These movies will be available via BlackBoard for individual viewing; you will be responsible for watching them on your own. You will be asked to complete a **movie response assignment**; details TBA.

A **midterm exam** will take place on **Tuesday, 28 October 2014 in McGraw Hall 165, at 19:30-22:00.** The main purpose of this exam is to encourage you to read the textbook (*Burger, Shaping of Western Civilization*) carefully and critically. The lectures will not cover all of the issues addressed in the textbook, nor will my takes on the major issues in the development of the West always coincide with those taken by Burger. You therefore need to study the book with care ahead of each week’s classes, and to construct from it the connecting threads you will need to make your own sense of a long and diverse historical narrative.

A **final, 2½ hour exam** will be held on a date TBA, at a location TBA, at a location TBA. The exam will call on your knowledge of materials discussed in class as well as in the assigned readings. Occasional in-class quizzes may be given, counting towards your participation mark.

Always **keep a paper trail** of your thinking and writing process; you may be asked to submit research notes and drafts. Please submit your work electronically via TurnItIn. A late-penalty policy (2 points deducted per day overdue) will be strictly enforced.

You can expect me to be available for consultation on course-related matters during office hours or via e-mail anytime. If you cannot come to regular office hours, please enquire over e-mail or contact me to arrange another time to meet with you. I will do my best to respond to all e-mail queries within 24 hours. You will be expected to have an active e-mail account and check it regularly.

**The Internet** is a delightful, democratic, wide-open space; it’s also a dangerous place, especially for students: there’s no easy way to sift the gold from the garbage. **The Internet is, therefore, often not a reliable tool for academic research – and is never, on its own, a sufficient one.** There’s a world of difference between, say, a Wikipedia entry and an article on JSTOR, although both can be legitimate and (if used correctly) powerful tools of academic study. Do you know how to tell the difference? Are you able to apply the same sorting criteria to new websites you may never have heard of before?

Use care and commonsense when surfing. Learn to look for signs of trust-worthiness (such as citations of verifiable, accredited sources). **Always** check information you learn online against reliable sources elsewhere. One of the healthiest approaches to using the Web prudently is to get into the habit of cross-referencing anything you discover online; in fact, if you get used to doing this, you will have mastered an important technique historians use all the time, in reading sources both on- and offline. If you’re not sure what to make of an online resource, ask your instructor or a Reference Librarian for help.

Some useful online resources include:

- **Ancient Greek World** <http://www.museum.upenn.edu/Greek_World/index.html>  
  a museum portal to the world of Ancient Greece (with some links to Rome)
- **Ancient History Sourcebook** <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook.html>  
  an immense collection of general ancient materials, mostly primary sources
Visual Tour through Late Antiquity <http://www.nipissingu.ca/department/history/muhlberger/4505/show.htm> with an emphasis on 6thC Gaul

What did people in the past wear? <http://www.siue.edu/COSTUMES/TEXT_INDEX.HTML> an entertaining 19thC romp through pre-modern costume

Medieval Sourcebook <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html> an immense collection of general medieval materials, mostly primary sources

Douai-Rheims Bible <http://www.drbo.org/> 16thC Catholic translation: closest English equivalent to medieval Latin Vulgate

1492: An ongoing voyage <http://www.ibiblio.org/expo/1492.exhibit/Intro.html> Library of Congress exhibit on Europe and America up to the early 1600s

Oxford English Dictionary (OED) <http://dictionary.oed.com/entrance.dtl> most comprehensive (& historical) dictionary of the English language

Key Library Resources for Western Civilisation <http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/hist151.html> custom-made pointers prepared for this course


Grading principles:

A-range marks indicate work whose excellence stands out. The work demonstrates thorough preparation, nuanced comprehension and synthetic ability, analytic insight and even originality. It is beautifully written and presented. This grade signifies exceptionally fine achievement within the already high standards expected of Cornell students.

