



May 2026

### Preparatory Reading for Ancient and Modern History

Congratulations on your offer of a place to read Ancient and Modern History at St Hilda's College!

We enclose some sheets giving you information about the first year of the Ancient and Modern History course at Oxford. You will see that you have to choose four papers to study in your first year. Please let me know as soon as possible **and in any event by July 27th**:

- i) which period of European and World History you would like to offer
- ii) whether you will take Greek or Roman History
- iii) whether you will take 'Approaches to History' or Historiography: Tacitus to Weber or a paper on a classical historian (Herodotus *Histories* V.26 - VI.131, to be read in Greek; or Sallust *Jugurtha* to be read in Latin); or would like to opt for a language option (see below).

Let me say a word about the **language options**. We have in recent years devised a set of language papers specifically for students of Ancient and Modern History. These are intended to provide gradual but rigorous language-learning with a view to equipping you to use ancient evidence in the original languages, as well as for its own sake! For those with some Latin or Greek already, more advanced language options are also available.

For beginning and intermediate languages, courses will be taught by Faculty classes, for three hours per week during Michaelmas and Hilary Terms; advanced languages will be taught by a combination of college and faculty resources. Please let me know by the above date if you would be interested in taking a language option. I would be happy to help, if you need further information about any aspect of language-learning. I am enclosing for your information a document which sets out the various language levels and options available to students of AMH.

Let me be clear that, although learning a Classical language is an *option* in this degree, it is by no means compulsory!

The Optional Subject involving the use of primary sources is taught in the third term so there is no need to make your choice at this stage. The Options available are listed in the course outline – as you will see, most of these are options in Modern History, but there are also two papers in Ancient History ('Augustan Rome' and 'The World of Homer and Hesiod').



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It is essential that you should allow time – at least a few weeks - before coming up, for preparatory reading on papers that will be taught in the first term: that is, Greek **or** Roman History and Approaches to History **or** Historiography: Tacitus to Weber **or** Sallust **or** Herodotus. Reading lists are enclosed.

We hope that you will enjoy making a start on your university work. If you would like any further advice about any aspect of the course or college please do not hesitate to contact me. We very much look forward to having you at St Hilda's for the next three years.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Katherine Clarke FBA  
Fellow and Tutor in Ancient History  
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## ANCIENT AND MODERN HISTORY: FIRST-YEAR COURSE OUTLINE

Students study four papers, on which they are examined at the end of the first year.

### Paper 1 A period of European and World History.

A choice of four options is available:

- 1) The Transformation of the Ancient World, 370–900
- 2) Communities, Connections and Confrontations, 1000–1300
- 3) Renaissance, Recovery and Reform, 1400–1650
- 4) Society, Nation and Empire, 1815–1914

These papers are studied thematically.

2. Either **Greek History c. 650–479 BC** or **Roman History 241–146 BC**.

3. An **Optional Subject** involving the use of primary sources. You may study any one of those listed under below, including The World of Homer and Hesiod or Augustan Rome, which are specifically directed at ancient historians. Please note that the availability of these options may vary from year to year.

4. Either **Approaches to History** involving an examination of interdisciplinary ways of studying history; or **Historiography: Tacitus to Weber** or a **Paper on a classical historian** (options on Herodotus and Sallust are currently available); or learning **Latin or Greek** at elementary or intermediate level.

### Optional Subjects

Theories of the State (Aristotle, Hobbes, Rousseau, Marx)  
Alfred and the Vikings: Conflict, Culture and Identity in the Early Middle Ages  
Early Gothic France c.1100–c.1150  
The Mongols  
Conquest and Frontiers: England and the Celtic Peoples, 1150–1220  
English Chivalry and the French War c.1330–c.1400  
Crime and Punishment in England, c.1280–c.1450  
Nature and Art in the Renaissance  
Conquest and Colonization: Spain and America in the Sixteenth Century  
Witchcraft and Witch-hunting in Early Modern Europe  
Making England Protestant, 1558–1642  
Revolution and Empire in France, 1789–1815  
Women, Gender, and the Nation: Britain, 1789–1825  
The Romance of the People: The Folk Revival from 1760 to 1914  
Haiti and Louisiana: The Problem of Revolution in the Age of Slavery  
Imperial Republic: The United States and Global Imperialism, c.1867–1914  
The New Woman in Britain and Ireland, c. 1880–1920  
The Rise and Crises of European Socialisms: 1881–1921  
1919: Remaking the World  
Living With The Enemy: The Experience of the Second World War in Europe  
Global USSR: Empires, Borders, and Identities  
Viewing Communism: Cinema and Everyday Life in Eastern Europe, 1944–1989  
Radicalism in Britain, 1965–1975  
The World of Homer and Hesiod  
Augustan Rome  
Industrialization in Britain and France 1750–1870