B-range marks indicate skilful, thorough work at the high level of academic competence expected of Cornell students. The work demonstrates a good grasp of specific subject matter and knowledgeable reliance on the course materials, as well as the writer’s analytical engagement with the assignment. It is clearly written and sensibly structured.

C-range marks indicate work that evinces some preparation, general comprehension of the subject matter and assignment parameters, a degree of analytic effort and expressive skill. Such work measures up to the standards expected of Cornell students, but partially or inconsistently. It still requires significant improvement in one or several respects.

D-range marks indicate work that only barely qualifies for academic credit. The work is seriously flawed in terms of argument, structure, writing or presentation, pointing to problems in reading, comprehension, knowledge processing or preparation of the assignment. It does suggest that the writer has learned something and could, with proper investment of time and effort, meet the standards expected of Cornell students. Students should not, however, allow themselves to perform at this level over time.

A grade of F marks work that is unacceptable for academic credit by the standards expected of Cornell students. This grade does not necessarily mean that no work was done; it does mean that a student’s work fails to demonstrate even a minimum of effort, comprehension or engagement with the course materials. An F (or worse!) is also routinely assigned in cases of breach of the Code of Academic Integrity.
Academic integrity:

A university is a community of learning. The glue that holds this community together and enables all of us to do our work – teaching, learning, research – is the academic integrity of all members of this community. If we can’t assume that we all respect each other’s intellectual property, communications shut down and the generation of knowledge dies.

It has become clear to me that the current generation of students may often have genuine difficulty telling what is and isn’t legitimate practice in academia. Some highschools apparently tolerate, maybe even encourage, ‘learning’ by downloading materials off the Web and presenting them as one’s own work. Such practice is plagiarism. Tweaking of downloaded materials (e.g., changing the wording slightly to your own style) doesn’t change the fact that they are somebody else’s intellectual property, and may in fact make the offence worse by making detection of plagiarism more difficult.

When you consult online resources, be extremely wary of simply copying & pasting from them. Do so sparingly, and always treat such copied passages as you would treat a quotation from a printed source (i.e., put it in inverted commas, provide a full reference, etc.). If you consult online resources without quoting from them directly, you should still acknowledge them in your references (as you should do with printed sources you read).

Remember that plagiarism is the most serious infraction of academic integrity, but not the only one: cheating on exams, providing false information, etc., are all forbidden. If it feels like cheating, it probably is.

Every student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. You are responsible for knowing this Code; see <http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>.

A practical guide to the Code is available at <http://www.theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/AcadInteg>.

Please review this brief online tutorial on Recognizing and Avoiding Plagiarism: <http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm>.

You may also find this online quiz (from the University of East Anglia) helpful: <http://www.uea.ac.uk/menu/admin/dos/quiz/>.

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

All work submitted for academic credit will be your own.

I have zero tolerance for violations of academic integrity.

Course outline:

(Please note: this is a tentative outline only. The definitive version of this syllabus is the one appearing on the course website, which is subject to regular modification. Be sure to check online routinely for any changes and updates.)

for the class on
WEEK I
1. August 26: Introductory: a civilisation in the West?
   **please read**

2. August 28: Preludes to civilisation
   **please read**
   Charles Q. Choi, “Humans Did Not Wipe Out Neanderthals,” *livescience* blog

   *no section this week; in lieu of section, please familiarise yourself with the principal textbook for this course:*
   Michael Burger, *The Shaping of Western Civilization*, pp. xiii-xvi

WEEK II (begin reading Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata*)
3. September 2: Before the West
   **please read**
   Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 1.1-1.4 (pp. 1-31)

4. September 4: Pharaonic Egypt
   **please read**
   Plutarch, “Isis and Osiris,” in *Moralia*, capp. 12-15, 18-20 [§§351B-359B] [on course website]

   *for section (September 4), please prepare:*
   Plutarch, “Isis and Osiris”

WEEK III (finish reading Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata*)
5. September 9: Archaic Greece
   **please read**
   Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 1.5-2.2 (pp. 32-47)
   Aristotle, *Poetics*, §§1-7, 10, 12-13
   <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/classics/resources/poetics/poettran.htm> or
   §§1447a-54a, 1459a-60b, 1461b-62b <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Aabo%3Atlg%2C0086%2C034&query=1447a>

6. September 11: Classical Greece
   **please read**
   Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 2.3-2.8 (pp. 47-74)
   Aristotle, *Politics*, Bk 1 (§§1-3), Bk 3 (§1 [1st ¶], §§5-11); Bk 4 (§§2-12)
   <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.html>

   *for section (September 11), please prepare:*
   review Aristotle, *Poetics & Politics*
   Thucydides, “Funeral Oration of Pericles”
   <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/pericles-funeralspeech.html>
Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*

**WEEK IV**

7. **September 16: Hellenism and the Roman republic**
   *please read*
   Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 2.9-3.2 (pp. 74-100)

8. **September 18: The glory that was Rome**
   *please read*
   Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 3.3-3.7 (pp. 101-29)

*for section (September 18), please prepare:*
   Polybius, *Histories*, Bk 6 (§§1-18)
   <http://www.constitution.org/rom/polybi.htm>

**WEEK V**

9. **September 23: Transitions in Late Antiquity**
   *please read*
   Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 4.1-4.3 (pp. 130-54)

10. **September 25: Birth & infancy of Christianity**
    *please read*
    [on course website]
    Bible (Douai-Rheims) <http://www.drbo.org/>: Genesis 1-4, 6-9, 11-17, 21-22:20, Exodus 1-3, 19-24, Deuteronomy 6, Gospel of Mark 1-16 [all], Acts of the Apostles 6-7, 9:1-30, 22, 26, Galatians 1-6 [all], Apocalypse 1-6

*for section (September 25), please prepare:*
   *Passion of S Perpetua* <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/perpetua.html>
   Nicene Creed <http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/Religion402/Topic%20One%20Early%20Church/LectureOne/NiceneCreed.htm>
   Dispute between Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, and Symmachus, Prefect of Rome (384 AD) <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/ambrose-sym.html>

**WEEK VI** (read & listen to Sells, *Approaching the Qur‘án*)

11. **September 30: Beginnings of Byzantium**
    *please read*

12. **October 2: Beginnings of Islam**
    *please read*
    Burger, *Shaping*, § 4.6 (pp. 161-65)
    Michael Sells, *Approaching the Qur‘án*

*for section (October 2), please prepare:*
   [on course website]
Qur’an, Surah 9: Repentance <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs.cmu.edu/project/cmt/resources/Quran/009.Repentance>

Michael Sells, Approaching the Qur’án, pp. 42-141, 154-57

WEEK VII (begin reading Beowulf; read at least up to line 1812)

13. October 7: The early medieval West
  please read
  Burger, Shaping, §§ 4.4-4.5 (pp. 154-61)

14. October 9: Charlemagne and the birth of Europe (first essay due)
  please read
  Burger, Shaping, § 4.7 (pp. 165-72)

for section (October 9), please prepare:
  Selections from the Lex Salica (Salic Law), tr. A.C. Murray, in From Roman to Merovingian Gaul (2000: 533-44, 549-54) [on course website]
  Pope Gregory I (“the Great,” r. 590-604), Epistle LXXVI (to Mellitus) & extracts from Pastoral Rule <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/greg1a.html>
  Life of Saint Balthild, tr. A.C. Murray (2000: 500-504) [on course website]
  Charlemagne’s General Capitulari of the Missi (802 AD) <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/carol-missi1.html>

WEEK VIII (finish reading Beowulf)

15. October 16: Meanwhile, offstage: Lost peoples of the early Middle Ages
  please read
  Burger, Shaping, §§ 4.8-4.9 (pp. 173-78)
  L.M. Bitel, Women in Early Medieval Europe (2002: 95-135) [on course website]
  Lynette Olson, The Early Middle Ages (2007: 110-24) [on course website]

for section (October 16), please prepare:
  Beowulf

WEEK IX (read through all of St. Benedict’s Rule for Monasteries)