## Ancient and Modern History: Introductory Reading

### 1 Period of Greek or Roman History

Some good general works on Ancient History

*Oxford History of the Classical World* (Oxford, 1986)

S. Price and P. Thonemann, *The Birth of Classical Europe* (London, 2010)

R. Lane Fox, *The Classical World. An Epic History from Homer to Hadrian* (Allen Lane, 2005)

J. Quinn, *How the World Made the West: A 4,000-Year History* (Bloomsbury, 2024)

You should try items from:

#### a) Greek History 650-479 BC

Herodotus *Histories*

O. Murray *Early Greece* (Collins, Fontana History of the Ancient World, 1993 2<sup>nd</sup> ed)

R. G. Osborne *Greece in the Making 1200-479 BC* (London, Routledge, 1996)

J. N. Bremmer *Greek Religion* (Oxford, 1999: Greece and Rome New Surveys)

R. Thomas *Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, 1989)

J. Hall *A History of the Archaic World, ca. 1200-479 BCE* (Blackwell/Wiley, 2013)

R. Lane Fox *Travelling Heroes* (2008)

#### b) Roman History 241-146 BC

Polybius *Histories*

Livy *Histories*

M. Beard, *SPQR* (London, 2015), especially Chapters 2–5

M. Crawford *The Roman Republic* (Fontana History of the Ancient World, 1992)

N. Rosenstein and R. Morstein-Marx (eds.) *A Companion to the Roman Republic* (Oxford, 2006)

A. Lintott *Imperium Romanum. Politics and Administration* (London, 1993)

E. Rawson *Intellectual Life in the Roman Republic* (London, 1985)

G. Shipley *The Greek World after Alexander 323-30 BC* (London, 2000)

### 2 Herodotus, or Sallust, or Approaches to History, or Historiography

#### a) Herodotus *Histories* V26-VI 131

Read in Greek; plenty of translations exist to help

J. Gould *Herodotus* (1989)

J. S. Romm *Herodotus* (1999)

C. Dewald, & J. Marincola, *The Cambridge Companion to Herodotus* (2006)

#### b) Sallust *Jugurtha*

Read in Latin; Penguin and Loeb translations exist for some assistance.

R. Syme *Sallust* (Cambridge, 1964)

D. C. Earl *The Political Thought of Sallust* (Cambridge, 1961)

W.W. Batstone and A. Feldherr *Sallust: Oxford Readings in Classical Studies* (2019)

#### c) Approaches to History

In this paper undergraduates study ways in which the writing of history has been influenced by other disciplines. There will be a choice of themes: anthropology, archaeology, art, economics, gender and sexuality, race, sociology. The following books are useful by way of introduction to the 'Gender and Sexuality' Approach:

M. Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (1994, or any other edition)

M. Berg *A Woman in History: Eileen Power* (1996).

S. Berger, H. Feldner, and K. Passmore, *Writing History: Theory and Practice* (2010 edn)

O. Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her* (1997)

S. Rowbotham, *Promise of a Dream* (2000).  
R. Shoemaker and M. Vincent (eds.) *Gender and History in Western Europe* (1997)  
J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History* (fifth edition, 2010)

**(d) Historiography: Tacitus to Weber**

John Burrow, *A History of Histories* (2007)

**3. European and World History**

**1. The Transformation of the Ancient World, 370-900**

P. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 2nd edition (2003)  
J. Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom* (1987)  
M. Innes, *Introduction to Early Medieval Europe, 300-900: The Sword, the Plough and the Book* (2007)  
C. Wickham, *The Inheritance of Rome: A History of Europe from 400 to 1000* (2009)

**2. Communities, Connections and Confrontations, 1000–1300**

R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe. Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950-1350* (1994)  
P. A. Linehan & J. L. Nelson, eds., *The Medieval World* (2001)  
D. Power, ed., *The Central Middle Ages. Europe 950-1320* (2006)

**3. Renaissance, Recovery and Reform, 1400–1650**

D. MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided 1490-1700* (2003)  
R. Mackenney, *Sixteenth-Century Europe. Expansion and Conflict* (1993)  
T. Munck, *Seventeenth-Century Europe, 1598–1700* (1990)  
Beat Kümin, *The European World 1500-1800: An Introduction to Early Modern European History* (2009)  
Ulinka Rublack, *Reformation Europe* (2005)

**4. Society, Nation and Empire, 1815-1914**

M. S. Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe, 1815-1914* (2nd ed. 1988)  
R. Gildea, *Barricades and Borders: Europe 1800-1914* (2nd ed. 1996)  
E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848* (1962)  
E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875* (1975)  
E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (1987)  
K. Offen, *European Feminisms, 1700-1950* (2000)

## **Ancient Languages for AMH**

### **Beginning Ancient Greek**

(This subject is not normally available to candidates with a qualification in ancient Greek above GCSE-level or equivalent).