16. October 21: The agricultural and commercial revolution of the central Middle Ages
  please read
  Burger, Shaping, §§ 5.0-5.1 (pp. 180-86)

17. October 23: The religious revolution of the central Middle Ages
  please read
  Burger, Shaping, § 5.2 (pp. 186-95)
  Rosenwein, Short History (2009: 205-16, 244-52)

for section (October 23), please prepare:
  St. Benedict’s Rule for Monasteries [read all; prepare to discuss especially the Prologue and capp. 1-3, 5-7, 16, 19-41, 44-48, 68-73]
  Dictatus Papæ [on course website]
WEEK X (midterm)

18. October 28: Europe rebooted
please read

please read
Introduction & cap. 1 (2009: 1-53) [on course website]
Olivia R. Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain* (1994: 1-15) [on course website]

for section (October 30), please prepare:
Excerpts from Fulcher of Chartres, *History of the Expedition to Jerusalem*
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/fulcher-cde.asp>
Excerpt from Ahmad al-Ya’qūbi’s *Kitāb al-buldān* (Book of Countries), in Bernard Lewis, *Islam from the Prophet ...* (1987: 2.69-73) [on course website]
Usamah ibn Munqidh, excerpts from his *Autobiography*
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/usamah2.html>

WEEK XI

please read
Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 5.3-5.5 (pp. 195-211)

please read
Burger, *Shaping*, § 5.6 (pp. 211-20)

for section (November 6), please prepare:
Heloise to Abelard <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/heloise1.html>
On employing a maid in the 12thC [on course website]
Town ordinances, customs of Lorris en Gatinais (1155) [on course website]
Thomas of Monmouth, *The Life and Miracles of St William of Norwich*
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1173williamnorwich.html>
*Magna carta* <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/magnacarta.html>
*Rule of St Francis* <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/stfran-rule.html>
“The Virgin bares her breast” [on course website]

WEEK XII (begin reading William Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*; read at least up to Act 3)

22. November 11: The gloom of the Late Middle Ages vs. the light of the Renaissance
please read
Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 5.7-5.8 (pp. 220-33)

23. November 13: The birth of the nation
please read

for section (November 13), please prepare:
Leonardo Bruni’s Funeral Oration for Nanni Strozzi [on course website]

**WEEK XIII** (finish reading Shakespeare’s *Tempest*)

24. **November 18: New worlds abroad: expansion of Europe**
please read
J.P. McKay (et al.), *A History of Western Society*, 10th edn (2011: 444-72)
Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, excerpts from his *Turkish Letters*<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1555busbecq.html>

25. **November 20: The shaping of scientific Europe**
please read
Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 7.0-7.2, 7.5-7.6 (pp. 270-84, 307-17)

*for section (November 20), please prepare:*
Leo Africanus, description of Timbuktu <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/%7Ewldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_2/leo_africanus.html>
Olaudah Equiano (alias Gustavus Vassa), *Interesting Narrative of his Life*, cap. 2 <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15399/15399-h/15399-h.htm>
William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

**WEEK XIV** (second essay due)

26. **November 25: Towards Absolutism**
please read
Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 7.3-7.4 (pp. 284-307)

*no section this week*

**WEEK XV**

27. **December 2: Reformation and Counter-Reformation**
please read
Burger, *Shaping*, §§ 6.0-6.6 (234-61)
Martin Luther, letter to several nuns, tr. E.B. Flores <http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/nuns.txt>
Argula von Grumbach, “A Hundred Women would Emerge to Write”<http://home.infionline.net/~ddisse/grumbach.html>

28. **December 4: Epilogue**
please read

*for section (December 4), please prepare:*
Review questions for the final exam. (Please let us know ahead of time whether you have any questions; section will only meet if there is need for it.)