The course will allow takers to read simple, if probably adapted, prose texts. Candidates will be required to show knowledge of some of the main grammatical structures of ancient Greek and of a small basic vocabulary. The paper will consist of prepared and unprepared prose translations, with grammatical questions on the prepared texts.

Course book: (parts of) John Taylor: *Greek to GCSE* (Bristol Classical Press, 2003), in addition to extra material supplied in classes.

### **Beginning Latin**

(This subject is not normally available to candidates with a qualification in Latin above GCSE-level or equivalent).

The course will allow takers to read simple, if probably adapted, prose texts. Candidates will be required to show knowledge of some of the main grammatical structures of Latin and of a small basic vocabulary. The paper will consist of prepared and unprepared prose translations, with grammatical questions on the prepared texts.

Course book: *Wheelock's Latin* (7th edition), in addition to extra material supplied in classes.

### **Intermediate Ancient Greek**

(This subject is not normally available to candidates with a qualification in ancient Greek above AS-level or equivalent). The text prescription is currently under review.

Candidates will be required to show an intermediate level knowledge of Greek grammar and vocabulary (including all syntax and morphology, as laid out in Abbot and Mansfield, *Primer of Greek Accidence*).

The set texts for the course are: Xenophon, *Hellenica I* (Oxford Classical Text) and Lysias I (Oxford Classical Text). The paper will consist of a passage of unseen prose translation, three further passages for translation from the two prescribed texts, and grammatical questions on the prescribed texts.

Useful editions with commentaries:

Xenophon, *Hellenika I.II.3.10*, ed. P. Krentz (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1989);

Lysias: *Selected Speeches*, ed. C. Carey (Cambridge: CUP, 1989).

### **Intermediate Latin**

(This subject is not normally available to candidates with a qualification in Latin above AS-level or equivalent). The text prescription is currently under review.

Candidates will be required to show an intermediate level knowledge of Latin grammar and vocabulary (including all syntax and morphology, as laid out in Kennedy's Revised Latin Primer).

The set texts for the course are: Cicero, letters in D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero: Select Letters* (Cambridge, 1980), nos 9, 17, 23, 27, 39, 42-3, 45; Tacitus, *Agricola* (Oxford Classical Text); Pliny, letters in A. N. Sherwin-White, *Fifty Letters of Pliny*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1969), nos 25, 29.

The paper will consist of a passage of unseen prose translation, three further passages for translation from the prescribed texts, and grammatical questions on the prescribed texts.

Useful editions with commentaries:

*Cicero: Select Letters*, ed. D. R. Shackleton Bailey (Cambridge: CUP, 1980);

*Cornelii Taciti, De Vita Agricolae*, eds R. M. Ogilvie and I. Richmond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967);

*Fifty Letters of Pliny*, ed. A. N. Sherwin-White, 2nd edn (Oxford: OUP, 1969).

### **Advanced Latin**

(This subject is available to candidates with a qualification in Latin above AS-level or equivalent).

Candidates will be expected to be familiar with *An Anthology of Latin Prose* ed. D.A. Russell (OUP 1990), nos. 7, 12, 22, 23, 34, 52 and 63, from which a selection of passages will be set for translation, in addition to a passage for unseen translation.

Candidates will also be expected to translate from TWO of the following texts:

(i) Cicero, *Pro Caelio* [ed. OCT].

(ii) Pliny, *Letters* 1.6, 9, 13, 19; VII.21, 24, 26, 29; VIII.16, 17; IX.6, 12, 15, 27, 33, 39; X.31, 32, 96, 97 (ed. M.B. Fisher and M.R. Griffin, CUP 1973)

(iii) Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8 (ed. A.S. Hollis, OUP 1970)

### **Advanced Greek**

(This subject is available to candidates with a qualification in Latin above AS-level or equivalent).

Candidates will be expected to be familiar with *An Anthology of Greek Prose* ed. D.A. Russell (Oxford University Press 1991), Nos. 17, 18, 23, 24, 33, 40, 44, 66, 78, from which a selection of passages will be set for translation, in addition to a passage for unseen translation.

Candidates will also be expected to translate from TWO of the following texts:

(i) Herodotus I.1-94 [ed. Hude, OCT];

(ii) Plutarch, *Life of Antony* 1-9, 23-36, 71-87 [ed. Pelling, Cambridge University Press, 1988];

(iii) Euripides, *Bacchae* [ed. Diggle, OCT].